

Part V – Tue Apr 30th

The Third Vision – Christ and His Bride**(21:9-22:5)**

We live in a cursed world (*Jhn 12:31*) in which Satan is the god of this world (*2 Cor 4:4*). No matter what generation we live in, as Christians we find ourselves caught in a struggle between Jesus Christ and the Antichrist or between good and evil. “This great dragon, the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world was thrown down to the earth with all his angels” (*12:9*). The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil (*1 Jhn 3:8*).

The New Jerusalem**21:9-21**

The scriptures compare the love relationship with that between Christ and His church. The angel so employed is the one that had the last seven plagues, to show that the ultimate blessedness of the Church is one end of the divine judgments on her foes. Within the new creation, a city sparkles as the crown jewel. This city, new Jerusalem, is the bride, the wife of the Lamb. The vision describes its glory and brilliance, walls and gates, measurements and layout, and materials. By painting for the readers, a vision for the senses, full of the sights, sounds, colors, and drama of the final event, Christ issues an invitation to his saints in hope of the dawn of a new creation. The inheritance and hope of the New Testament believer is the hope of obtaining the glory of God. This speaks of the likeness of Christ Himself seen upon His people. The Great Consummation is complete and finalized through newness:

New Temple	Rev 21:1
New Earth	Rev 21:1
New Jerusalem	Rev 21:2
New World Order	Rev 21:5
New Temple	Rev 21:22
New Light	Rev 21:23
New Paradise	Rev 22:1-5

The Habitation of God**21:22-27**

The glorious presence of God and the Lamb will elicit the response of praise from true believers, but false believers will be excluded forever from God’s presence. John’s description of the city concludes with four things that do not appear in the city. They are absent because they are incompatible with the presence of God that pervades the city. The description shows the reader that this city is the fulfillment of what God began to provide for in the OT tabernacle—a renewal of humanity’s access to the presence of God.

Renewal of the World**22:1-5**

The highest joy and privilege of the saints in eternity will be to return to Eden. This passage clearly indicates that the eternal state will return to the new creation the qualities of the Garden of Eden but on a grander scale. (*22:4*) The souls of the believers in glory are constantly pictured as taking part in all the activities of the Master.

Conclusion – Final Exhortations and Benediction**22:6-21**

Affirmation of God’s Word (22:6-10) Revelation closes with an appeal to the reader to respond to the message of the book. Christ testifies to the authenticity of the prophecy and proclaims that he will indeed

come and come “soon” **(22:7)**. Every generation should expect His coming; for the theme of Revelation is I am coming soon! **(22:12; 22:20)**. The Lord’s coming will be sudden. The Christian community of born again believers should always live with the expectation, the anticipation of the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This epilogue calls readers to take seriously the trajectory of their present choices. The voices of the Lamb, the Spirit, and the bride reach back from the end times into the present age to beckon the reader to “come.” The fulfillment of these things is near, and so John may not seal up the words of the book. An admonition to the reader to take action in light of the book’s contents concludes the paragraph. **God’s Work Completed (22:11-15)** The angel tells John what to do after his vision is over. Instead of sealing up what he has written, as Daniel was commanded to do **(Dan 12:4-12)**, the book is to be left open so that all can read and understand. **(22:14)** The last of the seven beatitudes in the book of Revelation is bestowed on saints. **Final Blessing (22:16-17)**. **Final Curse (22:18-19)**. Though **(18-19)** could be viewed generally as an exhortation, they are better seen as a warning or curse. They summarize the Apocalypse, viewing it as a new law code for a new Israel, modeled on the old law code directed to the nation of Israel:

Deuteronomy	Rev. 22:18-19
<p>“hear the statutes ... you shall not add to the word ... nor take away from it” (4:1-2; likewise, 12:32); “and it will be when he hears the words ... every curse which is written in this book will rest on him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven” (29:19-20).</p>	<p>“I testify to everyone who hears the words ... if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that have been written in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book ..., God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city...”</p>

Conclusion (22:20-21) The book concludes on the same note with which it opened: the coming of Jesus Christ **(1:7)**. Christ testifies to the certainty of the event, and John concludes the book with his own prayer that Christ will return soon. The letter closes with a benediction. There is both sadness and glory in the way in which Revelation ends. Amid the terrible persecution of his day, the one thing which John longed for was the speedy return of Christ. That hope was never realized in the way in which he expected; but we can never doubt that Christ nevertheless abundantly kept his promise that he would be with his own even to the end of the world **(Mat 28:20)**. Then comes the glory. Come what may, John was sure of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and equally sure that it was sufficient for all things. It is surely symbolic, and it is surely fitting, that the last word of the Bible should be GRACE.