

# The Millennium and Beyond

## Revelation 22: "Some Final Advice"



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### Let's Get Started

We have reached the last chapter in the Bible's final book, and questions still abound. Unfortunately, answers to many questions will not be found here. Instead, John further explains the believer's glorious eternal home, Christ's final promise, a final invitation, and a final warning. As for the unanswered questions, [in his time he will reveal the answers](#) (Daniel 12:8-10).

### River of Life

Revelation 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

Up to this point, the angel has been showing John the city's basic framework: foundations, walls, gates, and a street. The **Holy City**, however, will also contain other things such as water, trees, and fruit. Here we see that it will have a river called *the river of the water of life*. In other verses of Scripture, this water of life is called *living water* (John 7:37-39), and it is used as a symbol for the **Holy Spirit**.

God is using a physical substance (**water**) to help explain a spiritual truth. Living water flows pure, clear, and fresh. It is not murky, stagnant, or polluted. It possesses **life-giving qualities** (John 3:1-8) that man cannot live without. The *river of the water of life* is portrayed as a river that will possess life-giving powers; water that will restore and refresh, flow in abundance, and satisfy our thirst.

The source of this river will be the *throne of God and of the Lamb*. They will supply life-giving water and the **Holy Spirit** (John 7:37-39) in abundance to the **Holy City**. *The Trinity (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) will be present to meet all our needs.*

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ **River of the Water of Life**
  - *the Holy Spirit*

## What Others are Saying:

Hal Lindsey: I don't think it's far-fetched to regard this crystal-clear river, from the throne of God the Father and God the Son, as the continual outpouring of God the Holy Spirit. <sup>22-1</sup>

## Remember This...

- ✓ *To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life* (Revelation 21:6).

## Tree of Life

Revelation 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Picture a great street of pure gold like transparent glass. It will have mansions of gold on each side and a river of crystal-clear water flowing down the middle with rows of trees on each side. This is the magnificent scene John is trying to describe.

The tree of life takes us back to the **Garden of Eden** (Genesis 3:22-24). Before they **sinned** Adam and Eve could have eaten from it and lived forever. In the **New Jerusalem**, rows of the tree of life will grow. The trees will produce a different kind of fruit every month which will provide a continuous supply of food from God. This says something about the heavenly bodies. Just as **Jesus ate and drank** (Luke 24:30-34) after being raised from the dead, believers will eat and drink in the **Holy City**.

Believers will diet on manna and fruit from the tree of life. They will not eat the leaves of the tree because the leaves will be for the healing of those who dwell on the new earth. These leaves will sustain life and add to well-being.

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ **Fruit from Tree of Life**
  - *fruit for our heavenly diet*
- ✓ **Leaves from Tree of Life**
  - *for the healing of the nations*

## What Others are Saying:

**Tim LaHaye:** It would be better to translate the word **healing** as **health**, not indicating that man will be sickly during the eternal order, but that the Gentiles or nations that have been inhuman to each other throughout their known history will be healed in their relationship toward each other and will thus **live equitably and fairly**. <sup>22-2</sup>

## Something to Ponder

- ✓ **The Tree of Knowledge** caused Adam and Eve to know right from wrong. It is how they learned what **sin** was. It caused their **spiritual death** (**separation of their soul and spirit from God**) and their **physical death** (**separation of their soul and spirit from the body**). It cost them immortality. The Tree of Life does the opposite. Eating its fruit *brings* immortality.

## Remember This...

- ✓ *I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God* (Revelation 2:7).
- ✓ *To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna* (Revelation 2:17).

## The Curse Lifted

Revelation 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

When Adam and Eve **sinned**, God placed a **curse upon creation** (Genesis 3:14-19): Because of it, women experience pain in childbirth, both men and women suffer sickness, both must today work for a living, and **physical** and **spiritual death** came upon mankind. **Sin** has caused great harm in this *present* creation, but it will not affect the new creation. Once God has cast **Satan** with all his **followers** into **hell**, and raised us with new bodies to dwell in his constant presence, all of the curse will be gone.

The Holy City will be the new location of God's throne. We will not be floating on clouds with harps in our hands, but instead we will be praising and serving our God. What we will do is not said, but we have already been told that we will reign as priests and kings.

We know that we will find joy and fulfillment (Luke 6:23; Revelation 12:12) in his service.

## Something to Ponder

- ✓ In the New Jerusalem There Will Be No More:
  - **death, mourning, crying, or pain** (Revelation 21:4)
  - **temple** (Revelation 21:22)
  - **sun or moon** (Revelation 21:23)
  - **night** (Revelation 21:25)
  - **impure, shameful, or deceitful thoughts** (Revelation 21:27)
  - **curse** (Revelation 22:3)

## Remember This...

- ✓ *You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth* (Revelation 5:10).

## See God's Face

Revelation 22:4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

In the Old Testament, it was Moses (Exodus 33:18-23) who wanted to see the face of God. In the New Testament, it was Philip (John 14:8, 9). God did not allow them to see his face, because if they did, they would die. However, as residents of the Holy City, we will actually *see the face of our Father* (1 John 3:2) and his Son. The name of God will be written on believers' foreheads to identify them as God's own.

A name stands for much or little depending upon whose it is. When God puts his name on us it is the greatest name of all. It stands for his character, honor, glory, faithfulness, and much more. It means he is staking his reputation on us.

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ Name of God on Our Foreheads
  - *identifies the people of God*

## Remember This...

- ✓ *I will write on him the name of my God* (Revelation 3:12).

## No More Night

Revelation 22:5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

This is the second time we have been told there will be no night in the Holy City. Lamps, light bulbs, and flashlights will not be needed. We will not need the sun for heat or to grow

our crops. God and Jesus will light the entire creation. They will be all that is needed, and believers will have the honor and privilege of reigning with them forever.

### What Others are Saying:

J. Vernon McGee: Who knows but what (God) will give to each saint, a world or a solar system or a galactic system to operate. Remember that Adam was given dominion over the old creation on this earth. <sup>22-3</sup>

## The Truth Is Found Here

Revelation 22:6 The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."

The angel reminded John of the truthfulness of these words. He is giving his assurance that this prophecy is trustworthy and will be fulfilled.

The angel also reminded John of how this message was given. The Lord Jesus sent his angel to give the prophets spiritual understanding (Colossians 1:9). In other words, Jesus is the source of this revelation, and because he is, it must be fulfilled.

*The things that must soon take place* have already started. In fact, the first part of this prophecy (Revelation), the Church Age, is almost over. Everything from the Rapture to the Second Coming is *near* at hand.

### What Others are Saying:

J. Vernon McGee: *These words are faithful and true* (Revelation 22:6 nkjv) means that no man is to trifle with them by spiritualizing them or reducing them to meaningless symbols. Our Lord is talking about reality. <sup>22-4</sup>

## Remember This...

✓ *These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness* (Revelation 3:14).

## In The Blink of An Eye

Revelation 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

*Behold, I am coming soon* can be interpreted in at least two ways: *soon* or *shortly*, or *quickly* or *suddenly*. *Soon* or *shortly* means *before long*. *Quickly* or *suddenly* means *very fast*. This is significant because people get the wrong impression when we say, "Jesus will come very soon." What we should say is, "When he comes, it will happen very fast, in the blink of an eye."

Many people wonder why prophecy is so important. It's importance does not lie in predicting the future. But rather, in the changing of our lives, by giving us a desire and

concern for the lost and unsaved. The fact is, **God** means for prophecy to be obeyed, and those who do obey are promised a blessing.

## Remember This...

- ✓ *Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near (Revelation 1:3).*

## Overcome With Awe

Revelation 22:8 **I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me.**

John is repeating his claim that he is the human author of **Revelation**, and that he both *saw* and *heard* the things he writes about. He was so impressed with the angel that revealed these things to him, that he was overcome with awe, and fell down to worship at the angel's feet.

## God Alone

Revelation 22:9 **But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"**

This is the second time an angel told John not to worship him. Angels are servants of God, the same as John and the prophets are servants of God. It is a **mistake** to worship angels. Only God is worthy of worship.

## Remember This...

- ✓ *At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God" (Revelation 19:10).*

## Leave It Open

Revelation 22:10 **Then he told me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near.**

When **Daniel** wrote his prophecy several hundred years before the birth of **Christ**, he did not understand some of the things **God** had shown him. He wanted an explanation, but the fulfillment of his prophecies were a long time off, so he was told to seal them up (Daniel 12:4) until the end time.

**Revelation** is different. John's prophecy was already unfolding, and the **Church Age** was taking hold. For this reason, the message was to be left unsealed. **God** wants people to hear these things *now*.

## A Great Chasm

Revelation 22:11 Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy."

The time will come when a person's final destiny will be determined and sealed forever. When the eternal day dawns, all unbelievers will be condemned and cast into the **Lake of Fire**. They will be without hope because their eternal condition will never change. On the other hand, all believers will be accepted and given entrance to the Holy City where they will continue to grow and improve. Hope and holiness will always be theirs.

This is a warning regarding the separation of **the lost** and the saved. A great chasm (Luke 16:26) will separate the **Lake of Fire** from the Holy City that no one can cross. The decisions people make in this life will determine their destiny and seal it forever.

### Key Point

- ✓ *The decisions people make in this life will determine their destiny and seal it forever!*

Heaven

or

Hell

Revelation 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

This is Christ's personal promise that he will return, and when he does, he will bring rewards with him. He will separate the **lost** from the saved, and everyone will receive rewards according to the quality of work (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) they have done.

Not much is said in Church about rewards. For the most part it is a neglected message. No one deserves rewards, but we know they will be given because this verse says so. If we would let the goodness of God sink in most of us would do more to honor him, and follow the advice of the Apostle John: we would watch out so that we will be *rewarded fully* (2 John 1:8).

### Key Symbols:

- ✓ Rewards
  - *heaven or hell*

## The All In All

Revelation 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Jesus is using three of his titles to identify himself with the Father. He has used them several times before (Revelation 1:8, 17; 2:8; 21:6). No one else can use them because they assert his

deity. Explain it? No one can. It must be taken by faith.

## Heavenly Laundry?

Revelation 22:14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

Christ's words here imply a choice between washing our robes or leaving them **dirty**. Those who choose to wash their robes and therefore accept Christ will be blessed with two rewards:

1. access to the Tree of Life
2. permission to pass through the gates of the Holy City.

Those who leave their robes **dirty** by **refusing** to accept Christ will be **rejecting** his rewards.

### Something to Ponder:

- ✓ The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) is one of the most popular and best known teachings of Jesus. It begins with several principles Christians call the *Beatitudes* (Matthew 5:3-10). Revelation also contains some *Beatitudes*, but very few people are aware of it. They are:
  - ✓ *Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it* (Revelation 1:3).
  - ✓ *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on* (Revelation 14:13).
  - ✓ *Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed* (Revelation 16:15).
  - ✓ *Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb* (Revelation 19:9).
  - ✓ *Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years* (Revelation 20:6).
  - ✓ *Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book* (Revelation 22:7).
  - ✓ *Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city* (Revelation 22:14).

### Key Symbols:

- ✓ Washed Robes
  - *those who accept Christ*
- ✓ Unwashed Robes
  - *those who reject Christ*

## Access Denied

Revelation 22:15 Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Jesus is providing his own list of those who will not be blessed with access to the Tree of Life

and the Holy City. Instead of fruit from the Tree of Life, the **dogs** (those involved in the occult, sexual immorality, idolatry, and lying) will eat the garbage of hell. Instead of access to the Holy City, these **dogs** will scavenge in the **Lake of Fire**.

## Something to Ponder:

- ✓ *But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars, their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur* (Revelation 21:8).

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ **Dogs**
  - *those involved in the occult, sexual immorality, idolatry, and lying*

## A Star from David

Revelation 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

Here Jesus reiterates the first two verses of [Chapter 1](#) by saying that Revelation is a testimony he gave to an angel for delivery to the churches.

The *Root and the Offspring of David* (Jeremiah 33:15) comes from the Old Testament and is a reference to the Messiah.

### *Jesus is the Messiah!*

The *bright Morning Star* (Numbers 24:17; Revelation 2:28) comes from both the Old and New Testaments. Jesus is identifying himself as the one who will appear near the end of earth's darkest hour (**Tribulation Period**). He alone will bring a brighter day to the world (Millennium).

# Come!

Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

This is God's *final* call. It is a call for all believers to *Come!*, and a call for all believers to tell all **unbelievers** to *Come!* The Holy Spirit works in and through the Bride of Christ (the Church), using them to invite all **unbelievers** to come to Jesus and drink of his salvation, the water of life.

*Whoever is thirsty should Come!* Those who are tired of living without Jesus should *Come!*

God invites all who desire to receive his free gift of salvation through His Son Jesus to *Come!*

## Nothing New

Revelation 22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

Revelation was given by God, and it is His Word alone. He alone has authority over it. **Anyone who adds anything new to the words of Revelation will feel the wrath of God upon him.**

## Something to Ponder

- ✓ There are religious groups today that teach God is love, but refute the message of salvation, the **wrath** of God, the **judgment** of God, the **Tribulation Period**, and **hell**.

**Wouldn't you call this adding and taking away from the Word of God?**

- ✓ **Here are some examples:**
  - Jesus is really the Archangel Michael (Jehovah's Witnesses).
  - **Hell** is really the grave (Jehovah's Witnesses).
  - God, rather than Jesus, was once a mortal human being (Mormons).
  - Worthy humans are going to become gods and goddesses (Mormons).
  - God is a cosmic force, not a personal being (New Age).
  - Eve's sin was a sexual affair with **Satan** (Moonies).

## Warning!

- ✓ **If God struck down *Ananias and Sapphira* (Acts 5:1-11) for introducing sin into the early Church, what do you think he will do with those who do it today?**

## Nothing Less

Revelation 22:19 And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

**Taking away** from this book brings on a second part to God's warning. **Anyone who deletes anything from this book risks having his share in the Tree of Life and Holy City erased.** Those who do **delete** something prove not only that they do not love God or believe in his Word, but that they are destined for the **Lake of Fire** as well.

## Related Current Events

- ✓ The article (Theologians Opening Heaven's Gate A Bit Wider) reads, "Five centuries since the end of the Middle Ages, it's likely that modern-day Christians still subscribe to vestiges of that period's classic depictions of heaven and **hell**: the former a place of infinite peace and joy; the latter a hideous chamber of eternal punishment.

- ✓ "Last week, the Church of England made international news by joining other church bodies, including its American relative, the Episcopal Church, in **rejecting** the medieval image of **hell**, calling it a distortion of '*the revelation of God's love in Christ.*'
- ✓ "The implication was that God is a '**sadistic monster...who consigned millions to eternal torment.**'"
- ✓ The word is then that the liberals are again rejecting the doctrine of eternal punishment. They thereby deny the Word of God, but they do so in the name of the love of God. <sup>22:5</sup>

## Something to Ponder

- ✓ Many denominations are rewriting their hymnals and worship materials. They have decided to change such words as "him," "darkness," and "blindness" because they do not want to offend women, African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, etc. Some have even produced Bibles and New Testaments that contain an approved inclusive language.

**Should this be considered adding to or taking away from the Word of God?**

## One Last Promise

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

*I am coming soon* is his final promise! In answer to this promise of the Lord's return, John responds, *Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.* This is a statement of John's personal belief, and he urges Jesus to come back.

## A Final Note of Grace

Revelation 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

These last words of the Bible serve as a reminder that grace makes salvation (Ephesians 2:8) possible. Grace will keep us out of the **Lake of Fire**, and let us pass through the gates of the Holy City.

## Remember This...

- ✓ Grace is God's Riches At Christ's Expense. *Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne* (Revelation 1:4).

## Something to Ponder

- ✓ Facts About Salvation:
  - Everyone needs it (Romans 3:23).
  - Everyone can have it (John 3:16).
  - Only Jesus can give it (John 14:6).

- Only believers receive it (John 3:36).

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## Study Questions

- ✓ What will believers have on their foreheads in heaven?
- ✓ What can a person do to be blessed by God?
- ✓ How do we know the words of Revelation are true?
- ✓ What was John's mistake that we read about in this chapter?
- ✓ Who will have access to the Tree of Life and the Holy City?

[Go to Answers](#)

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## Chapter Wrap-up

- ✓ The River of Life will flow from the Throne of God through the Holy City. On each side of the river will be the Tree of Life. ([Revelation 22:1, 2](#))
- ✓ The **curse** of the **original sin** caused by the fall of Adam and Eve will be lifted when God makes everything new. God will once again dwell among his people and be the light for their feet. ([Revelation 22:3-5](#))
- ✓ The Spirit and bride **call anyone who is thirsty** to come and drink freely from the Water of Life. ([Revelation 22:17](#))
- ✓ A final **warning** goes to anyone who **adds to, or detracts from Revelation. Those who do not heed this warning face the plagues contained therein.** ([Revelation 22:18, 19](#))
- ✓ Christ has a final promise for all who read Revelation: *He is coming soon!* ([Revelation 22:20](#))

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***Time Is Running Out!***

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