

The Book Of Revelation Study 102

Revelation 22:6-12 (NASB)

⁶ *And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.*

⁷ *"And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."*

⁸ *I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things.*

⁹ *But he *said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God."*

¹⁰ *And he *said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near."*

¹¹ *"Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."*

¹² *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."*

These verses form the epilogue to the book of Revelation.

Having taken the reader through the amazing sweep of future history all the way into the eternal state, all that is left for John to record is this divine postscript.

By this point in the Apocalypse, all the glorious and gracious purposes that God ordained before the foundation of the world will have been attained.

The devastating judgments of the Tribulation will have been carried out, and their memory will remain only in the torment of the lost and separated from God.

The Lord Jesus Christ will have returned in blazing glory, executed His enemies and reigned on earth for a thousand years.

All rebels, both angels and humans, will have been sentenced to their final, eternal punishment in the lake of fire.

The present universe will have been "uncreated" and the eternal new heaven and the new earth created, in which the King of kings will be reigning with His Father.

The Holy angels and the redeemed of all the ages will be dwelling in eternal bliss with Him in the new creation, particularly in heaven's capital city, the New Jerusalem.

From His throne in the center of that majestic city, the brilliant blazing glory of God will radiate throughout the re-created universe.

Absolute and unchanging holiness will characterize all who dwell in the universal and eternal kingdom of God. They will constantly praise, worship, and serve Him throughout eternity in an environment of perfect peace, joy, and fulfillment.

Bracketing the book of Revelation along with the epilogue is the prologue, Recorded in chapter one.

Revelation 1:1-3 (NASB)

¹ *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take*

place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John,

² who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

The prologue introduces the theme of Revelation, the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The epilogue provides a fitting conclusion to the Apocalypse by pointing out what is to be the believers response to the second Coming. And we have that in these (chapter 22 verses 6-12)

This postscript also, for a final time in Scripture, invites non-believers to come to saving faith in Christ before it is forever too late (vv. 13-21).

In a series of rapid-fire, staccato statements that move breathlessly from theme to theme, verses 6-12 delineate the responses every believer should have to the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These verses convey a furious rush of energy, a wild flurry of excited effort to call forth immediate reaction to the vital truth they communicate.

The text is pregnant with urgency, pressuring every reader to take action based on the truths it presents.

Since Jesus could call His church home at any moment, triggering all the end time events culminating in His return, believers (and un-believers) need to be ready.

A natural reading of the New Testament yields the truth that to the early church Jesus' coming was imminent: that is, that it could happen at any time.

They believed that He could come back for them in their lifetime.

For the early church, imminence contained elements both of certainty and uncertainty.

They were certain that Jesus would one day return but were uncertain as to when.

Not knowing when He might return they wisely lived, prepared for and hoping for Jesus to return at any moment.

There are a number of New Testament texts that reflect the early church's belief in imminence.

Paul commended the Corinthians because they were awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ;

1 Corinthians 1:4-8 (NASB)

⁴ I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,

⁵ that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge,

⁶ even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you,

⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

⁸ who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He further exhorted them;

1 Corinthians 4:5 (NASB)

⁵ Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light

the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

The Apostle included the un-translated Aramaic word *maranatha* (O Lord, come) in a letter to the Greek speaking Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 16:22 (NASB)

²² *If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed. Maranatha.*

To the Philippians Paul wrote:

Philippians 3:20 (NASB)

²⁰ *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;*

He commended the Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ *For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,*

¹⁰ *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.*

Later in that same epistle, Paul expressed his own hope that he might be alive at the Lord's return;

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 (NASB)

¹⁴ *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.*

¹⁵ *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.*

¹⁶ *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.*

¹⁷ *Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.*

¹⁸ *Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

So the early church believed in the imminent return of Christ.

Paul reminded Titus that Christians are to be *"looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus"* (Titus 2:13)

As the epilogue opens, John records that he (the angel who had shown him the New Jerusalem;) said to me, "these words are faithful and true."

The angel's words provide heavenly attestation to the validity of all that John had heard and seen throughout the Apocalypse.

The angel repeats the same affirmation given earlier to John by God Himself:

Revelation 21:5 (NASB)

⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He *said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

The phrase **faithful and true** also appears twice in Revelation as a title for the Lord Jesus Christ

Revelation 3:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

Revelation 19:11 (NASB)

¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

The words of the Apocalypse are as faithful and true as the One who revealed them to John.

The angel's words reinforce an important truth:
Everything John has seen in Revelation will come to pass.
What the inspired apostle has written is not mystical;

The Apocalypse is not a record of his bizarre dreams or the result of an overactive imagination.
It is not an allegory from which reader can extract hidden meanings of their own concoction.

It is an accurate description of events and persons yet to come.

Verses 18 and 19 of this chapter give a sobering warning against tampering with Revelation;

Revelation 22:18-19 (NASB)

¹⁸ I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book;

¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

John affirmed the angel's emphatic testimony to the truthfulness of what he had seen and heard, writing that **"the Lord, the god of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place."**

The **God** who moved the spirits of His spokesmen the prophets to inspire both the Old and New Testaments is the same God who sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.

That is nothing short of a claim by John for the full and complete inspiration of Revelation.
The prophecies recorded by those earlier biblical prophets were literally fulfilled, and those in Revelation will be also.

The exactness, detail, and precision with which earlier prophecies already fulfilled came to pass form the pattern for those yet to be fulfilled.

God's prophetic record is perfect. He predicted Israel would go into captivity, and the nation did. He predicted the destruction of Babylon and Tyre and those cities were destroyed. He predicted that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, to a virgin, and be killed by sinners and He was.

Thus when God predicts future events such as the rise of Antichrist, the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments, the Battle of Armageddon, the return of Jesus Christ, and His thousand year earthly kingdom, those events will just as certainly come to pass.

God will do exactly what He says He will do, as He himself declares in Isaiah;

Isaiah 46:9-11 (NASB)

⁹ *"Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,*

¹⁰ *Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';*

¹¹ *Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.*

Now the reality of our Lord's imminent return calls for four responses of the part of every believer;

Immediate obedience,

Immediate worship,

Immediate proclamation,

Immediate service.

IMMEDIATE OBEDIENCE

Revelation 22:7 (NASB)

⁷ *"And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."*

Kai (and) marks a change in speakers.

The speaker is no longer the angel who spoke in verse 6, but the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who is **coming quickly**.

He pronounces the sixth of seven beatitudes in Revelation;

"Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."

The word prophecy by definition can refer to any message about the past, present, or future, the Apocalypse is a book largely consisting of future predictions and promises.

Heeds translates a participial form of the verb *tereo*, which means "to keep", "to hold fast", or "to guard".

Believers are called to guard or protect the book of Revelation.

It must be defended against detractors who deny its relevance, against critics who deny its veracity and authority, as well as against confused interpreters who obscure its meaning.

In fact all of Scripture is to be guarded in the same way.

Paul commanded Timothy;

1 Timothy 6:20-21 (NASB)

²⁰ *O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge"—*

²¹ *which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Grace be with you.*

2 Timothy 1:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ *Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.*

¹⁴ *Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.*

Believers are called not only to guard Scripture, but also to obey it.
Jesus said;

John 14:15 (NASB)

¹⁵ *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

John 15:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.*

John 14:21 (NASB)

²¹ *"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."*

John 14:23 (NASB)

²³ *Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.*

God does not command believers to read Revelation merely to satisfy their curiosity about the future.
He did not inspire it to provide material for detailed chronological charts of end time events.

There is a seemingly endless stream of books on prophecy being churned out, with speculative prophetic schemes proliferating *ad infinitum, ad nauseam*

but it is not God's purpose to give Christians a detailed analysis of the prophetic significance of contemporary cultural, political, military, and social events or trends.

God inspired Revelation for one purpose; to reveal the glory of His Son and call believers to live godly, obedient lives in light of His soon return.

The purpose of Revelation is not to provide entertainment, but to provide motivation for godly living.

The Apostle Peter also taught that believers' knowledge of end time events should cause them to live holy lives.
He wrote;

2 Peter 3:11-12 (NASB)

¹¹ *Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,*

¹² *looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!*

The glorious future realities described in Revelation compel a commitment on the part of believers to lead holy lives, Christ's imminent return demands immediate obedience.