

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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THE EPILOGUE OF REVELATION: IMPORTANT PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM THE BOOK

Rev. 22:6-11

"Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. ⁷ "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." ⁸ Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹ Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." ¹⁰ And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. ¹¹ He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.."

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In this final section of the book, the Holy Spirit, through John, reported the information and instructions God gave him to conclude this revelation. He did this to comfort and warn his readers, and to affirm the authority of **Revelation**. These final verses summarize and emphasize in readers' awareness the most important practical lessons of the book.
- B. This section we see a conversation between an angel and John, and between Jesus and John. Three emphases mark this epilogue: **1. This prophecy is genuine (vs. 6-7, 8-9, 16, 18-19). 2. Jesus is coming soon (vs. 6-7, 10, 12, 20). 3. The unfit must be careful, and the faithful must be brave (vs. 11-12, 15, 17-19).**
- C. **The entire epilogue is very similar to the first chapter in many respects**, it describes God and Jesus as those who gave rise to this prophecy; Its theme is the events that will happen soon; the mediator is an angel; the writer is John (**1:1; 22:6**); He speaks of the genuineness of the prophecy; to whom it is addressed (**1:3; 22:6-9**); the blessing for those who keep it and the warning for the unfaithful (**1:3; 22:12**); Christ is the center of prophecy (**1:2; 22:16**); the Alpha and Omega (**1:17; 22:13**); and emphasizes the soon return of Jesus (**1:3; 22:20**).

II. THE TESTIMONY OF THE ANGEL (22:6-7)

- A. **v.6a "These words are faithful and true..."** The angel who had been revealing to John the New Jerusalem is one of those who had the seven bowls (**21:9**), and continued speaking with him, assuring him that all this what he just said (**22:1-5**) regarding the river that came out of the throne; to the tree of life with its fruits and its leaves for the healing of the nations; the end of the curse and the throne of God and the Lamb being the center of the city; as well as serving Him and seeing His face; be marked by Him to be enlightened and reign with God forever; all these words are **faithful**, that is, they will not fail; and they are **true**, they are not false, they will be fulfilled with all certainty (**Dan. 8:26**).
- B. **v.6b "And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place."** The angel proceeded to explain to John that He was the same "**Lord ... God**" who had sent His angel to speak with John and

who inspired **"the spirits of the prophets"** of old; and who was revealing to John these words and visions. John was now also one of these prophets who was announcing the things that will come, specifically the Lord God had revealed **"the things which must shortly take place"** (4:1-22:5) to those who serve Him (**"his servants"**) to show them what will happen and that they must be prepared.

- C. In the context of eternity, the time that has passed between the prophecy and its fulfillment is very **soon**. The purpose of this verse is to emphasize the authenticity of this revelation and encourage us to be attentive to the fulfillment of all that has been said. This statement reinforces a futuristic interpretation of **Revelation**, because the book is about events that are yet to happen.
- D. **v.7a "Behold, I am coming soon!"** The Second Coming is the great culminating event that is perceived through most of this prophecy, therefore it is certainly legitimate to apply this word as to the imminent rapture. It is also quite clear that He wants us to live with the constant expectation that His return is imminent. The angel transmitted these words from Christ Himself (**Rev. 22:12-13**) to John (**Rev. 16:15**), instead of Jesus saying them directly to him because **"For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"** (**Rev. 19:10**).
- E. **v.7b "Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."** The book opens and closes (**Rev. 1:3; 16:5**) with a special blessing for those who pay serious attention to the prophetic words it contains.
- F. **No book in the Bible has a more precise certification, stronger protection against manipulation, or a more urgent recommendation for study and observance than Revelation, especially in its closing.** However, it is a book that very few study and preach. Dr. Constable says: *'It is ironic that people have neglected this book so much, of all the books of the Bible, even though it contains more promises of blessing than any other book of Scripture. Everyone should continue studying it.'*
- G. **God has intended that readers understand this book.** It is a revelation, not an incomprehensible mystery, although part of the revelation is symbolic and difficult to understand. It is for those who really want to understand it not so much for the casual reader.

Mat. 13:11-12 "He replied, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but others are not. ¹² To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them." (NTV)

III. JOHN'S TESTIMONY (Ap. 22:8-11)

- A. **v.8a "Now I, John, saw and heard these things"** John now turns to the reader in the first person, directly, what he had not done since **Rev. 1:1, 4** and **9**. He affirmed the words of the angel of That the prophecy is genuine. He himself had heard and seen **"these things"** that he had recorded (**Dan. 8:15; 12:5**). This is something that John mentions in his books and letters, that he was an eyewitness to these things, establishing the veracity of his writings:

Jn. 1:14 "...we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Jn. 19:35 *"This report is from an eyewitness giving an accurate account. He [John] speaks the truth so that you also may continue to believe."*

1 Jn. 1:1 *"We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life."*

- B. With that same truth and certainty that John had lived with Jesus at His first coming, so he had contemplated everything related to His return and eternal kingdom.
- C. **v.8b-9** *"And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. **Worship God**"* Juan confessed that when he heard and saw these things, he reacted by worshiping the angel who revealed them to him. It was the revelation of the new creation that evidently made John respond in this way for the second time. John's strong reaction attests to the authenticity of the amazing revelations he had received.
- D. What happened to John can happen to us; worship the messenger instead of the one who issued the message. Those of us who preach the word are only a voice but we can never take any credit or praise for us.
- E. This angel, like the one in **Rev. 19**, also rebuked John for worshiping him (**19:10**), could have been the same angel that John had tried to worship before (**19:10**), perhaps similar to Jesus as the one of **Dan. 10:4** People must worship God, not His servants. The angel presented himself as a service partner ("**fellow servant**") along with John; both served God only in different positions and places.
- F. *"**your brethren the prophets**"* The angel told him that he had also served the other prophets besides John, as well as all the believers who pay attention or "**keep**" or take seriously what God has revealed. The words of the prophecy of "this book," refers to the book that John was writing, that is, the Apocalypse. The specific mention of "the prophets" as a special group here, increases respect for all prophecies, and for this particular prophecy
- G. *"**Worship God**"* He is the one who has given origin to the visions and prophecies of **Revelation** therefore John should be motivated to worship God Himself and no one else; That is the ultimate goal of the entire book, to inspire us to worship God, not John or the angels or any other messenger.
- H. **v.10** *"And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand."* John received instructions from the angel to leave his book (scroll) open, not to seal it. He should not close it because the fulfillment of the predicted events is near, and people should be aware of them (**Rev. 1:11**). God had told **Daniel** to "**seal**" (store; or possibly "encrypt") his prophecy, evidently because there was more prophecy to come (**Dan. 8:26; 12:4, 9-10; Rev. 10:4**) . As an artist covers his work when it is under construction until it is complete, so God covered His portrait of the future until he finished it.

Dan. 12:9 *" But he said, "Go now, Daniel, for what I have said is kept secret and sealed until the time of the end."*

- I. **v.11** *"He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him [e]be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be*

holy still.” The angel gave us this warning because the dynamics of end times will tend to take more root in each person's character according to the habits he/she has already formed; those who have given themselves over to evil will continue their way but those who are righteous will put into practice what is right; the same will happen with holiness; the trials and difficulties will refine us more in our holiness.

Dan. 11:35 “And some of the wise will fall victim to persecution. In this way, they will be refined and cleansed and made pure until the time of the end, for the appointed time is still to come.”

Dan. 12:10 “Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined by these trials. But the wicked will continue in their wickedness, and none of them will understand. Only those who are wise will know what it means”

- J. **This is a strong warning for unbelievers, not to postpone converting to Christ.** It presents the hopelessness of the final state of the unbelievers. When Christ comes, it will be difficult for people to change their tendency because the pressures will be very great and what they are will remain forever. People should not wait for a second chance in the future (after the Rapture), but should make the decision to surrender to God now, in light of what they have read in this book (**Mt. 25:10; Luke 13 : 25; Heb. 9:27**). **We must change when there is still time.**
- K. This verse does not teach that for some people, who now live in the Church age, repentance and conversion are impossible (**v. 17**). It is a guarantee of personal responsibility for one's decisions (**Ez. 3:27; Matthew 11:15; Rev. 2: 7; 13: 9**).

IV. REVELATION NOW

- A. The truthfulness and faithfulness of all that has been written in **Revelation** is a guarantee to us that everything will happen as it has been prophesied: Jesus comes soon and we are invited to continue gaining understanding to be prepared and reaffirm our determination to follow our course of love Jesus, act justly and continue to sanctify us even in the face of difficulties.

V. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1. How can you gain more understanding of the end times to be prepared for everything that will bring the return of Jesus?**
- 2. What can you do to reaffirm your process to grow in holiness and justice in your life?**
- 3. Ask the Holy Spirit His guidance to show you who needs to have an encounter with Christ now that it is still time and share your testimony.**