

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

REVELATION 21-22

When we think about the past we can imagine what life was like in Colonial America - or at the height of the Roman Empire - or even in the Israel of King David...

You can go back on the timeline until you **reach two impasses**. Two events so dramatically altered our planet, all assumptions of life beforehand are a blur.

First is **the flood of Noah**. Prior to the flood it had never rained. The earth was shrouded in vapor and watered by dew. There was no fear between mankind and the animals. Our planet was a very different place.

But try to go back even farther, before **the fall of mankind**. It's mind-boggling to imagine a perfect world. Work was no sweat. Childbirth was pain-free. Sin had not yet spoiled the paradise of God's original creation.

But today, we're thinking in the opposite direction, *forward into the future*. And again, our conjectures will be fairly accurate until we reach **two impasses...**

The first is **the Millennial Kingdom**. King Jesus will rule this planet and right all wrongs. He'll repair all that sin has damaged. He'll turn the jungle into a garden! Last week, we tried to imagine life in the Kingdom Age.

But what happens after the thousand-year reign of Christ? Well, in Revelation 21-22 God takes John and us to the ultimate brink... *when time fades into eternity*.

God will create **"a new heaven and new earth."** And at points John just puts down his pen - he's so in awe of the

wonders he's shown. Today, we get a glimpse of Eternity. *And I hope it captures our hearts as well...*

Revelation 21, “**Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.**” There is coming a time when the physical universe as we know it will be no more. Here, the Bible teaches **the non-eternity of matter**. Matter had a beginning and it'll have an end. God created matter, and what He creates, He can *uncreate or eliminate*.

2 Peter 3:10 predicts, “**the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat...**” At the end of Chapter 20 when God's Great White Throne appears all that's material flees.

Recall Jesus' words in Matthew 24:35, “**Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.**” God's Word is forever, but all that we can see and touch will go out in a blaze of **God's** glory.

Realize, this Earth is a no-deposit, no-return planet! It won't be recycled! The eternal state will consist of “**a new heaven and new earth.**” It may resemble the Old Earth in aspects - but qualitatively it'll be very different.

In Isaiah 65:17 when God speaks of eternity, He says, “**Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.**” The Hebrew word Isaiah uses for “create” is “**bara.**” It's the same term used in Genesis 1:1 of the original creation. It means “**to create out of nothing.**”

In the final future, God won't recycle the elements of His first creation. *He'll create again... something better.*

And you'll immediately notice differences between the before and after. Verse 1, **"Also there was no more sea..."** Today, 70% of the Earth's surface is ocean. Our eco-system depends on the sea for water and weather.

But in the New Earth a sea won't be necessary.

In the Bible, the sea is always sinister. It's a symbol for evil. In Revelation 13 the Beast rises out of the sea. In the new creation this reminder of evil is eliminated!

Verse 2, **"Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."**

In John 14:2, before His crucifixion, Jesus told His disciples, **"I go to prepare a place for you."** And we can assume that's what He's been doing for the last 2000 years. Nazareth's carpenter has been constructing our heavenly digs. What John sees as a beautiful bride, this **"New Jerusalem"** - is what we today call **"Heaven."**

Scripturally speaking, there're *three Heavens...*

The **first heaven** is *the blue sky* - the atmosphere.

The **second heaven** is *the night sky* - **"outer space."**

But the **third heaven** is God's eternal throne. This is where our friends and loved ones who died knowing Jesus, now reside. In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul writes of his experience, he **"was caught up to the third heaven."**

Now John sees this “**third Heaven**” coming to Earth. He calls it “**the New Jerusalem.**” This is God’s capitol or throne. Apparently, Jesus will reign from “**the holy city.**”

And when John sees this city it reminds him of a bride on her wedding day. She appears decked out in splendor. She’s the object of her husband’s desires.

Whenever I officiate a wedding, I tell the groom to scoot over into the aisle. He doesn’t want to miss his bride. I tell him she’ll never look as pretty as on her wedding day. I’ve met some *ugly women*, but never an *ugly bride*. All brides are gorgeous. *And this will be our reaction to heaven.* It’ll dwarf all of our expectations.

Don’t ever think you’ll be homesick for Earth. Heaven will be infinitely greater. It’s true this world is an awe-inspiring place. There are vistas so beautiful they take your breath away. But Jesus created this planet in just six days. Imagine what He’s creating given 2000 years!

A voice sounds in verse 3, “**Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.**” You’ve heard of the streets of gold and pearly gates - but heaven’s chief attraction is God!

It’s Jesus that’ll make Heaven so *heavenly!*

And here’s life in heaven, verse 4, “**And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.**”

In the Millennial Kingdom death will be rare, yet still exist. Here though, death is done. In the eternal state, there're no undertakers or gravediggers or cemeteries!

It reminds me of a gravestone in Virginia that marks the remains of Margaret Daniels. It reads, "She always said her feet were killing her, but nobody believed her."

Sin created a fallen world that makes us vulnerable to sickness, pain, and death. But in Revelation 21 sin is no more. Now its symptoms can be treated. *Grief goes! Tears dry.* When you come into the world the first sound you make is **a cry**. And to a degree you keep crying throughout life. But one day Jesus will end our sorrows and dry our tears. *There's no crying in heaven.*

"Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." The Greek word translated "*new*" means new not in terms of *time*, but of *kind* or *quality*.

One of life's huge disappointments is its diminishing returns. Things lose their luster. Thrills grow mundane.

I've met folks who say, "*I'm from Hawaii...*" And I think, "*why did you leave?*" They got tired of Hawaii! Bored with Paradise! *How fickle can we be!* But after a million years there'll be nothing boring about Heaven.

It'll always feel new. Heaven has the new car smell.

"And He said to me, "**Write...**" Apparently, John had stopped writing. He was so in awe over the wonders he saw he'd laid down his pen. He forgot the task at hand.

Jesus tells him, "**Write, for these words are true and faithful.** And He said to me, "**It is done!**" It's the words of Jesus on the

cross, “It is finished.” The heavy lifting came at Calvary. Now all that was paid for is acquired.

Jesus says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” Alpha is the first letter in the Greek “*alpha*-bet.” Omega is the last. They are the A to Z. In essence, all of life begins and ends with Jesus.

And He promises, “I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.” Jesus *hydrates* our thirsty soul, and *overcomes* what drags us down. Yet those who *succumb* to sin He leaves outside the holy city...

Verse 8, “But the cowardly...” Note, cowardice is not a weakness, it’s a sin. There’s no excuse for cowardice if Jesus makes us overcomers! Faith is courageous.

He also mentions, “unbelieving, abominable...” The word speaks of a *repulsive* act. I researched this, and made a list of all that the Law calls an “abomination...”

Disregarding God’s distinctions between clean and unclean was abominable... Giving God an offering from ill-gotten gain was called “abominable...” Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 describe homosexual practices as an abomination to God... Deuteronomy 22:5 adds cross-dressing to this category... Idolatry was abominable...

As was offering God a blemished sacrifice - *less than your best*... Which means if you’ve ever been guilty of giving God the leftovers of your time or money (*and regrettably I have*), beware of pointing a finger at other “abominations.” Take care

of your *abominables* before you start worrying about someone else's *abominables*.

The list goes on, “murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers.” The word is “pharmakeus” from which we get the word, “pharmacy.” It refers to illicit drug use.

Also “idolaters, and all liars...” God loves truth, *why would He want to spend eternity with a habitual liar?*

Everyone on this list “shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” Let me clarify, there will be people in heaven who lied, did drugs, were homosexuals, acted cowardly, slept around, **but they repented!** They were willing to live differently - *not perfectly, but differently.*

Those excluded from Heaven, and assigned to the lake of fire, were those folks who ignored or resisted the changes Jesus wanted to work in their lives.

Verse 9, “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.” And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.” This was a spectacular sight, John is repositioned on a high mountain to get a panoramic view of heaven. And he sees heaven as a hustling, bustling, “*great city.*”

Here on Earth we sometimes begrudge city life.

Cities become an incubator for all that's bad in the world - *crime, poverty, congestion, noise, pollution*. We romanticize moving to the more pristine countryside...

But apparently, God likes the city. Cities bring people together. They spawn *culture and creativity*. New ideas bubble up in the city. There's excitement in the streets.

And this is what heaven is like. Don't think of heaven as a bank of fluffy, puffy cumulous clouds. For all eternity we'll live in a city that never sleeps... You and I were not created for the isolation of the country. God designed us for *community* - for the buzz of city-life.

We'll see later, aspects of the New Jerusalem are more like a garden. Heaven is a city with lots of green space. But God's garden is in the midst of a city.

John sees this holy city descending out of heaven. What happens to it after its descent, he doesn't say...

Does it hover between Heaven and Earth as a celestial satellite? Does it take a parallel orbit with the New Earth?... Does a new Earth even have an orbit?...

We know this new Earth doesn't revolve around the sun, for in verse 23 there is no sun... *"the Lamb is its light."* In eternity everything revolves around Jesus!

One of the certainties we do glean from this picture of the city is its beauty and color... Verse 11, *"Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."* Heaven is like a gemstone. Think of a twinkling diamond on the black cloth of huge expanse!

“Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates...” Like ancient cities, heaven has a wall with gates and foundations.

In verse 13, on the gates, there were “names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.” It’s fitting the twelve gates bear the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The Hebrews were the gate through which the world entered God’s family.

“Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” At His first coming, Jesus chose apostles to work miracles and write inspired Scripture. The twelve apostles were foundational to God’s plan. No wonder their names are now written on heaven’s foundation.

Verse 15, “And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal...” “*Twelve thousand furlongs*” is the equivalent of about 1500 miles. Imagine a city with base dimensions of 1500 miles square. It’s a huge city!

Fix the upper right-hand corner in Boston, then the other three corners would land in Miami, Phoenix, and Calgary, Canada. The New Jerusalem would cover three-quarters of the US - 2.25 million square miles!

The most mind-boggling dimension though, is the height of the city! It’s 1500 miles high! Currently, 99% of the Earth’s

atmosphere is within 100 km or 62 miles of its surface. That means if the New Jerusalem sat on the Old Earth it would extend 1400 miles into space. The size of the city will be a tad smaller than our moon.

Imagine too, its 3D occupancy. Its residents are not just on the ground floor, but throughout the entire structure, which increases living space to 3 billion square miles - plenty of room for all the redeemed!

I read a fun estimate, say 100 billion humans have lived throughout time... and 20% were saved. If each person gets an equal plot in the New Jerusalem we'll all have 75 acres. Heaven has plenty of real estate to back up God's promise "whosoever will may come."

We know the city's dimensions, but what *we don't know is its shape...* Some teachers believe the New Jerusalem is in the shape of a **dome**, or a **sphere**.

Others believe it's in the shape of a **cube**. The Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle was a cube - 15'x15'x15'.

A more provocative suggestion is a **pyramid** shape.

Ancient pyramids were associated with death and the afterlife. It could be that the idea of a pyramid was a memory of heaven left over in the mind of fallen men.

Verse 17, "Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits (at 18" per cubit, that's 216 feet), according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel." Whether this is 216 feet *high* or *thick* is unclear.

“The construction of its wall was of jasper (the word means “speckled stone”); and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.” This gold is so pure it’s transparent.

“The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones...” And note the colors: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire (a blue), the third chalcedony (or aqua), the fourth emerald (a bright green), the fifth sardonyx (a brownish red), the sixth sardius (a deep, blood red), the seventh chrysolite (or greenish-yellow), the eighth beryl (or yellow), the ninth topaz (or reddish-gold), the tenth chrysoprase (an apple green), the eleventh jacinth (or a burnt orange), and the twelfth amethyst (or purple).

I believe these stones were the same stones that appeared in the breastplate of the Jewish High Priest.

And for all eternity they’ll remind us of Jesus’ priestly ministry. He stands in our place and intercedes for us.

One thing is sure, the heavenly city is a kaleidoscope of sparkle, and color that will stimulate our senses!

Verse 21, “The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl.” The pearl is the only gem that’s not a mineral. It starts as a spec of sand in the belly of an oyster. It begins as an irritation.

Secretions from the oyster crystallize around the spec of sand, and the process forms a beautiful pearl.

This makes it fitting that *the entrance ways* into the New Jerusalem are pearls. It’s through the sufferings of Jesus that God made a way for us to be forgiven. And it’s through life’s irritations that God matures our faith.

For all eternity, each time we pass through the pearly gates we'll thank God for the irritations and sufferings.

“**And the street of the city...**” Notice, it's not “**streets**” (plural), but “**street**” (singular). Unlike other cities, there's not a maze of arteries - no spaghetti junctions. There's only *one way to God... one street!*

And John says it's made of “**pure gold, like transparent glass.**” On Earth, gold is highly valued, but in heaven it's used as asphalt. *Grace, mercy, peace patience - spiritual commodities - are the real treasure!*

Verse 22, “**But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.**” This is odd...

In the former Jerusalem, the Jewish Temple was the city's chief attraction. It towered over the city's skyline.

In the OT it was the one place on Earth where you were sure to meet God. You *worshipped, offered sacrifice, took vows, celebrated feast days, performed rituals* - all at the Temple. It was the epitome of religion.

This is exactly why it no longer exists! The absence of the Temple means God will put an end to religion.

God tolerated Jewish religion to teach us spiritual lessons. But people focused on *the Law, rather than love*. They fixated *on rules, rather than the Ruler*. God desires a love-relationship with His people, not religious obligation. Thus, in the end there's *no Temple*.

Verse 23, “**The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its**

light.” The radiance and brilliance of Jesus will give off all the *light and warmth* we need!

“And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be **no night there**). Neither night or dark exists in heaven. This is good news for kids - *no more bedtime!* Resurrected bodies won’t require sleep.

Verse 26, “And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie...” This eternal city will never be soiled by sin again. The New Jerusalem will be inhabited by “**only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.**”

And so I ask, do you trust the Lamb? Is *your name written in His Book?*

Now in Revelation 22 John walks us inside the walls, through the city’s gates, and there we find a garden!

Verse 1, “**And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month.**

The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” There’s **a river, a throne, a street, a tree...**

Like all cities heaven has a main street. John takes us cruising down the New Jerusalem's main drag. And there's a river splashing up in the middle of the street.

Once, I spoke in San Antonio, where Kathy and I visited the Riverwalk. A river runs through downtown. There's a walkway on either bank of the river. Heaven is a lot nicer than Texas, but it too has a Riverwalk!

Throughout the Bible, in Psalm 1, Psalm 46, John 7, God is viewed as a river of refreshment flowing through our lives. In heaven we'll literally drink from His *River of Life*. And notice it flows out of "*the throne of God and of the Lamb.*" For all eternity we'll be reminded that all that's good flows... *not from us.. but to us from God.*

And on either side of the *River of Life* John sees a tree. Perhaps it's one tree that grows on both banks of the River, and the water runs through the tree trunk.

Or the original language could indicate multiple trees. Maybe it's a row of trees growing on either bank.

But Main Street in Heaven affords a welcomed sight. Adam and Eve were barred from *the tree of life*. God dispatched an armed angel to guard the tree. He didn't want man eating from the tree of life in a fallen state, or we would've lived forever in our sin. But in heaven, now fully redeemed, we can munch on its fruit again.

Remember when Jesus spoke to the thief on the cross He referred to Heaven as "*paradise.*" It was a Persian term for a lush, beautiful, protected oasis.

When you think of Heaven think Fiji or Tahiti...

The original garden was called “Eden,” which means “delights.” That was God’s intention for us - *eternal delight* - and that too is our ultimate destination!

Note a couple of other details in verses 1-2, the tree of life bears “*twelve fruits...*” One tree yields bananas, and mangos, and oranges - multiple fruit. Apparently, in Heaven there’re few limitations and unbridled creativity.

Notice too, “*each tree yielding its fruit every month.*” *Is this one tree producing a dozen fruits?... Or one tree yielding a different fruit each month?... Or is it twelve different trees yielding their fruit?... We’re not sure.*

But notice the inclusion of time. Here’s a mention of months - *a lunar measurement*. In Revelation 21:23 there is no moon, yet there’re months. Even in eternity we won’t escape time. It’ll continue to be measured.

Today, **time rules our lives**. We’re always on the clock. We have limited time. We’re pressured by time. But in Heaven we won’t be a slave to time. We’ll have an endless supply of everything, including time.

And notice in Heaven we’ll eat! Why else is their fruit? *Surely, we won’t **have to eat!*** There’s no hunger in Heaven, but we don’t always eat out of hunger...

We eat for enjoyment - fellowship - relaxation. If you want to eat in Heaven, *you can eat!* I’m sure Angel’s Food Cake is on the menu - as is CalvaryCSM BBQ.

And every food in heaven is **zero calorie!** Notice verse 2, “*The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*”

The word “*healing*” can mean “*health producing.*” All the foods in Heaven are *health foods*.

Verse 3 answers the question often asked, “*What will we do in Heaven?*” And here’s where misinformation abounds. People think all we’ll do is take harp lessons, or rake clouds, or spend 24/7 singing. *Not hardly!*

Verse 3, “*And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.*” *We’ll work in Heaven!*

Mankind was created by God for meaningful service.

Whenever you complete a task, and walk away with the satisfaction of a job well done realize that’s a gift God gave you. It’s how He made you, and it’s a foretaste of one of the joys we’ll experience in Heaven.

Today, we labor under the curse. There’s thorns and thistles around us. We work by the sweat of our brow.

Adam was made from the dust of the ground; then told to work that same dust - but as he did he left something of himself in his work. He never got out of his labor all that he had put into it. And this is our plight.

Today, we labor under the curse which means *all labor is hard labor*. We’re working ourselves to death.

But imagine, work without its curse! Work that’s no sweat. Every day ends with a sense of satisfaction. In Heaven you can’t wait to get to back and clock in. No one in Heaven ever asks for vacation time! Incredible!

And verse 4 is heaven's ultimate blessing. "They shall see His face and His name shall be on their foreheads..." Here's the pinnacle of *human pursuit*. That one day, you and I will look into the face of God.

Nothing testifies to the power of the Gospel more than this... *That the likes of us will see the face of God.*

And just as amazing, "His name shall be on their foreheads." I'm really not into tats. I've got my *Kathy tattoo* and my *Calvary Chapel tattoo*... but that's it!

Yet here's a tattoo I won't mind getting! Heaven has a tattoo parlor... Since the Beast identifies the rebels who pledge their allegiance to him by putting a mark on their forehead. God also will mark His own with His name on our foreheads. One day, God will brand His children as His own. It's one tattoo I won't mind getting.

Verse 5, "There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever."

Our sun is a massive source of energy, yet in the new heaven and new earth *God's Son* takes its place.

"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." In the first verse of Revelation 1 the same phrase is used, "*must shortly take place.*" It means "what's next!" Often people read Revelation focused on "when" - *when is the end?* But the book's theme is "who." What's next is *Jesus in all His glory.*

That's why Jesus cries out in verse 7, "Behold, I am coming quickly!" The glory of Jesus is what's next!

“Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.” Verse 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.” John made the same mistake in 19:10.

And again he’s corrected. “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.” John is a slow learner - **God alone is worthy of our worship!**

Verse 10, “And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.” The Revelation is to be understood, not discouraged.

And pay attention to the ominous warning in verse 12, “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.”

Once a person passes from time into eternity he or she forfeits any possibility for change. In Dante’s famous novel, “*Inferno*,” he emblazons the following words over the gates of hell, “Abandon all hope ye who enter here!” If you are filthy at the time, you’ll be filthy forever. And if you’re holy, you’ll be holy forever.

In foothill cemetery in Tombstone, AZ a gravestone reads, “Here lies *Lester Moore*, four slugs from a .44, no Les, no More.” And that will one day be said of you.

What you were when you checked out on Earth you’ll be for eternity, *no less, no more*. If you walked with Jesus in this life,

you'll walk with Him forever. But if you lived your life on your own, you'll be alone forever!

In verse 12 Jesus speaks, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

Over the millenniums, mankind has had considerable say in matters, but in the end God gets the last word.

"Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs..." Not Georgia "d-a-w-g-s" but "d-o-g-s." This was slang word for an especially brutish, immoral person.

And there're other people outside the New Jerusalem, "sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie." Heaven is a place for those who do life God's way. Those who don't, end up outside looking in.

Verse 16, "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

"*The Root and Offspring of David*" refers to Jesus' birthright - His first coming... The "*Morning Star*" is the last star seen before the dawning of a new day. It speaks of the rapture - Jesus' coming for His Church...

"And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"

And let him who hears say, "Come!"

And let him who thirsts come."

I love this chorus of "*comes*." Salvation is free - paid for by Jesus. But you have to *come!* God won't chase you down. Step over what holds you back, and come. "Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."

Since John was the last living of the 12 apostles, he knew the sacred Scriptures concluded with him, so he attaches a warning. And I believe it applies, not just to Revelation, but to the other 65 books that come before.

Verse 18, "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

The Bible is not to be edited. It's sufficient for all that pertains to faith and life. Woe to anyone who tampers with the Bible. Plagues will get added to the Adders. And Subtractors get subtracted from the Book of Life.

Verse 20, "He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen." Three times now we've been told to get ready. And John is prepared!...

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus!..." He closes, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Let me close by reminding you of Jesus' first miracle. He turned the water to wine. And the wedding guests marveled that their host had saved the best wine for last. This is what Jesus does - *saves the best for last*.

And this is how Revelation ends. It teaches us that when you follow Jesus, the best is always yet to come.