

⁷ *“And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”* Revelation 22:7 We opened our study with the promise to those who read the words of this book. Now at the conclusion Jesus promises He will come soon, and we will be blessed if we keep the words of this book. We must read and keep the words of this book to receive that blessing. The word here translated as “keeps” comes from a word that means to guard, such as keeping an eye on a prisoner. It implies doing what the prophecy commands. The commands of Revelation are summed up in Revelation 18:4 ⁴ *Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues;* Do not let Babylon, which I interpret as this world’s temptations, have your soul. Be wholly devoted to God. Put Him first and find your satisfaction in Him. Enjoy the good gifts of God, but do not worship them or be enslaved to them (John 8:34ⁱ). In a few verses we will read the descriptions of certain sins that enslave people.

To “keep” can also mean to remember. We should continue to keep the message of Revelation before us. The world and its lusts are passing away (1 John 2:17ⁱⁱ). God’s kingdom is coming, and man’s evil ways will be condemned. Our souls have an eternal destiny with our Savior or in the lake of fire. We overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony and not loving our lives even unto death (12:11ⁱⁱⁱ).

Skeptics point to this phrase of coming soon and say it did not come to pass. The word for soon is also translated “quickly” or one could say “suddenly.” Peter addressed this in his day in 2 Peter 3:8. ⁸ *But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* A thousand years is as a day to God (Psalm 90:4^{iv}), so we can say it has just been a couple of God days since Jesus spoke this. Our lives are a vanishing vapor (James 4:14^v), and one way or the other we will stand before Jesus soon.

Beal comments on coming soon. *Christ’s coming is a series of comings in blessing and judgment and will be consummated by a climactic coming in final blessing and condemnation. Nevertheless, the greater focus here at the end of the book is likely on the consummate coming.*^{vi} Remembering that Babylon is doomed and that those who suffer for Jesus have this glorious future will help us to persevere to the end.

Jews have an interesting take on this. *According to classical Jewish sources, the Hebrew year 6000 marks the latest time for the initiation of the Messianic Age. The Talmud,^[2] Midrash,^[3] and Zohar^[4] specify that the date by which the Messiah will appear is 6,000 years from creation.*^{vii} The current Hebrew year is 5785. That would leave the seventh day, the Millennial reign to start no later than 215 years from the present. I do not think this world can go on that much longer, but of course only God knows (Matthew 24:36^{viii}). It is an interesting concept. Church history informs us that every generation has expected Jesus to return. That is a good attitude to keep our lives in check. We might always ask ourselves if Jesus came today would I be ready and overjoyed, or would I be filled with regrets? We should live every day as if it was our last. Fulfilling the commands of God is to love the Lord our God with our whole being (Luke 10:27^{ix}).

^{8a} *I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things.* Revelation 2:8a John tells us he heard and saw these things. He did not make them up from Scripture passages, but what he heard and saw included many Bible references. Why would it be otherwise? The

One who inspired the prophets gave this revelation of Himself. God intentionally used the language of previous Scripture passages to help us see the connections. 40 authors wrote 66 books over a 1500 year period with one message concluding in this chapter!

^{8b} *And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me,* ⁹ *but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”* Revelation 22: 8b,9 Just as in 19:10^x, the angel was so glorious and the revelation so profound that John felt he should bow and worship him. John is either looking back to that event in 19:10, or he has forgotten what the angel said and needed a reminder. I tend to think it is the former. John wants to emphasize the revelation was so real to him. I think he repeated that event because he needed to write what the angel said as recorded in the next verse and the link with “those who keep the words of this book.” Keeping the words of this book means we are God’s servants. That title is not a demeaning title but rather an honorary one of the prophets in the Old Testament. Servants is a reference in Revelation to all who follow Jesus (1:1^{xi}; 22:6^{xii}). That angel’s final words to John also sum up the book in two words, “*Worship God!*” Do not worship creation. Do not fall for this world’s lies. Worship the Creator not the creation.

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 evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.”* Revelation 22:10,11 The angel went on to say that John was not to seal up the words of the prophecy. Unlike the book of Daniel whose message was for the end-time (Daniel 12:4^{xiii}, 9^{xiv}), Revelation is for now, which meant the second century and onward. The battle rages because the church is advancing (Matthew 16:18^{xv}). The wicked will continue to practice wickedness, and the godly will continue to be godly. Babylon and the kingdom of God exist side by side for the present time. The world is not going to convert. I think this disputes the whole idea of amillennialism, the belief that through conversions to Christ the world will come under the reign Christ. Believers will always be a minority.

Babylon is summed up as evildoers who do evil and are filthy. New Jerusalem is summed up as those who are righteous, who do what is right and are holy. This is the final contrast of the many contrasts we have seen throughout the book. Once we reach that age of the new heaven and new earth those who are evil will not change. Those who are righteous will not change. Hearts will be fixed one way or the other. That adds emphasis on the warning that Jesus is coming soon. People think they can repent when they see these things in this book taking place. The warning here is that their hearts may become so fixed that they will never change. If these prophecies that have revealed what is coming do not bring us to repentance, will we ever repent?

¹² *“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.* ¹³ *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”* Revelation 22:12,13 Jesus speaks again emphasizing that His return is soon. This is the same message Jesus spoke near the end of the Olivet Discourse. ⁴⁴ *Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.* Matthew 24:44 I see this as a call of urgency. Come to Jesus while your heart is still soft enough to hear the call. Others interpret this to be the unexpected suddenness of His coming. That was indicated in 16:15^{xvi} by Jesus’ expression, “*I am coming like a thief.*” (Also 3:3.^{xvii})

He reminds all readers that He will bring recompense (Isaiah 40:10^{xviii}). That means repayment. What you expend for Christ will be repaid. The evil the unbeliever has done against the truth will be repaid as well. When Jesus comes, He brings that repayment, what is deserved according to His perfect justice. Those whose sins are covered by the blood of the Lamb will be repaid for their faithful service. We are not saved by our works, but if we are saved, we will want to lay up our treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21^{xix}). Those who rebelled against God's goodness and in their selfishness harmed their fellow man who are made in God's image will reap what they have sown.

Jesus is A to Z, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. That was the description of God in the first chapter (1:8^{xx}; 21:6^{xxi}; Isaiah 41:4^{xxii}). The Bible clearly declares the divinity of Jesus. Those descriptions of God are used to describe Jesus, who is one with the Father (John 10:30^{xxiii}). Jesus is the instrument of creation (Colossians 1:15^{xxiv}). It all started with Him creating and it all ends with Him re-creating. It is sure because He sees the end from the beginning for He is outside of time.

Spurgeon wrote, *These terms together mean that Jesus is the beginning, middle, and end for the Christian. "Preach orthodoxy, or any form of doxy; if you have left out Christ, there is no manna from heaven, no water from the rock, no refuge from the storm, no healing for the sick, no life for the dead. If you leave out Christ, you have left the sun out of the day, and the moon out of the night, you have left the waters out of the sea, and the foods out of the river, you have left the harvest out of the year, the soul out of the body, you have left joy out of heaven, yea, you have robbed all of its all. There is no gospel worth thinking of, much less worth proclaiming in Jehovah's name, if Jesus be forgotten."*^{xxv}

¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. Revelation 22:14,15 Here are the blessed and the cursed! If you have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, if His blood shed for you has made your robes white (7:14^{xxvi}), you are blessed for you can enter the city. When Adam and Eve fell, they were put outside the guarded gates so they could not enter and partake of the tree of life (Genesis 3:24^{xxvii}). The gates will be open to the new Eden for all who are in Jesus (Psalm 118:20^{xxviii}). That means you have access to the tree of life, which I believe is Jesus Himself. If you are not cleansed by Jesus, the only other place is the lake of fire.

Verse 15 describes those in the lake of fire. It is a summary of those evil ones referred to in verse 11. The list includes dogs, an expression for unbelievers (Matthew 7:6^{xxix}), sorcerers are those who invite demonic power, the sexually immoral, murderers, idolaters, which is the worship of any created thing, and those who love and practice lies. That would include all false religions. It includes hypocritical lives such as those in the letters who are present in the church but practice very different lives. The devil is the father of lies (John 8:44^{xxx}). These are not people on the new earth clamoring to get into the city. It is a description of those who are in the lake of fire for the new earth is sanctified.

¹⁶ "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." Revelation 22:16 Jesus tells John that He sent the angel to him so he could give this revelation to the churches. That includes us. He is telling us that these words are

trustworthy and to be heeded. Some people claim that we are raptured before this all begins and the word church is not used after chapter three. In this verse Jesus is specifically saying these things for the churches! It was indeed for the seven churches in Asia, but those churches were chosen for their likeness to those in the entire church age. That means it is for us as well.

Then He gives more descriptions of Himself, the root and descendant of David (Isaiah 11:1^{xxxii}; Matthew 22:42^{xxxiii}), the bright and morning star (Numbers 24:17^{xxxiv}; Matthew 2:2^{xxxv}). That identifies Him with the predictions of the Messiah. It does not mean He is the planet Venus. It is a fulfillment of the prophecy given by Balaam that a star would rise out of Jacob who will rule Israel (Numbers 24:17^{xxxvi}). Remember that Israel means one who prevails with God. That is not ethnic Israel, but the people of faith (Romans 2:28,29^{xxxvii}). Jesus was sent by the Father for all of mankind (John 3:16^{xxxviii}). That He is the morning star is pointing to the new day that is coming.

17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price. Revelation 22:17 This may be a call for Jesus to return followed by an invitation to us to drink the water of life, or it is the invitation from the Spirit and the Bride calling us to come to Jesus. Both interpretations are applicable. We long for Jesus to return and put an end to sin and the suffering it causes. We also long for souls to join us in the kingdom of God. God's Spirit works on the hearts of mankind to draw them to Himself (John 1:9^{xxxix}). As the bride, we preach the gospel to all who will hear. It is an invitation to all who have spiritual thirst and a desire to come to drink from the fountain of living water (Matthew 5:6^{xl}). That desire comes from the Holy Spirit, but not all will act on it. It is free for the taking because Jesus paid the cost for all who would come to be able to drink it. The gospel is free, but it cost Jesus His very life. We cannot earn it by good works. It demands no payment. All who receive that desire can come. Isaiah 55:1 invites us,

1 "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Someone has said that you cannot be too bad for Jesus, only too good. We must humbly recognize our need before we receive that desire from the Holy Spirit. If we think we are so good we do not need forgiveness, we will seek to fill the hunger on our own. If you have that thirst, you are invited without any qualification. Jesus met all the qualifications for you. That is how much He loves you and wants you to be His. Even believers need to be reminded to come and drink of the water of life, otherwise we become spiritually parched.

This is the big difference between faith in Jesus and all other religions. All other faiths ask you to give or do something. Jesus says, "I did it all for you. Please come to me and find rest for your soul." (Matthew 11:28-30^{xli}) What a fitting conclusion to the warnings and promises in this revelation. Why would you put off coming to Jesus? Why would you resist so great a love (John 15:13^{xlii})? Just talk to Him. Tell Him you are sorry for all the wrong you have done. Gratefully receive His forgiveness. Thank Him for paying your sin debt. Ask Him for help to live in a way that honors what He has done for you, and to guide you day by day. It is really that easy. Take the water of life freely offered to you.

18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if anyone

takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. Revelation 22:18,19 The final warning goes out to not tamper with what has been written. We are not to add to it or take from it. This is one reason I leave the final interpretation to you. I do not presume to know the correct interpretation. I have simply done my best to understand it from other Scriptures and commentators. If any of my conclusions are incorrect, it is due to my limited understanding of this deep revelation of Jesus. I have tried to be clear that my interpretation is just one of many and have shared the interpretation of others. We should not be dogmatic about what is unclear in Scripture, but we can stand firm on what is clear. What is clear is that we must choose between setting our hearts on the things of this world or on Jesus. We cannot worship God and the passing things of this world (2 Corinthians 4:18^{xlii}). The book presents a stark contrast between evil and holiness. It tells of the end of each path. It warns us to choose life in Christ or face the judgment we deserve. And it tells us the blood of the Lamb is what makes us acceptable to God.

Some people take away from the book by simply calling it John's writing, as if he came up with this on his own. If that is the case, he lies when he says he saw and heard these things. That makes the book worthless. But if it is as has been declared, a trustworthy message from Jesus delivered to John by an angel then we better take heed. If we want to be blessed, we will keep what is written in this revelation.

²⁰ *He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!* Revelation 22:20 Jesus declares that He testifies to the truth of the book. We can accept the Bible as the very Word of God and know Almighty God preserved it, or we can doubt it and claim it has errors. That leaves us free to pick and choose the parts we want to accept and reject what is difficult or not to our liking.

Ivan Panin a double PhD spent his life showing the miraculous combination of sevens in every paragraph of the Bible using the Hebrew and Greek values of the letters. No one has ever been able to disprove it. Recently the Shroud of Turin was subjected to a new x-ray technology that proves it came from a first century crucified man. The pollens prove it to have come from the Jerusalem area. Physicists now say the image was made by an incredible amount of power. The Gospels are eyewitness accounts of the miraculous life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. But despite all the evidence, we must come by faith and decide for ourselves that the Bible is indeed the Word of God and contrasts two very different choices we have in life. Revelation graphically tells how each will end. Now you must decide what you will believe and live accordingly.

Jesus gives His final words, the last recorded in Scripture, and how appropriate they are. *"Surely, I am coming soon!"* John responded, and we join him in saying, *"Amen. Come Lord Jesus."* That is the solution to the fall of man and the resulting curse upon sin. That is the end of pain and suffering. That is the transformation of redeemed souls into the likeness of Jesus (1 John 3:2^{xliii}). That is glory! Come Lord Jesus!

²¹ *The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.* Revelation 22:21 John's benediction is for the churches and for all who read the book, so we can receive it for ourselves. "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen." The grace of God is what we need to endure, to choose to be the chaste bride of Christ rather than joining the whore Babylon. There is a conclusion to the chaos of the reign of man. Endure, for Jesus is coming soon. Thus we should *follow the Lamb wherever He goes* (14:4^{xliiv})!

Questions:

- 1 How do we obtain the blessing promised?
- 2 How might we interpret “coming soon”?
- 3 Why is John commanded not to seal up the words?
- 4 What is the recompense Jesus will bring with Him?
- 5 What is the significance of Jesus being the Alpha and Omega?
- 6 What is the invitation and who is it from? Who is it given to?
- 7 What is the main difference between Christianity and other faiths?
- 8 What is the final warning?
- 9 What is the final word of encouragement?
- 10 What is your takeaway from the book of Revelation?

ⁱ **John 8:34 (ESV)**

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

ⁱⁱ **1 John 2:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Revelation 12:11 (ESV)**

¹¹ And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

^{iv} **Psalms 90:4 (ESV)**

⁴ For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.

^v **James 4:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

^{vi} G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 1127

^{vii} Wikipedia

^{viii} **Matthew 24:36 (ESV)**

³⁶ “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

^{ix} **Luke 10:27 (ESV)**

²⁷ And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”

^x **Revelation 19:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

^{xi} **Revelation (ESV)**

⁰ The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

^{xii} **Revelation 22:6 (ESV)**

⁶ And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.”

^{xiii} **Daniel 12:4 (ESV)**

⁴ But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

^{xiv} **Daniel 12:9 (ESV)**

⁹ He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.

^{xv} **Matthew 16:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

^{xvi} **Revelation 16:15 (ESV)**

¹⁵ (“Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!”)

^{xvii} **Revelation 3:3 (ESV)**

³ Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.

^{xviii} **Isaiah 40:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

^{xix} **Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)**

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

^{xx} **Revelation 1:8 (ESV)**

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

^{xxi} **Revelation 21:6 (ESV)**

⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

^{xxii} **Isaiah 41:4 (ESV)**

⁴ Who has performed and done this, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.

^{xxiii} **John 10:30 (ESV)**

³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

^{xxiv} **Colossians 1:15-16 (ESV)**

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

^{xxv} David Guzik, *Revelation*, David Guzik’s Commentaries on the Bible (Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik, 2013), Re 22:12–13.

^{xxvi} **Revelation 7:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

^{xxvii} **Genesis 3:24 (ESV)**

²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

^{xxviii} **Psalms 118:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

^{xxix} **Matthew 7:6 (ESV)**

⁶ “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

^{xxx} **John 8:44 (ESV)**

⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

^{xxxi} **Isaiah 11:1 (ESV)**

¹ There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

^{xxxii} **Matthew 22:42 (ESV)**

⁴² saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.”

^{xxxiii} **Numbers 24:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth.

^{xxxiv} **Matthew 2:2 (ESV)**

² saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

^{xxxv} **Numbers 24:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth.

^{xxxvi} **Romans 2:28-29 (ESV)**

²⁸ For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. ²⁹ But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

^{xxxvii} **John 3:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

^{xxxviii} **John 1:9 (ESV)**

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

^{xxxix} **Matthew 5:6 (ESV)**

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

^{xl} **Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)**

²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

^{xli} **John 15:13 (ESV)**

¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

^{xlii} **2 Corinthians 4:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

^{xliii} **1 John 3:2 (ESV)**

² Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

^{xliv} **Revelation 14:4 (ESV)**

⁴ It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb,