

REVELATION: CHAPTER 22

Verses 1-5 continue to describe the future glorified spiritual realm of the New Jerusalem in Heaven.

Rev 22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

- pure river- The uncontaminated river here represents the abundance of what sustains (*spiritual/ eternal*) life: Tit 3:5; Heb 10:22.

- water of life- Life sustaining (4:5; 7:17; Mat 5:6; Jn 4:13-14; 6:35, 63).

- clear as crystal- Denotes the radiance of its purity.

- proceeding- Its origin.

- out of the throne- The seat of all authority of rule (Mat 28:18).

- of God and of the Lamb- Rev 3:21.

Read Jn 4:10-14; 7:37-39 (*Eph 1:13-14*); Jer 2:13; 17:13; Psa 42:2; Eze 47:12.

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Rev 22:2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- The throne is located in the midst of the street of the glorified church thus its focus. From the throne flows that which nourishes the (*singular*) tree of life (Gen 3:22) which flourishes on both sides of the river (2:7). This tree is symbolic of the cross of Christ (*Act 5:30; 10:39; 1 Cor 1:18; Eph 2:16; Col 1:20*). Its fruits are

perfect (12) for sustaining life. Here "Eden" is restored (*not physically as in Gen 2:9*), Satan has been defeated and cannot return, and there now exists a glorious setting (*Isa 51:3*) in which God and man can, once again, commune in person. Satan will no longer be able to tempt those in this realm. The faithful on earth have Christ as "Advocate" just in case "anyone does sin" (*1 Jn 2:1*). In this setting man once again fulfills his purpose in giving God the pleasure of his company. (4:11)

- every month- all year, continual, no short period of harvest, eternal. (*In Gen 2:9, 16-17; 3:17, 22-24 Adam and Eve lost their access to the tree of life bringing about their mortality- 1 Cor 15:45.*) Post Pentecost the hope of eternal life (*Tit 1:2*) begins once a person enters the church via obedience to the Great Commission (*Mat 28*) and keeps it by being "devoted... to the apostles teaching" (*Act 2:42*) while they continue to "grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (*2 Pet 3:18*). Those who have "conquered" need not fear "the second death" (*2:11*) since in this life they have "passed from death to life" (*Jn 5:24*).

- the leaves- used as a balm for the healing of the nations- (*Gk.1484-gentile*) salvation is no longer for the Jews only but for every nation, language and peoples (*21:26*): *Psa 1:3; Rom 1:16; 11:26, 30; Eph 2:14-17; 4:4.*

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Rev 22:3 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:

- In Gen 3:17-19 the ground was cursed because of Adam and Eve. They were cast from God's presence because of their sin since He cannot be in the presence of or even look upon it (*Psa 5:4*). Those entering the city must, as the priests of the Old Covenant were required before entering the Holy Place (*Ex 30:20*), have been washed by being "baptized into Christ" (*Rom 6:3*) thus

removing anything accursed, having “an appeal to God for a good conscience” (1 Pet 3:21) since even “the stain of [one’s] guilt” would remain before Him (Jer 2:22). With the throne of God and of the Lamb (*seats from which They rule*) in this city as the Divine authority of the Godhead, only “the one who conquers, [will Christ] grant... to sit with [Him], as [He] also conquered and sat down with [His] Father on His throne” (3:21). Described here is that place of rule. This can only be granted to citizens of this “better country, that is, [this] heavenly one” (Heb 11:16). Christ’s throne on earth is the church from which He rules “with a rod of iron” (12:5; 19:15) and only those (“His servants”- 1:1) who are faithful unto death will be permitted to rule with Him for all eternity from this throne in Heaven: Zec 14:11; 1 Cor 15:24-28; 1 Tim 6:13-16.

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Rev 22:4 And they shall see His face; and His Name shall be in their foreheads.

- Moses could not see God's face (Ex 33:17-23), but in this setting things will be different (Jn 14:6-9). To see His face here (Jn 16:16) has to do with having the same fellowship with God as do the angels.

1Pe 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and His ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

- Name in their foreheads- shows ownership and mark of submission (7:3; 9:4; 14:1) in contrast with the “mark of the beast” (13:16-17; 14:1): Isa 62:2; 65:15; Act 11:26; Eph 3:14-15; 1 Pet 4:16.

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Rev 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.

- Darkness, here signifying sin and ignorance, cannot exist in the presence of light (Jn 8:12). This has

“specific reference to the absolute absence of any element of heathen darkness in the new and renovated state of the Holy City, the bride of the Lamb” - Wallace.

With the presence of this eternal light emanating from God (21:23), the saints can reign forever. Unlike the earthly rule (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; 5:10) of the 1000-year reign (20:4-6) which is considered temporal, this period of victory will never end. Light existed (Gen 1:3) before Deity created the “lights in the firmament” (Gen 1:14) with “two great lights; the greater light (*sun*) to rule the day, and the lesser light (*moon*) to rule the night” (Gen 1:15-16). Whatever that light was in Genesis that pre-dated the sun, moon and stars, here it represents being in the presence of Deity (Ex 34:29-30; See also Isa 60:19-20).

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Verse 6 to the end of the chapter deals with a literal event at the time of the writing.

Rev 22:6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to shew unto His servants the things which must shortly be done.

- The angel here, as in 21:9 states (*as did the voice from the throne- 21:5*) that the Revelation is reliable and genuine and is the same one of 1:1. In Matt 22:31-32 we are told that God “is not God of the dead, but of the living”. The God Who spoke to the prophets of old, here understood as living in the spirit realm, now brings to fruition those mysteries concerning His Christ...

Luk 24:44 And He said unto them, *These are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning Me.

...the destruction of Jerusalem and the fulfilling of the law, (Matt 24:1-28; Col 2:14; Heb 8:13; Rev 11:11) and here, the persecution of the church under Rome's

watch (*Matt 24:29-31*). The purpose of this revealing was to show the saints of John's day the impending tribulation and how such a dreadful era would have such a key part in the proclamation of the Gospel message (*Acts 8:1-4; Rev 3:19-21*).

- shortly be done- (*1:1*) (*Gk.5034- a brief space [of time], that is, [with Gk.1722 prefixed] in haste*) Thus timeframe is of utmost importance when deciphering the events of the Revelation. The time of the writing was between Nero's reign (*54-68 AD*) and Vespasian's reign (*69-79 AD*). The real persecution would soon begin (*Rev 17:9-11*).

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Rev 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

- In 1:9 John already knew that the kingdom was in existence since Pentecost (*Acts 2:33*) of which he understood himself, along with all other true believers, to have been made a partaker of (*Col 1:12-13*): *Lk 17:20-21*. It came as the "*unseen reality of the world*" - Everet Ferguson.

- The "coming" here, once again, has to do with a visitation in the events of history (*Mat 24:34*), more specifically, those events that were to shape the churches of Asia (*and thus the whole church*). It was/is a warning as it was in 2:5. As in *Jos 8:34* concerning the Law of Moses, here also there would be blessings on those who kept the words of this revealing (*1:3; Jn 8:51*) and condemnation on those who didn't (*2:4*). Jesus warned the first century church that He would visit them with judgment if they didn't heed His warning to remain pure from the apostate influences of Jerusalem and the pagan practices that the Roman government sanctioned (*18:4*). His judgment was soon to come on both Jerusalem and then Rome and they weren't to be partakers with them in their idolatry or other sins (*Gal 5:21*) lest they suffer right along with

them. The same can be true of us today if we participate in and/or agree with government sanctioned practices such as the laws being established on homosexual relationships, abortion and anything else that goes against the word of God (*Gal 5:21*). We become delinquent when we fail to keep an eye on His word. Even though Jesus' words here in the Revelation were to a specific group of Christians, written to the seven churches of Asia means it has application to the whole church (*Rom 15:4*) from inception to resurrection; seven being the figurative number of completeness.

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Rev 22:8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

- As in the beginning of the writing (*1:1, 4, 9*), so in the end. John avows that he is the receiver and writer of the words written herein. The visions so profound, John drops before the heavenly messenger in awe.

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Rev 22:9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

- fellow servant- (*19:10*) Only God deserves worship as this angel's intelligence reveals (*Prov 9:10*). Angels are part of the kingdom that the saints "have come to" (*Heb 12:22*): *Heb 1:13-14 (The saints are their equals-12:10)*; *Act 12:21-23*.

- and of them which keep the sayings of this book- Angels are not just equals to the prophets and apostles but also with all the faithful saints as contemporaries and are not in any position of authority above us.

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Rev 22:10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

- Daniel was told in Dan 8:26 to "seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now". Received in 550 BC Daniel's vision concerning "*the most vindictive religious persecutor of pre-Christian times*" (Antiochus IV) was completed in 164 BC (Dan 8:14), a span of almost 400 years. (See McGuigan commentary on Dan 8:18-27.) The events here foreseen (i.e. *the culmination of the Jewish and Roman persecutions*) were about to begin shortly (1:1, 3; 22:6).

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Rev 22:11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

- With this fulfillment underway, so also the time for repentance would be terminated. There would be a day beyond that day of repentance when it will be too late (*then for those who originally received this prophecy*) and (*at the Day of Judgment*) "in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor 15:52) whatever state a person is in (*saved or lost- Ecc 7:16-17*) their eternal reward will be "according to what they had done" (20:13). Hebrews 3:13 dealt with the destruction of Jerusalem (70 AD) and the Christians living there but applies to all who have yet to make the commitment to serve God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

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Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

- Same message of quick judgment, different speaker (Jesus). In Matt 28:20 He said "I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world". Jesus was constantly "coming" in the events that faced the church, whether in comfort or chastisement. To be rewarded according to one's work should not have brought about any fear to the faithful, with whom the Lord is always present via Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:15; Heb 2:15; Rev 2:10).

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Rev 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

- (1:8) Alpha and omega (α and Ω) are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet (*just as **a** and **z** are in the English*). Here they refer to Jesus as being equal with the Lord God, the Eternal One. He was in the beginning with God (*Gen 1:26*) when all things physical were created (*Jn 1:1-3*) and He'll be there in the end when they will be "dissolved" (*2 Pet 3:11-12*). What a comforting thought to have for the churches of Asia when they were about to undergo such atrocities: *Jn 8:58; Eph 1:14.*

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Rev 22:14 Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

- In 1 Jn 1:7 "if we walk in the light" (*do His commandments*) ... "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin". Only those who obey Christ's commandments (*wash their robes; this is a continual washing- [1 Jn 1:7] with continued obedience in keeping our robe white- [Jam 1:27]*) have a right to the tree of life, thus eternal life. (*See also Jn 14:15; 15:10.*) The washing of robes here (*entering the priesthood of believers via baptism*) begins the individual's eternal life and will last into the next realm if they remain in the church (*2 Thes 3:6; 1 Jn 1:7*). White robes exist in both realms of the church (*Rev 6:11; 7:9, 13-14; Mat 22:11-12; Gal 3:27*). The tree of life will be found inside the city four-square, through the pearly portals. It is a continual source of spiritual food to have the right to for those who have been found obedient, who have had the knowledge of good and evil and have chosen to be led by the good. Unlike the tree in the garden that was off limits to Adam and Eve once they ate of the forbidden fruit, here, through Christ paying the

ransom/entrance fee (*Mat 20:28*), the faithful saints will have access.

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Rev 22:15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

- without- (*20:15; 21:8*) With only two realms existing in this future state (*Heaven/Hell*), those outside the city will have their place in the “lake of fire” (*20:15*). The list given here of the evil deeds of those outside the glorified church in Heaven is not to be considered comprehensive (*Gal 5:21*).

1. dogs- man's best friends, in this passage, is not understood to be so. They are associated with evil and disgust: 1 Kin 21:19; 22:38; Php 3:2; 2 Pet 2:22.
2. sorcerers- those who practice deceit through “magic”: Act 8:11; 13:6, 10.
3. whoremongers- Gk.4205- a (male) *prostitute*: Rom 1:26-27.
4. murderers- not just those who commit the act: 1 Jn 3:15.
5. idolaters- anything worshipped other than God. Notice its company: Gal 5:19-21; Col 3:5.
6. whosoever loveth and maketh a lie- Pro 6:16-19; 2 The 2:10-12.

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Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star.

- Jesus affirms, via His angel (*1:1*), the authenticity of His testimony to give assurance to the churches. He is

the Messianic King sprung from the royal line of King David (*Gal 3:16; Matt 1:6; 22:42-45; Act 2:25-31*). The following verses, among many others, prophesied it: Isa 9:6-7; 11:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zec 3:8; 6:12.

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Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

- bride- (*19:9; 21:6*). Here it refers to the “church militant” in executing the Great Commission.

- In whatever manner of visitation the Lord chooses (*tribulation, turmoil, affliction or final coming- 2 Cor 12:10*), along with the (*inspired word of the*) Spirit and the bride (*church*), He invites (*via the Great Commission- Mat 28:18-20*) those who will respond to the invitation to come. To have a thirst is to have a desire (*Mat 5:6; Jn 4:14*), (*21:6*); the water is free (*Pro 23:23*): Act 8:20.

Act 20:28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God (*equating Jesus with Deity*), which He **obtained with His own blood**. (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)

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Rev 22:18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

- To add **to** this Revelation to the churches, one would suffer Jerusalem’s and Rome’s fate/judgment. The same was true under the Old Covenant; therefore it would apply to the whole Bible: Deu 4:2; 12:32; Pro 30:6.

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Rev 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of

the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

- To hold back **from*** this Revelation, one would risk losing their part in the holy city (*church glorified*) revealed in this writing, and thus could not partake of the tree which sustains life eternally. And since there are warnings in the Old Testament, as well as there are here, shouldn't this apply to the entire Bible? (*2 Pet 3:15-16*)

*Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness **suppress the truth**. (*ESV*) (*Emp. added*)

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Rev 22:20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

- Even though this was written to a specific audience (*the seven churches of Asia*) it is not to be disregarded for “whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (*Rom 15:4*). As a consolation, Jesus acknowledges to the churches under Rome's expansion that His judgment/salvation would be soon. To that statement John, who was also their “partner in the tribulation” (*1:9*), responds.

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Rev 22:21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

- Salutation. Intended to be delivered to the saints as a message from God through Christ through His angel to John to the churches of Asia (*and subsequently to all*). This was a warning for the churches then to be prepared for the destruction of Jerusalem (*70 AD*) and the fallout that would ensue it. His unmerited favor upon us. **So let it be, my Lord and my God** (*Jn 20:28; Col 4:16*)!

The Revelation's message is appropriate for every generation because we know not when our Lord will come. We need always to come out from the world and be ready!

Rom 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to **awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.** (*Emp. added*)

Worksheet
Revelation: Chapter 22

1. Describing “the river of the water of life”; where does it flow “from”, what does it flow “through” and what is “on either side of” it? (*vs. 1, 2*)
2. What will be in the city where “His servants will worship Him”? (*v. 3*)
3. What will His servants wear “on their foreheads”? (*v. 4*)
4. Describe why the city “will need no light of lamp or sun”? (*v. 5*)
5. At that specific time, why were the churches of Asia “blessed” if they kept “the words of the prophesy of this book”? (*v. 7*)
6. How and why did the angel compare himself to John after John “fell down to worship” him? (*v. 9*)
7. Why was John told to “not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book”? (*v. 10*)
8. Why did Jesus say He was “coming soon”? (*v. 12*)
9. What is necessary to “have the right to the tree of life” and to “enter the city”? Explain. (*v. 14*)
10. What lies “outside” the city and where exactly will they exist? (*v. 15*)
11. Through whom did Jesus affirm that He is the author of The Revelation? (*v. 16*)
12. Why is “the water of life without price”? Who paid for it making it free and at what cost? (*v. 17*)
13. What will happen “if anyone adds to” or “takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy”? Where else can such a warning be found? (*vs. 18, 19*)
14. Explain the phrase where Jesus said, “Surely I am coming soon”. To whom specifically was this given and why? How then does it apply to the present? (*v. 20*)

