Revelation: A Look at Things to Come
HaDavar
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Session 39

Maranatha: Come Quickly Lord Jesus
Revelation 22:6–21

We come to the epilogue of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Everything that God has promised to His people has been attained. The rebellion of the angels and mankind is over as all rebels are suffering in everlasting punishment. Jesus Christ is now sitting on the eternal throne along with God the Father as they rule over the new heaven and the new earth. Absolute and unchanging holiness characterizes all within the universal and eternal Kingdom of God. The saints are all in their resurrected, recreated, and glorified bodies dwelling in the Holy City, and everyone is enjoying the unsurpassed beauty of the new heaven and the new earth.

This new universe is filled with music of praise to God as His glory fills this new creation with blazing light. The diamond city of the New Jerusalem is radiating His glory everywhere; there is peace and joy, along with renewed relationships, along with the privilege of being in the presence of the Lamb Jesus and seeing the very face of God. What a great time we are going to have in our new home. Yes! What a day that will be!

The verses we are going to study are like a P.S. at the end of a letter. This postscript can be divided into two major sections: verses 6–14 are specifically directed toward believers; verses 15–19 are directed toward unbelievers; the remaining two verses are a closing salutation: it is “Maranatha,” meaning “Come, Lord Jesus!”

The Warning of Christ (22:6–7)

*The accuracy of the message... “Then he said to me, ‘These words are faithful and true...’” (22:6a). An angel is speaking to John and assuring him that all he has seen and heard is true and reliable; this title “Faithful and True” is one given to Christ (Revelation 19:11); He is Faithful and True; therefore, John has the assurance from the One who is Faithful and True that what he has written will come to pass.*
The anticipation of His coming... “And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. ‘Behold I am coming quickly!...’ (22:6b–7a). John’s message came from the same God who inspired the great prophets of the OT and his prophecy needs to be accepted as equally divine and treated with equal seriousness.

There is another speaker in this dialogue and it is Jesus who says, “Behold I am coming quickly!” There are two ways to look at this: one understanding is when He comes, He comes rapidly; the other understanding is, His coming is imminent, that is, He could come at any moment; there will not be a long delay.

The phrase, “I am coming quickly” is mentioned three times in our overall text; it is found in verse 7, verse 12, and again in verse 20; three other times in the book of Revelation a similar phrase appears (see 2:5,16; 3:11); in Revelation 3:3 it says He will come “as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you”; and this “I am coming as a thief” is found again in Revelation 16:15; that is, He comes at a time when we least expect Him.

I believe the Scriptures support the imminent return of Christ; some will argue that when the Lord spoke these words to John that was 2000 years ago; He has not come yet so how can we say His coming is imminent? Of course, from man’s perspective, that seems like a reasonable conclusion, but not from God’s perspective. Peter said that God views time differently than we do; God dwells outside of time, therefore Peter writes, “That with the Lord one day is as a thousand years...” (2 Peter 3:8). When you count time as God does, only two days have passed; even in the light of eternity, 2000 years is but a few grains in the hourglass. There are a number of texts that support the imminent return of Christ.

Paul said to the Philippian congregation, “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20); there is to be an attitude of “eagerly waiting” for the Lord’s return.

To the Corinthians Paul wrote, “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts...” (1 Corinthians 4:5). Don’t go on passing judgment; wait for the Lord to come.

In Paul’s closing words to the Corinthians in his first letter, he writes: “If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ let him be accursed. O Lord Come!” (1 Corinthians 16:22). In the Greek text, you have the Aramaic word, “Maranatha,”
which means “Lord come!” Aramaic was the language of the common people who lived in Israel; believers frequently greeted one another saying, “Maranatha”; they believed that Jesus could come at any time so this word was an expression of their imminent hope!

Paul told the Thessalonians, “You turned to God from idols to serve a living God and to wait for His Son from heaven” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). Notice he told them to wait for the coming of the Lord from heaven as though it could happen at any time.

In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul is addressing the rapture; he says the Lord will come in the air: “And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17). Paul expected to be alive when the Lord returns; he used the plural pronoun “we”: “We who are alive and remain shall be caught up together…”

In Paul’s letter to Titus he said: “Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus” (Titus 2:12); we look for Christ to come because that is our “blessed hope.”

James writes: “Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord… Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand” (James 5:7–8).

Peter wrote: “But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayer” (1 Peter 4:7). Is he not implying the end of time is close by?

Three times in our text the Lord says: “I am coming quickly”; certainly these are all references to the imminent return of Christ; the Lord wants us to believe that He can come at any time so that we will live a life of “confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming” (1 John 2:28).

The affirming of those who keep the words of this book... “Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book” (22:7b). One-third to one-fourth of the Bible is prophetic in nature; there are over 300 prophecies in the OT about the first coming of Christ and all of them were completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ, from His birth in Bethlehem to His ascension to the right hand of God. In the NT, one out of every 25 verses relates to the second coming of Christ; the entire book of Revelation is devoted to prophecy and when you consider how accurate the Bible has been in predicting the future why should we doubt anything we have
studied in this book! To believe and to keep the words of this prophecy is to be blessed; this verse is one of the seven blessings that God has promised from reading this book.

The Worship by John (22:8–9)

*The impact on John...* “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” (22:8). After John saw and heard everything he wrote in this Revelation he immediately went into a posture of worship, but he fell at the feet of the angel who showed him all these things.

*The instruction of the angel...* “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.’” (22:9a). The angel tells John, “Get up, don’t worship me; I am your fellow servant”; Paul warned the Colossians about not worshipping the angels; he said to do so is to be cheated of your reward in heaven and to be vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind (Colossians 2:18).

*The insistence on who to worship...* “Worship God” (22:9b). That is one pithy statement: “Worship God”; all worship is directed to Him and to Him alone; we are not to worship angels, or the saints, or kiss the hand or foot of the pope, for that too is a form of worship; we must never forget, the most fundamental word in the Greek NT for worship is *proskuneo* and it literally means “to kiss toward”; it is absolutely appropriate to kiss your spouse in showing your affection; but when the kiss is directed in a bowed position toward a religious person or symbol it is a form of spiritual idolatry; both God the Father and His Son Jesus are the only ones to be worshipped; the psalmist wrote: “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry... Blessed are those who put their trust in Him” (Psalm 2:12).

The Word of Prophecy (22:10–11, 18–19)

*The importance of prophecy...* “And he said to me, ‘Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.’” (20:11). The book of Revelation is for immediate proclamation; its prophecies are not to be sealed until some future time; it is to be proclaimed so its hearers and readers can share in the promised blessings of this book; Daniel was told “to seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future” (Daniel 8:26). Again he was told to “shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end” (Daniel 12:4). Twice Daniel is told to seal up his prophecies for a future time. There are prophecies that Daniel gives that
will not be understood until the time of the end, and while the book of Revelation reveals end-time events, it is not to be sealed or shut up. Rather, the Holy Spirit wants the message of this book proclaimed. It is to be proclaimed to produce obedience to God, to produce worship to God, to produce blessings from God, and above all, to prepare us for the soon return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

The very theme of Revelation is that Jesus Christ is coming again to set up His kingdom on earth with an eventual eternal life that will follow. It is to assure the believer that their future is with the Lord, and for those who reject Him their future is eternal damnation; therefore, every great church, every church faithful to biblical teaching is to always be a Second-Coming Church; our God wants this prophetic book to be taught.

An example of a second-coming Church was the church at Thessalonica. Paul referred to her as the noblest of all the NT churches. He said of them: “... what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven” (1 Thessalonians 1:9–10a). What caused the believers of Thessalonica to turn from idols to worship the true God? Their belief in the Second Coming; the preaching of the second coming was prominent in that church!

The indication that eternity is settled... “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” (22:11). There comes a time when everyone’s future has been settled, when it is too late to change! Daniel wrote, “The wicked shall do wickedly” (Daniel 12:10). Ezekiel wrote: “He that will hear let him hear; he that will refuse to hear, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house” (Ezekiel 3:27). There is a strange quirk of mankind that he can be so set in his character that all that any situation can do is to make him more deeply and more ineradicably what he already is; that is the human tragedy—that a man can so long refuse the way of Christ that, in the end, he cannot respond to His call. It was the ancient commentator, Andreas, who explains this passage: The Risen Christ is saying “Let each man do what pleases him; I will not force his choice.” Since God gave each of us free will then each man is writing his own destiny; each of us has the choice to hear and to obey God’s Word or to ignore it altogether!

The imperative about prophecy... “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 that are written in this book” (22:18–19).

John is specifically talking about Revelation. It is not a book to mess with; it is not to be rejected; it is not to be added to or taken away from; it is to be taught as it is. Dire consequences, like missing out on the holy city, will come to those who falsify, mitigate, or misinterpret this book.

However, what is said about Revelation is true of all Scripture. Moses wrote: “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you” (Deuteronomy 4:2; see 12:32); Solomon wrote, “Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you and you be found a liar” (Proverbs 30:5–6); God told Jeremiah to stand in the court of the Lord’s house, and speak “all the words that I command you to speak to them. Do not diminish a word” (Jeremiah 26:2). It is an awesome responsibility to teach the Word of God and for those of us who do we “shall receive a stricter judgment” (James 3:1).

God’s Word is precious, so much so that the psalmist has written: “You have magnified Your Word above Your name” (Psalm 138:2). The very reputation of God is wrapped up in His Word; if what the Bible says does not come true, that will be a bad reflection on the character of God!

The Witness of Jesus (22:12–17)

*Seen in His return...* “And behold, I am coming quickly...” (22:12a). Again imminence is the issue; it is the refrain of this chapter (vss. 7, 10, 12, 20); John is insisting the Lord will come at any moment.

*Seen in His reward...* “...and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to His work” (22:12b). We have seen several times in our study of Revelation that rewards will be given according to our works; only those works which survive the fire of God’s testing will survive and have eternal value (see Revelation 4:10; 1 Corinthians 3:9–15; 2 Corinthians 5:10). God remembers our works of faith which are done in His sight (see 1 Thessalonians 1:3). Our works are evaluated by God and when Christ comes again He will reward us according to how God has evaluated what we have done for Him. This evaluation will not necessarily keep
one from heaven, but will keep one from receiving rewards; when Christ returns He says, “My reward is with Me.”

Seen in His recognition... “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.... I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star” (22:13, 16b).

Here we have three titles of Jesus:

1. **He is deity:** “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last” (v. 13); these very titles used of God the Father, Jesus claims for Himself.

The titles “Alpha and Omega” and “the Beginning and the End” were used of the One who sits on the throne and that is God the Father (Revelation 21:6). For Jesus to have the very same titles proves He is God.

God said through Isaiah: “I, the LORD, am first and with the last I am He” (Isaiah 41:4; see also 48:12); this is a reference to God’s eternal nature. Our God is the eternal God; the psalmist said, “Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God” (Psalm 90:2b). God said of Himself: “Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD” (Isaiah 43:10b–11a).

Now hear what God says about His Son Jesus: “But to the Son He says, ‘Your throne is forever and ever... therefore God, Your God, has anointed You...’” (Hebrews 1:8–9). Did you notice that God the Father refers to His Son as the everlasting God?! Then God goes on to say of His Son that He “laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the works of Your hands... And they [the works of creation] will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail” (Hebrews 1:10–12). Jesus is referred to the eternal Creator God by the Father Himself!

When Christ returns He comes as our God.

2. **He is the descendant of King David**... “I am the Root and Offspring of David...” (v. 16). Isaiah wrote when the Messiah comes he will come from the “Rod and stem of Jesse”; He will come as “a Root of Jesse” (Isaiah 11:1–10). Jesse was the father of King David; the prophet Jeremiah wrote: “Behold the days are coming says the LORD, ‘That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness, a king shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness. In His day Judah
will be saved, and Israel will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is the name by which He shall be called: "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jeremiah 23:5–6); the Jews have always believed their Messiah would come from the line of David; that is the very reason Matthew begins his gospel by writing: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1).

When Christ returns He comes as our King.

3.  

_He is the Deliverer_... “I am the Bright and Morning Star” (v. 16). It is strange that in Balaam’s attempt to curse Israel on behalf of Balak, king of Moab, that he actually prophesies the coming of the Messiah as a Star who comes out of Jacob and a Scepter who shall rise out of Israel. Balam says to Balak: “I see Him, but not now; I behold Him but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel...” (Numbers 24:17). To the Jews, to refer to a man as a “morning star” was a prestigious title; it was given only to those who deserve the greatest honor. The rabbis referred to Mordecai, from the book of Esther, by that title; it was a title for one who would deliver Israel. Remember, it was Mordecai who exposed the plot of Haman to obliterate the Jews in the days of King Ahasuerus of Persia. Christ is the Morning Star in that He has come to deliver us from the consequences of our sins.

When Christ returns He comes as our Savior.

_Seen in the rights of the faithful_... “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” (22:14). The tree of life is a symbol of eternal life and the open gates of the Holy City reveal that in heaven we will have the freedom to come and go as we please. We can explore the new heavens and return to the New Jerusalem at will. I am confident we will have plenty of vacation time in heaven as we rest from our labors in serving Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.

_Seen in the refusal of the unfaithful_... “But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie” (22:15). It is interesting that in biblical days dogs were a despised animal. Jews referred to all Gentiles as “dogs” (Matthew 15:21–28); Paul referred to the Judaizers who were perverting the gospel as “dogs” (Philippians 3:2). It is interesting that Islam considers dogs as unclean animals and no Muslim can have a dog as a pet. In Saudi Arabia dogs are outlawed; it is a country without dogs; Jews in biblical days referred to anyone with a low moral character as a...
dog; that included unfaithful leaders (Isaiah 56:10) and homosexual prostitutes (Deuteronomy 23:18). Those who are “outside” the New Jerusalem are those who are in hell and they are referred to as “dogs.”

Seen in the request to come... “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires let him take the water of life freely” (22:17).

John is now appealing to those outside of Christ, those not prepared for the Lord’s return. The Holy Spirit and the bride of Christ, which is the Church, are calling for those to “come” to Christ before it is too late; there is still time to receive God’s mercy and grace. Salvation is still available and to know you are forgiven by God and saved from the consequence of sin is the only way to have a thirsty soul quenched.

The prophet Isaiah offered an invitation to this abundant life: “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come buy wine and milk without money and without price... Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteousness man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on Him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:1, 6–7). Isaiah is saying that all that God offers is free and it totally satisfies the soul.

Jesus spoke of Himself as the giver of living water whereby one will never thirst again; He told the Samaritan woman at the well, “But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life” (John 4:14b). Yes, the call of the Holy Spirit, the call of the Church, the call of every believer is “Come! Come to Christ and find the satisfaction and the hope that only the God who created you can provide! It is free and it is forever satisfying!”

The Wish of John (22:20–21)

The return of Christ... “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming quickly.’” (22:20). For the final time, John hears the voice of Jesus say, “Surely I am coming quickly.”

The request of John... “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (22:20b). With this tremendous prophecy of the Revelation of Jesus Christ completed, John replies with a brief prayer; he too wants to see the Lord return. However, in light of this
future expectation, Peter reminds us of what is required of believers; he reminds us that “the day of the Lord is going to come as a thief in the night and the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved what manner of person ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening — [that is, eagerly desiring] the coming of the day of God — [ that is, the eternal state]... Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:10–13).

We are to live every day as if Jesus were to come in the next moment. As Peter said, we are to live a holy and godly life, eagerly desiring to live with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in our eternal home.

*The recognition of his readers*... “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (22:21). This expression, common in other NT books, is God’s final word to man; His revelation is complete. For those of us who have believed that Christ has brought salvation in His first coming, there is the wonderful promise in His Second Coming that our salvation is now secure; that salvation means there is total rest and peace and joy that will be ours when we move into our new home in the New Jerusalem; it means there will be a reunion with all our believing loved ones who have gone before us; it means we will have lots of fun exploring the new heaven and the new earth. But most of all it means we will be with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and will be able to look on the face of God and thank them both for their grace and mercy and the salvation that we will be enjoying! I can’t wait! The future before us will be glorious, even far better than we can possibly imagine.

And so we close our study of Revelation.

This book opened with these words: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants — things which must shortly take place...” (Revelation 1:1); it is a book which has featured the truth that Christ is coming back again and very soon; this Revelation ends with the same thought as John prays: “Maranatha, even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Amen!