

March 22, 2011

The Epilogue: Come, Lord Jesus!

Revelation 22:6-21

⁶And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his slaves the things that are necessary to happen soon."

⁷"And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

⁸I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, ⁹but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow slave with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship only God."

¹⁰And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

¹²"Behold, I am coming quickly, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

¹⁴Blessed 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. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

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."

¹⁷The 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.

¹⁸I give witness to 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, ¹⁹and 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.

²⁰He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

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- 6 "the God of the spirits of the prophets"- connects the prophecy of Revelation with all Scripture
"slaves"- Why do we stress this translation rather than "servants?"
"to happen soon"- *TLSB- The imminence of Christ's second coming is more obvious from the divine than from the human perspective. However, Jesus does not leave the Church as an orphan in the meantime (Jn 14:18). He is present in Word and Sacrament (Mt 18:20, 28:[18-]20), most intimately in the Eucharist.*
- 7 "Blessed is the one..." the 6th of 7 Beatitudes (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14)
"who keeps the words..." How can we KEEP the words of God? (Lk 2:19, 51 are good examples)
"the words of the prophecy of this book"- What is biblical prophecy?
- 8-9 "I, John...heard and saw these things"- eyewitness testimony is important to John (Jn 19:35, 1 Jn 1:1-3)
"to worship at the feet of the angel"- the rebuke is slightly different from 19:10
- 10 "Do not seal up"- the opposite of Daniel's command in Dan 12:4 because the End is already under way
- 11 A harsh condemnation, compare it with Romans 1:26-31
- 13 "I am the Alpha and Omega"- this was said by the Father in 1:8 & 21:6, here it is Jesus- true God
"the first and the last"- said by Jesus in 1:17, it is different from Alpha & Omega. Is 44:6-8, 48:12
"the beginning and the end"- Beginning (Gen 1:1), End/Finish/Completion (John 19:30)
- 14 "Blessed are those..."- the seventh and final beatitude of Revelation
- 15 Another vice list like 21:8, compare the two for better understanding
"dogs"- Ps 22:16 calls evildoers dogs and Dt 23:18 for a male prostitute (cf. Mt 7:6, Php 3:2)

“sorcerers”- occult arts including habitual drugs

“everyone who loves and practices falsehood”- a practicing lifestyle of sin is what damns

16 “I am the root and the descendant of David”- stressing Messianic prophecies (2 Sam7:16; Is 11:1)
“the bright morning star”- first seen in 2:28, a Jewish tradition associated the Messiah with a Star

17 “The Spirit and the Bride say”- who are these two and what is so important about their speech?
“Let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’”- who are the hearers mentioned here? (Rev 1:3)
“take the water of life without price”- this water from John 4 is a free gift to the thirsty!

18-19 John’s warning, does it apply only to Revelation or the whole Bible? What about translations?

20 Verse 20 is structured as a type of liturgical response. Remember Rev 1:3 that this is being read like we read our lessons in the Divine Service: “This is the Word of the Lord,” “thanks be to God.” Here it is “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming quickly.’” And the hearers reply, “Amen. Come Lord Jesus!” After this letter was read in the churches’ worship services on the Lord’s Day they would have begun their Communion liturgy.

The *Didache* has a *Maranatha* (Lord, Come!) after the prayers following the Lord’s Supper.

21 “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.”- A concluding benediction like Paul’s epistles

TLSB- Because John’s message is about the ultimate triumph of good over evil, it is always relevant and all the more as the world slides further into chaos and corruption. On one level, Revelation powerfully confirms what we already fear, i.e., our world and everyone in it is doomed. More profoundly, however, this Book is about transcendent hope. It shows how infinitely greater God is than evil. By offering a vision of the new creation soon to be revealed, Revelation draws us on toward our blessed hope in Christ. To Him be power and glory throughout the ages!

Blessed Redeemer, help us to keep these holy words and thereby conquer sin, death, and the devil. May we, along with Your whole Church on earth and heaven, continue praying with full confidence and a joyful expectation, “Come, Lord Jesus! Come Quickly!” Amen.

What’s the point? Why is there an Epilogue? It stresses the authenticity and genuineness of the prophecy.

