

Text: Rev 22.1-21

Outline of Revelation:

1. The things you have seen (the vision of Christ) Rev 1
2. The things which are (the letters to the churches) Rev 2-3
3. The things which must come after these things (Rev 4-22)
 - a. The overture: the scene in heaven (Rev 4-5)
 - b. The seal judgements begin (Rev 6)
 - c. (Parenthesis): the believers of the Tribulation (Rev 7)
 - d. The seventh seal which reveals the seven trumpets (four in chapter 8)
 - e. The fifth and sixth trumpets (Rev 9)
 - f. (Parenthesis): Voices in heaven (Rev 10)
 - g. (Parenthesis): The Two Witnesses | the seventh trumpet (Rev 11)
 - h. (Parenthesis): The Long War Against God¹ (Rev 12)
 - i. (Parenthesis): The Beasts (Rev 13)
 - j. (Parenthesis): Triumph of the Saints foreseen (Rev 14)
 - k. (Prelude): Another Sign in Heaven (Rev 15)
 - l. The bowl judgements (Rev 16)
 - m. (Parenthesis): Fall of Religious Babylon (Rev 17)
 - n. (Parenthesis): Fall of Political Babylon (Rev 18)
 - o. The Second Coming (Rev 19)
 - p. The Great White Throne (Rev 20)
 - q. The New Heavens and the New Earth (21)
 - r. The Last Chapter (22)**

Up to this chapter, the New Jerusalem seems to be all mineral and no vegetable. Its appearance is as the dazzling display of a fabulous jewelry store; we wonder if there is no soft grass to sit upon, no green trees to enjoy, and no water to drink or food to eat. However, here are introduced the elements which add a rich softness to this city of elaborate beauty.²

Constable: "Essentially what John saw next was Paradise regained."³

I. Restoration of Paradise (1-5)**A. Then he showed me: a new vision with more detail (1)****1. The river of the water of life****a. Pure as crystal**

¹ I borrow the title of Henry Morris' book of this same name for our chapter heading here.

² J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 1075.

³ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Rev 21.27 I am using Constable's outline for this chapter.

b. Flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

1. The thrones are the centerpiece of the New Jerusalem
3. The river may be a literal river, but should not be confused with the river of the Millennium described in Ezek 47
4. The river flows down the middle of the main street of the New Jerusalem (2a)

B. The tree of life lining the street (2)

1. Access to the tree of life was lost in the Fall (Gen 2.9, 3.22-24)
2. The 'either side of the river' reference suggests that this means a tree lined street
3. The tree is perpetually in fruit, not in season, but all year long
4. The leaves are for healing: some benefit the believing nations will enjoy as the old creation passes into distant memory

"The word 'healing' (*therapeian*) can be understood as 'health-giving.' The English 'therapeutic' is derived from this Greek word. Even though there is no sickness in the eternal state, the tree's fruit and leaves seem to contribute to the physical well-being of those in the eternal state."⁴

C. The fellowship with God (3-4)

1. The curse is lifted [the barrier is down]
2. The Lord and the Lamb will be present eternally
3. The bond-servants of the Lamb will serve Him continually
4. The bond-servants will see the face of God (and live!), and bear his name on their foreheads [ownership, protection, identification]

D. The end of night (5)

1. The old creation with its darkness of night is done away forever
2. The glory of God lightens the whole of creation

⁴ John F. Walvoord, "Revelation," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 987.

3. The new creation will endure forever, and the saints will reign with God forever

II. Epilogue (6-21)

A. Testimony of the angel (6-7)

1. It is the voice of the angel we hear in vv. 6-7 [same angel who was been speaking to John in the last chapters.]
2. The substance of his testimony (6)
 - a. The words are true
 - b. The Lord has spoken through the prophets concerning these things
 - c. The Lord sent his angel to reveal them to John
3. The stamp of authority: a quotation of Christ (7)
 - a. The Lord is coming soon
 - b. Blessing on those who heed the words

B. Testimony of John (8-11)

1. Personal witness of this revelation: I, John (8a)
2. Mistaken reaction of the apostle (8b-9)
 - a. Overwhelmed by all he saw
 - b. Corrected by the angel, a 'fellow-servant'
3. Final instructions from the angel (10-11)
 - a. Leave the book open (no more prophecy to come) — compare Dan 12.4, 9-10 (10)
 - b. Warning to men: when the Lord comes, there will be no opportunity for changing your mind (repentance) (11)

C. Testimony of Jesus (12-20)

1. The warning of soon coming judgement by him who is the first and the last (12-13)
2. A blessing on those who are prepared for his coming (14)
3. Those who do not prepare themselves are on the outside looking in (15)

4. The Lord expresses his purpose in sending the angel to John, to inform all the churches – and he states his authority (16)
 5. The Lord invites men to respond, all who are willing, to come and take the water of life (17)
 6. The Lord warns those who would vandalize the prophecy (18-19)
 - a. By adding to the words (18)
 - b. By taking away from the words (19)
 7. One final reassurance: I am coming quickly (20a)
 8. The response of John: come quickly (20b)
- D. Final benediction (21)

“Probably no other book of Scripture more sharply contrasts the blessed lot of the saints with the fearful future of those who are lost. No other book of the Bible is more explicit in its description of judgment on the one hand and the saints’ eternal bliss on the other. What a tragedy that so many pass by this book and fail to fathom its wonderful truths, thereby impoverishing their knowledge and hope in Christ Jesus. God’s people who understand and appreciate these wonderful promises can join with John in his prayer, ‘Come, Lord Jesus.’”⁵

⁵ Walvoord, 990.