

REVELATION PART FIFTEEN - Chapter 22 – The River of Life

This is the last chapter of Revelation and it is also the last chapter of the Bible.

1. We may wonder why the Bible took so long to reach this grand finale of the New Heaven and New Earth in the last two chapters. However, to prepare for an eternity that is trillions of years, the seemingly long duration taken for the preparation of the Bride is nothing in comparison. God lives in an eternal timeframe, and so will we too.
2. Isaiah 65:17 says that God will “create new heavens and a new Earth” and that the former will not be remembered anymore. He will create Jerusalem which will give such great joy to Him and His people. This will be fulfilled in Revelation Chapter 21, where a New Heaven and a New Earth as well as a New Jerusalem would be created when the current world passed away. The New Earth is similar to the current Earth, yet amazingly different.
3. John 14:1-7 says that we are not to be troubled, but to believe in Jesus, and He will go and prepare many mansions for us.
 - a) Jesus said in John 14:6 that He is “the way, the truth and the life”.
 - b) Christians may think that the “mansions” mentioned in verse 2 here is figurative because they think that Christians become only spirits and do not have need for a physical mansion or house. It is made clear to us here that the New Earth will have physical things and it will not mystical.
 - c) Most Christians are happy that they do not go to hell, but they are not looking forward to a place with many mansions in this New Earth.
4. Genesis 1:26-28 shows the original purpose of God in creating man in their own image.
 - a) God’s plan is for man to rule or have dominion over God’s creation in partnership with Him.
 - b) Now, in this New Heaven and New Earth, God wants man to do the same thing as He intended for man to do in the Garden of Eden, except that the scope is infinitely bigger. This new place for man to rule over is a universe, not just a garden. Here, everything is united in Christ. Man is to bring this universe into uncharted territories, making it an even bigger and more beautiful place, because we have all eternity to do it.
 - c) The story comes in one full circle as God achieves the same purpose He set out to do in the beginning.
5. We also learn in Revelation Chapter 21, that there will be no temple in this New Heaven and New Earth because God’s presence will fill the whole place, covering every square millimetre of it. Presently, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, but the outside world is all messed up. But one day, the whole universe will be the temple of God. Right now, we struggle to sense God’s presence though He lives in us.
6. We also learnt that since the fall of man, just as Nimrod built the Tower of Babel, men try to build their own empires and names for themselves on the current Earth, but it was at the expense of others.
 - a) Since the day Adam ate that fruit from the forbidden Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, the sinful man had already decided that “good” means to build his own empire, to be “super number 1”. That had become the new rule of

- the sinful man. His knowledge of “good” is that, it is better to have more, to be more powerful and to possess more riches; so he seeks to grab as much as he can.
- b) This is man’s erroneous understanding of good and evil. In this book of Revelation, God says that He will destroy every Babylon, whether it is a real Babylon or empires; and Babylon, the world system, will cease to exist.
 - c) In this book of Revelation, we are taught the true concept of “good”, which is to have the knowledge of God, and to do good, and bless others; by giving and not grabbing. Through blessing others, we will all be blessed. But, this is not how fallen man thinks. The Christian has a Christ-like spirit and should focus on serving others and in the process, be blessed immeasurably. So, the New Jerusalem will operate on a principle totally opposite to that of Babylon.
7. The purpose of this book of Revelation, is to motivate people, especially those whom John wrote to.
- a) The recipients of John’s letter were under tremendous pressure to bow to Caesar as god and to forget about their God, since they can only see Caesar during their lifetime anyway.
 - b) This book of Revelation tells us to make a choice. Do we want to win now and get some immediate benefits in this lifetime on Earth or would we prefer to have benefits that will last through eternity?
 - c) The purpose of this book is to motivate man to make the right choice.
 - i. Are we to make ourselves god or to make something else (such as money or power) our god? Are we to trust ourselves, money, power, etc. or trust Him?
 - ii. There are only two pathways. For those who make the right choice, this book will motivate them to think of eternity, our amazing future in the New Heaven and New Earth.
 - iii. So, this book is to ensure firstly, that we do not miss the fact that there will be a New Heaven and New Earth, and secondly, we must prepare for it.
8. According to the Wikipedia, there are about 2 trillion galaxies, and the number of stars (Note that the Sun is a star) is more than the grains of sand on Planet Earth.
- a) These are going to be renovated as part of the eco-system of the New Heaven and New Earth. Currently, this outside universe is remote to us. We cannot reach them and if the Sun is only a grain of sand, then the Earth is only as tiny as a coronavirus!
 - b) Can we imagine the eternity in which we are to reign over such a vast space? Thus, eternity will not seem long to us because there will endless things to do and to enhance those perfect galaxies, etc. to bring them to new heights just as God had originally wanted Adam to Eden to do.
9. The New Earth and individuals will still be recognisable as Earth and individuals, but will be without defects, e.g. no limping, no blindness etc.

- a) This means that if we want to climb Everest, we do not have to write a bucket list thinking that if we do not climb it now, we will have no chance to do so once we die. Everest will still be there.
- b) So currently, we should spend our time bringing people to Christ and later on, enjoy climbing Everest in the New Earth as much as we like. It would be a better Everest. It will be the same with all the other beautiful lakes, etc. that we desire to see but without any pollution! We will not have to pay for air tickets and hotels, or be worried about getting Covid-19 while travelling.
- c) We do not need a bucket list unless we are planning to go to hell, which is total darkness in a lake of fire. Christians need to get their theology right, then we will live our lives correctly, though there is nothing wrong to take a short holiday break while on Earth.
- d) With bad theology, people will try to do as much earthly things as possible, for fear that on that day, when we go to heaven, we will just be sitting on a cloud and will not be able to enjoy those things that we had wanted to do while on Earth.
- e) We will be able to do anything that is not immoral in the New Earth. Therefore, most Christians are wasting their life on Earth now due to their acceptance of bad theology.

Revelation Chapter 22:1-5 – Description of the River of Life

Verse 1

1. “River of water of life” means water that would satisfy our thirst. We will never be thirsty again or be dissatisfied there in New Heaven and New Earth.
2. This River of water of life is said to flow from the Throne of God and of the Lamb. “Water of life” is also symbolic of the Holy Spirit. Hence the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will be filling us with satisfaction and with their presence forever.

Verse 2

1. The River of water of life flows right through the middle of the street of the city from the Throne of God and is prominently available to everyone.
2. The Tree of Life is featured here as being on either side of this River of water of life. Genesis, Chapter 2, describes that the existence of 2 trees, namely, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life.
 - a) When Adam chose to eat the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, he chose to live his own way. Today, man chose to live his own way, and it is often the wrong and selfish way, which is why the world is so messed up with endless problems in families, politics, etc. When people regard themselves “first”, fights will result, and everyone will lose in the end.
 - b) When Adam fell, God threw him out of the Garden of Eden to prevent him from eating from the Tree of Life which gave eternal life.

- c) Now, this Tree of Life is much bigger as it is on both sides of the river. It will not only have fruits, but the twelve kinds of fruit. It will yield fruits every month. It is amazing to have a tree that can be on both sides of a river and be having different kinds of fruits on one single tree. Note that the number 12 always speak of God's people. There are also 12 months in a year too.
- d) It says that the leaves of this Tree of Life is for the healing of nations. Doctors know that a lot of antioxidants are stored up in leaves. For example, people who adopt conventional wisdom as well as doctors always encourage us to eat lots of vegetables to stay healthy. We are not exactly sure what this healing of nations meant though.

Verse 3

- 1. "Throne of God" speaks of His authority, describing a place where God is sitting and of Him ruling this New Heaven and New Earth which is unified as one.
- 2. Being on the Throne also means to be in a place to be worshipped. This means we have a righteous ruler in God and we will worship Him forever.

Verse 4

- 1. We will see God's face and His name will be on our foreheads. Presently, we can only sense God's presence but one day we will be able to see His face. 1 Corinthians 13:12 says that we will see God, face to face, though for now, we only see Him as in a mirror, dimly.
- 2. For those who belong to the Antichrist, they will have the 666 mark on their foreheads; but for us, His name will be on our foreheads because we belong to God and so we have marks on our forehead to show that we are His.

Verse 5

- 1. It says that there will be no more night. There will not be any need for any light, be it light from the Sun or lamps because God will be the Light in this New Heaven and New Earth.
- 2. "They will reign forever" over New Heaven and New Earth. If one day, a son is told that he has to take over his father's conglomerate, he will surely prepare for it. Similarly, we have a huge responsibility and a great privilege to reign over the New Heaven and New Earth. Therefore prepare for it.

Revelation 22:6-21 – Jesus is coming

Verse 6

- 1. The angel conveyed the message that we should just trust God.
- 2. There are some things described about the New Heaven and New Earth which we still cannot understand (e.g. transparent gold) and which are not described in detail, but we know who God is and how great our Father is. We know that He is the Creator of current heaven and Earth and is also the Creator of the New Heaven and New Earth. So even if we cannot fully grasp what the book of Revelation is trying to describe, all

we need to do is to trust Him and know that there will be an amazing New Heaven and New Earth.

Verse 7

1. Jesus said He is coming soon.
2. But people said that this book has been written 2000 years ago, and so they questioned, "How can He be coming soon?"
3. People do not realise that the day we take our last breath, all this will come true as there will be no more gap of time. At the very moment we die, in a matter of split seconds after we take our last breath, we will see our Creator. All our past life would be gone and our future would be just one breath away from us.
4. The fact is that any of us can die any time. We are a fool if we think that we will not die yet just because we are young. People do die even at a young age and death may come sooner to us than we think.

Verses 8-9

1. John had been warned once before not to worship the angels. But he did it again here.
2. Why did John fall? It is so easy to worship other things besides God, such as worshipping self, money, power or some heroic figure, etc.
3. Recipients of John's letter were pressured to worship Caesar. This is the reminder to worship God and to trust Him alone. Do not ever (even for a brief moment) think that we are not likely to worship something else. If we are spiritual, we may end up worshipping ourselves. Let us therefore be careful over this sinful inclination of worshipping something else other than God.

Verse 10

1. John was told not to seal up the prophecy of this book of Revelation.
2. Unfortunately, this book had been sealed up by many Christians for a long time because they refused to read the book of Revelation and had never even heard about this book. The book is in the Bible, but it is hardly opened, read or preached! It has been sealed indeed.

Verse 11

1. There are only two ways, which is either the evil way or the righteous way. There is no middle way.
2. Many religions have all kinds of gradations (like purgatories or lots of roads and bridges to cross) which are false. You either worship God or you do not.

Verse 12

The word "soon" appears again. "Soon" means any time although we do not know exactly when it would be.

Verse 13

1. God says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."
2. We read the first book Genesis, Chapter 1, which is the beginning, and the last chapter of the book of Revelation which describes the end. God started with the Garden of Eden, and the ending will be an amazing one. It is not how we start that matter but how we end.

Verse 14

Blessed are those who washed their robe in the blood of Christ and who trusted Christ in the greatest transaction at the Cross.

Verse 15

1. No one else except those who washed their robes in Christ's blood can enter this New Heaven and New Earth.
2. There will be no sinner there.

Verse 16

1. The bright morning star is the star which is bright in the early morning that leads us.
2. Christ is called the bright morning star as He leads us. The darkest time of the night is just before dawn but we have a bright morning star to lead us on while we are in this current world of darkness.

Verse 17

1. The Holy Spirit welcomes us.
2. We, as the Bride, together with the Holy Spirit, say "Come".
3. When you hear the call to come, you must come but what is the price? You only need to be thirsty to come and drink as the water of life is without price (i.e. free)!
4. It says, "Let the one who is thirsty come." All we need is to have the desire to take this water of life. Salvation is free. Anyone who does not come, after hearing the call to come, has made his choice. All we need to know is to realise that something is wrong with this world and this life and to respond to the call "to come and drink this water of life".
5. This is in fact the Gospel message.

Verses 18-19

1. God warns that no one is to add or take away the words of the prophecy of this book.
2. God has put in three stamps in the Bible.
 - a) The first stamp is in Deuteronomy 4:2. We are not to add or take away the commandments of God.
 - b) In the middle of the Bible, Psalms 12:6-7 say, "The words of the Lord are pure and purified 7 times" and God will keep them.
 - c) The third stamp is in here in Revelation 22:18.

2. Basically, God is saying that we are not to tamper with His words!
3. There are many ways to tamper with God's words.
 - a) You cannot cut it with the scissors, but you can easily take out and say God's words is a myth and that it is not true.
 - b) Today, many preachers say that many things are symbolic and not literal, or that they are just stories. When God said "1000 years" 6 times in one chapter, we have to take it seriously. Similarly, when God said "evening and morning" 6 times in Genesis Chapter 1, we must also take it seriously that it meant 6 literal days.
 - c) Do not add things to God's words by writing new chapter.

Verse 20

1. Not many Christians will say, "Come, Lord Jesus", as many are not ready to leave this world and they still will want to finish their bucket list first.
2. It is sad to leave this world if you leave unfinished things behind, but if you have been faithful in doing your best, you can genuinely say "Come, Lord Jesus, come" with joy and confidence. Then, when we take our last breath, we will be there with Jesus.

Conclusion

1. This book of Revelation has now ended. This is not an easy book, but it is not meant for us to argue about what is the timing and who the Antichrist is, etc. We are to spend time preparing for the eternity that is to come, and to leading and welcoming others to "Come" with our testimonies and preaching. If we have been faithful, we will look forward to His coming. We will be glad to leave this sinful, unrighteous world behind forever.
2. It is my hope that we can all say that this is the greatest love story ever from a God who loves us, plan for us, prepares us, and finally, has the Bride prepared for the Creator. Everyone loves a story with a good ending with the Bride and Groom coming together and living happily ever after. No fairy tale can have this kind of real ending. Jesus said "I am trustworthy, trust Me." This is the greatest love story of love stories that God found a wife for His Son whom He loves very much.
3. In eternity, God will not only have one Son, but He will have many sons in this New Heaven and New Earth who bear the image of His Son, and who in turn, bear the image of the Father. We will forever enjoy and worship our God there.