

The Book of Revelation

By

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

BLESSINGS, ADMONITIONS AND WARNINGS

"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" (vs. 1).

This is a **"pure"** river. Earth's rivers may look clear, but through the eye of the microscope there is revealed a world of wriggling, swimming creatures, so small that every drop of water is a continent in which they live and move and have their being. And this teeming life is so varied and so deadly to the health of mankind. But there issues from the throne of GOD a **"river"** so pure, so clear, so abundant, that every thirst and longing of the human soul is satisfied. And marvel of marvels, its abundance reaches to the last earnest soul that treads this earth, for **"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."**

Verily, the invitation is broad and the prospect sure; for **"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"** (vs. 17).

Let not mortal man despair. Is there sin in the life? Is there failure at every turn? Does life disappoint and bright prospects fade? Then turn an ear and hear that blessed word, **"Come."** Come and drink of the water that will quench every thirst and fulfill every desire of the human heart. Holy writ abounds with invitations to the sin weary soul, but lest these blessed welcomes might be missed and some human soul fall upon the rocks of despair, a last and urgent call is issued in the last great chapter of this great book - **"Come."**

The Tree of Life

"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" (vs. 2).

Not only is there water to quench the thirst, but food to strengthen the soul. A great avenue, lined with trees that bear fruit fit for the immortal kings who tread those golden streets.

No More Curse

"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" (vs. 3).

This is not the first time the tree of life has born fruit for mankind. Ages ago it bloomed, blossomed and bore fruit in the midst of the Garden of Eden.

But alas, at its side there grew the tree of death. When man put forth a hand and plucked fruit from that dread tree, God put forth a hand with a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life.

Fearful indeed was the curse that issued from that tree. The serpent was cursed above all cattle; and **"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shalt be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, ...cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns... thistles... sweat"** (Genesis 3). But a time is coming when there **"will be no more curse"** (see Romans 8:21).

The Heavenly Messenger

"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" (vs. 6). "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" (vs. 8).

Man is ever religious, and in his heart there ever burns the desire to worship. John, overjoyed at the blessed revelation of what he had seen and heard, and with a heart full of gratitude, fell at the feet of the heavenly messenger. But strange indeed are the words that greet his ears, **"See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God"** (vs. 9).

Who this glorious heavenly messenger may be, we do not know but according to his own word he must be a member of the redeemed human race.

On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah came from their heavenly position and were seen as they communed with the Lord about His death in Jerusalem.

"And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand" (vs. 10). Twenty-five hundred years ago another man received similar revelations from Heaven. **"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end"** (Daniel 12:4). Daniel's message was to be sealed **"until."** Here John is told to **"seal not,"** for the Book of Revelation is an open book and is given to all who wish to know and do His will.

Crystallized Character

"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" (vs. 11).

These words seem to denote a crystallization of character. Some one has said that "eternity is frozen time." Let a man spend his life in unrighteous ways and eternity will find him firm in those ways.

At the age of twenty-one, I received a watch from my parents. It was the fulfilment of a promise if I would not use tobacco until that age. They knew that my habits of life would be well formed by that time, and very likely my life would be free of that habit, if it were free until that age. So, if a man enters eternity as an unjust man, his character is made permanent forever. There is a time when wax is soft and pliable, and will conform to the mould at will, but when once it is "set," its form is permanent.

May the reader of these lines set his heart to please his GOD, for "**the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day**" (Proverbs 4:18). And let him labour on in full assurance that though his lot be humble and obscure, yet his Lord watches over His own and in due time He will come to reward His faithful ones.

Crowns for Christians

"**Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be**" (vs. 12). Every idle word and every secret thought will be brought out and given its due recognition. GOD offers five definite crowns for definite Christian service.

Love Produces Action

"**I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches**" (vs. 16).

Love is invisible. Love is abstract. Love cannot be seen, only as it reveals itself in action. GOD loved the world, but that love was unknown until it was set forth in action. "**In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.**"

Many are they who profess to love the Lord, but "**If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.**" Word profession may be a lie that is revealed in the life we live. It is only when profession produces a worthy walk that the heart is proven true. "**If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another**" (I John 1:6, 7).

I love you, mother, said little Don;
Then forgetting his work, his cap went on,
And he was out to the garden swing,
Leaving his mother the wood to bring.

I love you, mother, said little Fan;
Today I'll help you all I can,
So she hurried about to dust and sweep,
And rocked the baby till it fell asleep.

I love you, mother, again they said,
Two little children, ready for bed;
How do you think that mother guessed,
Which of them really loved her best?

Keep My Words

And so it is, Love will produce obedience, "**If a man love me, he WILL keep my words**" (John 14:23).

Keep My "words" is much stronger than keeping His commandments.

Oft was the patter of little feet; oft did the pitcher splash in the water below; oft did the water of the old town well quench the thirst of the little lad.

Years passed. David was a fugitive. It was harvest time; the sun beat down unmercifully; the hot wind scorched the face; the earth lay dry and baked beneath their feet. "**Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate**" cried David, as he wearily threw himself upon the floor of the cave and remembered his childhood.

There was no command; only a wish. But love would ever please, and three mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and brought it to David (II Samuel 23). Love drove these men to risk their lives because of David's "words;" and so, says our Lord, "**If a man love me, he will keep my words.**"

Do we love our Lord? Then let us heed His "words," for the strongest possible language is used to get us to read and keep the book of Revelation. He urges us to "read" and promises a "blessing" if we do. Then He signs His name so we will know that it is a message from His own hand. "**I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you *these things* in the churches;**" and may both the writer and reader of these words set his face steadfastly to learn what "**these things**" are, that are so near to the heart of the Lord.

Curse to Change

"For I testify to 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. 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" (vs. 18, 19).

A small Scripture portion containing the entire book of Revelation can be secured of the American Bible Society for one cent. Think of it; a book freighted with blessings; teeming with promises; and filled with warnings and admonitions for our eternal welfare - and all for one cent, and yet so few take advantage of the opportunity to read and keep these things. If the reader of these notes received no profit from these pages may he at least take advantage of the oft repeated admonition to read the book of Revelation, and read it again and again.

Danger Lurks Near

But great danger lurks where blessings lie, and the greater the blessing the greater the danger. For where the good seed is sown, immediately dark wings appear and the word is snatched away; and where the wheat is sown, there is an enemy to sow the tares (Matthew 13). Thus let us beware how we treat the words of the book of Revelation, for woe to him who puts forth a hand to **"add unto"** or **"take away from the word of the book."**

- Does GOD call it a revelation? Then let not men call it a concealation.
- Does GOD say it is to show? Then let not men say it is to hide.
- Does GOD say it is an open book? Then let not man call it hidden.

"Young man, leave the book of Revelation alone; it is a dangerous book." Such were the words of an older minister to a younger one. Are these words of wisdom? Or might they bring a man under the curse of GOD. I know not, I only know that he who spoke those words now fills a suicide's grave. Let us beware.

Ready to Meet the Lord

"Behold, I come quickly; Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (vs. 7).

I had been nine long weeks away from home; nine weeks in Washington and California. But time had come for my return. Trains, busses and cars were pressed into service and I was nearing my home. Would the loved ones welcome me home? Would they be looking for my return? Ah, yes, my wife and children were on the front porch and a sumptuous meal lay spread upon the table. They knew not the moment of my return, but they were waiting to welcome me.

And now I wait for Another; I know not the day nor the hour of His return, but **"Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh"** (Matthew 24:44).

And what can I do to please Him? How can I be most ready to welcome Him? **"Behold, I come quickly** (suddenly)." His coming will be in the twinkling of an eye, and no time will be to prepare. If I am to hear His "well done," I must be ready now.

Some there will be who will be saying **"My Lord delayeth his coming."** Others will be twiddling away their time crying **"Where is the promise of his coming?"**

The slothful servant will hide his talent in the earth and seek to argue his way through, while still others will be overcharged with the cares of this world and that day will come upon them unawares (Matthew 24; II Peter 3:4; Matthew 25; Luke 21). Most certainly I must seek to avoid these errors, but isn't there something I can DO to assure my welcome then?

Nearest His Heart

"Behold I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this

book" (vs. 7).

Mother is going to town. Words are spoken and directions are given, but just as she steps into the car she turns to utter one more admonition concerning that which is nearest to her heart. "Now take good care of the baby," she cries, as she closes the door and is wafted away.

And so with our Lord. Admonitions have been spoken; urgent invitations have been given; blessings have been promised, but just before our Lord slips back into glory, He pauses to utter that which is nearest to His heart - "I am coming suddenly; if you want to be happy when I return, and meet me with joy, then read the book of Revelation and keep the sayings that are therein."

END OF BOOK

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