

Let's keep our eyesights leveled on the sky for HIM!
Stretch your neck out for Him, brother (Phil. 3:20). It
is only in this way that the closing call for God's grace
is understood. Until He comes, we need His grace upon
us. Hallelujah, He provides it (1 Pet. 5:10).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

"The Testimony of Christ"
Revelation 22:16-21

Introduction

1. The final words of this book are much like the beginning of the book (cf. chap. 1). The accent is on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is dominant.
2. But this is a solemn book. There is no time for tomfoolery here. Eternal issues are at stake. The close of all things has come. No serious person thinking of the tribulation period nor of the events which relate to Christ's second coming for the church or for Israel would ever mock. There is an urgency and a seriousness overshadowing the entire scene.
3. Christ is the speaker in these final verses. He has much to commend to the readers (cf. 1:3). The notable ones are these:

1. The CHARACTER of Christ v. 16.

- a. His identification

Using the emphatic personal pronoun, He says: "I" Jesus. There is no mistaking Who is the speaker. He uses His personal Name: Jesus. He opened the book and now He closes it. Of course, the name Jesus means Savior. This He is. He is the One Who sends His angel to give information to the churches. The Father does the same (cf. v. 6), hence Christ and the Father are equal (cf. John 10:30 where neuter pronoun is employed to show essence).

- b. His origination

He comes as the Root of David. This means He is David's head and Lord (cf. born King: Matt. 2:2; died King: Matt. 23:37; reign as King: Zech. 9:9). But as the Root, He gave David his place in life. But He is also the offspring of David. This shows His humanity. He is David's Son (Matt. 22:43).

- c. His activation

One wonderful thought is mentioned: He is the

bright and morning Star. As such, you have to get up early to see Him. It explains His role to both the Bride (Church) and to Israel (after the seven years of tribulation). He is the promised Seed of Abraham. All His revelations and pledges are true. No doubts about anything. What a blessed truth this is!

2. The COMING of Christ v. 17.

The present middle imperatival form of the verb is employed twice. It could be rendered: "come on!" The call comes from four sources:

a. From the Holy Spirit

When the Spirit came, He was to instruct of things to come (John 16:13). It is His intent to see things consummated, too! Indeed, without the belief in the second coming of our Lord, there is no true faith!

b. From the Bride

There can be no portion of the bride left out. This is the cry of the entire Body of Christ which is the Bride of our Lord (Eph. 5:21-33). Sad to say, there are some in the church (Bride) who rarely appear to say this! It should be our heart cry day and night!

c. From the hearers

The thought here is that those who do hear should say "come." Anyone who has been made aware of these events ought to have this earnest cry in his soul, too. Why? Because redemption draws nigh.

d. From the thirsty

It is as if the preaching of the Gospel, including the second coming of Christ, is yet offered to all. It is freely offered (same word as in John 15:25; Rom. 3:24). Oh, for more to join the chorus to say "come" to our Lord.

3. The CONCERN of Christ vv. 18, 19.

The big question today focuses on two items: a. Does God speak? We say "Yes." Then, b. What does He say? Our reply: The Bible only! So, here in the compass of these

two verses is a severe warning. It is intense and has terrible and dreadful consequences. Here are profound sanctions. God declares it without doubt. To do anything with these words but believe them is total rebellion. The plagues mentioned are those literally defined in the text of the book. To emasculate what God has said and put His seal to is fearful! He is the witness (vv. 16, 18, 20). He is jealous for His Word (vv. 7, 9, 10, 18, 19). He has placed His Word very high (Psa. 138:2). We should beware of God's jealousy like fire! The Old Testament concurs with this (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5, 6). Jehoiakim will suffer for what he did (Jer. 36). May the Lord keep us from anything which is inconsistent with His Word. May He bless His Word forever and ever.

NOTE: Some have rightfully extended these verses to apply to the totality of the Word of God. We believe this is acceptable. The Bible we have is written (perfect tense). There is no other "word of God" available! It is obvious, then, that the taking away of v. 19 relates to someone who is not born again in truth. Therefore, he has no part in the "book of life," he is "out of the holy city" and "he is kept" from the things which are written in this book (namely: spiritual blessings).

4. The CONCLUSION of Christ v. 20.

The revelation of this book was given by the Father to the Son (1:1). He claims that this is He Who still speaks. His final word which is all-comprehending and in a summary fashion is this: "surely (yes) I come quickly." It is the great hope of the church. Christian behavior is appealed to by it. No other subject in the Bible is given more prominence (cf. vv. 7, 12). There is a certainty with which the book closes! Let all the earth deny and question it. Christ says: I come quickly! That is enough for those of us who know Him through faith!

Conclusion Since there is no other final goal of our faith than the coming of Christ, John obviously prays for it to come soon. So John hangs his head and bows before God with a final prayer: Come! We do wait for Him. Some look for fulfilled prophecy and events. The true child of God is waiting for a PERSON! How this should influence and shape the conduct and impact of our lives with vigor. The Old Testament ended with a curse. The New Testament ends with a blessing. The blessing of the second coming.