

# (Revelation) 10 Revelation 21-22

by David Pawson

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*The sermon explores the final seven visions of the book of Revelation, focusing on the separation of those who want to be righteous and those who don't, and the creation of a new universe where all things are made new and redeemed.*

**Duration:** 50:09

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:1-2, Revelation 21:4, Revelation 21:23, Revelation 22:14-15, Revelation 22:17-19

**Topics:** "End Times", "Gods Judgment"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the final visions in the book of Revelation. He explains that the major enemies of God's people, including the devil, the Antichrist, the false prophet, and the city of Babylon, have all been dealt with. Now, the focus shifts to sorting out the people on earth into two groups: those who are willing to live under God's rule and those who rebel against it. The preacher compares this sorting process to the television show 'This Is Your Life,' where a person's entire life is examined and recorded.

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## Transcript

We're now looking at the final series of seven visions at the end of the book of Revelation, the last seven. We've got it right up to vision five and six and seven are the subject for tonight. Before I turn to vision six, let me remind you that so far in the book of Revelation four great enemies of the people of God have been introduced one by one.

The first one to be highlighted was the devil himself when he was thrown out of heaven and came down to earth in fear and frustration and anger. The next two were the Antichrist and False Prophet, the two beasts who became his puppets on earth. And the fourth was the city of Babylon represented by that scarlet woman, the prostitute sitting on the dragon.

Now those are the four great enemies of God's people at the end, but they have all been dealt with, however, in reverse order. Babylon fell, she was out of the way. Then the False Prophet and the Antichrist were thrown into hell at the battle of Armageddon.

Finally, Satan was locked up for a thousand years, then released, and is finally thrown into hell himself into the lake of fire with his two puppets who had already been there for a whole millennium. So all the major enemies of the people of God are out of the way. There remains one thing.

The people on earth need to be sorted out, need to be separated into two groups. Those who are ready to go into vision seven, a recycled universe, and those who are not. Those who are willing to live under the rule and kingdom of God and those who hate it and rebel against it.

The stage is set for the final day of judgment and that is vision six. It's a remarkable vision because heaven and earth pass away in it. They disappear, they're finished, leaving only the people.

And now the resurrection of the rest of mankind takes place in order that everybody may stand before the judgment seat. Even the sea gives up the dead in it. The buried are raised from their graves, but whenever I read that the sea gives up the dead I can't help thinking about the Titanic and the people who went down with it.

But of course the sea is full of the remains of human beings. There have been thousands and thousands of shipwrecks, particularly during two world wars, and the ocean bed must be littered with them. But those people have not gone, they will be back.

They will stand before God on this day because the resurrection of the body, we are told in Daniel, in John's Gospel, and in the book of Acts, will be for everybody. We are all coming back and we are all being given a body without exception. And now books are opened.

Now we have a television program on BBC called This Is Your Life. I don't know if you have such a program here, do you? And a big red book with This Is Your Life in gold lettering is presented to some famous star or some person who has done a great deal of good for others and they're very interesting programs. But I was speaking to a researcher on the program and she said that they find out all sorts of things that they can't include in the program because they do their homework.

They find out a lot about the person who figures. In fact, one man figured on that program, I was astonished to see him, who was my grandmother's employee and he was such a crook that she fired him. He appeared as a hero on This Is Your Life as something he'd done during the war as a firefighter during the Blitz on London.

I thought, if they only knew him as my grandmother knew him, it would be a rather different program. But they suppress all the bad bits. They put all the nice things they can say about a person into a half-hour program.

Well, vision six says, books are opened. I just get a vision of red books with This Is Your Life, but this time everything's in it, the whole lot. Do you know that your entire life and everything you've said and done and thought and felt has been recorded in two places? One is within your own memory.

Nobody forgets anything of their life. Now I guess you'll immediately question that because, yes, I'm well into my seventies and I've found out that there are two things very characteristic of old age. One is a bad memory and the other... No, I know, it's a bad memory.

But you haven't forgotten anything. You only have difficulty remembering it. Do you understand what I've just said? You have in fact everything locked in your memory from the earliest age.

It's all recorded there. But somehow it's difficult to pull it back again to your conscious mind. But have you ever had this experience? Some time ago I smelt a smell that I had never encountered since I was a little boy.

I won't tell you what it was, but as soon as I smelled that smell a kind of flood of memories came pouring out and I thought of people and events with whom I had associated that smell. I realized that all those memories I hadn't thought of for sixty-five and more years, but they were all still there and triggered off. It was as if a filing cabinet drawer had been pulled out and there was so much I could recall that I had never thought about in over sixty years.

Have you had that experience? Your whole life is locked in that record, but there is a duplicate record in heaven too. When the books are opened everything that has not been erased from that book will still be there. One of the beauties is that things can be erased.

I'm always amazed with God's control of his memory. The difficulty with our memory is we can't control it, but God can control his. One of his most precious promises is, your sins I will remember no more.

I once, at the end of a Sunday evening service, was waiting around in the church. Everybody had gone home except one little old lady sitting in the front row and she was sobbing away as if her heart was broken. I went and sat beside her and I said, whatever is the matter? She looked at me and she said, God won't forgive me.

I said, what do you mean? She said, thirty years ago I did the most terrible thing. I've kept it secret all these years. If my family knew they would disown me.

If my friends knew they'd never speak to me again. She said, for thirty years I've been begging God to forgive me and he hasn't. She was sobbing away.

I said, you poor thing. I said, the first time you asked him he forgave and forgot, and for thirty years he doesn't know what you're talking about. Well, she looked at me as if I was crazy, but I took her through scripture after scripture to show that God wipes things from his memory and from that record in heaven when they are truly repented of and forgiven.

Isn't that good news? Of course it is. Finally, I convinced her from the Word of God that God can control his memory. I said, the problem with you is you can't.

You can't forget what you did. He can, but you can't. The real problem is that you can't forgive yourself because you can't forget it.

Finally, she realised that even though she would probably never forget it till her dying day, that God had forgiven and forgotten. Do you know what she did? Though she was in her sixties, she danced round the whole empty church, round and round, while I just sat and watched this elderly lady dancing and leaping for joy. Boy, that's the kind of dancing the Lord loves.

Well, things that have not been forgiven are not erased. The record is there. And you know, I can tell you this, if a book is opened with my name on it and everything is there, I'm damned.

And I'd have to say to God, you're absolutely right to damn me. I would ruin that new universe if you let me in. But another book is opened and it's not the book of my life, it's the book of Jesus' life.

It's the Lamb's book of life, which means the Lamb's life. But it's a unique book, though it's the only one that would pass muster, that would be accepted because it's a perfect record. The interesting thing is that it's got other names in it too, the names of those who have faith in Christ and have been faithful to Christ.

We know from the book of Revelation that it's possible to have your name erased from that book. But if your name is in the in that book on the day it's opened, God will take you through to the most wonderful future that you've ever heard of. Well, it's a day when books are opened and if anyone's name is not in that book of life, his book, it really would be better if they'd never been born, for they are thrown into the lake of fire.

God doesn't send people to hell, he throws them there. When Jesus was wanting to picture hell, he pictured a deep valley five minutes' walk from the south gate of Jerusalem, a very deep valley, the Valley of Hinnom, a valley with a dreadful history, a valley where there'd been pagan sacrifice, where even a king of Israel called Manasseh had killed his own son to the god Moloch. God cursed that valley, Jeremiah cursed it, made it a place of desolation.

It became the garbage dump of Jerusalem where they not only threw their old food and things that were wasting away, they actually carried their sewage out in buckets from Jerusalem and tipped them into the deep valley. That's why the gate on the south side of Jerusalem is called the Dung Gate. It was a foul valley and they kept fires burning to keep the rubbish down and the rotten food attracted maggots and was eaten up.

When I first went to Jerusalem in 1961, it was still like that and the blue smoke rose from the depths of the valley and the smell was horrible. Now they've completely cleaned it up and turned it into a garden and it's Lovers Lane, it's where all the young Jews do their courting, quite different from Jesus' day. That was the valley where they threw the bodies of men who had been crucified and Jesus' body would have finished up there had a man called Joseph not given him his tomb.

That was the valley where at the deepest part where the sun never reaches, it's always dark down there, where Judas went and found a tree at the top of the cliff and tied a rope round the tree and put it round his neck and threw himself off. The rope snapped and his body fell to the bottom and his bowels gushed out. They will still show you the field where that happened.

It's still called Akaldama, the field of blood, a horrid valley. Jesus said, if you want to know what hell is like, just go a five-minute walk outside Jerusalem and look in the valley of Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom. What a vivid picture, where the worm never dies and the fire never goes out.

That's what he said. Jesus spoke of the lake of fire with horror and we should have the same horror of it as he had. Many of his most severe warnings were about it.

It's called in the book of Revelation, the sea of flames or the lake of fire, how the translations use. The nearest I came to imagining it or seeing it was this. I went to minister in Sicily in a town called Catania where there had been two hundred murders by the Mafia in just twelve months.

The atmosphere of fear and lawlessness was powerful. I didn't like walking around that town, but there were saints of God there who were a joy to meet. While I was there, I had an ambition that in my spare time I wanted to climb to the top of Mount Etna, the largest living volcano in Europe, and you can climb to the top and look down.

Unfortunately, while I was there it exploded, it erupted, and a sea of red-hot lava came running down the mountainside and destroyed a village in its path and people were being evacuated and so they wouldn't let anybody near Mount Etna. However, when the time came to leave I got a British Airways flight home and

the pilot said, I'm going to give you a treat. He flew straight for Mount Etna and I was on the port side, window seat.

When he got over erupting Mount Etna he tipped the plane up like that, so I found myself looking straight down into this erupting volcano and we were just above it. And I tell you, I was scared because I know what uprush currents can come from such a volcano. I thought, pilot, you're taking a big risk with all of us.

I was praying that he would straighten up and fly on to Heathrow. Well he did and with relief I sat back. I had two thoughts about what I saw.

I thought first, that's hell. But the next thought I had was even more startling. I remembered a verse in Hebrews 12, let us worship God with reverence and awe for our God is a consuming fire.

Do you know, I had feelings as we circled around that volcano mouth that I ought to have when I go to church. We're coming to a God who is a consuming fire. Not a nice warm fire to warm yourself, a consuming fire.

The next time I thought of that phrase was I was in Melbourne, Australia and found myself in a bushfire, a huge bushfire. The flames were travelling at eighty miles an hour from one eucalyptus tree full of oil to the next and they were consuming homes as if they were matchwood. And people were escaping by driving cars faster than the flames if they could along country bumpy roads.

It was a bit of a nightmare. I thought again, this is what a consuming fire is. And to those who cling to their wickedness, to those who line up with Satan, to those who will not repent when they get the chance, to those who don't want to be good people, God is a consuming fire.

And that is the significance of that at the end of the book of Revelation. So the sixth vision is of a separation of those who want to be righteous and those who don't, those who want to be like God and live under his rule with all the benefits of that rule and those who hate it. And there will be nobody in between.

And God who knows everything about us, who has got that record in heaven, he will be absolutely fair, absolutely just, but that will be the principle. We are justified by faith but we are judged by deeds. That is very clear.

We are judged by our works. As Paul says, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive according to the things done in the body whether good or evil. Now just a moment, what have I just said? The judgment seat of Christ? Here is the scene of a great white throne and him who sat on it, but it doesn't say who he is.

It is not God who is going to judge us at the last, it's Jesus. For as Paul said in Athens on Mars Hill, God has already appointed a day on which he will judge mankind through a man whom he has appointed. God has delegated judgment to his Son Jesus so that no human being will be able to complain.

We are going to be judged by a human being who has known the pressures we live under, who has been homeless, who had an illegitimate birth, who had no money of his own, who was accused of a crime he never committed and falsely executed at an early age. He understands. But on the other hand, Jesus knows what's in people.

He just has to look at them and he sees right inside. The outside may be all white, but he will see inside and say, you are a whited sepulcher, a whitewashed tomb, and inside nothing but decay. Jesus only had to look into a person's face and he knew all about them.

A woman at the well of Samaria, and he just looked at her and said, you've had five husbands, haven't you? And you're living with a man you're not married to. She realised he was a prophet. That's the Jesus before whom we stand, before whom the books will be opened.

Jesus here is the judge, not the saviour. He came to be the saviour first, to do everything he could possibly do to get people righteous for their God. But there comes a time when he must take the role of judge and decide whether we have seized the opportunity of God's grace or not.

So, we turn to the seventh vision and this one at last is wonderful. It's a vision of the new heaven and a new earth, a brand new universe, recycled. We know from the second letter of Peter that the old one disappeared in flames.

It just burned up because of course every atom of even this pulpit I'm using is packed with energy and power. I can see that the God who packed each atom with energy, he can release it all in a moment with a word and that seems to be how he will bring the old heaven and earth to nothing. He will release the energy in the whole universe and presumably from all that energy will build a new one, a brand new heaven and a brand new earth.

When it says heaven and earth, just get out of your mind the idea of the heaven that people go to when they die. It's the same phrases in Genesis 1.1, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. I've done a bit of Bible translation and published it, but nevertheless I translated that not as heavens and earth but outer space and planet earth.

That's what it really means. So the new heaven and the new earth will be a new outer space and a new planet earth. It's simply saying the whole universe is going to be made new.

In fact, shortly a voice from the throne says, Behold, I am making all things new. The redemption that Christ won for us on the cross is not only going to create new people, it's going to create a new universe altogether. In fact, Paul in writing to Colossae said that he has reconciled all things to God by his death, a universal redemption.

When I was trying to communicate this to a congregation in England in the Lake District, beautiful Lake District, we were in a tent and I preached on this concept of the whole creation being redeemed, the whole universe being made new. I said, the gospel is not just about giving me a ticket to heaven, it's about creating an entirely new creation and making me a new creature so that I can go and live in it without spoiling it. There was a businessman sitting there.

He'd only been a Christian for a few weeks so it was all very new to him and he'd never heard this. He'd only heard how he could be saved. I remember him calling out.

He said, Wow! This is big! That was a really lovely, spontaneous response from a member of the congregation. I thought so anyway. Wow! He said, this is big.

He was used to big business and he was used to thinking big, but suddenly he realised that Christianity is big, salvation is big, it's everything going to be made new. What a vision! And there in the middle of this

vision of a new planet earth and a new outer space, he sees a city built out in space coming down and landing on the earth. You know, there's much talk now of building cities out in space and sending little bits of machinery up and bolting them together until they've got a city up there.

I tell you, man spends his days catching up with God. They need to know that Jesus has gone back to carpentry and woodwork. He's preparing the place for us.

This was the city that persuaded an eighty-year-old man to leave a brick-built house with central heating and running water and live in a tent the age of eighty for the rest of his days, and his name was Abraham. That's precisely the kind of house they've found in Ur of the Chaldees dating back to his day. I showed a photograph of one that's been excavated by an archaeologist and I showed it to my wife and I said, what do you think of that house? She said, it's alright but I don't think I would like to live in it.

I said, actually it's four thousand years old. She was absolutely surprised. It just looked like a comfortable brick-built house of today.

It wasn't particularly modern by standards, but there it was. This old man at eighty said, I want to live in a tent. I'm prepared to live in a tent.

I'm prepared to leave all this and live up in the mountains in a tent, cold or hot. I'll be up there because he was looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. Four thousand years later it's still not here, but Abraham died in faith that one day he'd live in the most beautiful city.

Some of you know now that one of my hobbies is architecture and I design two or three churches a year. I love designing. I design a few houses, one thing and another.

So I'm fascinated in such planning and I've studied the new cities, Brasilia in Brazil and Canberra in Australia to see how men think the perfect city should be. I notice that in every case they like water running down the middle of it, and so in Canberra they've dammed up a stream and in Brasilia they've done the same thing as if water is central to a city and you've got the river Missouri, is it? Running through the centre of Cairns. Water somehow provides a focal centre.

It's going to be true here, just the same. Incidentally, Brasilia was designed by a man called Nehemiah, but not the biblical one, a German architect called Nehemiah. You know, I once said to a congregation, I'm dying to see the new Jerusalem, and a voice shouted out, you will, which was pretty quick.

But I really want to see what kind of a city God can make for such a huge number of people and yet the problem with designing new cities is how do you keep it human scale so that people feel at home in it? This new Jerusalem - listen, Jerusalem is not the bride of Christ, it's just that she looks like a bride. She comes down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. It's the most beautiful city that we've ever seen.

Streets of gold, you've been singing about that already tonight. I wonder if you realise that that means the streets will be white because pure gold is white. It's the impurities that make it yellow or red or green.

There are different shades of gold, but pure gold, white, clean white streets of gold. And what is rare down here will be quite common in that city. Things that are jewels and rare precious stones here, those are the building materials which will be used up there.

And now I want to show you a proof that the Bible is the Word of God, an absolute proof because of those stones, those gems of which the new Jerusalem will be built. I got this information from the President of the Emerald Foundation in Britain who had worked with Jules all his life and he made a unique discovery about twenty-five or thirty years ago because by then we could make pure light. Now hitherto we weren't able to make pure light.

All of the light in this room is coming at us from different angles. It's bouncing off reflective surfaces, it's coming from all directions and the waves are criss-crossing from all these sources of floodlights and so on. But they discovered years ago first polarised light.

And if you've had polarised sunglasses, you know that they filter out bounced light. You look at the waves of the sea and you can see them much more clearly because all the flashing light of the waves is cut out by the filter of the polaroid lenses. Therefore, if you take two lenses from a pair of spectacles and put them on top of each other, it goes much darker, and then turn one at right angles, you've got a much finer grid to filter light through.

It's cutting out from two directions. Are you still with me? Now of course we now have laser light which is even purer and runs very straight. But cross-polarised light was available to this man and he wondered what would happen if he took a thin slice of precious stones and shone cross-polarised light through them to see what would happen, to try and find out what happens to gemstones in purer light than they're normally seen in.

And he made an astonishing discovery which is now widely accepted of course in science, that precious stones are of two distinct kinds. The technical term is anisotropic and isotropic, but the difference between them is this. If you take an isotropic precious stone and put it in purer light, it loses all its colour, all its brilliance, looks like a piece of coal, loses all its attraction.

But if you take anisotropic stones as they're called, cut a thin slice, cross-polarised light through them, whatever colour they are to begin with, red, green, or blue, they turn into all the colours of the rainbow and the most astonishingly beautiful patterns. And then this dear man read the book of Revelation and he found that all the stones mentioned in Revelation as the building materials of the New Jerusalem are anisotropic. In pure light they become breathlessly beautiful, all the colours of the rainbow.

And none of the isotropic stones are mentioned. Now I've got some disappointment for you ladies. Diamonds are isotropic.

No use taking them with you to heaven. They won't even sparkle, they will look like a piece of coal dust. And if, like me, you've had a ruby wedding and given your wife a ruby, that's no good either.

And garnets are no good either. But all the twelve precious stones of the New Jerusalem are anisotropic and beautiful in pure light and there they are. The top twelve stones are the twelve stones of the New Jerusalem.

The bottom line, well there's a diamond. Diamonds are forever, never. And here are rubies, garnets there.

But look at the stones of the New Jerusalem. Now here's the proof, the Bible is the Word of God. That has been discovered in the last twenty-five years.

Before that, nobody knew which was which and you could sell them all, whichever they were, to ladies who loved jewellery at great price. But there was one person who knew this two thousand years ago and it wasn't John the Apostle. It was the one who revealed the revelation to him.

There is no way that John could have guessed those stones, no way. But God knew all about it and to me that alone would tell me that the Bible came from the Lord above who made them all. And he knew which stones would be right for his New Jerusalem.

You're allowed to whisper Hallelujah. No, never say Hallelujah because the preacher is trying to work you up. Can't stand preachers who say Amen and then you come back with Hallelujah.

Look, say it because you feel it. I think this is wonderful. Can't wait to get there.

I'm dying to get there and probably will. Right. The size of this city as well as the beauty of it is breathtaking.

The size of it, you could just fit the New Jerusalem inside the moon if the moon were hollow. That tells you the size of it. Or to make it more realistic, if it came down in Europe it would stretch from Paris to Warsaw, and not just in one dimension but in three.

I just can't imagine how it will happen, but God's Holy of Holies in the temple was a cube and this will also be in some way a cube. Twelve names on the gates and twelve names on the foundations, all Jewish, twenty-four names representing the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles of the church. What a sight! And that river going right through the middle with trees bearing fruit every month either side.

Well, its picture language is trying to convey something to us of the beauty and the majesty of the city, God's capital in the new earth. Now this is not up in heaven. It was, but it's come down out of heaven to earth.

This is in the new earth which is your eternal destiny. We're not going to heaven to live with God forever. God's moving to earth to live with us forever.

That's the amazing truth at the beginning of Revelation 21. The angel cries out in utter astonishment, look, look, the dwelling place of God is with men and he will be their God and they will be his people. That phrase runs right through the Bible.

I can't tell you how many times it occurs, I just keep meeting it as I read through the Bible. I will be their God and they will be my people. It describes a very intimate relationship.

You know, God wanted to be on earth with us right from the beginning. In fact, Adam heard him walking in the garden of Eden, heard his footsteps, and hid from him because by now he'd disobeyed him. But God wants to be down here.

He sent his Son down here, he sent his Spirit down here, but at the last he comes himself and we shall see his face. See God's face. Nobody could do that now and not die, but one day we shall see his face.

Now that city will be kept utterly clean and therefore nothing impure, nothing polluting will ever be allowed in. It is not a prison because the gates are open day and night, which means we can go out. Somebody asked me what will be the point of the new space and I said, for holidays.

If Jesus with his new body could go up into heaven with no space suit, why shouldn't my new body have a holiday on Mars? The American astronauts might get there first, but I doubt it. But take a holiday out there, wonderful. An open universe, an open city, a place where we will feel at home and it's on the new earth.

Now I have never heard a preacher talk about the new earth in my whole life, and I've heard many preachers. When I preach on the new earth people say, have you joined the Jehovah's Witnesses? Because they talk about the new earth, but they get some things right or they wouldn't fool people. Some of what they say is right and they major on this book of Revelation, but they get some things terribly wrong.

I was preaching in Australia, in Sydney, just a few miles from the Bondi Beach, if ever you've heard of that. I said in this church congregation, I said, in the new earth there will be no sun, no sea, and no sex. And nobody said hallelujah.

There was a dead silence and they all looked as if they wanted to get out of that meeting and run down to Bondi Beach because I understand you can get all three things there. And then I added, but the new earth will be so wonderful that you won't even miss those things. There'll be light everywhere for God will be there.

And where God is, he's the source of all light, he's the source of the light in the sun. If God is with us there'll be no darkness anymore. And oh, the things that won't be there excite me.

There'll be no temptations in that city. How does that grab you? No sadness, no pain, no hurt. It's almost too good to be true, isn't it? But it's true because God is telling us about this wonderful new city, the new Jerusalem, in the new earth.

Well now, we must draw to a close. It's been lovely taking you through all this because I love the book of Revelation. We come now to what is often called the epilogue.

The last chapter and the verses seven to twenty-one are an epilogue. I think it wouldn't be a bad idea to read it. Let's see how this book finishes.

Remember that it's a letter and this is the signing off bit, but it's also a prophecy. This is what the epilogue says, Behold I am coming soon. Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book.

Keeping the words is to harbour them in your heart, to think them over, to live in them, make it part of your hope for the future. I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things and when I had heard them, seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, don't do it.

I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God. Then he told me, do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book because the time is near.

Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong. Let him who is vile continue to be vile. Let him who does right continue to do right and let him who is holy continue to be holy.

Behold I am coming soon. My reward is with me and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches.

I am the Root and Offspring of David and the Bright Morning Star. The Spirit and the Bride say, come! And let everyone who hears say, come! Whoever is thirsty let him come, and whoever wishes let him take the free gift of the water of life. I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if anyone adds anything to them God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

And if anyone takes words away from the book of prophecy, from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city which are described in this book. He who testifies to these things says, yes, I am coming soon. Amen.

Come Lord Jesus, the grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen. Isn't that a wonderful ending? Notice that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all included, for God is Trinity, three persons in one from beginning to end.

There's a strong emphasis on the timing. Time is short. Now centuries have passed.

Some people take the wrong conclusion from the fact that it's been two thousand years already. They say, well he's never coming. Actually it means we're two thousand years nearer to his coming.

That's how we should react to that. The epilogue points out that the choice is still available, that people can still come and take the water of life. Anyone who hears this book, read or taught or whatever, is still open to come and take that water of life.

Strong evangelistic appeal here right at the end. But there is also a strong statement that there will come a day when the Lord says, you are fixed to stay as you are. Did you notice that? Let him who is vile continue to be vile.

Let him who is holy continue to be holy. Our destiny, our character, will one day be fixed and the choice will no longer be available. We can choose now to be holy, to be clean, to be the kind of people who will not spoil that new creation for everybody else and themselves.

The choice is still open, water of life. And now we have access again, here it says, to the tree of life. We haven't heard of that since the Garden of Eden.

Adam and Eve had to be shut off from the tree of life to prevent their rebellious attitude persisting forever. Because Adam and Eve were not inherently by nature eternal or immortal, but they could be by taking the fruit of the tree of life and live forever. But now that they were in the state of sin, God had to cut them off from the tree of life.

Now that they tasted the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he couldn't let them go on like that forever. That's how death came to the human race. But one day the tree of life will be restored.

Scientists look for this magic elixir of life that will make us live forever. They will never find it because the tree is no longer available. But there it is, popping up at the end of the Bible.

The significance of this book, says John, is it is a prophecy. It is about the future. It is true and trustworthy.

Here again we are told that it's for the churches, that it's delivered through an angel, direct from Jesus, the bright morning star and the root and offspring of David, and it's all come down to us. Then there is that very solemn warning not to tamper with it, not to touch it up, not to add anything to it, not to take anything away from it. And you know, one of the greatest temptations I have when I teach revelation is that I'm flooded with questions about things that are not there, as if people want me to add more information about the future than the Bible gives.

What about this? What about that? What about the other? I've had plenty of those questions while I'm here. Listen, if it's not answered in the Bible, you don't need to know. And far further than that, it might be bad for you to know the answer.

So be content with what God has answered and what he's told us. Don't try and add to the book of Revelation. It's speculation if you do.

It's not God's prophetic word about the future. And the solemn warning is that if you add to this book, God will add the plagues in it to you. And if you take away from this book, God will take away your access to the tree of life.

But it finishes very positively with the two uses of the word, come, which Mike Bickle mentioned on last Thursday evening. The two uses of the word, come, which the church should be using all the time. One is directed to the Lord, even so, come Lord Jesus, come! That is the earliest prayer of the church that we know, and we have it in the original Aramaic language that they used, Maranatha, come! They were always wanting the Lord to come back and they kept praying it, pleading with him, come, come! But there is another come here.

At the same time, the church is to be saying, come to the people of our world, come and take the water of life, come and get ready for all this. Come and be a new person. We want you in the recycled universe.

God wants you there, but only if you want to be recycled now by him and prepared for this beautiful future. Come, come! So here are the two comes that should be constantly on our lips. Come Lord Jesus, come and take the water of life and join us here and hereafter.

Well, we want the final seven visions to happen as soon as possible, don't we? And we want to welcome the Lord Jesus back to earth. I've appreciated so much your hunger for the Word of God, but let's sing this one. Welcome him.

That's lovely. Praise you. For more information on Friends of the Bridegroom, visit our website at [www.fotv.com](http://www.fotv.com).

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