**VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY**

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[**REVELATION 22**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22&t=NKJV) **– COME, LORD JESUS**

**Revelation 22**

**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. 2 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, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 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: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. 6 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. 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. 8 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. 9 Then saith he unto me, 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. 10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 11 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. 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. 15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. 16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. 17 And 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. 18 For I testify unto 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: 19 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. 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.**

At the end of chapter 21, John described the beauty of New Jerusalem. This depiction briefly continues as well as concludes here. John sees a river of the water of life which is a great contrast with the pollution and decay seen during the tribulation as God released His judgment upon the earth. It also echoes the original state of the garden of Eden. Water and life are often intertwined in Scripture, especially in the writings of John who reveals Christ as the water of Life who is able to quench the spiritual thirst of humankind. This city also contains a tree of life, something from which fallen man was specifically barred after the fall.

**22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: 23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (Genesis 3:22–24).**

The reference to the leaves being used for "healing" leads some to suggest that New Jerusalem will exist somewhere above earth prior to the end of the millennium, others see this as a symbolic reference to permanent, eternal health and life. Light, as well, is a crucial metaphor in the Bible, representing truth and knowledge (John 8:12; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Matthew 4:16). John also notes that all evil, darkness, and night are gone from this holy city (Revelation 22:1–5). Revelation then ends its description of the future and returns to more immediate commands from Jesus. The angel commends what John has seen as accurate and worthy of trust. This is followed by a statement reiterating the idea that "I am" is coming soon. This might have confused John, seeing that the words are those of Jesus, but it had been the angel speaking up to that point. Perhaps in confusion, John starts to worship the angel, but is immediately corrected (Revelation 22:6–9). John is then told not to "seal up" the words of Revelation. Unlike older prophets such as Daniel (Daniel 12:9), John's visions come when there are few remaining events left between the prophecy and its fulfillment. These words are to be shared and understood, not guarded. The reference to evildoers and the righteous is not an endorsement of sin. Rather, it's an expression that Jesus' return is inevitable and unavoidable. This might be stated as "people can do whatever they want to, but the time is near, and Jesus is coming soon." Likewise, we are reminded that those who demonstrate their rejection of Christ through persistent, unrepentant sin will find themselves separated from God (Revelation 22:10–15). John completes Revelation, and the final words of the New Testament, by including another reassurance from Christ that these are His words, and His testimony. John appeals to readers to accept the offer Christ makes for salvation, echoing other such pleas in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Peter 3:9). John also warns against those who would add to or take away from the words of Revelation. This would include a literal editing of the text, but it also implies attempts to twist, ignore, or insert false meanings or interpretations. While the dire warning is technically aimed at the book of revelation itself, that general principle is found elsewhere in reference to all of God's inspired Word (1 Corinthians 4:6; Luke 4:1–13; John 10:35). John completes his message with a final statement from Jesus proclaiming His imminent return, and a prayer for grace (Revelation 22:16–21).

**(v1-2) The interior of the New Jerusalem.**

**A river flowing from the throne of God:**

**And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.**

Throughout the Old Testament, prophets used the picture of a river as a powerful expression of richness, provision, and peace:

**Isaiah 48:18**

**18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:**

**Zechariah 14:8**

**8 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.**

Or, as expressed by the Psalmist in Psalm 46:4-5

**There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.**

God’s provision in the New Jerusalem is described with pure, absolutely unpolluted waters. This river of provision comes right from God’s throne. Because it comes from God, it cannot be anything other than pure and abundant. Ezekiel saw a glorious river ([Ezekiel 47](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+47&t=NKJV)) flowing down from the temple in Jerusalem and into the sea, but that river belongs to the millennial earth. It is perhaps the final preview of this heavenly river. This is a better river with better trees.

**The tree of life.**

**In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**

The Bible begins with a tree of life ([Genesis 3:22-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.22-24&t=NKJV)) which man was not allowed to eat from after the sin at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now we see the tree of life again. Each tree yielding its fruit every month: From all indications, this describes the world of the new heaven and the new earth, yet we are given a time indicator. Apparently, heaven will still mark time, but not be subject to it in the same way we are on this side of eternity. Some people wonder if we will eat in heaven. The best answer is that we can eat, but will not have to. In His resurrection body, Jesus enjoyed food

**Luke 24:41-43**

**41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. 43 And he took it, and did eat before them.**

**John 21:12-14**

**12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. 14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.**

Angels ate with Abraham

**Genesis 18:6-8**

**6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.**

The great heavenly reunion between Jesus and His people is described as a marriage supper ([Revelation 19:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.9&t=NKJV)). Even though man fell by what he ate, God will still allow us to eat in heaven.

The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations**:** Why do the nations need healing? In the ancient Greek language, the word for healing can also mean “health-giving,” and this may be the sense here. The word for ‘healing’ is therapeian, from which the English word therapeutic is derived, almost directly transliterated from the Greek. Rather than meaning ‘healing,’ it should be understood as ‘health-giving,’ as the word in its root meaning has the idea of serving or ministering.

Street… river… tree… fruit… leaves: Are these pictures of heaven literal or symbolic? It may be that you can’t describe another dimension like heaven without using symbols, but they are symbols connected to their reality. What John saw may or may not be exactly like a river on earth, but when we see it we will also say, “That looks like a river.”

**(v3-5) What it will be like and what the saints will do:**

**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. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.**

In heaven, the curse is gone. Since the fall, man and creation have lived with the effect of the curse described in [Genesis 3:16-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.16-19&t=NKJV): sorrow and pain in childbirth for women, friction between the sexes, the necessity of hard and often futile work for man’s sustenance, and most of all death. These aspects of the curse will even be present during the Millennium, though they will be greatly mitigated by the perfect rule of Jesus. [Isaiah 65:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+65.20&t=NKJV)shows us that it is still possible for a sinner to be accursed in the millennial earth. But in the new heaven and new earth they are done away with forever. Instead of the curse, the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it. That’s quite an exchange. His servants shall serve Him: Heaven will be a place of work and service for God’s people. However, this is a picture of the pure blessedness of service rather than arduous, curse-stained difficult type of labor that we’ve endured here on earth. They shall see His face: Heaven will be a place where God’s people see His face, a place of intimate, face to face fellowship with God. Moses was denied the privilege of seeing God face to face ([Exodus 33:20-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+33.20-23&t=NKJV)), but everyone in heaven shall see His face.

**“By which I understand two things: first, that they shall literally and physically, with their risen bodies, actually look into the face of Jesus; and secondly, that spiritually their mental faculties shall be enlarged, so that they shall he enabled to look into the very heart, and soul, and character of Christ, so as to understand him, his work, his love, his all in all, as they never understood him before.” (Spurgeon)**

Because of Jesus, we can know something of the face of God right now:

**For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ** ([2 Corinthians 4:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+4.6&t=NKJV)).

Yet, Paul also anticipated a greater fulfillment of our seeing the face of God:

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I am also known ([1 Corinthians 13:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+13.12&t=NKJV)).

**2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2)**

In that day there will be nothing that obscures our vision of Jesus:

· We will see Jesus clearly because sin is done away with.

· We will see Jesus clearly because care and worry are gone.

· We will see Jesus clearly because idols are done away with.

This will be the greatest glory of heaven: to know God, to know Jesus, more intimately and wonderfully than we ever could on earth.

His name shall be on their foreheads: Heaven will be a place where God’s people will forever be identified with their God, and there will never be any doubt that they belong to Him. There shall be no more night there: Heaven will be a place where the darkness of this age will be forever gone. The light is not artificial, even from the sun – God Himself is the light. They shall reign forever and ever: Heaven will be a place where God’s people enjoy an eternal reign, in contrast to the limited duration of the Millennium. It will never end.

**“As the Bible opens with the story of ‘Paradise Lost’, so it here closes with the story of ‘Paradise Regained.’” (Erdman)**

We see the return of Paradise in the ideas of a river, a tree of life, revocation of the curse, intimacy restored, and reigning resumed. It is a perfect consummation:

No more curse:Perfect Restoration

Throne in their midst:Perfect Administration

Servants shall serve:Perfect Subordination

Shall see His face:Perfect Transformation

Name on foreheads:Perfect Identification

God is the light:Perfect Illumination

Reigning forever:Perfect Exultation

**Parting words.**

**(v6-7) The angel and Jesus add words of verification**

**Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. “Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”**

In these last few verses of the Book of Revelation, we hear parting words from a variety of persons. It isn’t always easy to know who is speaking, but the themes make sense no matter who speaks: verification, invitation, and warning. The angel that showed John all this reminds John that it isn’t too good to be true. John is assured that it is in fact faithful and true. As John reminds us of the suddenness of these events, Jesus Himself breaks in with a reminder to all that He is coming quickly. Why does it seem that it has been so long? Was Jesus wrong here? The word quickly in the ancient Greek isn’t exactly the same as our word for 'quickly’. The word ‘quickly’ might with accuracy be rendered ‘suddenly’. Still, the early church expected Jesus’ return soon – were they just wrong, or did Jesus mislead them? Not at all. They were not wrong and they were not misled by Jesus. God wants to keep all generations expectant, watching, and ready for His return. Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book: This blessing reminds us that prophecy gives us a word to keep, not merely material for interesting discussions and debates. The main intent of prophecy is to lead us to trust and obey God, and apply His truth to the way we live.

**(v8-9) John is corrected for worshipping an angel a second time.**

**Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”**

As before in [Revelation 19:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.10&t=NKJV), John was overwhelmed and bowed before an angel in worship. In the same way, the angel reminded John that only God is to be worshipped, and that they were both players on the same team – along with all who keep the words of this book. See that you do not do that.

**(v10-11) A warning is given, either by the same angel or by Jesus.**

**And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”**

Because the time is at hand, and history now runs parallel to the brink of the consummation of all things, this book isn’t sealed. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still… he who is righteous, let him be righteous still: The thought here is probably “since Jesus is coming so suddenly, there won’t be time for change.” There will be no time for last minute repentance, but there is time now. If what you have read in Revelation hasn’t changed you, there isn’t much hope!

**“If the warnings of this book are not sufficient, there is no more that God has to say.” (Walvoord)**

**(v12-13) Jesus declares: I am coming quickly.**

**“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”**

We can never miss the note of urgency and warning in all what Jesus tells us about His coming. His message is always be ready!

**Matthew 24:44**

**Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.**

My reward is with Me: If Jesus will give to everyone according to his work, does that mean we are saved by our works? No, but it does show that living faith will have works attached to it.

**James 2:20**

**But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?**

**Titus 3:8**

**This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.**

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last: As an added incentive for us to do and be what is right, being ready for Jesus’ return, He reminds us just who He is. If we really know and understood who Jesus is, we will not have any trouble being ready for His return.

These titles are irrefutable proof that Jesus is Yahweh, the LORD: I, the LORD, am the first; and I am the last. These terms together mean that Jesus is the beginning, middle, and end for the Christian.

**(v14-15) A blessing and a curse is pronounced by someone (perhaps John, perhaps the angel, perhaps Jesus Himself).**

**Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.**

Doing His commandments does not earn us eternal life, but it is evidence that we have been granted eternal life. Besides, there is an inherent blessing in doing His commandments, because they are good and right for us. Why does it say that all dogs will be outside? Is this a refutation of the idea of a heaven for pet dogs? No, what is meant here is “Not literal dogs, but the morally impure… Dogs in the Oriental cities are scavengers and excite unspeakable contempt.

**Matthew 7:6**

**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.**

**Philippians 3:2**

**Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.**

**Jesus brings a word of verification.**

**“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”**

With these solemn words, Jesus authenticates the entire book. Much of the Book of Revelation is either fantastic or seems too good to be true, but it is all true. The Book of Revelation is written to the churches. This book is not a private affair, knowable only by an elite – it is for all believers. It’s also worth noting that this is the first reference to the church since the letters to the seven churches in [Revelation 2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2-3&t=NKJV).

The Root and offspring of David: This is a precious Messianic title.

**Isaiah 11:1**

**And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:**

It shows that Jesus is both the Creator of King David and His descendent. Bright and Morning Star: This is another Messianic title from the Old Testament

**Numbers 24:17**

**I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.**

and the New Testament

**Revelation 2:28**

**And I will give him the morning star.**

Just as the Morning Star (generally held to be the planet Venus) shines and welcomes the new day, so does Jesus.

**The Spirit and the Bride say to all: Come!**

**And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.**

Is this an invitation to Jesus, asking Him to return? Or is it an invitation to those with a spiritual thirst to come to Jesus? Either sense is certainly true. Come! Who can come? Him who hears can come to Jesus, but they can’t come unless they hear. Him who thirsts can come to Jesus, but they can’t come unless they feel their thirst. Whoever desires can come, but they can’t come unless God works in their heart to desire Him. So how do you know if God has worked in your heart? Go through a little checklist. Have you heard? Are you thirsty for God and eternal life? Do you want Him? Then come! Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely: This is an open invitation to receive salvation from Jesus. He will not exclude anyone who comes to Him. An invitation is both an opportunity and a responsibility. If we decline an invitation, we have only ourselves to blame. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely: This is an invitation so great that we can glory in it. Anyone who desires salvation in Jesus Christ can come to Him and take the water of life freely. It is really this simple: do you desire Jesus and His salvation? Then come. Can you say, “Now, Lord, I desire to be saved, give me a new heart; I desire to give up my sins; I desire to be a Christian; I desire to believe and desire to obey. But I have no strength to do this. I have the desire, give me the power.” If this is your desire, then you are freely invited to come, if you are only willing. There is no barrier between you and Jesus except your stubborn will.

**(v18-19) Someone brings a warning – either Jesus, or an angel, or John.**

**For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**

This is another section at the end of the Book of Revelation where it is difficult to tell exactly who spoke. In most red-letter editions, these words are in black, indicating that the translators believe that these were not the words of Jesus. But there may be good reason to believe Jesus gave this warning.

If anyone adds… if anyone takes away: This means that there is a high price to pay for tampering with the Book of Revelation specifically, and the Scriptures in general.

**(v20-21) Last words.**

**He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.**

To the very end, the Book of Revelation emphasizes readiness and watchfulness. If we miss this practical lesson from the Book of Revelation – the lesson of readiness – then we miss the essential message of the book. If the statement “I am coming quickly” were not enough, Jesus puts emphasis on both sides – surely before and amen after. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! With this phrase, John used an idea related to an Aramaic expression that was well known in the ancient church: Maranatha! The Book of Revelation concerns many prophetic events, but the book closes with John’s longing for the return of Jesus for His people – he wants the rapture of the church.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen: The book (and the Bible) ends with a word of grace, and grace for all. The last verse of the Old Testament contains a curse: Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse

**Malachi 4:6**

**6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.**

Fittingly, the last words of the New Testament speak of grace, because grace describes God’s dealing with man on the basis of the New Covenant.