

Prayer

The book of Revelation tells us about the conclusion of everything. It builds to this point, and we are given an inspired outline concerning the contents of the book as seen in Revelation 1:19.

Slide # 1

Revelation 1:19 – Inspired Outline

Revelation 1:19 (NKJV)

19 “Write the things which you **have seen**, and the things **which are**, and the things which will take place **after this**.

- “have seen” – Past (Vision of Christ) – **Ch. 1**
- “which are” – Present (Church Age) – Ch. 2-3
- “after this” – Future (Post-Church Age) – Ch. 4-22
- - Scene in heaven – Ch. 4-5
- - Tribulation – Ch. 6-18
- - Second Coming – Ch. 19
- - Kingdom – Ch. 20
- - **Eternal State – Ch. 21-22**

Genesis is the book of beginnings, telling us where it all began.

Revelation shows the consummation of all things eventuating in the **Eternal State**.

In Genesis we have – **PARADISE LOST** – In Revelation we have – **PARADISE RESTORED**.

At the conclusion of the millennial kingdom, there is going to be the creation of a New Heaven and a New Earth. And then we see a New Jerusalem descending out of the New Heaven. This New Jerusalem is the special place – the eternal home that God has prepared for His people. It is a golden city – a jeweled city –, and I take it as a type of “garden” city based on the word **PARADISE** (meaning “walled garden” or “king’s garden”) as seen in Revelation 2:7, and the tree of life language carried over from the garden of Eden in Genesis 3 as seen in Revelation 22. As presented in Revelation 21-22, the New Jerusalem is...

Slide # 2

THE NEW JERUSALEM...

A holy city

A prepared city

An indescribably beautiful city

A city where God intimately dwells with His people

A city where never again will the effects of sin be felt

The New Jerusalem will be the **WORSHIP CENTER** of the new universe. It is where God uniquely dwells with His people, with the intimate presence of God pervading the entire place continually forever and ever.

Last time in Revelation 22:1-5 – we noted the emphasis on the **quality of “life”** for the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. In effect, the New Jerusalem is **PARADISE RESTORED**.

Everything is about **newness and life** in this city. There is the **water of life** flowing from the Throne. There is the **tree of life** on the banks of the river. Nothing will ever grow old here. The effects of decay and death are gone. There is no more curse. It is a place of great activity, with the kings of the new earth coming and going, and the citizens of the city serving God and reigning under Him.

This brings us to the **EPILOGUE** of the book as found in Revelation 22:6-21.

No other words in the Bible carry more significance than Revelation 22:6-21. Herein lies the testimony of angels, of God the Father, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of John himself to the validity and genuineness of this prophecy and the imminent return of Jesus Christ. – **David Levy**

“The book closes in an epilogue (vv. 6-21) with a rapid succession of voices, instructions, statements, and promises.” – **Robert Thomas**

In this section, there are three prominent emphases. 1) An affirmation of the genuineness of prophecy; 2) An emphasis on the imminence of Christ’s return; and 3) a warning to those not right with God coupled with an invitation to get right while you can.

Revelation 22:6 (NKJV)

6 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.

In view is the revealing angel that has been on the scene since 21:9. He has revealed to John the glories of the New Jerusalem as seen in chapters 21 and 22.

He tells John, “**These words are faithful**” [meaning trustworthy/reliable] and they are “**true**” [meaning accurate/real]. This combination of faithful and true is found 4 times in the book (cf. 3:14; 19:11; 21:5; 22:6).

This same emphasis was made in relation to the introductory verses regarding the New Heavens, the New Earth, and the New Jerusalem at 21:5 – and now again we have the very same emphasis at the conclusion of its discussion. So this whole section on the New Jerusalem is bracketed with this emphasis.

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Revelation 21:5 (NKJV)

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “**Write, for these words are true and faithful.**”

Revelation 22:6 (NKJV)

6 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.

Whenever God says something once, it is SIGNIFICANT. When He states it twice in reference to any subject, He is making a very strong emphasis. This is absolutely, dogmatically true – you can drive an eternal stake down here.

The unique truth and trustworthiness of the revealed word (and words) of God are underscored seven times in the last two chapters of Revelation [see Rev. 21:5; 22:6,7,9,10, 18, 19]. – **ESV Study Bible**

What is being stressed here are the realities of the eternal state regarding the New Jerusalem. That is the context here. We have seen the beauty of the city, the illumination of the city, the intimacy of God with His people in this city, the quality of life called PARADISE in this city.

It's all emphatically TRUE! "These words are faithful and true." Says who? Says God Almighty – once directly from the throne (21:5) and once via His angel who delivers the message (22:6).

"**Faithful and True**" is used twice in Revelation as a title for Jesus Christ (cf. Rev. 3:14, 19:11). This message here in 21 and 22 is just as certain as the very character of Jesus Christ. You can't get more certain than that!

In the first PARADISE in the garden of Eden, Satan came to Eve and introduced seeds of doubt in reference to the Word of God, thereby questioning both the accuracy and authority of God's Word.

Slide # 4

Genesis 3:1 (NKJV)

1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "**Has God indeed said**, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

Now, in reference to PARADISE RESTORED, we have a double emphasis that it is all true. Don't let the devil get you to question or doubt it. It's all true. The best is yet to be. PARADISE RESTORED is coming for the overcomer who truly knows Jesus Christ.

These words are not merely John's mystical notions; they are not the fruit of bizarre hallucinations or wild-eyed dreams; they are not the result of an overactive imagination; they are not some allegorical message which requires finding some mysterious deeper meaning.

NO! These WORDS are from God. They are to be taken at face value. They are true and faithful, and we need to take this emphasis seriously.

So many in history have not taken Revelation as "seriously" as they should have. The Reformers didn't really deal with the book of Revelation – essentially at all. Calvin wrote a commentary on every book of the Bible except Revelation. Likewise, in our day we often hear, "*Stay away from the book of Revelation – it is just full of symbolism and allegory – no one can really understand it.*" That spirit completely misses the emphasis of Revelation 21:5 and 22:6, which says this message can be relied on – it is to be taken for what it plainly teaches. It is "**faithful and true.**" You can drive a stake down here!

And then he gives us the basis for making this strong statement of genuineness, saying, “***And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.***”

This phrase is very significant because it ties together the whole of prophetic Scriptures, including the book of Revelation. In the immediate context, the words “faithful and true” apply to the New Jerusalem and the Eternal State, but now the language broadens and applies “faithful and true” words to the entire book of Revelation.

The same God who spoke through the prophets also spoke through the apostle John. As the capstone of God’s revelation, John’s book cannot be divorced from the rest of the Bible. – **Warren Wiersbe**

The signature of divine inspiration is everywhere in this book. ...It interconnects Old and New Testament truths with prophetic events and provides a picture of the future with God fully in control.
– **Ed Hindson**

The Scriptures as originally given were about 25 percent prophecy. We have prophecy interspersed throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The Lord God is behind it all. He sovereignly superintended and inspired all of prophecy. The Bible STANDS ALONE as a prophetic book amongst all the religious literature of the world. There is no other truly prophetic book. Peter in 2 Peter 1 strengthens his own personal testimony by saying we have “***a more sure word of prophecy.***”

Just as God inspired the OT prophecies, so also the book of Revelation. Revelation is the CAPSTONE of prophecy and cannot be divorced from the rest of the Scriptures. It all comes to consummation in Revelation. Revelation serves to tie all the previous prophetic truth into a grand conclusion.

As we study prophecy, we find that it ALWAYS has a literal fulfillment. Note a few examples: 1) God’s people would be in slavery for 400 years (Gen. 15:13). 2) Abraham would have a son by Sarah (Gen. 17-18). 3) Israel would be taken into captivity (Lev. 26:33-39). 4) Judah, more specifically, would be taken to Babylon for 70 years (Jer. 29:10). 5) Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). 6) Messiah would be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14). 7) Messiah would die a brutal death with all kinds of details listed in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53, etc.

All these prophecies were LITERALLY fulfilled. In that same vein, all the prophecies of Revelation will be literally fulfilled. Just as sure as the first coming prophecies of the Messiah were literally fulfilled in Jesus, so also will the prophecies related to the Second Coming and what follows literally be fulfilled.

All prophetic revelation is true (cf. Rev. 15:3; 16:7; 19:2). ***These words are faithful and true!*** That is true of the revelation of New Jerusalem, it is true of the holy prophets, and it is true of future things as revealed throughout the book of Revelation.

The Lord God who inspired the holy prophets has now sent His angel to show His servants the things that must shortly take place.

Again, this puts the book of Revelation on the same par as the inspired message of the holy prophets. It's all inspired Scripture.

Angels have been involved in the Revelation all along, but in the most immediate context, one of the 7 angels involved with the bowl judgments has just revealed to John these special insights about the New Jerusalem (21:9, 22:1).

But the message wasn't only for John, but also for God's servants. Servants is literally "**slaves**."

This revelation concerns what is about to happen, and it is delivered to God's servants who are shown to be those in the churches, as seen in verse 16. This revelation was sent specifically to the seven churches of Asia Minor, as noted in 1:11, but then the repeated refrain "the Spirit says to the churches" throughout Revelation 2 and 3 shows that application is to be made to all local churches (cf. 2:7...).

God's pattern in prophecy is to reveal to His people what will take place and then to make it happen.

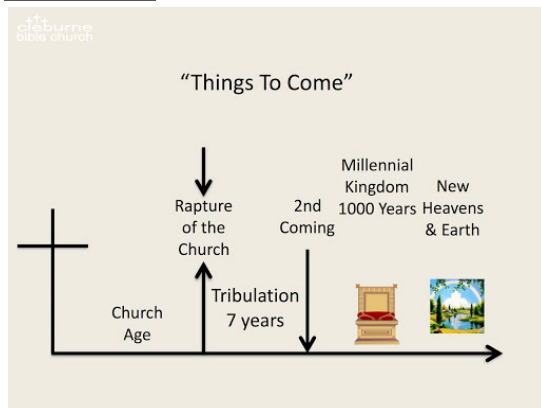
Slide # 5

Amos 3:7 (NKJV)

7 Surely the Lord God **does nothing**, Unless He **reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.**

God has shown us what is coming in the future. Following the church age (Rev. 2-3) will come the Tribulation Period (Rev. 6-18), followed by the millennial kingdom (Rev. 19-20), followed by the eternal state (Rev. 21-22). God has made it very clear to us what is coming. The next great event on God's prophetic calendar is the Rapture of the Church – **PERHAPS TODAY!**

Slide # 6



When he says, “***the things which must shortly take place***,” this phrase ties closely with the emphasis made in the prologue in Rev. 1:1

Slide # 7

Revelation 1:1 (NKJV)

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—**things which must shortly take place**. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

Repeatedly we find the same emphases coming through, first in the prologue and then in the epilogue – in the introduction and in the conclusion of the book.

“sent His angel to show to His slaves the things that must happen soon” is a direct reference to 1:1 and the purpose of the book as a whole. – **Robert Thomas**

Shortly – means “soon.”

Prophetically speaking, these things are on the threshold of happening.

A key interpretive marker in this context is the “***Do not seal the words of this prophecy***” as seen in verse 10.

There is to be no more pause or gap – prophetically speaking. I think it is important to note we are speaking prophetically – which speaks to the next things on God’s prophetic calendar – not necessarily “soon” as we might in our humanness think in terms of time. Instead of being sealed, these things are now to be unraveled.

It is like the strand of a thread – that once you begin to pull it, the whole thing unravels. The Church age will immediately give way to the Tribulation Period, which will immediately give way to the Second Coming, which will immediately give way to the kingdom. In that sense, these things are at hand – shortly to take place.

Note that at the time John is writing, which we believe was probably around AD 95, these things still had a future fulfillment.

The reason I mention this is that there is a heresy called PRETERISM. The word PRETERISM comes from the Latin word “preter,” meaning “past”. There are varying degrees of this heresy, but in general they claim that the prophecies of judgment, etc., were essentially fulfilled in 70 AD. This allows them to do away with a future for Israel. In addition, they are often those who stress POLITICAL ACTIVISM, claiming it is up to the Christians to turn this world around. In contrast, sound doctrine that takes prophecy literally/normally realizes the end of the age will bring about apostate conditions that only Jesus Christ will ultimately turn around.

Verse 6 is clear that these things must take place shortly – meaning in the near future. Well, if John is writing in 95 AD, then that shoots down the 70 AD theory. That is why the Preterist wants to argue for a much earlier date for the book of Revelation, such as (64-67 AD – during the time of Nero). Dr. Mark Hitchcock did his doctoral dissertation on this issue and shows very convincingly that the evidence strongly supports the late 95 AD date.

Revelation 22:7 (NKJV)

7 “Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

At this point, there is a sudden parenthetical **INTERJECTION** by the Lord Himself.

Quickly can mean suddenly or soon. Both are true, properly understood. However, the most natural meaning of the word and the overall context would argue for the idea of SOON. He is coming without delay.

His coming is IMMINENT! Prophetically speaking, His coming for the church, which triggers the events of this book, is the next thing on God's prophetic calendar.

Again, we need to understand the idea of "**coming quickly**" – coming soon in the prophetic sense. Note that this harmonizes with "**shortly take place**" in verse 6 and "the **time is at hand**" in verse 10.

Three times in this chapter Christ says He is coming quickly, as seen in verses 7, 12, and 20. This is not just a DOUBLE EMPHASIS but a TRIPLE EMPHASIS! He is on His way without delay. And again, that fits with the emphasis in verse 10 that this book is not to be sealed.

The rapture is an impending/imminent event! Both the prologue stresses this as does the epilogue. This is a consistent emphasis throughout the NT.

Slide # 8

1 Corinthians 1:7 (NKJV)... **eagerly waiting** for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Philippians 3:20 (NKJV) For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also **eagerly wait for the Savior**, the Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (NKJV) **and to wait for His Son from heaven**,

...

Titus 2:13 (NKJV) **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**,

"The adverb tachy ("quickly") does not refer to the speed at which Christ will travel from heaven to earth when He returns; instead, it has the connotation of "soon", or "before long". The point is that "the Judge is standing right at the door" (James 5:9), poised to return at any moment." – **John MacArthur**

The consistent testimony of the NT is that the expectation of the early church concerned the imminent return of Christ to deliver them from the wrath to come. And the consistent emphasis is to LIVE READY, which is what the remainder of the verse underscores when it says:

"Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

Blessed – this is the 6th of 7 beatitudes in the book. (see 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14)

The one blessed is the person who “keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

The word “keeps” means “to guard”, “to hold fast,” or “to heed.” The same word is used in 14:12 to describe the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

This could be understood in one of two ways.

It could be a blessing pronounced on those **who guard** the message of the book of Revelation, or it could refer to the one who **HEEDS** in the sense of applying it to their own life. The sense then is that obeying the message of this book. This person takes seriously what it says and lives accordingly in view of the imminent coming of the Lord. He takes seriously the reality that judgment is coming to the world. He takes seriously the issues developed in the book concerning eternity and therefore lives in view of an eternal perspective.

I lean toward the latter emphasis of HEEDING because it harmonizes with the emphasis in the **prologue** as well as with the **immediate context**, which stresses the imminence of His coming and living accordingly.

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Revelation 1:3 (NKJV)

3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, **and keep those things which are written in it**; for the time is near.

The book of Revelation is not just to satisfy our curiosity but to spur us on in matters of practical Christian living. To take seriously the coming of Christ and all that goes with it as revealed in Revelation will change the way you live (cf. 1 Pet. 4:7; 2 Pet. 3:11-14).

Slide # 10

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV)

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that **when He is revealed**, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

3 And **everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself**, just as He is pure.

The blessing is on those who live out the Pilgrim faith character of a saving faith, as seen in Hebrews 11(cf. Heb. 11:10-14). These people **look for the city** which has foundations whose builder and maker is God – **they confess** that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth – **they declare** plainly that they seek a homeland – **they desire** a better, that is, a heavenly country, and this changes the way they live. Thus, they keep the words of the prophecy of Revelation, and in this they are BLESSED.

The spirit of faith is reflected in that they HEED the prophetic truth in this book and live in light of it, which is in stark contrast to the earth dwellers committed to the Babylonian system as seen previously in the book.

Revelation 22:8 (NKJV)

8 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.

John affirms that this was his very own experience. He didn't get this secondhand. He saw and heard – stated twice. He didn't just hear – He didn't just see – He saw and heard. It was like a talking vision that was real to his experience.

This wasn't just a shadowy – mystical – dreamy thing – no, it was very real in terms of what John saw and heard. The point is it was REAL and AUTHENTIC – and this again affirms “***these words are faithful and true***” as noted in verse 6.

In context, John has just been given a personal tour of the New Jerusalem by this interpreting angel. And being so overwhelmed by it all, he fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed him these things.

The EXPERIENCE in this spiritual realm was absolutely overwhelming. John feels compelled to worship! The same thing happened in Revelation 19:10 when John was shown realities related to the 2nd coming.

Now the issue with the angel often gets all the press at this point, but the real issue is the REVELATION that John has just been shown – what John saw and heard. Again, note the DOUBLE emphasis on “these things.” What he heard and saw was mind-blowing to the point that it seems he was somewhat discombobulated. It was totally overwhelming. Don't miss that point. The REVELATION itself is the MAJOR point! It was incredible beyond what we can imagine or comprehend.

And with that in mind, John felt compelled to worship – which, by the way, is the proper thing to do if it is directed to God. But the problem was that he directed it to the messenger, to the angel, instead of to God.

Angels are awesome creatures, but they too are just created beings and are not to be worshipped.

Side # 11

Colossians 2:18 (NKJV)

18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

We are not to be enamored or preoccupied with angels. They are not to be worshiped.

It is easy for us to rebuke John for this response, but I think we need to realize just how overpowering this experience was. Yes, John was wrong in this action, but he was just responding without thinking.

He had already been corrected on this score earlier in chapter 19:10, and now once again he is making the same mistake. He knows better theologically (cf. Jn. 4:21-24), but emotionally and experientially he was overcome in the moment. For the moment he loses his bearings and needs to be corrected. It speaks to ...

The awesomeness of the REVELATION.

The awesomeness of the intimate presence of an angel.

Revelation 22:9 (NKJV)

9 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.**”

The angel rebukes John – telling him flat out to “not do that.” He then tells John, “For I am your fellow servant,” or more literally, “your fellow slave.” In effect, he says, “I too am just a created being serving the will of God.”

He further says, “***I am of your brethren the prophets.***” Again, John is LINKED with the prophets – but now the angel also links himself with them in the sense that he too is merely a fellow instrument of REVELATION.

Prophets and angels are merely instruments of REVELATION. The very word angel means “messenger”.

And then he explains that he too is one of those ***“who keep the words of this book.”***

Note that the angel makes a distinction between John’s brethren who are prophets and those who keep the words of this book. John belongs to the category of prophets who bring forth New Revelation – but the other category speaks to those who obey the Revelation that is given.

Note that there are four categories in view here.

Slide # 12

- **John:** An apostle/an authoritative representative of Jesus Christ who gives forth NT Revelation.
- **Angel:** A messenger of Revelation.
- **Prophets:** Those who gave forth inspired Revelation.
- **Those who keep the words of this book:** Those who live according to what God has revealed.

All these are on the same level of being fellow servants of God and His truth, although they have different roles in the plan and will of God! All are created beings – all serve the will and purposes of God. All are merely servants. None are to be worshipped! Only God is to be worshipped!

The angel concludes: “Worship God.”

“Since John’s day to the present, the attempt has been made to divert worship from God. In the heathen world it is directed to sticks, stones, serpents. In the realm of Christendom it is directed to images of saints, crosses and cathedrals. This false worship will reach its climax in the worship of the beast. No more important phrase is found in the entire book than that of the angel [when he says ‘Worship God.’].”

- **John VanGorder**

Worship is the proper response as one is lost in wonder, love, and praise, but it must ONLY be directed to God.

When Peter came to share the gospel with Cornelius, Cornelius fell down at his feet to worship him. Immediately Peter lifted him up, saying, ***“Stand up, I myself am also a man.”*** (Acts 10:24-25).

When John twice fell at the feet of an angel to worship him, both times he was rebuked for doing so (Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9).

Slide # 13

Revelation 19:10 (NKJV)

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “**See that you do not do that!** I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the **testimony of Jesus**. **Worship God!** For the **testimony of Jesus** is the spirit of prophecy.”

And note that in Revelation 19:10, “**Worship God!**” is bracketed on both sides with “**the testimony of Jesus**,” who is worthy to be worshiped. In the gospels, the disciples worshiped Him (cf. Matt. 14:33). In Revelation 1 John fell at the feet of the risen Christ as a dead man (Rev. 1:17). Christ is the grand subject of the book, and throughout worship is attributed to Him and the Father (cf. 1:1; 5:8-14; 7:9-12; 15:2-4; 19:10).

Whereas angels are not to be worshiped, we find in Hebrews 1:6 that they worship the Son.

“A proper understanding of Revelation should elicit worship; thus, worship is a major theme in the Apocalypse (cf. 4:8-11; 5:8-14; 7:9-12; 15:2-4; 19:1-6). ...God alone is the only acceptable Person to worship. The Bible forbids the worship of anyone else, including angels, saints, the Virgin Mary, or any other created being (cf. Col. 2:18). – **John MacArthur**

Revelation 22:10 (NKJV)

10 And he said to me, “**Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.**”

This is a key interpretive verse related to the timing emphasis in this chapter.

Slide # 14

Revelation 22

- v. 6 – “must shortly take place.”
- v. 8 – “Behold, I am coming quickly!”
- v. 10 – “for the time is at hand.”
- v. 12 – “And behold, I am coming quickly.”
- v. 20 – “Surely I am coming quickly.”

Thus, throughout this chapter there is an imminency and an urgency to be right with God.

“That the specific words of Revelation are not to be sealed up stresses again that there is no hidden, secret meaning apart from the normal sense of the text. If the truth is not clear in those words, then this command is nonsense. If the plain, normal understanding of the words of Revelation does not convey the meaning God intended its readers to grasp, then those words are sealed.” [But in fact they are not sealed – hidden] – **John MacArthur**

This is the book of Revelation. The word translated as “Revelation” is the Greek word “apocalypse,” which literally means “unveiling,” and therefore it must not be sealed.

As a side note, the literal meaning of the word “Apocrypha” is “hidden” or “veiled,” which is the exact opposite of “apocalypse.” The NT is all about light. Our Savior Jesus Christ “**has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**” (2 Tim. 1:10).

But not only is “clarity” in view, but also “timing” – prophetically speaking. The reason they are not to be sealed is because “the time is at hand.” Sealing indicates delay, but now there is to be no more delay.

600 years earlier, God had told Daniel to seal the words of his prophecy. The fulfillment would be a long way down the road. In many ways, it did not have an immediate relevance (cf. Dan. 8:26).

Slide # 15

Daniel 12:4 (NKJV)

4 “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and **seal the book until the time of the end;** many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

Daniel 12:9 (NKJV)

9 And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and **sealed till the time of the end.**”

Revelation builds on Daniel! Without the book of Revelation, and other N.T. revelation, there are a lot of things hard to put together in Daniel’s prophecies.

But now we are at the time of the end, and the book of Revelation, which is a further commentary on Daniel, is an “**open book**”. It is no longer sealed! It fills in our understanding that which was previously dark and hard to understand.

Note the connection between “**Do not seal**” and “**the time is at hand.**” As addressed in Revelation 2-3, the church age is now in view, which will usher in these last days events as found in the book of Revelation. We are at the end – prophetically speaking!

Therefore, there is immediate relevance to the contents of this book. Instead of postponing disclosure, now is the time to be aware of these prophetic things. The time for their fulfillment is “at hand.”

Slide # 16

1 Corinthians 10:11 (NKJV)

11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, **upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**

We must take “**the time is at hand**” “prophetically” in terms of the program of God. The next event on God’s prophetic calendar is the rapture of the church, which will then usher in all the end-time events mentioned in the book of Revelation.

There are no more gap periods – no more delays – before the end of the ages. It is right now currently upon us. This God has clearly told us in Revelation!

Picture it this way. You are marching forward towards a destination. It is a ways off, but you move steadily towards the destiny. Then you come right to the cusp of the destiny – right to the river's edge, and on the other side is your destiny. You are RIGHT THERE at the cusp. You then move up the bank of the river as it curves around – you go up and down hills, etc waiting for a bridge to come into view, which will bring final passage to the other side.

In effect, you have reached your destiny – all but for the passage to the other side – but you have no idea how long you will follow the winding path of the river until you reach the bridge. And prophetically speaking, this cross-over point is the RAPTURE, which is ever imminent!

This is a fitting illustration of the idea of the “**prophetic soon**” as presented in Revelation. We are on the cusp of the fulfillment of end-time events – but we don’t know how far we will have to follow the bend and turning of the historical events until we reach the bridge of the rapture that takes us across the final threshold that ushers all these things into place.

Revelation 22:11 (NKJV)

11 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.”

This verse is found in the setting of the eternal state where all has been settled for all eternity.

Slide # 17

Unjust means unrighteous, wrongdoer, evil, or wicked.

Filthy means morally vile, impure, or unclean.

Righteous means being in right relationship with God, just, or upright.

Holy means set apart for God.

Note the repeated emphasis on “still” (Gk. *eti*), emphasizing a fixed position for all eternity. Consistent with the warning passages in chapter 21 and 22 (cf. Rev. 21:8, 27, 22:15), this verse indicates that true conversion results in a changed life. Those unchanged in this life will remain in that condition for all eternity.

Of course, it is always best for sinful people to repent. But if not, the verse implies, so be it. – ***The Moody Bible Commentary***

At first reading, this verse appears to be “fatalistic,” but that misses the context (cf. Ezek. 3:27; Dan. 12:10)

The discussion in context revolves around the eternal state. The coming of Christ, triggering events eventuating in the ETERNAL STATE, is imminent. Eternity is in the balance, and once in the eternal state, people will have a fixed state. They will be locked into what they were upon arriving in eternity. Eternity permanently fixes one’s character and eternal destiny.

“The verse does not teach some kind of religious determinism that makes repentance and conversion impossible for some people. The invitation of 22:17 makes clear that an opportunity for the right choice remains. Here is indirectly the formulation of a powerful warning against putting off one’s decision to become a faithful follower of the Lamb.” – ***Robert Thomas***

“There will come a time when change will be impossible – when no further opportunity will be given for repentance on the one hand or for apostasy on the other.” - **Henry Swete**

As such, this is a fitting URGENT warning in light of the context of the imminence of last days events. Now is the time to change. If a person won't respond to the awesome warnings of this book – there is no hope for them. They will retain their evil/filthy natures forever – a picture of hell where they will have to live with themselves forever.

“By this he does not mean that men should remain unmoved by the prophecies of this book, but rather that if the prophecies are rejected, there is no other message that will work. If the warnings of the book are not sufficient, there is no more that God has to say. ... It is an either/or proposition with no neutrality possible.” – **John Walvoord**

“Here is indirectly the formulation of a powerful warning against putting off one's decision to become a faithful follower of the Lamb. The time remaining is short, and once it is up, no more opportunity to change remains. Because of the imminence of Jesus' coming to initiate the events of this book, the response of a person to its message may very well be the decision that will carry him to his eternal state, whatever that may be. ... The lesson is 'Change while there is time'.” – **Robert Thomas**

“Those who hear the truth but continue to do wrong and be filthy will be that hardened response fix their eternal destiny in hell. On the other hand, the one who continues to practice righteousness and keep himself holy gives evidence of genuine saving faith. Preaching Revelation draws a line. Its truths will melt the hearts of the repentant and harden the hearts of the unrepentant. Those same truths thus become either an instrument of salvation, or an instrument of damnation.” – **John MacArthur**

Slide # 18



There are FOUR great emphases in our text today regarding the eternal state.

- 1) The message is as certain as it can be – these words are faithful and true.
- 2) The imminent coming of Christ is ever a reality that will trigger all these end-time events.
- 3) The appropriate response is to WORSHIP God!
- 4) It serves as a WARNING that NOW is the time to respond to the message because in eternity both character and destiny will be permanently fixed. There is no “second chance” in the afterlife!

“A man is traveling in a railway train. Shall he get out at such and such a station? He halts between two opinions; really he can’t make up his mind. Meantime, the train has gone up to the station and is off again thundering through the dark – and the man has decided against boarding there just because he could not make up his mind. Few people calmly and deliberately decide against the Lord. But multitudes do it who never thought to do it, by the easy way of not deciding.” - **George Morrison**

The train of time is moving on, and there are a series of STATIONS we might call “**Now Stations**” along the path of life - but then the train moves on and soon, very soon, either death or the Lord’s coming will usher in eternity with no more opportunity to change position (cf. 2 Cor. 6:2; Heb. 3:15).

The Bible says, “**Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**” (2 Cor. 6:2). The Bible says, “**Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.**”

This week I shared Christ with my neighbor who is on hospice care. I shared with him about the thief on the cross who was mocking Christ (Matt. 27:44), but then had a change of mind (called repentance) and, looking to Jesus in faith, said, “**Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom,**” and Jesus said, “**Today you will be with Me in Paradise.**” (Lk. 23:42-43)

I said, “*Don, the good news is that the converted thief shows us that it is never too late as long as we are breathing and you still can call on the Lord and be saved.*” (cf. Hb. 9:27). But NOW is the accepted time!

Come to Jesus! Now is the accepted time! Eternity is the balance.