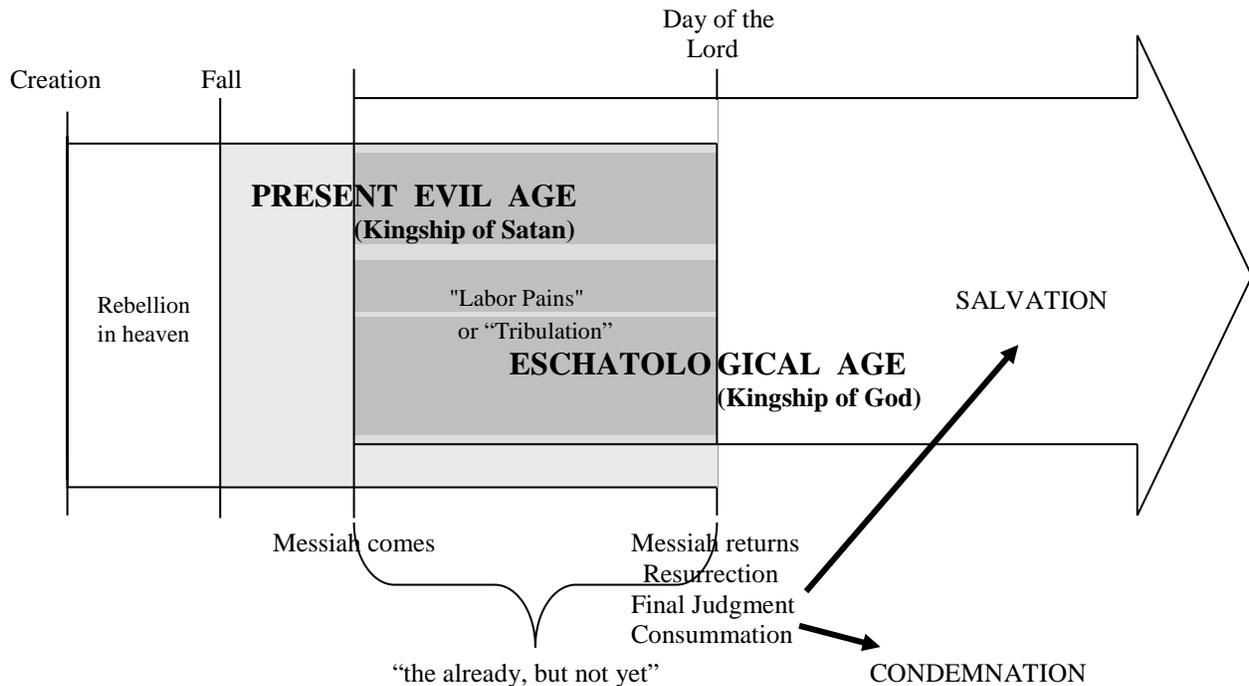


VISIONS OF REVELATION

Session 4: John's Vision of Victory (Revelation 21:1-22:5)

THE SHAPE OF CHRISTIAN APOCALYPTIC THEOLOGY



- A. "I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering (*thlipsis*) and kingdom (*basileia*) and patient endurance (*hypomone*) that are ours in Jesus..." (Revelation 1:9)
- B. "... not one stone [of the Temple] here will be left on another . . . All these are the beginning of birth pains . . . there will be great distress (*thlipsis*), unequalled from the beginning of the world until now" (Matthew 24:2, 8, 21)
- C. "Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus. . . . The beast [from the sea] was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months (Revelation 12:17; 13:5)

THE STRUCTURE OF JOHN'S APOCALYPSE

"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later." (Rev 1:19)

"After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.'" (Rev 4:1)

"The angel said to me, 'These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place.'" (Rev 22:6)

A. Prologue (Rev 1:1-20)

B. Part I: The Revelation of "What Is Now" [= John's Present] (Rev 2:1-3:22)

C. Part II: The Revelation of "What Will Take Place Later" [John's Future] (Rev 4:1-22:6)

1. Introduction: John's Heavenly Vantage Point (Rev 4:1-5:14)

2. First Vision of the Future (Rev 6:1-8:1)

3. Second Vision of the Future (Rev 8:2-11:19)

4. Third Vision of the Future (Rev 12:1-22:6)

John sees a vision of the complete future pictured as the Dragon's war against Christ and his final defeat:

- a. The Labor Pains pictured as the Dragon's war against Christians through the beast from the sea and beast from the land (Rev 12-13)
- b. Images of the Final Judgment, which brings the Salvation of God's people and the Destruction of His enemies (Rev 14:1-22:6)
 - (1) Salvation: The song of the redeemed and announcement of judgment (14:1-13)
 - (2) Destruction: The harvest of the earth and grapes of wrath (14:14-20)
 - (3) Destruction: The seven last plagues or seven bowls symbolizing God's complete wrath poured out at the Final Judgment (15:1-16:21 with interlude in 16:25 encouraging suffering Christians to view their present in light of the future)
 - (4) Destruction: The fall of Babylon (17:1-19:4)
 - (5) Salvation: The wedding supper of the Lamb (19:5-10)
 - (6) Destruction: The victorious Christ and great supper of God (19:11-21)
 - (7) Destruction and Salvation: A vision patterned after Ezekiel 37-48, which encourages readers to think of the coming of God's Kingship as a "Second Return from Babylonian Exile" to the "New Jerusalem" and the presence of God in His Temple (20:1-22:6)

D. Epilogue (Rev 22:7-21)

THE CONSUMMATED KINGSHIP OF GOD (Revelation 21:1-22:5)

^{21:1}Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ²I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusa-

lem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

⁵He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

⁶He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. ⁸But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

⁹One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." ¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹²It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. ¹³There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. ¹⁴The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. ¹⁶The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. ¹⁷He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using. ¹⁸The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

²²I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

^{22:1}Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

⁵There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

A. The Consummated Kingship of God will be the _____ of God (Revelation 22:3b):
The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

B. The Consummated Kingship of God will bring the _____ of _____ and the end of the _____ (Revelation 21:1b, 4, 8, 27; 22:3a):

...for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea....⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

...⁸But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

...²⁷Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

...^{22:3a}No longer will there be any curse.

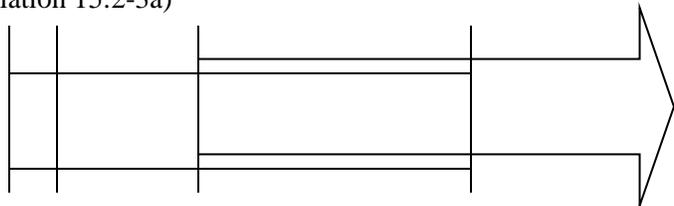
1. "No longer will there be any curse" (22:3):

¹⁷Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, "You must not eat of it," Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return. (Genesis 3:17-19)

2. "There was no longer any sea" (21:3):

Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. (Revelation 4:6)

And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They held harps given them by God and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb.... (Revelation 15:2-3a)



3. The _____ of evil (21:8, 27):

- C. The Consummated Kingship of God brings the _____ of Creation and the establishment of the _____ (Revelation 21:1a, 5, 6a, 24b, 26):

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth....

⁵He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

^{6a}He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End."

...^{24b}the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it....²⁶The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

1. Imagery of Isaiah 65:17-19:

¹⁷Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. ¹⁹I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more. (Isaiah 65:17-19)

2. God does not make _____, but _____. (M. Eugene Boring)

¹⁸I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:18-23)

3. Paul on the Consummation (1 Corinthians 3:10-15):

¹⁰By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. ¹¹For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day [of the Lord] will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

4. "The kings of the earth will bring their splendor into [God's Kingship]...The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it." (Revelation 21:24, 26):

In the last days the mountain of the LORD'S temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. (Isaiah 2:2)

Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn...the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come...Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations—their kings led in triumphal procession. For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined." (Isaiah 60:3, 5, 11-12).

5. "It is done!" (Revelation 21:6; compare 16:17):

- D. The Consummated Kingship of God will be a _____ made up of God's _____ (Revelation 21:2a, 10, 12-21):

21:2aI saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God....

...¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God....¹²It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. ¹³There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. ¹⁴The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. ¹⁶The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. ¹⁷He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using. ¹⁸The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

1. "City" (*polis*):

2. “A mountain great and high...the Holy City, the new Jerusalem” (compare Revelation 11:2; Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22):

3. “Coming down out of heaven from God”:

4. “Twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb”:

Compare Ephesians 2:19-20 (see also Matthew 16:18):

¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

5. “It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west”:

6. “12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long”:

7. “Its wall...was 144 cubits thick”:

8. “The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst” (compare Isaiah 54:11-12; Tobit 13:16-18):

Compare Exodus 28:15-21:

¹⁵Fashion a breastpiece for making decisions—the work of a skilled craftsman. Make it like the ephod: of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen. ¹⁶It is to be square—a span long and a span wide—and folded double. ¹⁷Then mount four rows of precious stones on it. In the first row there shall be a ruby, a topaz and a beryl; ¹⁸in the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and an emerald; ¹⁹in the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst; ²⁰in the fourth row a chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper. Mount them in gold filigree settings. ²¹There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes (cf. Exodus 39:8-14; Ezekiel 28:13, LXX).

- E. The Consummated Kingship of God will be a “_____” where God is _____
(Revelation 21:3, 11, 15-16, 22-24a, 25; 22:4-5a):

³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God....

...¹¹It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

¹⁵The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. ¹⁶The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long....

²²I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ^{24a}The nations will walk by its light...

²⁵On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there....

...^{22:4}They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ^{5a}There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light.

1. The Jewish Tabernacle/Temple:

⁸Have [Israel] make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them...²²There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites. (Exodus 25:8, 22)

⁴⁴So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. ⁴⁵Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. ⁴⁶They will know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God. (Exodus 29:44-46)

I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there. (1 Kings 9:3)

¹⁰When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. ¹¹And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled his temple. (1 Kings 8:10-11)

2. “I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple”:

3. "The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long" (compare Ezekiel 40-42):

The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty wide and twenty high. (1 Kings 6:20; compare 2 Chronicles 3:8-9; Matthew 27:51)

And the name of the city from that time on will be: THE LORD IS THERE. (Ezekiel 48:35b)

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling (*literally* "Tent") of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people (*literally* "peoples"), and God himself will be with them and be their God. (Revelation 21:3)

They will see his face (*compare 1 John 3:2 and contrast Exodus 33:18-23*), and his name will be on their foreheads (*compare Revelation 3:12*). (Revelation 22:4)

4. "It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal...The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light...On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there...There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light" (Revelation 21:11, 23-24a, 25; 22:5a):

- F. In the Consummated Kingship of God, Christians will enjoy the _____ with God (Revelation 21:2b, 7, 9):

^{2b}prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband (compare Revelation 19:5-10)....

...⁷He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son....

⁹One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

G. The Consummated Kingship of God will be _____ (Revelation 21:6b; 22:1-2, 5b):

21:6bTo him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

22:1Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb **2**down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month (compare Revelation 2:7; 1 Enoch 24-25; Testament of Levi 18:11). **And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations...****5b****And they will reign for ever and ever.**

⁸Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

^{10a}A river watering the garden flowed from Eden.... (Genesis 2:8-10a)

¹The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east... ^{7b}I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. ⁸He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the [Dead] Sea. When it empties into the Sea, the water there becomes fresh.

⁹Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live... ¹²Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing. (Ezekiel 47:1a, 7b-9, 12; compare Zechariah 14)

CONCLUSION OF THE VISION OF THE FUTURE (Revelation 22:6)

⁶The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."

Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. (Revelation 1:19)

EPILOGUE (Revelation 22:7-21)

... ¹²"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

¹⁴"Blessed are those who wash their robes (compare Revelation 19:8), that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs (compare Matthew 15:21-28 // Mark 7:24-30; Philippians 3:2), those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

¹⁷The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

¹⁸I 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. ¹⁹And if anyone takes words away 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.

²⁰He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Davis, Christopher A. *The College Press NIV Commentary: Revelation*. Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2000. 393pp.