

Revelation 19:1 – 10

Heaven Exults over Babylon

¹ After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honour and power belong to the Lord our God! ² For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." ³ Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" ⁴ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" ⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" ⁶ And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! ⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." ⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." 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."

We now turn our attention to the marriage of the Lamb and His wife, who it is seen, has made herself ready. We have already seen that the church is bride of Christ, and Israel was His wife, both signifying the closeness of the relationship with no sexual connotations. It is about knowing and being known. This is when our engagement comes to an end and our marriage takes place. We don't have time to go into it here, but if you listen to the teaching on the Jewish wedding ceremony and the rapture of the church, it will set everything in context.

After the ceremony comes the feast. Blessed are those who are bidden and invited to this feast it tells us in verse 9 and it indicates that the supper will be held in a different place to the marriage ceremony.

The Old Testament saints are not resurrected until after the Tribulation, John the Baptist, who was an Old Testament saint, called himself a **friend** of the bridegroom and did not consider himself to be a member of the Bride, the Church –

John 3:29 – 30

²⁹ He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.'

So, many who are called to attend the marriage feast on the earth are the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints who will be resurrected after the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

Whilst the marriage ceremony will take place in heaven, the feast will take place on earth. In fact it seems that it is the feast that begins the Millennium and the glorious reign and rule of Jesus on the earth for 1,000 years, hence the parables Jesus told about the wedding feast –

Matthew 22: 1 – 14 -

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

'¹ And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: ² "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son ³ and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. ⁴ Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.'"⁵ But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. ⁶ And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. ⁷ But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹ Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'¹⁰ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹ "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. ¹² So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'¹⁴ "For many are called, but few are chosen."

Matthew 25: 1 -13 –

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins

'¹ "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. ³ Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, ⁴ but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. ⁵ But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. ⁶ "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' ⁷ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'⁹ But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. ¹¹ "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' ¹² But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'¹³ "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.'

John the Baptist and the Old Testament saints, who were not part of the Bride but are the friends of the Bridegroom, will be those who are invited – so all the believing dead from Adam until the resurrection of Jesus will be guests at this feast. In addition to this vast number, there will also be the tribulation martyrs and those who received Jesus as Saviour during the Tribulation period but before we enjoy this, Jesus has a battle to fight.

The battle before Jesus sets up His Millennial Kingdom is usually referred to as the Battle of Armageddon. This is useful only to pinpoint the stage in the proceedings it occurs, which is **at the end of the Great Tribulation, at the Second Advent.**

As we will see it could more properly be titled the great Day of His Wrath, because the battle is fought over a wide area of Palestine. Armageddon means 'Mount of Slaughter' and refers to the beautiful valley to the east of Mount Megiddo. There are a series of at least four 'campaigns' and the carnage and the horror of the scene are described only generally in verses 17 -21. We cannot do full justice to this because of time constraints, so we will briefly look at what is happening here –

Revelation 19:11 – 16

Christ on a White Horse

¹¹Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.'

This is the glorious appearing. His coming in glory will be in marked contrast to His first coming, when He fulfilled the prophecies of a suffering servant. This time, He returns as Conquering King – and the most awesome of events, 'He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.' We cannot close this study without looking at the major passage in the Old Testament that talks about this time –

Isaiah 63: 1 – 6

The LORD in Judgment and Salvation

*'¹Who is this who comes from **Edom** with dyed garments from **Bozrah**, this One who is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."² Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?³ "I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. ⁴For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come. ⁵I looked, but there was no one to help, and I wondered that there was no one to uphold; therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; and My own fury, it sustained Me. ⁶I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, made them drunk in My fury, and brought down their strength to the earth."*

So the place of His return is pinpointed, **Bozrah** – contrary to popular opinion, the Mount of Olives is not the first place His foot will touch – He has business to do with the nations first – we see this in -

Isaiah 34:1 -7

Judgment on the Nations –

¹Come near, you nations, to hear and heed, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and all things that come forth from it. ²For the indignation of the LORD is against all nations, and His fury against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to the slaughter. ³Also their slain shall be thrown out; their stench shall rise from their corpses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. ⁴All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; all their host shall fall down as the leaf falls from the vine, and as fruit falling from a fig tree. ⁵“For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; indeed it shall come down on Edom, and on the people of My curse, for judgment. ⁶The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made overflowing with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ⁷The wild oxen shall come down with them, and the young bulls with the mighty bulls; their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust saturated with fatness.”

The first thing we see here is that it is to the *nations* that the remarks are addressed. Jesus calls the whole earth to hear – His indignation is against their armies which are gathered in Edom. They have gathered in Edom, incited by the Antichrist, the False Prophet and Satan, for the purpose of *annihilating the Jews*, who by now will be calling upon the One whom they pierced. We saw this in -

Revelation 16: 12 – 14

*¹²Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. ¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the **battle of that great day of God Almighty.***

The armies of the world will move southward from Jerusalem to Bozrah with the set purpose of annihilating the Jews – to be met by Jesus who forthwith destroys them.

Revelation 19:17 - 21

The Beast and His Armies Defeated

¹⁷Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, ¹⁸ that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.” ¹⁹And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.’

Now we understand how His garments so white, came to be stained with blood. He fought against the nations alone; to save His redeemed people, Israel. He fought it alone, there was none to help. (Isaiah 63:5) and though the battle begins in **Edom** at **Bozrah**, it apparently continues back to the eastern walls of Jerusalem, which overlook a section of the Kidron valley, also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

The battle of Armageddon, therefore, would more properly be called a campaign, because there is more than one conflict. With the False Prophet and the Beast thrown straight into the lake of fire, and everything else destroyed with the sword of His mouth.

When he has consumed all before Him through the earthquakes, lightnings and the sword that proceeds out of His mouth, not only will the Holy Land be destroyed but the entire country will be bathed in the blood of unregenerate, God hating, Christ opposing mankind.

Who can conceive of a time when the blood of slain men will flow as high as the horses' bridles by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs? That is almost the entire land mass of Palestine.

No-one escapes the Warrior King in this last great battle. Those who resist Him during the Tribulation will be slain by Him at His Glorious Appearing.

It is at this point that Jesus will make His ascent up the Mount of Olives. There is much more here but we are constrained by time and we will address it at a later date.

Revelation 20

And the first thing we see is the binding of Satan, this restricts him from doing what he does best – deceive. He will remain bound for the 1,000 years of Christ's reign on the renewed earth and at the end of that time will be released for a short time to prove the people again, after which he will be cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:1 –3

Satan Bound 1000 Years

¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.'

Revelation 20:4 -6

The Saints Reign with Christ 1000 Years

⁴And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has

part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years’.

Here we may more clearly understand our training and proving ground is here on the earth, preparing us for the reigning and ruling we shall be doing in the Millennium. Not only are there rewards in store for us, but there is a glorious future and it is important to understand that to the extent that we overcome in this life, we shall reign not only in this life, but in the future. God is purposeful with us, He is intentional with us and this should really give an edge to our Christian walk, give us something to aim at, cause us to ask the Lord what *is* your purpose for my life, rather than drift along waiting for the Rapture or going to heaven when we die. Remember the parable of the talents – whatever you have been given, determine to give the Lord a tenfold return on it and you will see your reward in heaven.

Revelation 20: 7 - 10

Satanic Rebellion Crushed

*“Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, **Gog and Magog**, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. ⁹ They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.’*

This is the most amazing thing – 1,000 years people have lived with Satan bound and chained and unable to influence them at all. They have been able to go and see Jesus in Jerusalem, they have lived in peace and plenty, but when that old deceiver is let out again, he gathers a people so vast it is described as the sand of the sea. Being deceived by his lies, they attempt an insurgence against Jesus in the Holy City. Their end is swift – fire comes down from God and devours them. Their next appointment will be in front of –

Revelation 20:11 -15

The Great White Throne

“¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” And I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

This is probably the most awesome scripture in the Bible.

The moment when all the dead *unbelievers*, stand before God to receive sentence for the things done in their earthly body. They have rejected God's free gift of salvation and chosen their eternal destiny, from which there is no escape.

Purgatory does not exist, they cannot work a few years and be let out. This is it. Already they will have been in torments, knowing that they made the wrong decision whilst alive on this earth, and now the finale – the Great White Throne judgment with Jesus Christ as Judge and Lawgiver.

You will notice that the unbelievers are judged according to their *works*, not according to their sins, because when Jesus died on the cross He died for the sins of the whole world, not just the sins of those who would believe. The only sin these people will be judged for is that they have not accepted Jesus, that is the only sin which is unforgivable. The people at the great white throne judgment are those who have rejected the work of Jesus on the cross, in doing that, they will have to take the penalty of their deeds themselves.

Verse 5, which we haven't yet looked at, speaks of the first resurrection we are part of the 'first resurrection' over which the 'second death' has no power.

The second death, of course, is the lake of fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels, which will also be full of unbelievers, though it was not created for mankind.

So what is meant by the second death? The first death in the bible is our physical death where our spirit goes back to God, our body goes to the dust from which it was formed and our soul goes on to be clothed from above.

The second death is the lake of fire.

So, Revelation 20:6 refers to *all believers*.

Most people will suffer the first death, although not all, because we don't know when Jesus is coming for us and those of us who are alive will be caught up to meet him in the air, so shall we ever be with the Lord Paul tells us in -

1 Corinthians 15:51, 52

⁵¹Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.' And -

1 Thessalonians 4: 15 – 18.

¹⁵For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore comfort one another with these words.'

As we know, the church must be removed before the 7 year tribulation period can begin as it is not only the time of Jacob's trouble, but the time when God's offended holiness results in judgment on an unbelieving world. So the day is coming when you will be resurrected and that is called the first resurrection.

Chronologically we see that sandwiched between verse 6 and verse 11 is the thousand years when Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit and you and I will rule and reign on a renewed earth, verse 7 shows the final release of Satan and the last battle the *Gog and Magog* rebellion, but just now we are wanting to see the result of the judgement and something of the eternal state which we are looking forward to!

Matthew 25:45, 46.

“⁴⁵Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’⁴⁶And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Verse 46 shows us everlasting punishment for the unbeliever,

So, the Great White Throne. Have you ever wondered why it is white? As soon as you see white in the Bible you are talking about absolute purity and absolute righteousness. Revelation 20:7 – 15. Like numbers, and metals, colours have great significance in the Bible. Notice this judgement is forever. At the end of the millennium the whole universe will be destroyed.

Verse 12 shows us that unbelievers are judged according to their works, not according to their sin. They go to the lake of fire because they have refused to accept Jesus as their Saviour. The books that are opened will contain everything that they have ever done. God will be searching to see if their righteous acts add up to enough righteousness – it won’t, without the blood of Jesus there is no remission of sin. The book of Life is opened and that only contains those who have believed.

Verse 13 shows us that no matter where you die, you will be resurrected. The unbeliever no matter where he dies one day will face God’s judgement, which is why the Grace of God is available to all because God does not want anyone in the Lake of Fire – their own choices will take them there.

Revelation 21:1 - 27

All Things Made New

“¹Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”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.” ⁶And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The New Jerusalem

⁹Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹²Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. ¹⁴Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are

equal. ¹⁷ Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. ¹⁸ The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

The Glory of the New Jerusalem

²² But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. ²⁴ And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it. ²⁵ Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). ²⁶ And they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it. ²⁷ But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.'

Revelation 22: 1 - 21

The River of Life

¹ And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. ² 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. 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 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. ⁵ 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.

The Time Is Near

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. ⁷ "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." 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. 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." ¹⁰ And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. 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."

Jesus Testifies to the Churches

¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. ¹⁶ “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.” ¹⁷ 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.

A Warning

¹⁸ 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; ¹⁹ 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.

I Am Coming Quickly

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

²¹ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

The crowning jewel in heaven will be the Holy City, the New Jerusalem: So we come to the second of two cities. “We have travelled with John on a prophetic time machine, and as we look back at the people we’ve met and the places we’ve seen, we could title our trip ‘An incredible journey’ ” thus says Dr David Jeremiah in his book ‘*Escape the coming night*’, when he begins to speak about the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelation 21:2).

In this state of eternal bliss which follows the millennium there will be nothing to mar our perfect relationship with Jesus and with each other. The thoughts and deeds that dominate us now will be gone, no jealousy, anger, cheating, murder, fornication, (and that’s only the church!) dirt, slums or pollution. There will be no death, pain or mourning, all tears will be wiped away, for the old order has passed.

Conclusion:

The longing for a future glorious city of God is traced back as far as Abraham who we are told in Hebrews ‘was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God’ Hebrews 11:10.

Did you know there is a crown for those who “love His appearing”

2 Timothy 4:8.

⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.’

The whole thrust of the New Testament teaches that we should be looking up because our redemption draws near, we would be foolish to put down too many roots here on this tired old globe when at any moment we may be caught away to be with the Lord, the One who loves us to distraction.

We would do well to heed the admonition in the Psalms to *'teach us to number our days'*, Psalm 90:12 and in the New Testament, Paul exhorts us to *'redeem the time for the days are evil'* Ephesians 5:16. We cannot be too serious about the call that God has placed on our lives, the things with which we deal have eternal consequences – we can indeed have all this and heaven too.

Lest you think I am saying, do nothing, just get super spiritual. Prophecy is not given to us to understand and then become dropouts, believing Jesus is coming soon and goals are not important. That is not true at all. We are told to work even more *fervently* if we believe He is coming soon. Don't let us be like the servant who said *'My master delays his coming'* Luke 12:45.

"Behold I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done" **Revelation 22:12**. At the judgement seat of Jesus – the Bema seat where we get our rewards for services rendered – we are going to give an account of what we have done in the Lord whilst living on earth. Our work is to be a labour of love for Him, prompted by the Holy Spirit, and as such, we will reap benefits eternally, first in terms of the authority we will obtain to reign and rule with Him during the Millennium and secondly in the New Jerusalem.

The days, the weeks, the years pass so quickly. Now is the time to work, for there will come a time when it is too late. We are told to watch expectantly for His return, He has said *'Behold I am coming soon'* – Revelation 22:7 at least 3 times, He must mean it.

As the Shining Ones told Pilgrim –

'In that place you must wear crowns of gold, and enjoy the perpetual sight and visions of the Holy One; for there, you shall see Him as He is. There, also, you shall serve Him continually with praise, with shouting, and thanksgiving, whom you desired to serve in the world, though with much difficulty because of the infirmity of your flesh. There your eyes shall be delighted with seeing and your ears with hearing the pleasant voice of the Mighty One.'

God bless you, thanks for staying the course, may God bless His word to our ears and may we indeed *'hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches'*.

Amen.

Nevertheless Maranatha – 'Come Lord Jesus'.

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