

Revelation 22

Outline:

- I. The River of life (verses 1-5)
- II. Jesus is coming, promise of the imminent return of Jesus (verses 6-9)
- III. Prohibition of sealing the book, promise that Jesus is coming soon and promise of blessing (verses 10-15)
- IV. Transmission of the revelation (verses 16-17)
- V. Prohibition of altering the book, promise that Jesus is coming soon, and final pronouncement of blessing (verses 18-21)

Important facts about Jesus in this chapter:

FACTS ABOUT THE CHRIST (22:6–7, 12–13, 16, 20)

A. **His description of himself (22:13, 16): Jesus refers to himself as follows:**

1. *The Alpha and the Omega* (22:13a)
2. *The First and Last* (22:13b)
3. *The Beginning and the End* (22:13c)
4. *The root and offspring of David* (22:16a)
5. *The bright morning star* (22:16b)

B. **His provision for his saints (22:6–7, 12, 20)**

1. *He will come for us* (22:6–7, 12a, 20).
2. *He will reward us* (22:12b).¹

I. The River of life (verses 1-5)

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Promise to Overcomers from the ESV Study Bible:

Promises to Overcomers

¹ H. L. Willmington, [The Outline Bible](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), Re 22:6–12.

The following images depict ways in which God will be God to those who conquer (cf. [Rev. 21:7](#)).

Promise	What Will Happen	Fulfillment
2:7	will eat from the tree of life	22:2
2:11	will not be hurt by the second death	20:6 ; 21:7–8
2:17	will be given a white stone	21:11 , 18–21
2:26–27 ; 3:21	will reign with Christ on his throne	20:4
2:28	will be given the morning star	21:23 ; 22:5 , 16
3:5	will be clothed in bright garments	19:7–8 ; 21:2 , 9–10
3:5	name will be in the book of life	21:27
3:12	will be made a pillar in God's temple	21:22–23
3:12	will participate in the new Jerusalem	21:10
3:12	will have God's name written on them	22:4

Dr. Mulholland:

The vision of [Revelation 22:1–2](#) remarkably reflects Ezekiel's vision:

“river with the water of life” (cf. [Ezek 47:1](#), [8–9](#))

“flowing from the throne” (cf. [Ezek 47:1](#))

“on each side ... a tree of life” (cf. [Ezek 47:12](#))

“twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month” (cf. [Ezek 47:12](#))

“leaves ... to heal the nations” (cf. [Ezek 47:12](#))

Since John had seen there is no temple in New Jerusalem but God and the Lamb are the temple ([21:22](#)), the river of life flows from their throne rather than the temple as in Ezekiel. The tree of life is a common fixture in the Jewish expectation of the restoration of the kingdom, and the vision modulates Ezekiel's “trees of all kinds” to this image. In [2 Esdras 8:52](#), the tree of life is coupled with the age to come and a city built, and in [2 Esdras 2:12](#), it is coupled with the kingdom prepared for the faithful. In [1 Enoch 25:4–5](#), it is associated with the consummation of all things and will be given to the righteous and holy ones for food. In the Apocalypse of Moses, the throne of God is located where the tree of life is ([Apocalypse of Moses 22:4](#); the same image is found in [2 Enoch 8:3](#)). And Adam is promised the tree of life when the resurrection comes ([Apocalypse of Moses 28:4](#)). The most striking modulation of Ezekiel's vision is that in John's vision the leaves of the tree of life are to heal the nations (i.e., the Gentile believers, cf. [5:9](#); [7:9](#); cf. Beale 1999:[1107](#)). In

Ezekiel, it is presumed that the healing is for ethnic Israel, but in John's vision those who follow the Lamb constitute Israel. Once again the vision subverts the Jewish expectation by including the Gentiles in the restoration.²

- a. John is continuing his description of the New Jerusalem.
- b. He sees the river of the water of life.
- c. Think about how important water is for the world. The world is mostly water, yet many die for lack of good water around the world. Still, in the United States we can create cities in deserts. Water is so important and so is clean water. Here, we see water.
- d. This water is described as bright as crystal.
- e. Moody: *Water is sometimes used figuratively for God, who brings peace from chaos (Is 8:6; 33:21-24), but that is not likely here. More to the point is a continuing parallel with Eden (Gn 2:10-17; 3:22-24). Paradise will be regained. It may be that the river will flow under a dual throne that straddles it. The presence of a healing tree (v. 2) has led some to place this paragraph back in the millennium, but this would ruin the clear sequence of the text. Better is the view that it symbolizes God's work in maintaining the invulnerable state of the redeemed. Verses 3-5 reveal some of heaven's wonderful blessings: absence of death through the removal of the Edenic curse (v. 3; see Gn 3:1-24), opportunity to serve God, and the privilege of ruling as had been intended originally (v. 5; see Gn 1:28). Believers in the new Jerusalem would be servant-kings, ever praising and serving God, yet reigning themselves for eternity.*³
- f. Notice where this water is flowing from: the throne of God and of the Lamb.
- g. The ESV Study Bible: *The river of the water of life and the tree of life recall Eden before the fall into sin (Gen. 2:8-10) and Ezekiel's vision of a future glorious temple (Ezek. 47:1-12; see Zech. 14:8). Refreshment and life flow from the throne of God and of the Lamb, carried by the Holy Spirit, as Jesus promised (John 4:10-14; 7:38-39; see also Isa. 44:3; Ezek. 36:25-27). Living believers and martyrs taste this life-giving water even now in this present age (Rev. 7:17; 22:17), but its fullness awaits the new heaven and earth. This ever-flowing river gives a picture of an unending stream of abundant blessings and joy. The tree of life, once banned to guilty humanity (Gen. 3:22-24), will satisfy the city's residents year-round (Rev. 2:7). The healing of the nations will have been completed in the destruction of death (20:14; see Ezek. 47:12).*
- h. This water is also flowing from the middle of the street of the city.
- i. Verse 2 further tells about the tree of life on both sides of the river.
- j. The tree of life has 12 kinds of fruit and it gives fruit each month. There will no longer be harvest seasons, etc, at least for this tree.

² M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "Revelation," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1-2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 597.

³ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83453-83457). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

- k. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
- l. This could have to do with healing from the sin problem. The nations can be gentiles, or in this case all people gain life and healing from this tree.
- m. It gives fruit year round so that we can always take from the tree and have immortality.
- n. Dr. Constable: John also saw the tree of life.⁷⁷¹ *When Adam and Eve fell, they lost their access to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen. 2:9; 3:22–24). In the eternal city the residents will have access to the tree of life there.*⁴

The description of this tree's location is debatable, but perhaps John saw the river dividing and flowing on both sides of it. A tree surrounded by water is the epitome of a fruitful tree (cf. Ps. 1:3; Jer. 17:8; Ezek. 19:10). This tree was perpetually rather than seasonally in fruit; it produced a new crop of fruit each month of the year. Evidently the new creation will not have a lunar calendar, since there will be no moon (21:23), but another type of calendar will define months. Most fruit trees in the old creation bear fruit only a few months each year at most. In contrast, God's blessing of fruitfulness will mark life in the new earth. The tree of life in the Garden of Eden could perpetuate life forever (Gen. 3:22, 24). Evidently that will be the function of this tree in the new earth as well, to sustain immortality. "Healing" really means "health-giving" (Gr. therapeian). Since there will be no death in the new earth these leaves will evidently promote well-being.⁷⁷² They will provide healing from the conditions of the old creation as the wiping away of tears removed the sorrows of the old creation (cf. 21:4; Ezek. 47:12). The nations are groups of people in the new creation viewed according to their old creation divisions (cf. 21:24).

"It seems possible therefore to understand participation in the tree of life as a regular experience of fellowship with God, i.e., eating of this monthly fruit."^{773 1}

^{772 772} 772. For an amillennial study of the symbolism used in [Genesis 2–3](#) and [Revelation 21:9–22:5](#), as ancient cosmography used the figures of a garden, a city, and a mountain, see Ken Olles and Warren Gage, "The City of God and the Cities of Men."

^{773 773} 773. Dillow, p. 474.

¹ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 22:2.

^{771 771} 771. Several commentators take the reference to the "tree" (singular) as generic. They believe that John really saw many trees (e.g., Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 484). I think it is better to interpret the reference as one tree since this is the normal meaning of the singular noun.

⁴ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 22:2.

- o. Verse 3: this is a strong statement: no longer will there be anything curses. There has been a curse ever since Genesis 3, but now that is gone.
 - p. ESV Study Bible: *Earth was cursed for Adam's sin (Gen. 3:17). Guilt, strife, struggle for survival, sickness, sorrow, and death resulted. In the consummated new creation no such woes will remain (Rev. 21:4). God's throne will make the entire city a temple (21:22) in which his servants will worship him as his priests.*
 - q. "but" instead of the curse... the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it.
 - r. And His servants will worship Him.
 - s. There is worship in the presence of God.
 - t. *The Greek word for "serve" (latreuo) suggests priestly service in view of its other uses in this book (cf. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6). "His" and "Him" present God and the Lamb as essentially one being.⁵*
 - u. Verse 4 continues the idea: they will see God's face. We cannot see God's face now (Ex 33:20) because of His holiness, but then we will see God. Maybe His face is Jesus.
 - v. ESV Study Bible: *Moses could not see the Lord's face and live (Ex. 33:20–23; 34:29–35), but when the Spirit has completed their sanctification, God's redeemed people will see his face. It will be the greatest blessing of the age to come, as God looks upon his people with favor and delight. His name ... on their foreheads had sealed them as his protected property through history's turmoil and trials (Rev. 3:11–12; 7:2–8; 14:1).*
 - w. Dr Constable: *Scripture does not reveal whether we will see one, two, or three persons of the Godhead.⁶*
 - x. God's name will be on their foreheads. We will have the name of God on us. We belong to Him.
 - y. Verse 5: night will be no more. Night always represents death and destruction and evil.
 - z. No need for lamp or sun as God will be our light.
 - aa. We will reign forever and ever.
 - bb. Again, the ESV Study Bible: *Since night has been banished (cf. 21:25), God's servants will bask in light from the God of radiant glory and truth, who dwells in "unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:16; Rev. 21:23–24). In union with Jesus their king, believers will not only worship as priests but also reign as kings over the new earth forever and ever (5:10).*
- II. Jesus is coming, promise of the imminent return of Jesus (verses 6-9)

And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

⁵ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 22:3.

⁶ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 22:4.

⁷ “And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

⁸ I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, ⁹ but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”

Dr Constable:

This section consists of verbal exchanges between an angel and John, and between Jesus and John. Three emphases mark this epilogue.⁷⁸¹ First, this prophecy is genuine (vv. 6–7, 8–9, 16, 18–19). Second, Jesus will return imminently (vv. 6–7, 10, 12, 20). Third, the unfit should beware, and the faithful should take courage (vv. 11–12, 15, 17–19). The whole epilogue is very similar to the first chapter in many ways.

Origin of the prophecy: God & Jesus	1:1	22:6
Subject of the prophecy: coming events	1:1	22:6
Mediator of the prophecy: angel	an1:1	22:6, 8, 16
Writer of the prophecy: John	1:1, 4, 9	22:8
Genuineness of the prophecy: true prophecy	1:3	22:6, 7, 9, 10, 18–19
Vehicle of the prophecy: a prophet	1:1, 9–11	22:8, 9, 10
Addressees of the prophecy: bond-servants	1:1	22:6
Destination of the prophecy: churches	1:3, 11	22:16, 18
Blessing of the prophecy: for obedience	1:3	22:7, 12, 14

⁷⁸¹ 781. Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 493.

Warning of the prophecy: for 1:7 unfaithfulness		22:11, 12, 18–19
Center of the prophecy: Christ	1:2, 5, 9	22:16, 18, 20
God of the prophecy: Alpha & Omega	1:17	22:13
Chief character of the prophecy: God	1:5, 7	22:12, 13, 16
Hope of the prophecy: soon return	1:3, 7	22:7, 10, 12, 20 ⁷

- a. The conclusion to the vision of the bride, New Jerusalem ([22:6–9](#)), is parallel to the conclusion of the prostitute, fallen Babylon ([19:9–10](#); see discussion on [17:1](#))⁸
- b.
- c. The angel is talking to John.
- d. The angel says that these words are trustworthy and true. These words are reliable.

The ESV Study Bible, this is really good: *The unique truth and trustworthiness of the revealed word (and words) of God are underscored seven times in the last two chapters of Revelation, as indicated first in [21:5](#), as repeated in [22:6, 7, 9, 10](#), and then in the solemn warning in [vv. 18 and 19](#) to anyone who “takes away from the words of this book.” The centrality, authority, sufficiency, and eternity of the word (and words) of God are foundational to all of Scripture, from the first words of Genesis to the last words of Revelation, as seen, e.g., in: [Gen. 1:3](#) (“And God said”); [Ex. 20:1](#) (“God spoke all these words”); [Deut. 6:6](#) (“these words ... shall be on your heart”); [Deut. 32:47](#) (“by this word you shall live”); [Psalm 12:6](#) (“The words of the LORD are pure words”); [Isa. 40:8](#) (“the word of our God will stand forever”); [Matt. 4:4](#) (“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word”); [Matt. 24:35](#) (“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away”); [Luke 24:44](#) (“These are my words”); [John 1:1](#) (“In the beginning was the Word”); [John 6:68](#) (“You have the words of eternal life”); and [1 Pet. 1:25](#) (“the word of the Lord remains forever”). Blessed is the one who keeps the words of ... this book. A timeless promise for*

⁷ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 22:5.

⁸ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., “[Revelation](#),” in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 597.

believers in every age. “Blessed” here in Rev. 22:7 echoes the first “blessed” (see 1:3 and note) and is the sixth of seven benedictions throughout the book of Revelation.

- e. The angel tells how things came to pass. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets...
- f. In other words the God who gives the revelation to the prophets has sent this angel to show His servants (Christians) what must soon take place.
- g. Verse 7 interjects words from Jesus. This is another blessings statement in Revelation.

Below is from the ESV Study Bible:

The Seven Benedictions

Blessed is the one who reads aloud, hears, and keeps	1:3
the words of this prophecy	
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord	14:13
Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his	16:15
garments on	
Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage	19:9
supper of the Lamb	
Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first	20:6
resurrection	
Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the	22:7
prophecy of this book	
Blessed are those who wash their robes	22:14

- h. Verse 8: John is so amazed that he falls down to worship. But the angel responds in verse 9, the angel redirects his worship to God. The angel is a fellow servant.
- i. We say this before in ch. 19:10

III. Prohibition of sealing the book, promise that Jesus is coming soon and promise of blessing (verses 10-15)

And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹ Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.”

¹² *“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*

¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

- a. Verse 10 we see the command not to seal this book.
- b. ESV Study Bible: **John must not imitate Daniel, whose visions concerned events in a remote future (Dan. 12:4, 9).** The time is near (cf. notes on [1 Thess. 5:2–3](#); [5:4](#)) for the fulfillment of John’s visions because the dragon was already defeated at Christ’s cross. The end will consummate the spiritual conflict in which the first-century churches were engaged, as is the church today (see [Mark 1:15](#); [1 Cor. 10:11](#)).
- c. Verse 10 shares that the time is near.
- d. Verse 11 is interesting as we are exhorted to stay in the condition we were in. If evil, stay evil. If holy, stay holy.
- e. It seems like this is God saying through the angel, “Okay, people, have it your way...” God is turning people over to their own desires.
- f. The ESV Study Bible: **Patterns of behavior, whether controlled by unbelief or by faith, will eventually be irreversible (cf. Dan. 12:10).**
- g. Verse 12 is Jesus talking again. Jesus is coming soon and bringing judgment with Him.
- h. Jesus will come again with judgment. “As the Divine Warrior of [Isa. 62:10–63:6](#), Christ will come to repay each one for what he has done, rewarding faithful servants and punishing every evildoer. “Recompense” (Gk. *misthos*, “wages, reward”) indicates degrees of reward for believers and punishment for unbelievers (cf. [Luke 12:47–48](#); and [1 Cor. 3:14–15](#) with [note](#)).” (ESV Study Bible)
- i. Jesus says that he is coming soon. 2 Peter 3:9 declares that time is different for God.
- j. In verse 13 we once again see that Jesus is the alpha and the omega, first and the last, beginning and the end. We saw this statement in Rev 21:6 given by God the Father.

Below is from the ESV Study Bible:

God and Jesus Are Alpha and Omega

God is the Alpha and the Omega ([1:8](#); [21:6](#))

Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega ([22:13](#); cf. [2:8](#); [22:13](#))

God is the beginning and the end ([21:6](#))

Jesus is the beginning and the end ([22:13](#); cf. [2:8](#); [22:13](#))

- k. in verse 14 we see a special blessing for the martyrs. The martyrs would be those who have washed their robes in blood.
- l. They can eat from the tree of life, they can enter the city gates.
- m. Entering by the city gates would be a big deal.
- n. It seems like we all can enter by the gates and eat from the tree of life, but there must be a special blessing for the martyrs.

Psalm 118:20: This is the gate of the LORD;
^bthe righteous shall enter through it.⁹

ESV Study Note:

Jesus is both David's "son" and his Lord, the source of his royalty (5:5; Isa. 11:1, 10; Mark 12:35–37). bright morning star. This is the ruler whom Balaam foresaw arising from Israel to conquer the nations (Num. 24:17).

- o. Verse 15 is a verse that summarizes the people who have not trusted in Jesus.
- p. These are outside the city gates. This seems to be hell.
- q. They are the dogs, sorcerers, sexually immoral, murders, idolaters, and **everyone** who love and practices falsehood.
- r. Moody: Dogs (v. 15) denotes those who refuse to repent and turn to Christ in faith. Sorcerers and liars are also targets of John elsewhere (1Jn 2:22-23; 5:21). They would miss the pleasures of the city from above.¹⁰
- s. **dogs**. This term was an epithet used by the Jews for Gentiles (cf. Jesus' use of the term in this fashion in [Matt 7:6](#); [15:26](#)). It denoted one who was totally unclean and outside the boundaries of God's covenant people.¹¹
- t. *In context, the term "sexually immoral" would be better translated "spiritual fornicators." The vision consistently uses the Greek term to describe, as in the OT, the actions of those who turn away from God to other things as gods (see note on [2:14](#)). As in [21:8](#), the placement of "idol worshipers" and those "who love to live a lie"/ "liars" might possibly be meant to indicate that all the vices listed are manifestations of the "false self" that is the consequence of worshipping a false god.¹²*
 - a. Dogs were looked upon as pest back then.
 - b. We know commands throughout the Bible against sorcery.
- u. Notice these people practice **and** love falsehood.
- v. They love it!
- w. They practice it! This means that there is a pattern.
- x. Matthew 8:12: *while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*¹³

IV. Transmission of the revelation (verses 16-17)

^b Rev. 21:27; 22:14; [Isa. 35:8]

⁹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 118:20.

¹⁰ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83473-83474). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

¹¹ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 600.

¹² M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 600.

¹³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Mt 8:12–13.

¹⁶ “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

¹⁷ The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

- a. Now, Jesus speaks again.
- b. The combination “I Jesus” occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Here Jesus used it to stress His role in producing this book and so to strengthen its authority (cf. vv. 7, 12). “My angel” is the main angel who revealed this material to John (cf. v. 6). The angel gave the whole revelation (“these things”) to John, but it was ultimately for all the churches, not just the seven churches of Asia Minor (cf. 1:4; chs. 2–3).¹⁴
- c. Jesus is affirming this message and this shows the validity of the message. This is authentic.
- d. In the first century it was common to send letters in someone else’s name (pseudonyms), but Christians never approved of this.
- e. Jesus is the root and the descendant of David. This goes back to His authority as the Messiah.
- f. He is the bright morning star.
- g. IVP BBC NT: *The morning star is Venus, herald of the dawn (cf. Rev 2:28), which in this case probably alludes to Numbers 24:17, the star descended from Jacob (Israel) and destined to reign and crush the enemies of God’s people. (The Dead Sea Scrolls also applied Num 24:17 to a conquering messiah.)*¹⁵
- h. Numbers 24:17 is a good cross reference.
- i. In verse 17 Jesus is extending His grace by way of invitation to those in need. The Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and the bride, the church, invite people to come.
- j. Good cross references: Isa. 55:1; John 7:37

Moody:

The second invites agreement from the seven churches. The verse’s final two sentences offer salvation to anyone in the seven churches who may not yet have trusted in Christ when it was read. Jesus identifies Himself as the source of the message that the angels had mediated. Reference to Him as the root and the descendant of David (v. 16; see Is 11:2) marks Him both as an Israelite and the successor to His forefather’s throne. Bright morning star identifies Jesus as the one who would introduce the new day, that is the rule of Messiah. Verse 17 echoes the messianic thrust of Is 55:1-7. In both, the recipients are invited to drink freely of life-giving water and be in a lasting relationship with God through a connection with David. The openness of the invitation is emphasized by the threefold use of come. It was issued by the Spirit and the bride, that is, the Holy Spirit and the Church. There was to be no hesitation. All who wished to accept the offer were welcome. No payment would be required. Jesus offered everyone hearing the message of the book an opportunity to make sure of his salvation. Perhaps some among the

¹⁴ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 22:16.

¹⁵ Craig S. Keener, [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Re 22:16.

seven churches were not yet believers. What motivation these verses provide for modern followers of Christ! They should look forward to the return of Christ and hold forth the gospel to whoever will listen. Salvation is a free gift of God's grace. The wrath of God is coming against all who rebel against Him. Those who drink of the water of life will reign with masses of the redeemed in the millennial kingdom and, finally, in all eternity (5:8-9; 22:5).¹⁶

V. Prohibition of altering the book, promise that Jesus is coming soon, and final pronouncement of blessing (verses 18-21)

¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

- a. About verse 19, the NET Bible shares: The *Textus Receptus*, on which the KJV rests, reads "the book" of life (ἀπὸ βιβλίου, *apo biblou*) instead of "the tree" of life. When the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus translated the NT he had access to no Greek mss for the last six verses of Revelation. So he translated the Latin Vulgate back into Greek at this point. As a result he created seventeen textual variants which were not in any Greek mss. The most notorious of these is this reading. It is thus decidedly inauthentic, while "the tree" of life, found in the best and virtually all Greek mss, is clearly authentic. The confusion was most likely due to an intra-Latin switch: The form of the word for "tree" in Latin in this passage is *ligno*; the word for "book" is *libro*. The two-letter difference accounts for an accidental alteration in some Latin mss; that "book of life" as well as "tree of life" is a common expression in the Apocalypse probably accounts for why this was not noticed by Erasmus or the KJV translators. (This textual problem is not discussed in NA ²⁷.)¹⁷

¹⁶ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83486-83487). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition

- a. ¹⁷ *Textus Receptus* *Textus Receptus* The "Received Text," the Greek text edited by Erasmus, Stephanus, and Beza that lies behind the King James Version of 1611
- b. KJV KJV The King James Version, known in Britain as the Authorized Version (1611)
- c. mss mss *manuscripts*
- d. Vulgate Vulgate The Vulgate version of the Bible in Latin

- b. These are strong warnings.
- c. Don't tamper with the Word of God.
- d. Don't go above the line of Scripture or below the line.
- e. Above the line is adding to the Scripture.
- f. Below the line is taking from the Scripture.
- g. Adding to Scripture gives people the plagues that are recorded here.
- h. Dt 4:2 You shall not add to the word that I command •you, nor take from it, that you may keep •the commandments of the LORD your God that I command •you.
- i. Dt 12:32 “•Everything that I command •you, •you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or •take from it.
- j. Taking away from the Scripture takes away the right to immortality by the tree of life.
- k. Verse 20 Jesus is coming soon.
- l. Dr. Constable: *This verse and the next are the only ones in Revelation that refer to Jesus Christ as the “Lord Jesus,” though this title is common in other New Testament books. It acknowledges Jesus’ deity and thus His right to judge.*¹⁸
- m. Verse 21: is a benediction.

Moody:

John warned the recipients of the book not to add to what God had said. While such a warning could well pertain to Scripture as a whole, here it refers more narrowly to the book of Revelation. Some scholars take this to mean that the text of the book itself should not be tampered with in any fashion. Others see a somewhat different warning. If the present text is parallel to Dt 4:2 and 29:19-21, then the prohibition is against false prophecy that contradicted what John has said (Beale, Revelation, 1150–1151). This makes good sense in the context of the seven churches that were assaulted with idolatrous religious thought. Two severe penalties were attached to disobedience in this matter. First,

-
- e. mss mss manuscripts
 - f. mss mss manuscripts
 - g. mss mss manuscripts

KJV KJV The King James Version, known in Britain as the Authorized Version (1611)
 NA NA *Novum Testamentum Graece*. Edited by B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger. 27th ed.

²⁷ ²⁷ *Novum Testamentum Graece*. Edited by B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger. 27th ed.

¹ Biblical Studies Press, [The NET Bible First Edition Notes](#) (Biblical Studies Press, 2006), Re 22:19.

¹⁸ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 22:20.

the very plagues of the book itself would be sent against any violator (v. 18). False prophets would not be delivered from the great tribulation, but would instead be left to experience its full fury. Second, such persons would miss the blessings of salvation associated with the tree of life (v. 19; see 22:2). Each of the major so-called Christian cults has abused the text of the Bible, twisting its meaning to support their false doctrines. Their founders have also written works that their followers consider to be on par with Scripture. These false prophets and their disciples will experience eternal damnation. Believers should not associate with them in any way.¹⁹

ESV Study Bible:

Key Themes in Luke

1. *God's sovereign rule over history.* The promises God made through the prophets are already being fulfilled. 13:33; 22:22; 42; Acts 1:16–17; 2:23; 4:28; etc.
2. *The arrival and actual presence of the kingdom of God.* Nevertheless, the consummation of the kingdom is still a future event, a blessed hope for which the church prays. 11:2, 20; 16:16; 17:20–21; 18:1–8; 21:27–28, 34–36; cf. Acts 1:11; 1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20
3. *The coming and indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus and his followers.* The Spirit is present in the Gospel of Luke, from the births of John the Baptist and Jesus to the end. The Spirit is present at Jesus' dedication in the temple, his baptism, temptation, early ministry, and first sermon. The Holy Spirit is central to the message of John the Baptist, and Jesus at his ascension promises the Spirit's future coming in power. 1:15–17, 35; 2:25–27; 3:16, 22; 4:1, 14, 18; 5:17; 24:49
4. *The great reversal taking place in the world,* in which the first are becoming last and the last are becoming first, the proud are being brought low and the humble are being exalted. Luke places great emphasis on God's love for the poor, tax collectors, outcasts, sinners, women, Samaritans, and Gentiles. In keeping 1:48, 52–53; 6:20–26; 13:30; 14:11; 18:14

¹⁹ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83492–83497). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

with this concern, many of the episodes that appear only in Luke's Gospel feature the welcome of an outcast (the Christmas shepherds, the Prodigal Son, the persistent widow, Zacchaeus, etc.).

5. *Believers are to live a life of prayer and practice good stewardship with their possessions.* In Luke's narrative, prayer occurs at every major point in Jesus' life: at his baptism; at his selection of the Twelve; at Peter's confession; at Jesus' transfiguration; in his teaching the Lord's Prayer; before Peter's denial; etc. 3:21; 6:12; 9:18, 28-29; 11:1-4; 12:33-34; 16:9; 18:1; 22:32, 40, 46

6. *The danger of riches* is constantly emphasized in Luke, for the love of riches chokes out the seed of the gospel and keeps it from becoming fruitful. This danger is so great that Jesus often warns his readers not to set their hearts upon riches and to give generously to the poor. The woes pronounced upon haughty rich people stand in sharp contrast to the blessings pronounced upon the humble poor. 6:20-26; 8:14; 12:13-21; 16:10-13, 19-31; 18:22 (cf. 5:11; 14:33; Acts 2:44-45; 4:32); Luke 21:3-4