

The Book of Revelation

THE MILLENNIUM AND
THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

Revelation 20:1-22:21

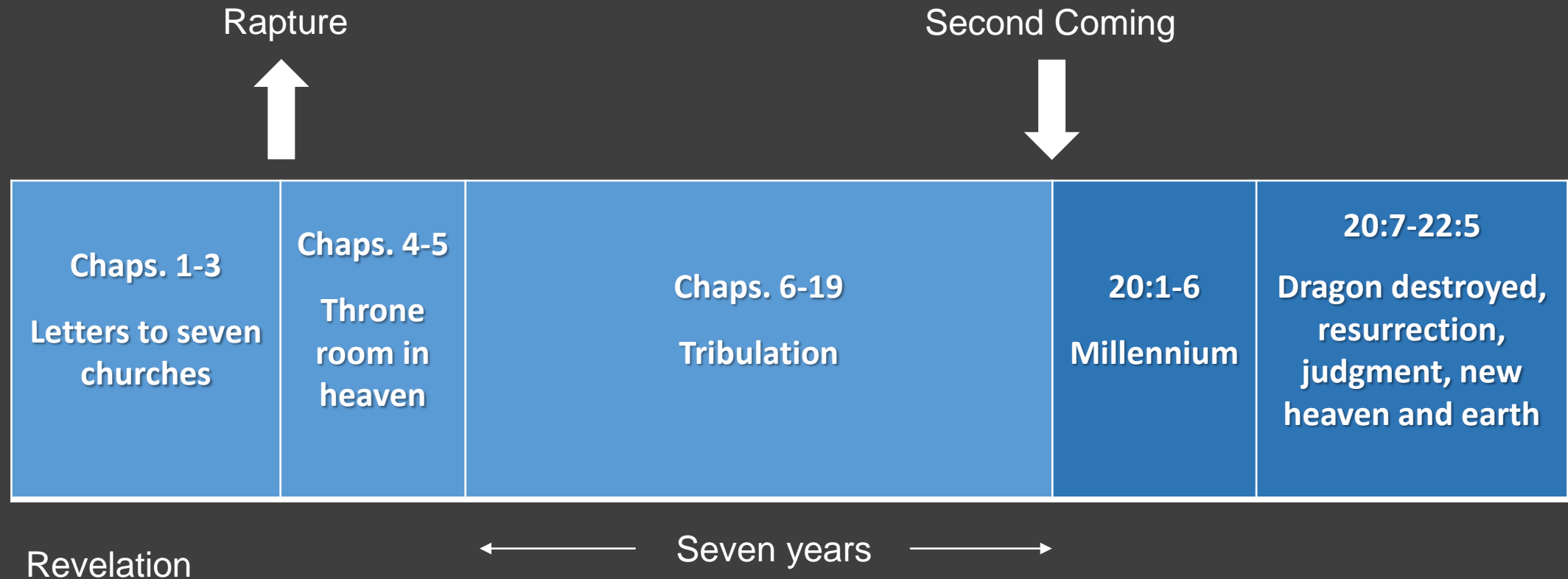
Nano Church
October 2, 2016



Outline of Revelation 20-22

20:1-6	The thousand years
20:7-10	The defeat of Satan
20:11-15	The great white throne judgment
21:1-8	The new heaven and the new earth
21:9-27	The new Jerusalem
22:1-5	The river of life
22:6-21	Epilogue

Futurist view (Dispensational Premillennialism)



Revelation 20:1-3

¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. ² And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a **thousand years**, ³ and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the **thousand years** were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

Revelation 20:4-6

⁴ Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a **thousand years**. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the **thousand years** were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a **thousand years**.

Three views of the thousand years

- Two main points of agreement
 - Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, and he rules or will rule over a glorious kingdom.
 - Jesus Christ will one day return to this world literally, physically, visibly, and gloriously as the Judge of all the earth.
- Two main points of disagreement
 - When will Jesus reign? - Is it present or yet to come?
 - How will Jesus reign? – Spiritually in heaven or literally on earth?
- The three views are *pre*millennialism, *a*millennialism, and *post*millennialism.
- Dispensationalists hold the premillennial view.

Dispensational Premillennialism view

- The millennial kingdom is a future aspect of Christ's rule, which will come into existence with Christ's visible return to earth.
 - It is a literal kingdom that will exist on this present earth for 1,000 years.
 - It will be established after all earthly human kingdoms have come to an end.
- There will be two resurrections – one at the beginning of the millennium and one at the end.
- The millennial kingdom fulfills the covenant promise made to Abraham and his descendants of a specific piece of land to occupy forever.
- The millennial kingdom also fulfills the promise to David that one of his decedents would sit on his throne and reign over his kingdom forever.

OT prophecies of the messianic kingdom

- Psalm 72 looks forward to the ultimate heir of David who will take the throne and all nations will serve him.
- The LORD will be king over all the earth (Zech. 14:9).
- Jerusalem will be the capital of the millennial kingdom (Isa. 2:3).
- War will be no more (Isa. 2:4) – “they shall beat their swords into plowshares.”
- Isa. 11 describes the righteous reign of Christ and the peace and tranquility of his kingdom - “the wolf shall dwell with the lamb” (11:6).
- Isa. 11 also states that Israel will be regathered from the various parts of the earth and brought back to her ancient land.

Other names given to the Millennium

- The kingdom of heaven (Matt. 3:2, 8:11)
- The kingdom of God (Mk. 1:15)
- The kingdom (Matt. 16:28)
- The world to come (Heb. 2:5)
- Times of refreshing (Acts 3:20)
- The period of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21)
- A kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:28)

The thousand years in Rev. 20:1-6

- The binding of Satan
 - An angel comes down from heaven and binds Satan with a great chain and throws him into the bottomless pit.
 - The pit is sealed so that Satan cannot deceive the nations for a thousand years.
 - After the thousand years, he will be released “for a little while”.
- The saints martyred during the tribulation are resurrected.
 - This is the first resurrection and it occurs at the beginning of the millennium.
 - The saints resurrected at the Rapture are considered part of the first resurrection which is not a single event.
 - The rest of the dead will not be resurrected until after the thousand years.
- The martyrs will reign with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:7-10

⁷ And when the **thousand years** are ended, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹ And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, ¹⁰ and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The final revolt

- When Satan is released after the thousand years, he resumes his evil plans to deceive the all the nations of the earth.
- Those who are tempted are the descendants of the Tribulation saints who survived the seven years and enter the millennium with their natural bodies.
 - These people will still have their sin nature and need salvation.
- The reference to the nations as Gog and Magog is uncertain.
 - The battle prophesied in Ezek. 38-39 occurred at the end of the Tribulation.
 - This could simply be a term for a disastrous battle as in the use of “Waterloo.”
- The number of those who follow Satan is innumerable.

The doom of Satan

- After the armies surround Jerusalem, fire comes down from God in heaven and destroys them.
- Satan is then thrown into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are already.
- They will be tormented day and night forever.

Revelation 20:11-15

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The great white throne

- Christ will be the judge (John 5:22).
- Earth and sky are destroyed prior to the new heaven and new earth.
- Those standing before God awaiting judgment are the unbelieving dead, who were not raised at the first resurrection.
- Judgment of each one is made on the basis of the books that are opened.
 - Book of life – the roll of those who are saved and have eternal life.
 - Other books – the divine record of the works of the unbelievers
- After the guilty verdict, the unsaved are cast into the lake of fire.
- Believers' receive rewards on the basis of their works at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10-11).

Revelation 21:1-4

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Revelation 21:5-8

⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. ⁸ But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

Revelation 21:9-14

⁹ Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—¹³ on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The new Jerusalem

- Jewels, gold, and pearls describe the indescribable glory which it reflects.
- The city has height, width, and length all equal to about 1,380 miles with a wall over 200 ft. high (or wide).
- There are twelve foundations inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles and twelve gates with names of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- No temple is needed because God is present.
- There is no need for the sun or moon since the glory of God gives it light.

Revelation 22:1-5

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² 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.

Progressive Parallelism view of Revelation

1:1-3:22	The seven churches
4:1-7:17	The seven seals
8:1-11:19	The seven trumpets
12:1-14:20	The seven visions or “signs”
15:1-16:21	The seven bowls
17:1-19:21	Final judgment of Babylon and the beast
20:1-22:21	Final judgment and new heaven and earth

Amillennialism

- As with other numbers in Revelation, the thousand-year reign is symbolic of a long but unspecified period of time between Christ's two advents during which Christ reigns from heaven.
- "A-millennialism" literally means "no millennium."
- Technically, this is not an accurate description of the position.
- Augustine of Hippo (354-430) abandoned premillennialism in favor of this view.
- This view was held by most of the Reformers.
- The term "amillennialism" has been widely used since the 1930's.

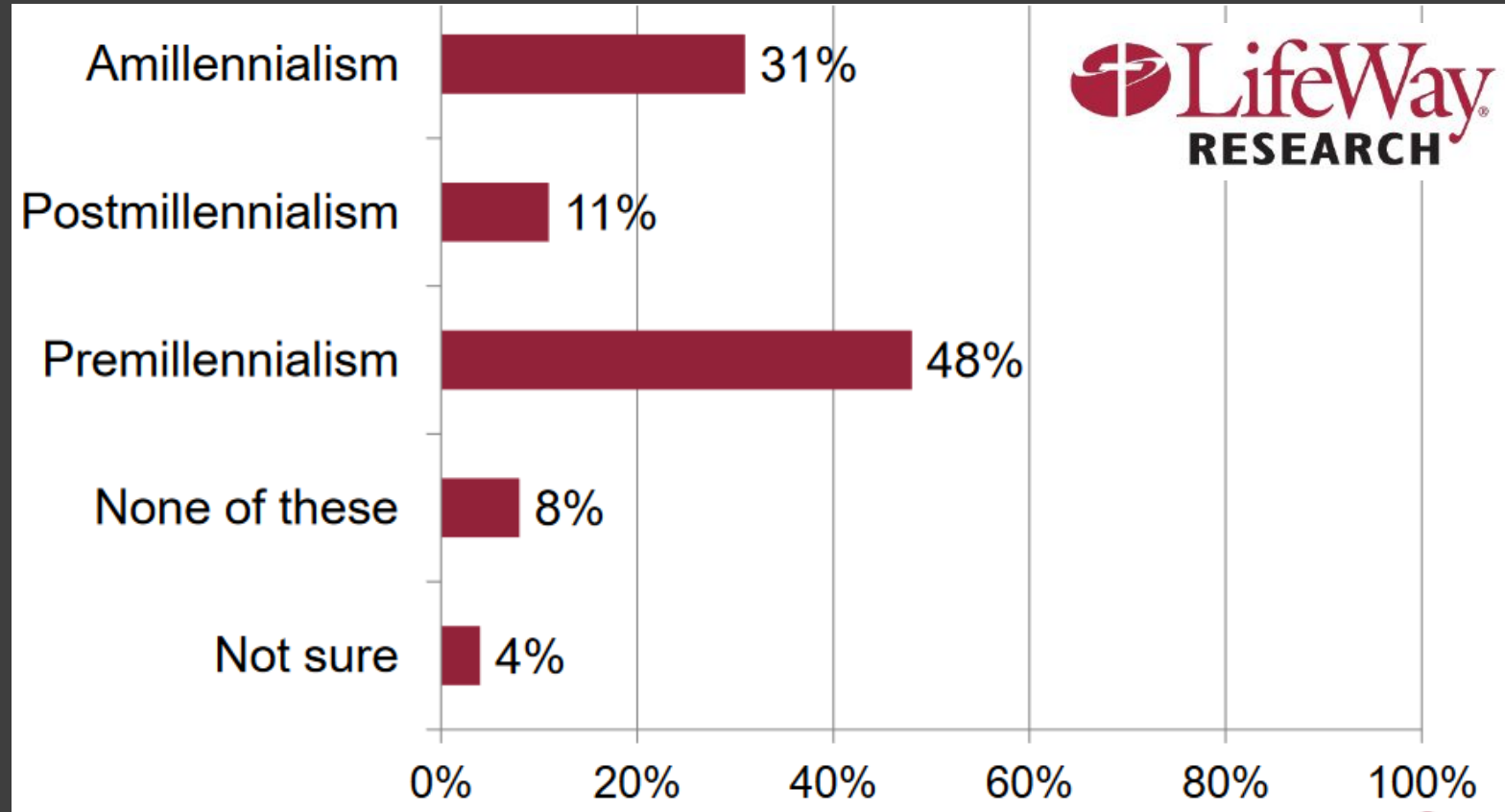


Sandro Botticelli, 1480

Postmillennialism

- Proclamation of the gospel will win the vast majority of human beings to faith in Christ during the present age.
- Increasing gospel success will gradually produce a time in history of unspecified duration prior to Christ's return in which faith, righteousness, peace, and prosperity will prevail in the affairs of people and of nations.
- After an extensive era of such "millennial" conditions, the Lord will return visibly, bodily, and in great glory, ending history with the general resurrection and the great judgment of all humanity.
- Its greatest influence was in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries.
- It is not widely held today and its advocates are mostly partial preterists.

Millennial views of Protestant pastors (2016)



Interpretation of Revelation 20

- The binding of Satan for a thousand years (20:1-3) represents Christ's dominion over him during the church age as a result of the crucifixion and resurrection.
 - Satan is bound so that he cannot “deceive the nations” during the thousand years.
 - Satan's forces are hindered sufficiently to allow successful proclamation of the gospel.
 - Satan is not neutralized and can impact the world within the boundaries of his imprisonment.

Interpretation of Revelation 20 (continued)

- The *souls* (20:4-6) of those who “came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” represent the saints who died while holding to their faith despite suffering and persecution of various types during the church age.
 - The thrones are heavenly thrones.
 - The “first resurrection” refers to the translation of the souls of believers to heaven where they live spiritually after physical death.
 - Believers and unbelievers both experience the “first” death, which is physical death.
 - Believers and unbelievers will experience a bodily (second) resurrection.
 - Believers do not experience the second death (20:6), which is spiritual.
- The “rest of the dead” (20:5) who did not come to life until after the thousand years refers to the lost who have no share in the thousand-year reign.

Interpretation of Revelation 20 (concluded)

- Satan's release and assembling of the nations for a final battle (20:7-10) after the thousand years represents a time of intense persecution of the church in a last attempt to destroy it before Christ's second coming.
 - This battle seems to be the same as the final battle in Rev. 19:17-21.
 - In this chapter, it is seen to occur after the millennium (i.e., the church age).
- Satan's complete and final defeat will then occur at Christ's second coming.
 - The beast and false prophet are also thrown into the lake of fire at this time (19:20).
- The final scene (20:11-15) in this vision describes the bodily resurrection of both believers and unbelievers.

The new heaven and earth

- The image of the city, the new Jerusalem, is symbolic of the fellowship of God with his people in an actual new creation.
- All of the promises to the overcomers in the letters to the seven churches are fulfilled in the final section of the book.
- The apostles are part of the foundation and the twelve tribes of Israel are part of the gates in the wall built on the foundation.
 - This symbolizes the fact that the fulfillment of Israel's promises has finally come in Christ, who with the apostolic witness forms the foundation of the new city (temple), the church, which is the new Israel.
- The wall (21:12) represents the secure nature of the fellowship with God.

The new heaven and earth (concluded)

- The symbolism of the city is further verified by several features:
 - The dimensions of the city (21:16) and the wall (21:17) are multiples of 12, a number indicating completeness.
 - The wall is disproportionately small for a city 1,380 miles high. However, John points out (21:17) that this is an “angelic measurement” which could mean it is symbolic.
 - The city was “pure gold, like clear glass” (21:18).
 - Each of the twelve gates was the size of a single pearl (21:21).
- The “river of the water of life” pictures eternal life.
- Perhaps the greatest blessing of the eternal state will be that God’s redeemed people will at last see his face (22:4)!

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Revelation 22:6-9

⁶ 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.”

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.”

Revelation 22:10-15

¹⁰ 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.

Revelation 22:16-21

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.

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.

Epilogue

- The epilogue repeats themes of the prologue.
- Christ's return is imminent (at any moment) – “I am coming soon” (22:6, 12, and 20), “the time is near” (22:10 and 1:3).
- There is a promise of future reward for the believer (22:12).
- There are warnings for evildoers (22:11, 15) and for those who add to or take away from the words of the book (22:18-19).
- There are blessings for the “one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book” (22:7) and for “those who wash their robes” (22:14).
- There is an invitation for those who are spiritually thirsty to come and take the water of life that is freely offered by God's grace (22:17).
- The book concludes with a benediction (22:20-21).

Concluding comments

The goal of Revelation

“The prophetic visions of Revelation can easily disguise the point that it was written as a letter to the churches, and a letter which is pastoral in nature. The goal of Revelation is to bring encouragement to believers of all ages that God is working out His purposes even in the midst of tragedy, suffering, and apparent Satanic domination. It is the Bible’s battle cry of victory, for in it, more than anywhere else in the NT, is revealed the final victory of God over all the forces of evil. As such, it is an encouragement to God’s people to persevere in the assurance that their final reward is certain and to worship and glorify God despite trials and despite temptations to march to the world’s drumbeat.”

G. K. Beale

Discussion

