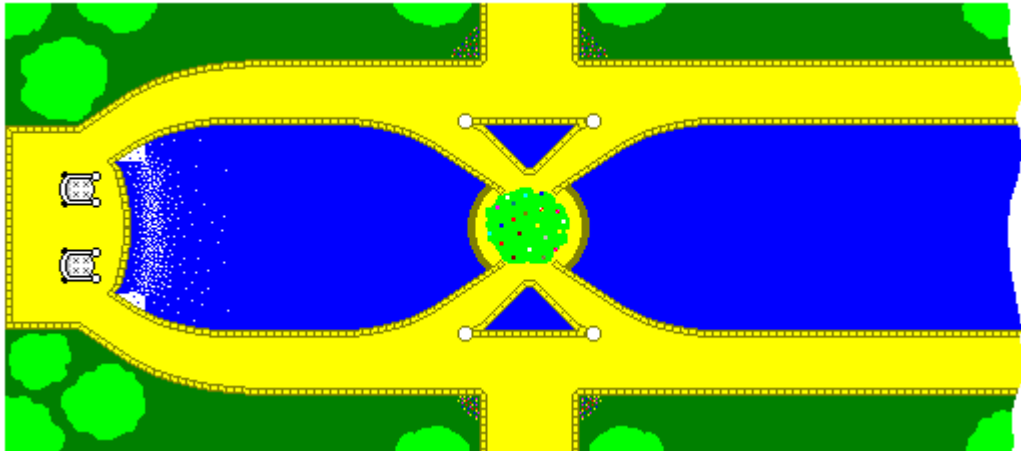


Chapter 22

The final and closing chapter of the Book of Revelation is the capstone of our eternal potential. The chapter continues with John's vision of the celestial Jerusalem and the glory of exaltation. We are admonished to heed the counsel of this vision. What is the counsel? Be numbered among the true and faithful, that the Father might bless you with all that He has. We are also warned by the judgment of this vision. He that does not follow the counsel of God shall in no wise partake of the tree of life nor drink from the pure river of the water of life.

Verse 1-2: As John proceeded to view celestial Jerusalem's inner city he is impressed to record the vision of *"a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb"*. This passage bears remarkable similarity to another event that is to occur prior to the second coming of the Savior. As the world prepares for the return of their Messiah, a temple will be built upon Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Not just any temple, but a temple of God. John briefly alludes to this fact in chapter eleven of the Book of Revelation. He doesn't, however mention that water will flow out from under the temple and heal the waters of the Dead Sea. This prophecy has been issued by such prophets as Moses, Ezekiel, Joel, and Zechariah (Deuteronomy 3:17, Ezekiel 47:1-12, Joel 3:18, Zechariah 14:8). The prophet Ezekiel wrote of a vision that he had in which he was standing at the doorway of the temple and seeing the water flow from it. *"Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar (Ezekiel 47:1)"*. Ezekiel followed the waters that flowed from the temple. They formed a river and *"at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other (Ezekiel 47:1)"*. A messenger of the Lord that was sent to Ezekiel for the purpose of his receiving this glorious message explained to him, *"These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh (Ezekiel 47:6-9)"*. Finally, we are told that *"by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that*

side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine (Ezekiel 47:12)". As John continued to view the celestial Jerusalem he saw that **"in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations"**. In John's vision of celestial Jerusalem, healing waters of life issued from the throne of God. In Ezekiel's vision healing waters of life issued from the House of God. Both of the waters flowed past trees that represented life and healing. The events on temple mount appear to be a beautiful foreshadowing of the celestial kingdom.



With the power and capability of deity, it is not unreasonable to assume that all of the things that John saw in the celestial city are literal; however, given the style in which John has written most of this work, we should expect that some of the things that John writes are symbolic in nature, or at least have symbolism associated with them.

The pure river of the water of life, which we are told is clear as crystal, symbolizes the love of God. Such love results in exaltation and eternal life. The scriptures teach us that, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16)"*. Indeed, the symbolism of the river, represents the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which offers eternal life and exaltation to all that truly desire it. It is fitting that a pure river, which is clear as crystal, should

symbolize this gift. Rivers represent perpetual renewal. They represent cleansing, and purity. The terms pure, clear, and crystal only reinforce this symbolic definition. Through Jesus Christ we may become pure and clean. We can wash ourselves clean from the blood and sins of this world and become worthy to accept the gift of eternal life and exaltation. The prophet Isaiah taught, *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool (Isaiah 1:18)"*.

The water of the river, we are told, proceeds from the throne of God the Father, and the Lamb, which is a symbol for Jesus Christ. An unspotted lamb was used in ancient Israel as a sacrificial offering in similitude of the atoning sacrifice that the Savior made on behalf of mankind. Given the symbolism associated with the river, one can see that such a gift is only made available of the Father through the Son. Hence John has taught us this by showing the river proceeding from the Father and the Son.

John spoke also of a tree. Due to the wording and structure of the passage that describes the tree, it is difficult to understand exactly what John saw. The passage states, *"in the midst of the street of"* the celestial Jerusalem, *"and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life"*. The passage could be interpreted as placing the tree in the middle of the street, which we were previously told is made of pure gold, and placing a river on both sides of the street. One might also picture the street and the river intersecting, with the tree being placed in the middle of the intersection. Another possibility is that the river runs with streets on either side and the tree lies in the midst of the river. A final possibility is that there are many trees of life and they line the banks of the river. If the events that are to occur on Temple Mount in the last days, more specifically the water flowing from the temple during the days preceding the second coming, are symbolic of the celestial Jerusalem, we might conclude that there are many trees. Ezekiel's accounting of events at Temple Mount says, *"the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees (Ezekiel 47:12)"*.

The details of the whereabouts of the tree, in relation to the street and river that lie in the Celestial Jerusalem, are insignificant compared to the meaning behind the tree itself. Like the river, the tree represents the love of God, which results in eternal life and exaltation to all those that are found worthy. The difference between the symbolism of the river and tree is that the river represents that which is necessary for each of us to be worthy to obtain access to the tree, while the tree represents the actual gift of eternal life and exaltation.

Before the fall of Adam, the river and the tree were present, and they were part of God's eternal plan for man. In the beginning,

after God had created the world, he formed the garden of Eden. In the Old Testament, we are taught, *"And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden....(Genesis 2:9-10)"*. Adam and Eve were commanded of the Lord that they were to partake freely of all that was in the garden, except for the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of eternal life. Satan, knowing that for him to truly gain the souls of men, they must have a knowledge of good and evil, that they might be held accountable for their sins. As part of the eternal plan, Adam and Eve partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Seeing this *"the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever (Genesis 3:7)"*. The tree of life was removed from the reach of man. It was necessary for the Lord to keep man from partaking of the tree of life, in that if he had partaken without partaking of the water of redemption, he would have lived eternally in his sins; having no chance for exaltation.

John saw that the tree of life did *"bare twelve manner of fruits"*. It also produced *"fruit every month"*. The symbolic nature of this passage makes us ask ourselves if the tree of life and her fruit are not just figurative expressions. We see yet another reference to the symbolic number twelve, which symbolizes completeness. I would suggest that the bearing of fruit is strictly symbolic. How can a tree produce fruit every month when there is no time, no day, no night, and obviously no months. The true meaning of the monthly bearing of fruit is that it bears fruit twelve times. This symbolizes that each of the twelve tribes will have access to the gift of exaltation and eternal life. The tree of life with its twelve fruits and twelve bearing periods represents the fulfillment of the promise that God made to Abraham, that his seed should be granted all that God has. In accordance with this, fruit is often used as a symbol of abundance and well-being. In this case, it symbolizes the fulfilling of the "Abrahamic Covenant". For us, the tree of life should be our utmost and highest goal. We should strive every day of our life to be found worthy enough to be called the seed of Abraham and granted the gift of partaking of the fruit of the tree of life.

The final reference made to the tree of life is a comment about its' leaves. John says, *"the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations"*. Leaves are often used to symbolize happiness and well-being. In the Old Testament we find that after Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, *"they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons (Genesis 3:7, see also Moses 4:13)"*. Because of this

occurrence, leaves are also used to symbolize the covering of ones sin's. Given the fact that the symbol of the leaf was used in this passage, and that John says that the purpose of the leaves is to heal the nations, that is the nations that are worthy to partake of the tree, I would conclude that the leaves of the tree represent the absence of sin, affliction and grief. Those that partake of the tree of life, shall not only receive eternal life, but an eternal life of happiness and joy. In a symbolic sense the pains of mortality will be healed.

Verse 3:

Confirming the fact that the leaves of the tree of life symbolize the absence of sin, affliction, and grief, John says, "***And there shall be no more curse***". That is the curse that was placed upon the earth, and it's inhabitants, at the time of the fall shall be lifted. Because of the fall, God told Adam and Eve, "*Unto the woman.....I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (Genesis 3:16-19, see also Moses 4:22-25)". We can summarize the curse of the earth as follows;*

The Curse of the Earth

- ‡ Sin came into the world***
- ‡ Women will have pain in child birth***
- ‡ Ground is cursed, it no longer produces food spontaneously.
Weeds are produced.***
- ‡ Man must labor in life to survive***
- ‡ Death is introduced into this world***

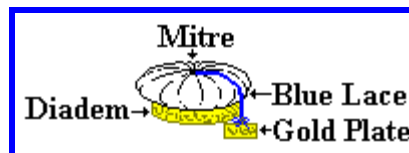
Not only will the curse be lifted from the earth and it's inhabitants, "***but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him***". Such is, and has been, the desired goal of the righteous from the beginning of time. Such was the goal of Father's plan for the salvation of man, that we might come to this mortal probation and prepare ourselves adequately to return to the presence of the Father, that we might serve Him throughout all eternity. As the Lord proceeded to show the prophet Zechariah a vision of the last days, which can easily sadden the heart as one views the wickedness of man, the Lord told Zechariah, "*Sing and rejoice, O*

daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again (Zechariah 2:10-12)".

Verse 4:

The celestial kingdom shall be the residence of God. Those that are granted joint residence with the almighty are promised that **"they shall see his face"**. Seeing the face of God and dwelling in his presence requires purity of heart and soul. It was for that very reason that *"Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God (Doctrine and Covenants 84:23)"*. We are all promised that if we are worthy, we will be blessed to stand again in the presence of our Father, and speak with him as a friend speaketh with a friend. The Lord told the prophet Joseph Smith that, *"It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am (Doctrine and Covenants 93:1)"*.

Those that are worthy of dwelling in the presence of deity, have diligently followed the words and councils of God. Several times throughout the book of Revelation, John has used the symbolism of having a name written on ones forehead to symbolize one devotions and allegiances. Those that are willing to follow the Lord are called the true and faithful **"and his name shall be in their foreheads"**. As previously discussed, the representation of having a name written upon ones forehead is represented in the ancient temple clothes of Israel. The mitre, or bonnet that was worn by the ancient priest had a blue lace that hung from the top of it to just above the priest forehead. From the lace hung a gold plaque that was engraved with the words, **"Holiness to the Lord"**.



The symbolism is beautiful, as the head symbolizes the control of one's life, the name in the forehead indicates the fashion by which one's life shall follow. Only those that have fashioned their lives after

that of the Lord, and have symbolically written the Lord's name on their foreheads are worthy of dwelling in the presence of God.

Verse 5:

John, who was most likely amazed that the celestial sphere was like unto a sun, reiterates what he said in chapter twenty (20), verse twenty three (23). He says, "***And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light***". To this he adds, "***and they***", those that dwell in the celestial city, "***shall reign for ever and ever***". Those that receive celestial glory "***shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them (Doctrine and Covenants 132:19-20)***".

Such a concept is mocked, and misunderstood by many that are of the world. Many feel that it is blasphemy to say that we have the potential to become Gods; however, the Old and New Testaments of the King James version of the Bible have several references to the fact that we indeed have the potential to become Gods. In the book of Psalms we are taught that we "***are gods; and all of you are children of the most High (Psalms 82:6)***". The Savior Himself taught of the divinity of man when He said, "***Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God (John 10:34-36)***"?

The fact that our divine destiny lies in godhood does not mean that we consider ourselves greater than the Father. The Psalmist who taught us that we are Gods, being the offspring of the Father, also taught that "***the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods (Psalms 95:3)***". Our Father is still greater than us, and we are still His children.

Verse 6:

The angel that is narrating John's grand vision bares testimony to him of the reality of this vision. He testifies that "***these sayings are faithful and true***". This not only testifies of the reality of this vision, but being true and faithful implies that they are the plan of the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is often called true and faithful.

The angel further testifies that the Lord has given this vision that the righteous, or as he says, the Lord's servants, might have a

knowledge and understanding of the things that shall come to pass. Similarly, the Lord warned the Nephites of His coming to their continent during the meridian of time. The righteous were taught and understood the signs that would precede the coming of the Lord. The wicked however, rejected the message and were sore afraid as the signs unfolded.

As we enter into the days of which the fulness of this vision is unfolded, it is important that we remember the lesson that was so beautifully taught by the prophet Elisha. The Old Testament tells of a time in which the King of Isreal was afraid that the King of Syria was going to set siege upon his country. His fears lead him to call upon the Lord's prophet Elisha, that he might acquire the protection of the Lord. The prophet Elisha came to the King's aid, bringing with him a servant. As they slept the King of Syria "*sent... thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the servant of " Elisha, "the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do"?* Fear had entered into the servant, yet the prophet answered calmly and non-worrisome, "*Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them*". I am sure that the naive servant, looked around to find that his math skills testified otherwise. He showed sign of serious concern as he weighed the mighty force of the Syrian army and the forces that accompanied him. Elisha saw the servant's concern, and he "*prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha (2 Kings 6:14-18)*".

I think this great story has specific application in our dispensation. As the forces of evil mount and our naive eyes fail to see the hand of the Lord that shall encompass His people, I am sure that we will be as the young servant, worried and sacred, asking our Master, "Father, what shall we do"? If we will draw close to the Master, and pray for our eyes to be opened, we will see the Lord's strength. We will feel the calming comfort of the spirit, as we come to the knowledge that, "*they that be with us are more than they that be with them*".

Verse 7: Another warning is issued in this verse. The Lord proclaims, "***Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book***". The two parts of this verse are closer related than one would expect. Christ taught that the righteous that

are waiting His return should *"learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors"*. In other words, those who "keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" will understand the signs of the times and will not be taken surprise when the Lord returns. Christ taught during the meridian of time that *"all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be (Matthew 24:32-51)"*. The wicked will be surprised and the righteous shall be expecting.

Verse 8: Having seen and felt the love and mercy that are contained in the Father's plan, John *"fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed"* him *"these things"*. I do not believe that there is much commentary that needs to accompany this verse. Who would not fall to worship and thank the Lord after such a marvelous experience?

Verse 9: This verse teaches us that the Lord sometimes sends angels to deliver His word, and they deliver it with exactness. So exact was some of the accounting that it was written in first person rather than third person. Of course, we know that when the Lord speaks, whether by His own voice, or the voice of His servants, it is the same (Doctrine and Covenants 1:36).

Verses 10-11: As John's vision ends, several pieces of warning and counsel are given to mankind. One piece of counsel is to heed the words of this book, the book of Revelation. The angel told John, *"Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand"*. In other words, don't keep the words of this vision closed up on a shelf where the dust of time collects on it's pages, but study them and familiarize yourself with their teachings. Why? *"for the time is at hand"!!* The prophet Alma taught, *"For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors (Alma 34:32)"*.

We are also counseled that the end of our mortal probation will determine our eternal place. He that is "unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still". Death and the end of mortal probation does not bring to pass sainthood. Moroni taught, *"wo unto them who shall die in*

their sins, and they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God; and I speak it according to the words of Christ; and I lie not (Moroni 10:26)". Many would believe that when we die we leave our mortal imperfection behind; however, this is nothing more than a teaching of deception. When we arise in the next life, we shall bring with us our same attitudes and desire that we formed during probation. They will be with us during eternity. Is it any wonder that we are counseled that this life is the time to prepare to meet God (Alma 34:32)?

Verse 12: For a second time in this chapter, the Lord warns ***"I come quickly"***, but this time he adds that ***"my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be"***.

The second coming is somewhat of a mystery to many. We have never been told the time, or day, or even the year in which it will occur. We have but words of counsel that warn that it will come quickly. The Lord explained to Joseph Smith that He *"cometh quickly, in an hour you think not.(Doctrine and Covenants 51:20)".* Only the Father knows the time when all things have been fulfilled, and only then will he issue the word. That day will symbolically come as a thief in the night (2 Peter 3:10). How can we then prepare for such an event? How can one prepare for something that will come so swiftly and unexpected that it is compared to a thief in the night? The Lord tried to explain that *"if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh (Matthew 24:32-51)".* In other words, we have been given the signs that will precede His coming, the warning has been issued, if we take heed we will not be surprised. Only those who ignore the signs, and fail to humble themselves before the Lord, will be surprised at His coming.

What is the reward that the Savior shall bring with Him? He taught His followers that at that day *"shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.....Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 24:32-51)".* The reward

of the righteous will be to be numbered among those that shall be lifted up at His coming. The reward that he shall bring to the wicked is damnation.

Verse 13: The Lord, Jesus Christ Identifies Himself by saying,

"I am Alpha", (the Greek Letter - **Α, α**),

"and Omega", (the Greek Letter - **Ω, ω**),

Such letters are the beginning and ending of the Greek alphabet, thus Christ is the "**beginning and the end, the first and the last**". Through modern day revelation, we read the words of Christ which expound on this passage. The Lord says, *"I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord; yea, even I am he, the beginning and the end, the Redeemer of the world. I, having accomplished and finished the will of him whose I am, even the Father, concerning me--having done this that I might subdue all things unto myself-- Retaining all power, even to the destroying of Satan and his works at the end of the world, and the last great day of judgment, which I shall pass upon the inhabitants thereof, judging every man according to his works and the deeds which he hath done (Doctrine and Covenants 19:1-3)"*. In all reality, Jesus Christ is the beginning and end. He was the beginning of mankind, as He assisted Father in our creation, and He is the end of mankind, as He open the door to our eternal destiny.

Verse 14: ***"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city"***. Those who keep the commandments of God are blessed in that all mankind must eventually *"render an account of his stewardship, both in time and in eternity"* before the Lord, they that have kept the commandment will be *"accounted worthy to inherit the mansions prepared for him of my Father (Doctrine and Covenants 72:3-4)"*. This is symbolized in this verse by the tree of life which represents eternal life and exaltation, and the gates of the celestial Jerusalem which represent dwelling in the presence of the Father.

Those that have not kept the commandments will find no such blessing, for the Lord said, *"I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise (Doctrine and Covenants 82:10)"*.

Verse 15: ***"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie"***. Dogs symbolize impurity and baseness. Those that are unpure, those that practice all manner of iniquity and proclaim power and strength

other than from God are to be left outside the city of Celestial Jerusalem. This symbolically teaches that the wicked will not receive any part of the Lord's inheritance. Such teachings are in line with those taught in the Doctrine and Covenants, when the Lord said, "*And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments (Doctrine and Covenants 59:21)*".

Verse 16: In a straight forward address the Lord proclaims, "*I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches*". He also states that He is "*the root and the offspring of David*". A similar statement was made in Revelation, chapter five (5), when "*one of the elders saith unto*" John, "*Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof (Revelation 5:5)*". The term "root" is a symbolic expression that means that one is a descendant of someone. We often use the term "tracing our roots", to imply that we are performing genealogical work. The Savior, Jesus Christ was born the literal son of Mary, and the adopted son of Joseph. The two were said to have been cousins. Their genealogy reveals that they are direct descendants of David. The New Testament verifies that fact, as the root of Jesus Christ is given. It is as follows;

God, The Father



Adam

Seth

Enos

Cainan

Maleleel

Jared

Enoch

Methusala

Lamech

Noe (Noah)

Sem (Shem)

Arphaxad

Cainan

Sala

Heber

Phalec

Ragau

Saruch

Nachor

Thara

Abraham

Matthew 1:1-16



Luke 3:23-38

Isaac

Jacob

Judas

Phares

Esrom

Aram

Isaac

Jacob

Juda

Phares

Esrom

Aram

*Aminadab
Naasson
Salmon
Booz
Obed
Jesse*

*Aminabad
Naasson
Salmon
Booz
Obed
Jesse*

King David

*Solomon
Roboam
Abia
Asa
Josaphat
Joram
Ozias
Joatham
Achaz
Ezekias
Manasses
Amon
Josias
Jechonias
Salathiel
Zorobadel
Abiud
Eliakim
Azor
Sadoc
Achim
Eliud
Eleazar
Matthan
Jacob
Mary (?)*

*Nathan
Mattatha
Menan
Melea
Eliakim
Jonan
Joseph
Juda
Simeon
Levi
Matthat
Jorim
Eliezar
Jose
Er
Elmodam
Cosam
Addi
Neri
Salathiel
Zorobabel
Rhesa
Joanna
Juda
Joseph
Semei
Mattathias
Maath
Nagge
Esli
Naum
Amos
Matthias
Joseph
Janna
Melchi
Levi
Matthat
Heli
Joseph*

Jesus Christ

The Savior is also identified as "*the bright and morning star.*" In our pre-mortal existence, the spirit children of God were referred to as morning stars. The Lord used this expression as He spoke to Job regarding the pre-mortal existence of man. He explained to Job, "*Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:4-7)*"?

The symbol of the morning carries the meaning of purity, newness, the beginning, and happiness. Stars are typically used to

represents people, especially spirits or souls. The morning stars are representation for the spirit children of God. They represent us in our pure state, before leaving Father's presence.

Jesus Christ is known to be our brother in the pre-mortal existence; hence, he too is a morning star. Although, he is called the bright and morning star. In the twilight hours of morning, the light of the sun slowly hides the light of the stars. The dimmer lights fade first, until finally there is but one star, which will also disappear into the firmament. This last star is the brightest of all. Its light surpasses all the rest. So it is with Jesus Christ. His glory and perfection exceeded all of the spirits of the Father. He stood out in the eyes of all, as Father began to unveil His plan for His children. Being the bright and morning star, He accepted the responsibility of becoming the Savior of mankind.

Verse 17: We find that in this verse *"the Spirit and the bride"* are issuing a plea. They are giving an invitation to mankind. The spirit represents the witnessing power of heaven. It is the Holy Ghost. The spirit is the tool that the Father uses to testify to the spirits of mankind when they hear the truth. The bride, in this case, is the church of Jesus Christ. It is the Lord's organization here upon the earth by which he brings a knowledge of Himself unto all mankind. By these two tools the Lord will issue this great plea, *"Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"*. We find that the Lord is willing to give unto all mankind His gift of immortality and eternal life. It is up to us. The offer stands upon the table. Shall we accept it or reject it?

To those that have accepted it, it is their obligation to make the invitation known to all mankind. So patient and Loving is our Father that every soul that partakes of His gift brings Him great joy. It is for that reason that *"if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father (Doctrine and Covenants 18:15)"*! As we go about the Father's work, we will share in the joy of the Father, of which there is none greater.

Verses 18-19: These two verses offer a strong warning with severe consequences to anyone who would alter or delete any part of this book. For many it has cause concern as to the validity of modern day revelation and the bringing forth of new scripture. For others it has caused apprehension in writing commentaries or other such books about the Book of Revelation. One needs to truly understand what these verses are saying. John records;

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book".

The first part of these verses is a caution to every soul that is privileged to hear the words of this vision that they shall not add unto the words written. In other words, he is cautioning those, who he saw in his vision, that would translate and assemble our present day Bible that they should not include their own words and interpretation with his book. Those that do shall be subject to the judgment of God, which is symbolized by the plagues in this book.

John also counseled that the translators of the bible should not delete parts of the vision, in which were unfavorable in their eyes. To such he says risk their own exaltation, which is symbolized by being taken out of the book of life and being denied access into the Celestial Jerusalem, which is God's presence. Keep in mind that John, like Nephi, saw the *"plain and precious things"* that *"were taken out of the book,"* or the Bible, *"which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God--because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them (1 Nephi 13:29)".* John knew that it was important that his message of warning ring throughout the world, and with inspiration issued this decree, that man might be leery of adulterating his work.

Does this mean that we can not have modern revelation or that new scripture cannot be brought forth? Such a concept is absurd and was not John's intention. John himself brought forth scripture after this work. If such were the case, John would have condemned himself. Not only is the Gospel of John assumed to be written after the Book of Revelations, but the first, second, and third epistle of John are also said to have been written after the Book of Revelations. The book of revelations is said to have been written in approximately 94 AD, and the other works of John were to have taken place between 96 and 100 AD. Similarly, Moses issued a decree that was given for the same reason that John issued these two verses. Moses said, *"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you (Dueteronomy 4:2)".* If the warning was to condemn all scripture that came after it, it would nullify the entire New Testament; however, such is not the case.

John's warning is given that his work might stand as it was given. That the counsels of the Lord might go forth as the Lord dictated to him. We should not be leery of discussing them, writing commentary, or other book that aid in our understanding of this great book. We should not be leery of other scripture, save it doesn't come from the Lord. We should only be leery to alter his original script. We should not attempt to rewrite the Book of Revelation, in a manner which we feel is more appealing or easier to understand. Such would bring the judgment of God upon us.

Verse 20: For the third time in this chapter, it is stated "***I come quickly***". I think the Lord is trying to impress upon us the urgency that we must have in repenting of our sins. If we do not repent, we will face torment and anguish at that day when our mortal probation is called to an end. Such a day we will not expect to come as quickly as it will.

The angel of the Lord ends the vision by saying, "***Amen***". Amen is an expression uttered at the ends of prayers that carries the idea of agreement. It actually means what the angels follow with, "***Even so***". The angel is, in a way testifying that this vision will all be fulfilled. He then exclaims, as if he would have the final outcome happen today "***come, Lord Jesus***". Throughout the Book of Revelation, it is apparent that the host of heaven are anxiously awaiting this day. It is us how need to prepare that we might also look forward to the great day of the Lord.

Verse 21: John closes this work with a hope and desire for his fellow brethren. He says, "***The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen***". The grace of Jesus Christ is a term often used to describe the mercy that mankind obtains through the atonement. Without the atonement of Jesus Christ, there would have been no mercy, only justice. No sins could have been repented of, nor mercy could be obtained, only justice and judgment for the error of our ways. With the atonement came mercy. We can repent, and find that our eternal objective is still reachable. This is the grace of Jesus Christ.

It is John's hope that we all partake of the Savior's grace. As Moroni closed the Book of Mormon, he issued a similar proclamation as he said, "***Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the***

remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot (Moroni 10:32-33)".

In a short verse, we find the desire of not only John, but of the Savior himself. The Lord taught, *"For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace (Doctrine and Covenants 93:20)".*

This is the grand message of this book. Though there is much to be learned in the twenty two chapters of the Book of Revelation, the grandest is ***"Come unto the Savior, that your sins might be lifted, and your burdens made light. Come unto Him, that His grace might open the doors of heaven and give unto you eternal rest"***.

I pray that we might heed the counsels of this book. Repent! Come unto Christ, that he might give you of the river of living waters.