

## **Revelation 22:17- 21 – A Prayer, A Warning, An Assurance**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The conclusion of Revelation is not filled with strange twists. It is not a mystery novel. It is not a whodunit 侦探小说 mystery. It is quite predictable. The church, the new Bride of Jesus, was faced with much trouble from the Scarlet Harlot and Rome and she needed to be comforted. And that is about what John predictably wrote. Freedom was on the horizon. Expansion was on the horizon. The night was long...but joy was coming in the morning. Today you will hear of three concluding thoughts which were ultimately for the comfort of the suffering church.

Our headings are: **A Prayer: Come Lord to help, A Warning: Don't Corrupt my Promise, and An Assurance: I will Come Soon.**

Our goals are: **That you will learn to pray wisely, that you will use God's Word carefully, and that you will rest on the knowledge of who your Lord is. In doing these things, you will be strengthened to fulfill you duties as the redeemed Bride of Christ.**

### **A Prayer: Come Lord to Help**

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

1. The **Holy Spirit of God prayed** that Christ would come to help his Bride. This is understandable.

a. The Holy Spirit called men to endure persecution, so it is reasonable for the Holy Spirit to call on Jesus to come and reward the faithful for enduring that persecution. Look at what John wrote:

Revelation 3:21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

b. The Holy Spirit does pray for Christians. This is part of his regular work.

Romans 8: 26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered 发出. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

The Holy Spirit needs to pray for Christians because sometimes Christians don't pray enough, or when they do pray, they pray incorrectly and unwisely. The Holy Spirit therefore purifies the prayers of the Saints so that their prayers become acceptable to the Father. You get fuller, richer blessings from God because of prayers of the Holy Spirit on your behalf.

2. The **Bride of Christ also prayed** that Christ would come – that he would come quickly and destroy his enemies and rescue his people from persecution. This was the same kind of prayer that the Bride of Christ in Songs of Solomon made to the Lord. She wanted his comfort and his presence and she asked him to hurry.

Songs of Song 8: 14 THE SHULAMITE Make haste, my beloved, And be like a gazelle 瞪羚 Or a young stag 牡鹿 On the mountains of spices.

The Bride needed the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, to destroy her enemies so that she might receive the blessings that Christ earned for her. She also needed Christ to quench her thirst. Their prayer for water is important because water represented the most basic human need. One might last a while without food, but without water one quickly succumbs 屈服 to death. Water=Life.

3. But there is another request "to come" that is not directed to Christ. In this request the Holy Spirit and the Bride call to the people of the earth to come to faith in Christ and enjoy that living giving water that comes from him. This offer of the water of life means that this is still on earth, not heaven. Only on earth that man needs the water of God's Word. There is no regeneration and no sanctifying of anyone in heaven. No one needs spiritual nourishment in heaven. Everyone in heaven will be satisfied... fully satisfied. And that is not a new concept. You will remember Isaiah's words:

Isaiah 55: 1 "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. 2 Why do you spend

money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. 3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you—The sure mercies of David.

And notice another important thing: this water is free. It cost Christ a lot to give you that water – his very blood – but it is free for you. And the church really needs this water so she might grow and reproduce as the Bridegroom desired. And because there is an abundance of water that saves and sanctifies, you must share it.

### **A Warning: Don't Corrupt my Promise**

18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues 灾祸 that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

1. While Verse 17 has words of hope for the Christian who was suffering, Verses 18 and 19 are filled with words of terror for those who reject Christ and his Words and the calls of his Bride. Consider similar language in the Bible -Moses' final words, for instance.

Deuteronomy 4: 2 "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Deuteronomy 12: 32 "Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

2. What would happen if anyone changed the words of the Book? Because those who changed the words of the book would rob Christians of the proper comfort God promised and would rob Christians of the directions they needed for living, God threatened the most violent curses on them. They would be damned...damned forever. Their names would be, if possible, removed from God's book. This was strong language to make an important point.

3. You saw some of the promises God made to those who kept the words of his law in Deuteronomy 28:1-14, but if you continued reading from Verse 15-68 and continue in Chapter 29, you will see the intense cursings that God threatened to those who changed his law or acted contrary to it.

Deuteronomy 29: 19 "and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates 指示 of my heart' —as though the drunkard could be included with the sober. 20 "The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven. 21 "And the LORD would separate him from all the tribes of Israel for adversity, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law,

God was saying that the curses that would come upon Israel and Rome for persecuting his people would also come upon the one who tried to change God's Word. God wanted his people to be comforted and would not allow others to rob his children of comfort.

4. Applications a. Can you imagine what God must think now of those who twist the Bible to be a book about morality – a rule for living, for instance, rather than being a book that teaches about the glory of God?

b. Specific to Revelation, can you imagine what God must be thinking when Revelation is taught as a book mostly about a fearful uncertain future?

c. Can you imagine prayer for God's judgment on the persecutors so that the church would be free to thrive and reproduce? Too often Christians' desire for approbation 认可 from man supersedes 取代 God's demands in his Words. But it must not be this way with you, brothers and sisters. Let God's Words direct how you live and how you pray. The church must never be afraid or ashamed or intimidated 胁迫 to pray for God's judgment on those who threaten his church. His

church is too precious to him. Serve him.

### **An Assurance: I Will come Soon**

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

1. Jesus then testified that he would hear the prayer of his people and come and comfort them, and he would hear the prayer of his people and come and destroy those who were terrorizing them. What amazing assurance this was to the hearers! And he would come quickly... not delay for long. We'll not read these again, but remember them.

James 5:8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

2Peter 3:12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent 炽热的 heat?

1John 2:18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

Hebrews 10:37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

2Thessalonians 2: 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming.

Matthew 16:27 "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. 28 "Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

2. The phrase "come, Lord Jesus" is equal to the word "maranatha." "Maranatha" has been the cry of the church from the very beginning whenever she has had troubles. She asked the Lord to come and save her from her troubles. "Maranatha" is often used in conjunction with "anathema" (accursed). In order to save, Christ must curse... put his curses upon the enemies of his Bride.

1Corinthians 16: 22 If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! 23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

It was proper for the Bride to pray for judgment on those who daily harassed her. So you are not to pray this for your personal enemies, but for the enemies of God's church. You pray this prayer that the church might be unencumbered 没有阻碍的 in her work of having children for the Bridegroom and expanding his kingdom.

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

3. The response of John and then the church to this prophecy was right and proper. They said: "So let it be - Amen, Come, Lord Jesus." They knew that Jesus was the faithful and true one. What he said, he would do.

### **Conclusion:**

First, the Bride of Christ and the Spirit of God prayed for Christ to be return to rescue of his Bride and bring judgment upon those who were daily harassing her. She needed to be free to reproduce. Second, the Bridegroom demanded, that while he was away, no one, not even those who pretended to be Christians, was to alter 更改 the words of comfort he left with his suffering Bride. And third, the Bridegroom assured the Bride that he was coming to rescue her and judge her persecutors.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: First, remember the 2 calls you must make with the help of God's Holy Spirit. You must call to Christ to be near you as you struggle through difficult times and you must call to the world to come and enjoy these same benefits. Second, you must receive God's promise that he will destroy the church's enemies for your safety. Third, you must confidently trust that Christ is willing and able to do what he has threatened. You must be confident in his threats on your enemies because Jesus is your Lord and Savior. He did not redeem you to leave you.

Finally, if you are not a Christian today, you can still drink of the water of life and live. That "water of life" is the Word of God. "Drinking of the water" means you believe the truths in it: that Christ came to live and die for sinners. So drink it and live. Refuse it and die in your sins.