

• *Jesus again revealed at the end*

The book of Revelation began by claiming to be a 'revelation of Jesus Christ'¹. Now it closes by again revealing Jesus to us. Jesus was there at the beginning. Jesus is found throughout the book. Jesus is present in the end. Our book is a revelation of Jesus Christ from beginning to end.

1:1

1. We are invited to look at the marvel of our Lord Jesus Christ

1. We are invited to look at the marvel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 22:16–17 develops the word of blessing in 21:6b–7. Jesus is the revealer of God's message. He says: ¹⁶*'I, Jesus, sent my angel to give this witness about these things for the benefit of the churches.'* Jesus is the revealer of God, the one who brings the truth of God to us like a witness in a law-court. He is the one who has sent this revelation about himself.

• *Jesus reveals God*

Jesus is both the 'root' and the 'offspring' of David. *'I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star.'* The thought here goes further than a similar expression in 5:5. Jesus is the 'root' of David because he is the divine Son of God who was at work in David's family even before David was born. He is the 'offspring' because as a human being he was born in David's family line. As 'root' he is the divine Saviour. As 'offspring' he is the human sympathizer.

• *Jesus is the 'root' and 'offspring' of David*

• *Jesus is the 'bright morning star' – announcing the coming of daytime*

Jesus shines in brightness amidst darkness. The 'bright morning star' refers to Venus. In the night-time the sky is darkness but Venus appears in the sky at some time before dawn. This world is like the darkness of night. Jesus is the 'bright morning star'. He appears in the darkness and tells us the daytime is at hand.

2. We are invited to come to our Lord Jesus Christ

2. We are invited to come to our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁷*And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the person who hears this come. And whoever is thirsty, let him come. Let anyone who wishes come and take the water of life freely.* Three times we have an invitation, 'Come'; it is followed by an invitation to 'take'. 'Come . . . come . . . come . . . take . . .', says our scripture.

• *The Holy Spirit draws us to Jesus*

The Holy Spirit says, 'Come.' It is the work of the Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts, drawing us to the Lord Jesus Christ. The bride says, 'Come.' It is the work of the church of Jesus (the bride) to invite everyone to come to the Lord Jesus Christ. When we hear the call to Jesus we are to say the same thing to ourselves, and encourage ourselves in coming to the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. There is one thing that will harm us, and that is our changing the word that comes to us

3. There is one thing that will harm us, and that is our changing the word that comes to us. Revelation 22:18–19 develops the threat in 21:8. ¹⁸*I bear witness to every person who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book.* ¹⁹*And if anyone takes away anything from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life, and from the holy city, which are written in this book.* Here is a warning against false teaching, which always adds to the inspired teaching that comes in God's Word, or takes away from God's Word. False teaching always involves a changing of the Scriptures. The curses against sin will fall upon anyone who perverts the gospel message. The rewards mentioned in 22:14 will be lost. At best such a person will be 'saved through fire' – if he or she is a Christian at all.

• *A warning against false teaching*

Final promises

- Jesus will come quickly
- God will give us grace until Jesus' second coming

But the book of Revelation does not end with threats; it ends with promises. Jesus will soon intervene in whatever situation we find ourselves in. ²⁰*He who bears witness to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.'* And the last word is a word of confident prayer. John himself is an example of enthusiasm for the unchanged message of this book. He adds his own final comment. *Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!* And he ends with a prayer. ²¹*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.* Jesus himself will come to our rescue when we are in need. We look to God for grace, and he will give it to us, again and again, until Jesus comes in such a way that every eye will see him.

Final blessing

- We pray for God's grace in our lives
- For restoration
- For teaching
- For sustenance

John feels he has to bring his book to an end by praying for a blessing upon all of his readers. We need God's grace – his favour when we do not deserve his favour at all, his kindness when he would be just to punish us, his love stretching out to help us when he could rightly abandon us. John wants this grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be powerfully at work in the life of his friends. He has a deep prayerful wish for them. May they know this grace, and trust this grace of God found in Jesus.

Now that the Bible is about to come to a close and we shall come to its last 'Amen', we are left with the prayer for God's grace in our lives. From now on until the day when Jesus comes we shall need God himself, with his grace pouring into our lives through Jesus. We shall need restoring grace when we wander. We shall need his teaching grace when we lapse in judgement and fall into error. We shall need sustaining grace when we are carrying heavy burdens. His grace will be sufficient for us. John knows it and makes it the matter of his closing prayer for all his people. May this grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them when mysterious seals are being opened, when loud trumpet blasts are blowing, when the dragon is roaring, when Babylon is at her worst, when beasts are arising from land and sea. He has spoken of the trumpets of judgement and we have seen every section of the earth – land, sea, rivers and sky – suffering because of the sins of men and women. But the last word is not everlasting distress or everlasting judgement; the last word is everlasting grace.

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|  | <p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p> |  |
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