

Lesson 26
Revelation 22
God's Final Call

Memory verse: "The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

By the time we have reached this point of study in the book of Revelation, the voices from heaven have spoken, the visions are complete, the message has been delivered, the sermons have been preached and most powerful and compelling sermons they were. The preacher was the divine omnipotent God of glory. We have swept through the end of the world, through this present age to the Rapture of the church, then through the Tribulation judgments and seals and trumpets and bowls. We have seen the day of the Lord, the return of Jesus Christ in judgment power and authority. We have been escorted through the visions of the Millennial Kingdom to the great white throne and after that into the eternal state. For the ungodly the lake of fire, for the godly the new Jerusalem in the new heavens and the new earth.

What began in Genesis is brought to completion in the last two chapters of Revelation, as the following summary shows:

<i>Genesis</i>	<i>Revelation</i>
Heavens and earth created, 1:1	New heavens and earth, 21:1
Sun created, 1:16	No need of the sun, 21:23
The night established, 1:5	No night there, 22:5
The seas created, 1:10	No more seas, 21:1
The curse announced, 3:14–17	No more curse, 22:3
Death enters history, 3:19	No more death, 21:4
Man driven from the tree, 3:24	Man restored to paradise, 22:14
Sorrow and pain begin, 3:17	No more tears or pain, 21:4

John has a preview into the interior of the city of the New Jerusalem. As we move inside the city, we discover that it is like a beautiful garden, reminiscent of the garden of Eden. There were four rivers in Eden (Gen. 2:10–14), but there is only one river in the heavenly city. Through the Old Testament, prophets used the picture of a river as a powerful expression of richness, provision, and peace. Ezekiel saw a glorious river (Ezekiel 47) flow down from the temple in Jerusalem and into the sea, but that river belongs to the millennial earth. It is perhaps the final preview of this heavenly river. This is a better river with better trees.

Water symbolizes salvation. Water symbolizes eternal life. You must be born of the water and the Spirit, it symbolizes washing and regeneration. John really understood the meaning of water in terms of its reference to salvation for it was John himself who wrote down the words of Jesus, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit he can't enter the Kingdom." It was John who wrote down the words of Jesus, "Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. But the water that I shall give them shall be come in him a well of water, springing up to eternal life."

Certainly, many interesting questions could be asked about our future abode in heaven, but most must go unanswered until we reach our glorious home. In fact, John closed his book by reminding us that we have responsibilities today because we are going to heaven.

The Bible indeed closes with God giving His final call to those who want to be with Him in Heaven and for all eternity in His presence! Heaven is more than a destination; it is a motivation. Knowing that we shall dwell in the heavenly city ought to make a difference in our lives here and now.

Jesus is coming again. Are you ready for Him?

Things to learn: 1) The reality of Heaven 2) Challenges for believers 3) Invitation to seekers

Discussion questions:

1) Have a read on verses 1 to 5. We may have limited knowledge of Heaven now but what is your impression of it from the text?

Q2. The assurance of heaven must not lull us into complacency or carelessness, but spur us to fulfil our spiritual duties. Discuss the challenges for believers found in verses 6 to 21.

Q3 As we close the final book in the Word of God, there is mercy and grace from Jesus to those seeking Him for all generation before He returns. How can we explain the invitation to those seeking God?