

REVELATION – SERMON 92

MARANATHA – COME, LORD JESUS!

Revelation 22:20-21

INTRODUCTION

- The believer is in a hostile world, under the enemy's dominion, but is sustained by the assurance that Jesus will soon come back to deliver him.
- One of the marks of the persecuted church throughout history has been a desire and anticipation for the return of Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 1:10)
- A sign of spiritual deadness is a disregard for the coming of Christ, which comes during times of ease and prosperity (3:17)
- Modern professing Christianity, like the Laodiceans, has removed its focus away from the coming of Christ and his future kingdom, and instead set their hearts on this present world
- Social Justice, Prosperity Gospel, Dominion Theology, Christian Reconstructionism, Kingdom Now heresies, etc
- What all these teachings have in common is a diminished yearning for the literal, personal, pre-millennial return of Jesus Christ
- There is a word the early church used, both as a prayer, and a form of salutation between believers, and that word is *Maranatha*
- It is an Aramaic term meaning "Our Lord cometh" and is found once in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 16:22)

- It was a weighty watchword which served to impress upon the brethren the imminent return of Christ and the need to be ready to meet him
- We have now come to the last of our studies in this amazing book of Revelation
- God has unveiled to us:
 - ✓ The glorified Jesus Christ (1)
 - ✓ His seven letters to the churches (2-3)
 - ✓ The worship around the throne of God in heaven (4-5)
 - ✓ The judgments of the tribulation (6-19)
 - ✓ The glorious return of Jesus Christ (19)
 - ✓ His millennial kingdom (20)
 - ✓ The new heaven and earth, and new Jerusalem (21-22)
- Now here at the conclusion, it is a condensing of all that has gone before, bringing the very essence of the book, and even the whole Bible to each of us as individuals to each of our hearts
- If we were to sum up the entire book of Revelation in four words it would be these words of Jesus: "Surely, I come quickly."
- These final 23 words seem to have extra weight and significance; each one brims with meaning, and forms a message in itself
- Contained within these words we can find the central theme of the whole bible – God's redemptive plan to save sinful mankind through the Lord Jesus Christ

I. THE PROMISE OF CHRIST WE HEED (20)

A. The testimony of Jesus

1. It is Jesus who testifies (*marturon*) and bears witness of those things recorded in the book of Revelation (1:1-2)
2. This is a final confirmation that the words of this book are indeed given by divine inspiration, and it marks the conclusion of God's revelation to mankind
3. God the Father said of Christ, "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people" (Isaiah 55:4)
4. Jesus said before Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (John 18:37)
5. We can be absolutely certain that the prophecies given concerning the future "*must* shortly come to pass" (1:1)

B. Surely I come quickly

1. Surely (*nai*) – yes, verily
2. The Lord Jesus comes "quickly" (*tachu*), that is "suddenly" (22:7,12)
3. Right to the end of the book of Revelation, the emphasis is on the soon return of the Lord, and the necessity to be ready for it

II. THE PRAYER TO CHRIST WE PLEAD (20)

A. Not all desire his coming

1. Sin makes a man hide himself from God (Genesis 3:10; John 3:20)
 2. Even at his first coming in humility, he was despised and rejected of men (Isaiah 53:3)
 3. All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him at his coming in glory (1:7)
 4. They will try to hide from his wrath (6:15-17)
- B. The believer says, “Amen” – let it be true, and come to pass
- C. What are we asking for when we pray, “Come, Lord Jesus”?
1. The resurrection of the saints
 2. The translation from our mortal to immortal bodies
 3. The saints being in the presence of the Lord evermore
 4. The judgment and damnation of the wicked
 5. The banishment of Satan
 6. The universal reign of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords
 7. The new heaven and new earth
- D. This prayer shows the state of a man’s heart
1. It is the prayer from the heart of a believer who is walking with God
 - a. The sinning believer, until he confesses his sin, smarts under God’s chastening, and does not joyfully

anticipate being face to face with the Lord (Psalm 32:3-4)

2. This is the prayer of a believer who is ready and willing to die at any moment
 - a. On an individual, personal level, the believer's desire to be in Christ's presence will be fulfilled either at the rapture or at death

E. John shows proper reverence in addressing him as "Lord Jesus"

1. No one in Scripture ever addressed the Saviour as merely "Jesus", but always used one or more of his titles (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:1-10)
2. "One great lesson and effect of this book will be to inspire us with greater reverence for Him who is at once the author and subject of the Revelation" (Bullinger)

III. THE POWER FROM CHRIST WE NEED (21)

B. An apostolic benediction

1. The final words of this book remind us that, though this is an apocalypse, revealing far reaching prophecies, it is foremost a church epistle, written to the saints, and to be read in the churches (1:3)
2. Paul ended his epistles the same way (Romans 16:24; 2 Thessalonians 3:18)

C. The necessity of grace

1. While v.20 shows us what is the believer's *hope* for the future, v.21 shows us the believer's *help* for the present

2. God's grace (*charis*) is his unmerited favour towards men, saving from sin and empowering for service
3. It is only by God's grace that we have anything (1 Corinthians 15:10)
4. His grace is glorious, and is to be praised, for by it we sinners are made "accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6)
5. As the Old Testament ends with a curse (Malachi 4:6), so the New Testament ends with grace
6. God delights in mercy (Micah 7:18), and though Revelation contains the wrath and severe judgments of God, those judgments are his "strange work" (Isaiah 28:21), and it all ends with his grace

D. This grace comes from the Lord Jesus Christ

1. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17)
2. "Lord" is a title of deity and authority
3. "Jesus" means "Saviour", showing his humanity and his redemptive work
 - a. He was so named, because he would "save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21)
 - b. Within this name is revealed the sinful state of humanity, and the means the God has provided for his salvation
4. "Christ" is a title meaning "Messiah", "the Anointed One"

E. From beginning to end, our whole existence depends on God's all-sufficient grace

1. Prevenient grace (John 6:44; Acts 16:14)
2. Pardoning grace (Ephesians 2:8)
3. Needful grace (Hebrews 4:16)
4. Instructing grace (Colossians 3:16)
5. Sanctifying grace (Philippians 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:23)
6. Comforting grace (John 14:18)
7. Strengthening grace (Psalm 27:14; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10)
8. Restraining grace (Jude 24)
9. Delivering grace (Matthew 6:13; 1 Corinthians 10:13)
10. Restoring grace (Hosea 14:4)
11. Reviving grace (Psalm 85:6; 138:7; Isaiah 40:31)
12. Persevering grace (1 Peter 5:10)
13. Dying grace (Acts 7:55-60)

F. Amen

1. The Hebrew origin of this word means "firm", and hence "faithful"
2. It is also translated as "verily"

3. The Lord Jesus himself is “the Amen, the faithful and true witness” (3:14)
4. As the very last word of the Bible, it is a declaration of confidence, assurance and certainty that what God has said will surely come to pass (2 Corinthians 1:20)
5. We say, “Amen” to all that God has revealed to us in the Bible; this includes his justice and wrath, as well as his mercy and grace

CONCLUSION

1. It is a mark of a believer to “love his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:8)
2. We are commanded to pray, “Thy kingdom come” (Matthew 6:10)
3. Is it part of your daily prayer to cry, “Come, Lord Jesus!” If not, why not?
4. In the Parable of the Pounds, the Lord, having entrusted his servants with gifts, commanded them to “Occupy till I come” (Luke 19:13)
5. Are you using every moment of your brief life in this world to labour for the Master, that, when he comes, you will hear those words, “Well, thou good servant” (Luke 19:17)
6. Will you add to your vocabulary the word *Maranatha*, in your prayers, in your conversation, so that the truth of it is not only on your lips but in your heart, controlling your life?