

The Voice of Truth # 544

The Certified Proclamation

We have now come to the close of this most wonderful and gracious book - The Book of Revelation. And we have seen the consummation of God's eternal purpose when everything in heaven and on earth enters the eternal state. The book of Revelation takes up where the book of Daniel leaves off, according to Daniel 12:4, **for thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book (of Daniel) even to the time of the end.** The first three chapters of Revelation bridges the gap by setting forth Christ in the midst of the churches during the church age, or the period of time from the days of the apostles until Christ's coming in mid-air for his church. The fourth chapter stands at the beginning of the tribulation period following the rapture of the church. Now, will you get this statement? Listen, I feel sorry for you, A-Millennialists. I do. A-millennialist means there's no millennial. I just feel sorry for you. You have to twist the scriptures to fit your ideas and then have to try to justify yourselves by calling my preaching conventional. That is, affirming that I'm just following the conventional or traditional interpretation. Brother, I'm following God's Word and preaching it as it is to men as they are. I'll stake my eternal destiny on it.

The Holy Spirit picks up the thread of events at "The Time of The End" in the fourth chapter of Revelation, and chapter by chapter we behold the tribulation break upon the world as we follow the Scriptures from the breaking of the seals through the sounding of the trumpets and the pouring out of the bowls of God's wrath upon a Christless, godless world. In the midst of the tribulation, we saw the Antichrist rise from the bottomless pit to conquer the entire world and rule it for three and a half years, during which time he reaches the height of blasphemy against the Lord God of heaven and his Christ. We saw the many windings and subtle deceptions of Satan, in heaven and on earth. Then we witnessed the battle of Armageddon, when the Antichrist and false prophet were cast into the lake of fire, and Satan was cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years. And after

the thousand years, we saw him loosed for a little season to complete God's purpose through him, followed by his final doom, when he was cast into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet were.

Also, we saw the Lord Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords ruling and reigning with his saints for one thousand years. At the close of this glorious reign, we beheld the heavens and the earth flee away, the wicked dead raised, judged, and consigned to their eternal state in the lake of fire with the devil and his angels. Then we beheld the new heavens and the new earth, replacing the old heavens and the old earth, and to which the new Jerusalem came down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband; the capital city of the new earth, and the glorious home of the glorified saints. With the new nations placed in their respective spheres upon the new earth, and the throne of God resting in the new city as God's tabernacle among men, we behold paradise regained, having the tree of life and the river of the water of life, blessing the new city and the entire earth. This gives us a complete picture of redemption and ushering in of the new eternal kingdom ruled by Almighty God and the Lamb.

As we come now to the epilogue of the Lord's closing message concerning the prophetic vision of future events, the first thing we notice is that he affirms the truth of the vision and the certainty of the coming event. Listen to Revelation 22:6, **And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.** Here is set forth the absolute truth and certainty of the message of this book. Christ knew that down through the ages men would belittle, make fun of, ridicule, disbelieve, and even reject the teachings of this great prophetic book we call Revelation. It was said of Christ by his enemies, **never a man spake like this man.** So here in regard to all the contents of the book of Revelation, the angel said to the apostle John, **these words are faithful and true.** This statement is repeated in Revelation 19:9, **these are the true sayings of God.** It's also repeated in Revelation 21:5, **Write: for these words are true and faithful.** The Lord God of heaven affirms and reaffirms with the highest authority that all that is written in this book is true and faithful. To make it even stronger, the Lord Jesus said in Revelation 22:16, look there quickly, **I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.** And again, he states with

all emphasis in Revelation 22:6, **and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.**

Therefore, the book of Revelation is the word of God. Turn with me to the first chapter of Revelation, the first verse. **The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.** The book of Revelation opens and closes with the affirmation stated and restated that these words are true and faithful. We are told that they come directly from God the Father to Christ the Son, from Christ to John, and from John to the servants of Christ. And God pity the man or woman who makes fun of the book of Revelation. It's a book of Revelation. It is a book to be read, a book that is easily understood. It's a book for our edification because it unfolds the consummation of redemption in Christ Jesus, our Lord, and the completion of all God's purposes and decrees and counsels from eternity to eternity. Any individual who does not understand the book of Revelation does not understand his Bible. Now you hold that.

The next verse, the next point of Christ's closing message to the church is found in verse 7, **Behold, I come quickly: Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.** The book of Revelation opens with these words, **Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein, for the time is at hand.** In the second and third chapters, you'll find these words repeated seven times. Listen. **He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.** The book of Revelation is to be read. It is to be heard. It is to be kept or observed. Christ said those who keep, or observe the things written therein are blessed. I want to tell you, it's been blessed to study this book. If the book of Revelation were a closed book, or a book of mysteries, or a book of symbols, not to be understood, then why did the Lord Jesus Christ say that it is blessed to read, to hear, to observe all things written therein? He'd be a liar, wouldn't he? Will you let me state it again with all the emphasis of my soul, that to the born-again believer, the book of Revelation is the unveiling of the crucified, buried, risen, exalted, glorified Son of God and Son of Man, and that the born-again believer can and does understand the book. It is not a closed book. It is not a book of symbols. It is a book of actualities. What a blessing to the heart of the believer to see his blessed and glorified Lord walking in the midst of the churches. Then what a blessing to see the Lord Jesus Christ

unfolded and revealed in verse after verse, chapter by chapter during the tribulation period as he prepares to take over the kingdom of this world as the Lord of lords, and King of kings. What a blessing it is to see the Lord reigning in power for one thousand years with his glorified saints and then see him dispose of all of his enemies and put the last enemy beneath his feet and set enthroned on the new throne in the new city upon the new earth. For you to tell me that you don't understand the book of Revelation, signifies that you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. I realize it takes study, it takes reading, and I know it takes meditation and prayer. So it does with all the Word of God.

Let me make this statement. I've come to the definite positive conclusion that the individual who does not understand Revelation, or who treats it with a sneer, or with a ridicule, or passes it off lightly as a joke, commits the highest act of blasphemy against the Son of God and calls him a liar. Therefore, as long as he remains in that attitude, he does not and he cannot know him as Lord and Savior.

Now why did the Lord Jesus Christ say that he is blessed who keeps the saying of the prophecy of this book. It is necessary that we understand, it is urgent that we understand, because apart from the book of Revelation, we can never know the final outcome of the victories won on Calvary. We can never know the final defeat of sin and Satan and rebellion. We can never know what the Lord has in store for his children. Apart from the book of Revelation we cannot understand the purpose of redemption. Then it is urgent that we understand the book of Revelation because Christ said in that verse 7, **Behold, I come quickly**. That means something to the believer. That means that he watches, waits anxiously, longingly, looking intently for his coming, as all the things in the book of Revelation cannot take place until our Lord comes. The blessedness of understanding the book of Revelation is based upon the second coming of our Lord back to earth again, which is the blessed hope of the believer. The reason Satan hates the book of Revelation and fights the doctrine of the second coming of Christ is that the believer's blessed hope of the fulfillment of redemption will be realized when all sin and Satan, who is the author of sin, will be forever disposed of and our bodies will be delivered from death. Everything the believer holds dear is tied up in the second coming of Christ. **Behold, I come quickly**, means that when the purpose of God has been fulfilled, he will leave his

meritorious throne in a split second and will come into midair for his own. There'll be no tarrying. There'll be no hindrance. He will come through all the battlements of Satan to receive his own. God's time clock is set and before judgment begins to fall upon the kingdom of Satan, the Lord Jesus Christ will come. As he told his disciples in the 14th chapter of John, Behold, I come quickly to snatch you out of this world, to kidnap you and take you unto myself, and you shall not go through the tribulation. So, our cry is, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. When John heard the voice of the Lord say, **Behold, I come quickly**, he was so caught in the ecstatic rapture of the marvel which had been revealed in this book that he seemingly, unconscious of what he was doing, fell down before the angel or the messenger of God to worship him. Listen to that eighth verse, **And I, John, saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.**

Now you listen. There's a beautiful picture here. As we brought out in the beginning of our studies of Revelation, we believe the angel here, the messenger, was old Daniel. It was not that John here committed idol worship. But he was enthralled, in rapture, as he saw the consummation of all things, and he no doubt took the voice of the angel to be the voice of the exalted, glorified risen Lord. The angel, or messenger, spoke quickly and said, John, get up. Don't do it, just wait a minute. Don't you see that I'm just a fellow servant of thy brethren, the prophets? Of them which keep the sayings of this book? The word angel means messenger. The word brethren refers to the Jews and identifies the messenger as one of the old prophets. **Of them which keep the sayings of this book**, is without doubt the saints. This could not refer to one of the angelic hosts as we generally understand angels. Also, I believe that sixth verse throws some light on the identity of the messenger. The literal reading says, **the Lord God of the prophets sent his messenger to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.** Which of the old prophets would be more fitting than the prophet Daniel to send to the apostle John the prophetic vision of future events? God gave to Daniel that great prophecy regarding the Jews, before and after the coming of Christ, and then the setting forth the great kingdom under the reign of Christ. And he said to

Daniel, when he had finished his prophecy, seal up the book, for the time is not at hand. But here he says, don't close this book, because the time is at hand.

Then the style of Revelation is the style of Daniel. The book of Revelation is the completion of God's prophetic word. And I get the picture here of these two great old prophets standing side by side, Daniel, come back from Gloryland, standing beside the apostle John, who was at that time some 90 years of age, with hoary hairs, stooped shoulders, with the eyes of a seer. When God had completed unveiling to him the consummation of redemption in Christ, it was only natural for him to fall in ecstatic rapture at the feet of the messenger. But I can imagine old Daniel reaching down, lifting him up by the hand and saying, John, look, look yonder, look, let's worship God. What was Daniel pointing him to? He was pointing him to the great triune God, God the Father, God the Son - who is the Lamb, and God the Holy Spirit, the great Godhead. You get that picture? I wish every individual would turn from every other created being, whether it be angel, saint, or Mary the mother of our Lord, and turn directly to God and worship Him.

The born-again believer does not have even a mental vision of Christ because the Holy Spirit, the third person of the triune God who indwells him, leads him up the blood-sprinkled way into the presence of the Lord God of Heaven. There is one God, one Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the only approach we have into the presence of the Lord God of Heaven the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and the Father of every born-again believer is the blood-sprinkled way. Yes, let's worship God, which means the triune Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. The Father gave, the Son died and rose again, and the Holy Spirit reveals the Christ - not a mental vision, but a spiritual reality.

Now let's listen again as the messenger continues in that 10th verse. **And he said unto me, Seal not up the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.** The prophet John was not to conceal them, he was to record them, that is, make them known. He was to publish them to the churches. Will you let me make this statement? Listen, listen. The book of Revelation constitutes our Savior's last and crowning testimony to his church and to his people, and the church is urged to read it, to hear it, and observe the things written therein. Notice that

expression, **seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book**. The word **sayings** shows us that the book is the very word of God, that it was written by the Lord God himself and it ought to be put into the hands of the saints. Why? It's God's word to us. It is God's last written word, his last message to his people, and it closes the canon of the scriptures. Now brother, I'm making a statement here that's going to shake some of you. From that day to this, the heavens have been silent. God has not spoken to his people through these centuries with a new revelation, but only through his word by the Holy Spirit. And he will not speak to his people again until Christ breaks through the blue at his second coming. And every individual who tells you they have a special revelation from God, apart from the Word of God, is a liar. He's a double-barreled liar. He's a false prophet, or she's a false prophet. God has not, God does not, give any special revelation apart from His Word, to anybody at any time. The heavens have been silent for these centuries and will be, till Christ comes back. Now, brother, I'll stake my eternal destiny on that. I stand here as a prophet of God, declaring without flinching, without compromising, that that's so. Let me say again, the heavens are silent. God has not and does not speak to his people except through his written word by the Holy Spirit. Brethren, that being true, how can anyone excuse himself from reading and studying the book of Revelation? How can anyone who calls himself a Christian think or speak likely of it? How can we say we are faithful to the word of God and yet neglect to study and revel in and rejoice over the words of the prophecy of this book? Let me warn you, let us beware lest we neglect or despise this book and bring the wrath of God down upon us. This is not a book of symbols. It is not a sealed book. It is not a dead letter. It is not a letter that cannot be understood. Only, get it, hold it, only spiritually blinded individuals fail to understand it.

Notice the phrase in verse 10, **for the time is at hand**. We come across this statement in Revelation 1:3. The book of Revelation, the vision of the unveiling of Christ at the second coming, was given to John for one reason, **the time is at hand**. To the born-again believer, there is no time to waste. To him, the time is always at hand, because we know not at what moment the Lord is coming. We are told to live constantly in the expectation of the coming of the Lord. We are to look for his coming. We are to wait for his coming. We are to occupy until he comes. We are to pray and labor and witness day by day as if it were the last day

that we shall have to tell men of our blessed Lord, for the time is at hand. Therefore, let us redeem the time to cause the days of evil. Let us watch as well as pray, for we know not what hour our Lord may come. There is one fact we face, we know he is coming, so the time is at hand. Isn't that gracious?

Now we face the reason for this solemn injunction. **Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. He that is righteous, let him be righteous still. He that is holy, let him be holy still.** The scripture sets forth the permanency of character, or the state of the unjust and unrighteous as well as those justified in Christ.

Let me call this great fact to your attention. There comes a time in the life of every individual that he reaches that state, and there is no changing it in this world or the world to come. There is a line unseen by man which when once crossed fixes the state of his being forever. If that individual has turned to Christ, and God has saved him, and he's blood-bought, then he's righteous and holy in Christ. When death comes, his state or character is fixed permanently throughout eternity. As death finds you, so will eternity. On the other hand, if that individual turns down and rejects the truth of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, rebels against the truth and will not have Christ rule over him, then the Spirit of God leaves him in that condition in this life as well as the life to come. His character is fixed and he'll be unholy still. There's no power on the part of man to change him or to pray him out of that state, whether it is in this life or the life to come. Let me make this emphatic statement, nowhere is it taught in God's Word that anyone, whether minister, priest, or otherwise, has the right or power to loose a soul from hell or purgatory because there's no such a thing as a purgatory existing in the universe. There is no second chance after death for any soul.