

# These Words Are Trustworthy and True

## 22: 6-9

**DIG:** How do we know that the words of this book are trustworthy and true? How do the words, in the twinkling of an eye, sum up the theme of Revelation? What was John's mistake that we read about in this section?

**REFLECT:** What does it mean to you to know that Jesus Christ is a truth teller? What are the blessings associated with this book? What, or who, are you worshipping other than God? Sports? Music? A spouse? Education? You fill in the blank!

With the vision of the New Jerusalem, John's prophecy is complete. Now **God Himself**, and **Jesus** in particular, authenticate all that **John** had written. **ADONAI**, who had inspired all the other books of the Bible, also inspired the book of **Revelation**. The specific means of revelation to **John** was a holy **angel**.

The **angel** said to him: **These words are trustworthy and true (22:6a)**. The **angel** assures **John** that what he has seen and heard in the whole revelation of the future is **true and reliable**. He was not merely dreaming.<sup>517</sup> Everything he saw and heard was **true**. We can be sure that He who is called **Faithful and True (19:11)**, will speak words that are **trustworthy and true (21:5)**.

The Lord, the God of the holy prophets, sent His angel to show His servants the things that must soon take place in the prophetic future (22:6b). The book of **Revelation** ends the same way it begins, with a promise of blessing to those who **read the words of this prophecy, hear it and take to heart what is written (1:3)**. This is the exact opposite of many Bible teachers. They find **Revelation** to be an impossible mystery for which there is no answer today. This book is the Word of **God** and not the bizarre dreams or overactive imagination on **John's** part. It is not an allegory from which readers can extract hidden meanings. Everything he said will come to pass. When taken in its literal, ordinary meaning, this is exactly what it does, even though much of **Revelation** is written in symbolic form. The Word of **God** is not written to be difficult to understand. It was given to be understood by those taught by the **Holy Spirit**.<sup>518</sup>

The book of **Revelation** ends the same way it begins, with a promise of blessing to those read the words of this prophecy, hear it and **obey** what is written (1:3). Believers are called not only to **hear** the Word, but also to **obey** it. Jesus said: **If you love Me, you will obey with I command . . . If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father's commands and remain in His love** (John 14:15, 15:10). The need to **obey** the Bible was strongly emphasized in John's first epistle. He wrote: **We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands. The man who says, "I know Him," but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in Him** (First John 2:3-4); **This is how we know that we live as the children of God: by loving God and carrying out His commands. This is love for God: to obey His commands** (First John 5:2-3). Those who live as if **Yeshua** could come at any moment will **obey** His Word.

The word **and** marks a change in speakers. The speaker is no longer the **angel**, but the **Lord Jesus Christ**. He said: **And behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed are those who keep the words of the prophecy of this book** because they will be ready for **Messiah's Coming** (22:7). This is the sixth of seven blessings in the book of **Revelation** (1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, here and 22:14). I use the phrase **coming quickly** here. People get the wrong impression when someone says, "**Jesus** will come very **soon**." The *Greek* word *tachos* can be translated **quickly** or **soon**. From the divine perspective both are true; however, the context determines which should be used. What we should say is, "When **Jesus** comes, it will happen **quickly**, in the twinkling of an eye." The context in this verse does not imply shortness, but suddenness. Rabbi Sha'ul said it this way: **We will all be changed in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead in Christ will be raised imperishable** (First Corinthians 15:51b-52).

**Jesus** does not command believers to read **Revelation** merely to satisfy their curiosity about the future. He did not inspire it to provide material for end-time seminars. It was not **God's** purpose to give us a detailed analysis of the prophetic significance of current cultural, political, military or social events. **God** inspired **Revelation** for one purpose: to reveal the glory of **His Son** and call believers to godly, obedient lives. The purpose of the book is not to provide entertainment, but to provide motivation for godly living.<sup>519</sup>

The word **and** appears once more and marks the change of speaker. The speaker is no longer **Yeshua**, but **John**, who named **himself** for the first time since 1:9. He said: **I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things** (22:8a). **John** now adds his own testimony for the benefit of **his** readers. Those first readers in the seven churches of Asia Minor knew **him** personally. They loved and honored **him**. Thus, **he** assures them again (1:9, 21:2) that **he** had actually seen and **heard** the tremendous events that **he** was reporting.<sup>520</sup>

Then overcome by what he had heard and seen them, John fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to him (22:8b). He had the right response, but being overwhelmed with the grandeur of the scene he mistakenly directed his reverence to the angel. He knew this was wrong. In fact, he had already been reprimanded for attempting to do so earlier (19:10). But like Ezeke'el (Ezeki'el 1:28), Dani'el (Dani'el 8:17, 10:9), and Peter, James and himself at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:6), John fell face down in awe and worship at the feet of the angel.

Since God alone is to be worshiped, the angel warned him, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book" (22:9a). Angels are servants of God. They helped to put the Torah into effect (Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2) and are often seen protecting believers (Exodus 23:20; 2 Chronicles 32:21; Psalm 91:11; Dani'el 3:28, 6:22; Acts 5:19, 12:7-11). Summarizing the ministry of angels, the writer to the Hebrews asks rhetorically: Are not all angels ministering spirits to serve those who will inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14)?

Jolting the confused apostle back to his senses, the angle commanded John to worship God (22:9b)! Only God is worthy of our worship. The Bible forbids us to worship anyone, including angels, saints, the Virgin Mary, or anything else. This is also a sharp rebuke to all those who feel they must have aids in order to worship God. Such things as images, a solemn atmosphere, excitement, prayer beads, ornaments, icons, a special building, a prayer room, nor anything else is needed to worship God. If not even a mighty angel of God provides a suitable atmosphere for worship, surely nothing we can make can add to it. **God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and truth** (John 4:24).

When God made His covenant with Isra'el, He exhorted them, saying: **Do not worship any other god, for ADONAI, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God** (Exodus 34:14). We think of jealous as a negative term. So what is God jealous of? Everything! Our time. Our thoughts. Our heart. Or anything else that gets in between Him and you. But actually the meaning here of Him being jealous is that He can tolerate no rivals and is zealous for your worship. He does not want to share His honor and glory with anything or anybody. When I married my wife Beth I vowed that she would always be number two in my life. Where is ADONAI in yours?