

In our last podcast, we discussed the eternal rule of the bride of Christ and how all the words revealed by the angel to John are faithful and true. God speaks authoritatively, but He chooses to render His message through His servants the angels and the prophets. But regardless of the vehicle He uses, we can trust His word, for it is faithful and true. The Spirit then spoke of what must now soon, by choice, take place. So much is happening in our now and will continue to happen in the now, even though “soon” might take many years, or many “now’s” from now. With that in mind, let’s continue in **Revelation 22**.

## EP195 Revelation 22:7-10

### I Now Come Quickly

#### **Revelation 22:7**

And behold, I **now** choose to come quickly. Blessed is he who is **now** keeping the words of the prophecy of this book.

Suddenly, Jesus speaks for Himself and not through an angel or through John. This phrase “*And behold*” is meant to draw great attention to the fact that He now chooses to come quickly, speedily, or without delay. Every moment of now He chooses to come without delay. The plan is in place, and He chooses to adhere to the plan without deviation.

For most of us, 2,000 years, give or take, does not seem to be very quick. His view of time is so radically different than our view of time. “*But **beloved**, you are **now** commanded to not be ignorant, commanded to **now** not be ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord **now** is not **now** slow about His promise, as some **now** choose, and some are **now** caused, to count slowness, but is **now** patient toward you, not caused to, or choosing to, be wishing for any to choose to perish but for all to come to repentance.*”<sup>1</sup>

If we are counting in days, it’s been approximately 2-days and counting since Jesus ascended into heaven. So, in a sense, He does choose to now come quickly. Seriously, what’s a couple of days between lovers. Well, if you have ever been in love, a couple of days can feel like 2,000 years.

This notion of “*quickly*,” however, cannot be ignored or downplayed as it serves as a huge and gigundus **WARNING!** He wants us to contemplate the suddenness of all that will come to be.

#### **Matthew 24:36-39**

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will in the **future** choose to be just like the days of Noah.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Peter 3:8-9

For as in those days before the flood they were **now** eating and **now** drinking, **now** marrying and **now** giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so in the **future** will choose to be the coming of the Son of Man in the **future** choose to be.

Just like He warned the churches at Sardis and Philadelphia, *“So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore, if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.” “I choose to **now** come quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.”*

The urgency of it all is apparent. Jesus does not want us to lose sight of this message of this prophecy and be caught off guard. He wants us to know that even now He chooses to come quickly so we can in turn choose to be fully prepared for His return, dressed in white, dressed in wedding garments, like a bride prepared for her husband.

## Blessed

*“Blessed is he who is **now** attending to the words of the prophecy of this book.”* The verb “attending to” which is often translated as “keep” or “heed,” is rendered in the *present active participle*. The root of this word derives not from the idea of doing so much as it does from the idea of being on watch, attentively observing, as would a guard who is peering out from the city walls. In our western mindset, the words keep, or heed are very action oriented, but that is not what the Spirit is communicating. As a watchman, we are to be observing, attending to, and guard even, the words of the prophecy of this book.

Jesus is communicating that those who are observing and attending to the “*logos*,” the breath, depth, and totality of the substance of these words is blessed. “*Blessed*” is an *adjective* describing the one who is giving full exhaustive consideration to all that has been revealed in the words of prophecy of this book. Thus, “*blessed*” is not talking about what will be, but what is for those who are now keeping, observing, the words of the prophecy of this book.

In that vein of thought, and pulling from the first paragraph in this study, we must never forget that *Jude* and *Revelation* targets those within the visible church with a message which separates those who stand only on the goodness of God from those who are trying extremely hard to be good for God. It is a message for those who abide in the household of God—those who must choose if they will live in **unrestrained freedom** as a son of God or as a slave to the law, whether that is the law, my law, your law, or any law from wherever it is sourced. The primary message of these two books is that **The Source Matters, the Source is Everything** because **Only God is Good!** Therefore, only those who choose to live as sons, dependent entirely on the goodness of God, will inherit the kingdom; all others will be cast out.

Therefore, we now need to choose to be found believing what we have learned; and if we choose, we will, by definition, be “*blessed*.”

We should always be thinking over-and-over about the description of the bride and what that image of the holy city, the New Jerusalem, communicates about who we are to Jesus. It is trippy, but all of history culminates in this story about the bride which the Father has prepared for His Son. The entirety of human history is fundamentally about Jesus’ relationship to His bride—His bondservants. From the first, imaged

through the relationship between Adam and Eve, to the end when the marriage is consummated and she rules with Christ forever and ever, it has all been about the bride. Jesus thinks she is glorious, and He adores her beyond what we can even come close to comprehending.

Jesus wants His bondservants to know their value, their worth, and how He is the Lord God Almighty over every tiny little detail of their lives. He wants this truth to transform their minds so they can live at rest, be disconnected from this world, and merely carry out the assignments He has given them with joy knowing that they don't even belong here. They **DO NOT** belong to this world or to the ruler of this world. As such, they don't have to let the things of this life consume them as it does others. They can live blessed of the Lord if they will dig down deep in their soul and *choose* to let these truths have their rightful place in their heart, mind, soul, and strength—if they choose to observe, obsess on even, the “*logos*” of the prophecy of this book.

Jesus has revealed to His bondservants an amazing view of **ETERNITY NOW** in order that they might choose to live in hope of their **ETERNITY THEN**.

### **Choice**

From the beginning of this book in **Revelation 1:3** where God promised to bless the one who reads this book to the church and bless all who listen to it and obey what it says, we have been confronted with this issue of personal sovereignty in all of creation. This is such an important aspect of this book and our relationship with **Yahweh**, and His relationship to all His creation.

God does not force anyone to believe in Him or to follow Him. Likewise, He does not force anyone to reject Him and ignore what He says. He simply gives them the truth, and He expects them to exercise their personal sovereignty and choose to apply it to their life. And, if they do, if they are *willing* to hear, *willing* to let Him cause them to obey, *willing* to let Him establish them in faith, *willing* to now be believing, and *willing* to depend upon Him for all things all the time, they will be blessed.

However, those who choose to ignore what we have learned, marginalize it, not believe it, downright reject the message, or manipulate and twist the message to say what the Spirit did not convey, it will be to their temporal and eternal detriment, which will be a product of their own choosing.

### **The Witness of 2**

In Jesus telling us to “*now be keeping*” (or “*heeding*”) these words, He is doing a very Jewish thing. As we know, under the Law every fact had to be verified by at least two witnesses. The first legal witness is the angel who told John, “*These words, faithful and true.*” The second witness is Jesus. By pronouncing a blessing on those who are now heeding this prophetic word, He validates its legitimacy as “*faithful and true.*” As such, we would all be wise to give heed to all that we have learned.

## **The Woman Who Rides the Beast: Present & The Past**

### **Revelation 22:8-9**

I, John, am the one who is **now** hearing and **now** seeing all these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell to worship at the feet of the angel who is **now** showing these things to me. But he **now** says to me,

"You are commanded to not **now** stare. I **now** am a bondservant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who are **now** attending to what is written in this book. You are commanded to worship God!"

The **Code** is interesting here, but it is not captured in most Biblical translations. The first rendering of "heard and saw" is in the *present active participle* (now hearing and now seeing), whereas the second rendering in the second sentence is in the *past* tense.

Since the Spirit of God is extremely precise in His use of the **Code**, the jump from the *present* to the *past* and then back to the *present* is not an accident, it is an encoded message. He is making an intentional point about our **NOW** and about our **PAST**. It is as if the Spirit is wanting us to now place ourselves in John's shoes and have us each personally consider these events that have transpired, events that should send shockwaves up and down our spines.

Almost as a capstone to the narrative, and to make a final and conclusive point on the depraved condition of humanity and our abject need for Jesus, the Spirit shows us the depth of the religious darkness that even now exists in our souls. He holds no punches. He just lays it all out for us to see by showing us the pathetic darkness that lurks within John.

Consider all the glory and splendor that John was seeing and hearing and yet in a moment of time it instantly faded into something that occurred in the past. Almost like, been there done that. The angel "who is **now** showing these things" to John even "**now** says" to him, but in John's mind, it all faded into the past, into what he "heard and saw."

Can you imagine, John received the revelation. He saw His friend glorified, and lifted above all creation, the one with whom He walked for 3-years upon this earth, the one who loved him. He was in the very presence of God. He saw the thrones, the Cherubim, the angels, terrible judgments after judgments, and the marvel of **ETERNITY NOW** and **ETERNITY THEN**. He saw the personification of evil imaged in the dragon, the devil, the Satan, the serpent of old, the twisted serpent, the Beast, the False Prophet, and the Woman who Rides the Beast. He saw the myriads of Christians in bondage ruled by their demonic captors in the house of the Harlot worshipping according to the tenants of Mystery Babylon. He saw spirits of demons who possessed the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet. He saw it all. He even saw the new heaven and the new earth and saw himself imaged in the bride, in the city, in the walls, in the foundation, in the wide great open place.

Yet, without hesitation, he once again succumbs to the spiritual and religious darkness in his soul, and he bowed down and worshipped at the feet of the angel who was now showing him these things.

And although he was now hearing and now seeing, his having bowed down is rendered in the *past* tense.<sup>2</sup> Again, this is an intentional detail included by the Spirit of God to have us all consider all the ways throughout our lives that we have bowed down to things that we must not worship. What's even more amazing is that it happened in the midst of an unprecedented spiritual encounter. One would think that John would have been drawn to Jesus and Jesus alone. But that is not how we humans tend to function. Give us something sacred, and before long, if not immediately, we will enshrine it and exalt it.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: "fell down" is rendered in the *aorist active indicative*.

With all that God has revealed and is even now revealing to us, this religious darkness still twists us inside such that we have far too often fallen to our knees, proverbially speaking, and worshiped something other than **Yahweh**, including our beloved religion—just like John.

This false worship of that which is not **Yahweh** is a remnant left-over from all the time that we spent in the Harlot's household worshipping all manner of things that have a semblance of godliness. It is terrible to consider, but yes, the Woman Who Rides the Beast is alive and well in the heart of John the same as she is in each of our own hearts.

Keep in mind, this is the second time that John succumbed to such darkness. In **Revelation 19:9-10**, just after John was shown the bride and her marriage ceremony to the Lamb, one of the most amazing scenes in the **Codex**, we read the following:

### **Revelation 19:9-10**

Then he **now** says to me,

"You are commanded to write, 'Blessed are those caused to being invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he **now** says to me, "These **now** are true words of God."

Then I fell at his feet to worship him. And he **now** says to me, "You are commanded to not **now** stare at me; I am **now** a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who are **now** having the testimony of Jesus; you are commanded to worship God. For the testimony of Jesus **now** is the spirit of prophecy."

It was almost an automatic and uncontrollable response, John seemed to not be able to help himself. *"I fell at his feet to worship him."* What is wrong with John?

You would think that after John was previously rebuked in this manner, he would never again make the same mistake of being enthralled with the angel and staring at him in homage, much less drop to his knees in worship. He was commanded to *"worship God."* But soon thereafter he is found doing the exact same thing; again, it was somewhat of a reflexive action, an automatic uncontrollable response.

The angel says: *"You are commanded to not **now** stare. I **now** am a bondservant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who are **now** attending to what is written in this book. You are commanded to worship God!"*

This shows us the spiritual wickedness that remains in our soul. We spent years in an intimate relationship with the Woman who rides the Beast, and she is always working to get us to return to her by tempting us to worship someone or something other than **Yahweh**. Humanity is simply exhausting.

For example, this is the reason why many believers desire to have a Moses in their lives, a strong spiritual influence, to lead them and tell them what they are to do and when they are to do it. It is why we idolize certain religious leaders; it is why we must have a hero in our life that we admire.

There is something very creepy in us that demands this sort of idolatry and finds strength, comfort, and security in it. There is something very unnerving in us that seeks it out (whether at a conscience or unconscious level) and attaches to whatever object or person that seems to fit the bill. And this sickness plagues all humanity, believers, and non-believers alike. This is the poisonous drink of the Woman Who

Rides the Beast. This is her special concoction of spiritual abomination. We must never forget that this woman is a friend to our *flesh* but is contemptuous to the Spirit of God.

Yet, this Woman Who Rides the Beast is so seductive and attractive that most of us are hardly aware of how much we have drunk of her abominations. But here is the truth. If we let our *flesh* have authority in our life, so shall she. That is why we must “*now be heeding*” the words of this prophecy. That is why we must worship God and worship Him alone! We must continue to abide in Jesus and like a little child live dependent upon Him for all things all the time, for that is the only way we can quiet her voice, her presence, and her authority in our lives. There is no other way.

Hear this proclamation! The Woman Who Rides the Beast is an issue for each-and-every one of us. As such, we must guard ourselves from making those types of attachments to leaders, famous people, kings of the earth, angels, spiritual beings, pastors, teachers, prophets, miracle workers, parents, husbands, wives, children, or anyone one or anything that pulls or tears us away from only worshiping God and God alone.

This sentiment is highlighted in the Spirit’s final quip at the end of **1 John**, the Spirit through John writes, “*Little children, you are commanded to guard yourselves from idols.*”<sup>3</sup> It is a real issue, especially the idolatry of the **ME** where we tend to love our own goodness and all the good that we have done for God and for others, including all the ways we have suffered for God and for others. “*Little children, you are commanded to guard yourselves from idols.*”

## He Says

*“You are commanded to not **now** stare. I **now** am a bondservant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who are **now** attending to what is written in this book. You are commanded to worship God!”*

Except for the final command to “*worship God*” (which is rendered in the *aorist active imperative*), the rest of this statement is rendered in the *present* tense.

Did you notice that the angel does not command John to not worship him, but he commands John to not be starrng or gazing at him. It is **not** the same word that is used when we are commanded to “worship” God. The idea is that the glory of this angelic being is so enchanting that the longer John stares at him in awe, the more he is tempted to fall before him. Let’s restate this translation according to the **Code**.

Being rendered in the *present* tense, this is a message for you and for me in our **NOW**. We need to keep our eyes off the supernatural that we encounter regardless of how fascinating we find it. It is not something that should demand our full and undivided attention for if we do stare at its glory for too long, we will be tempted to worship something that we must not. We must remember that everything is sourced in **Yahweh**, everything comes from Him, therefore, we must worship only Him. He is the only one worthy, everything else and everyone else is just a byproduct of His glory. **The Source Matters, the Source is Everything!**

## Patterned for Us

This dynamic, our tendency to be mesmerized by anything supernatural, is pictured in the prophecy

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<sup>3</sup> **1 John 5:21**

which **Yahweh** spoke over the Israelites when Moses was preparing to pass away and his authority was to be given to Joshua. **Deuteronomy 32** provides a recanting of Israel's tendency to turn and worship other gods, demons, and a prediction that they will again give themselves to worthless idols and new gods, which their ancestors had never feared. So, God made it clear to them that He alone is to be worshipped.

### **Deuteronomy 32:39**

Look now; I myself am He! There is no other god but me! I am the one who kills and gives life; I am the one who wounds and heals; no one can be rescued from my powerful hand!

Still, thousands of years later, even one of Jesus' closest disciples, the one He loved, twice drops to his knees to worship the angelic. Having been called by God up into the heavenly realms to see things that no one else had ever seen, including one like the Son of Man, you would think that John's heart would be fixated on Jesus and Jesus alone. But nanoseconds after being shown the wedding supper of the Lamb John bowed down to an angel. And then nanoseconds after being shown the bride imaged as the New Jerusalem, John bowed down to an angel. Apparently, he was so enthralled with the angel's glory that he felt it was only right, but it was so wrong.

This is a pattern, and so we need to be aware of it and guard ourselves from such idolatry by fixating on the truth that there is no other God but **Yahweh**, no one else worthy of our worship. Sure, the supernatural is amazing, enthralling, fun even, but we must never take our eyes off the source. **The Source Matters, the Source is Everything!**

*"Little children, you are commanded to guard yourselves from idols."*

## **We're In It Together**

*"I **now** am a bondservant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who are **now** attending to what is written in this book..."*

Though having a distinctly different relationship with **Yahweh**, not being part of the bride or amongst those who are the Righteous Elect, this angel understands that he is bound together, in service of God. The Greek word that is used is kind of cool, "*syndoulos*" — which means to be linked or joined with others in a form of volitional servitude that is rooted in one's love for his master.

It is curious that the angel added "*just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who are **now** attending to what is written in this book.*" Why didn't he leave it as "*I **now** am a bondservant of God, just like you.*" That would have made the point that despite his stunning glory, he is not one to be worshipped; hence, the command to "*worship God!*"

In the prior instance, in **Revelation 19:10**, where John fell on his knees to worship the angel, the angel said: "... I am **now** a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who are **now** having the testimony of Jesus..."

This begs the question, why did the Spirit of God decide to include this additional content? Why is it important that we know that this angel (and presumably other angels) is a "*syndoulos*," along with these classifications of people?

- Your brethren who are now having the testimony {literally, the martyrdom} of Jesus
- Your brothers the prophets
- All who are now attending to what is written in this book.

Perhaps this is a more expansive way of explaining **Hebrews 1:14**, that the angelic “*are now all ministering spirits, caused to now being sent out to render service for the sake of those who are caused to now being about to now inherit salvation.*”

There are those who are bearing the burden of martyrdom for the sake of their testimony in Jesus Christ, there are prophets bringing forth the word of God, and those who understand that the book of **Revelation** divides those who stand only on the goodness of God from all those who are trying so very hard to be good for God. These are bound together in unity with the angelic to serve and worship only God in both Spirit and truth.

## Don't Seal – The Time is Near

### **Revelation 22:10**

""And He **now** says to me, may you not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is **now** near."

John was previously told not to disclose what the 7-thunders had said, but to seal it up and keep it to himself.<sup>4</sup> Apparently, other than that mysterious event, he is free to disclose all else that he saw and heard during his time in the heavenly realms.

The word translated “*near*” comes from a Greek word meaning to squeeze or throttle. This is a cool picture. God is even now squeezing or throttling time, and it is soon to be fully drained, and all these events will soon be set into full motion. However, from the perspective of 2,000 years since this word was given, “*near*” is to be understood in the same light as the word “*soon*.” Still, we are to understand that the time is imminent and will soon come to pass, it is just a matter of time.

Let's stop here and in our next podcast we will pick up with more on the nearness of the time.

I am glad you “tuned in” and have been “ready to listen.”

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<sup>4</sup> **Revelation 10:1-4**