

The Conclusion: Jesus is Coming Soon! (22:6-21)

One thing I have mentioned in our study is that often, ideas that are introduced in the beginning of a book end up being some of the major themes throughout the entire work. This is a common literary strategy that biblical authors use in composing their books. We have seen this with the book of Revelation, as themes introduced in chapter 1, and in the messages to the churches in chapters 2 and 3, went on to serve as some of the major ideas John developed throughout his work. Another literary technique is what is called an *inclusio*, which is when a common phrase or theme or message is repeated at the beginning and end of a work. We have explored how this is true on the macro-level of Scripture; Revelation 21-22 serve as an *inclusio* to Genesis 1-3. However, it is also clear that the book of Revelation ends by repeating many of the things it started with; chapter 22 serves as an *inclusio* to chapter 1.

<i>Parallels Between the Introduction and Epilogue of Revelation</i>	
“The revelation of Jesus Christ , which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by <u>sending his angel</u> to his servant John...” (1:1)	“The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has <u>sent his angel</u> to show his servants what must soon take place.” (22:6) “I, Jesus , have <u>sent my angel</u> to testify to you about these things...” (22:16)
“ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of <i>this prophecy</i> , and blessed are those who hear, and <u>who keep what is written in it...</u> ” (1:3)	“ Blessed is <u>the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.</u> ” (22:7) “... <u>those who keep the words of this book.</u> ” (22:9)
“... <i>the time is near.</i> ” (1:3)	“... <i>the time is near.</i> ” (22:10)
“ I, John ...was on the island called Patmos... <u>I heard</u> behind me... <u>I saw</u> ... <i>When I saw him, I fell at his feet...</i> ” (1:9, 10, 12, 17)	“ I, John , am <u>the one who heard and saw</u> these things. <i>And when I heard and saw them, I fell down...</i> ” (22:8)
“...to the seven churches that are in Asia...” (1:4) “ <u>Write what you see</u> in a book and <u>send it to the seven churches...</u> ” (1:11)	“...to <u>testify to you about these things for the churches.</u> ” (22:16)
“I am the Alpha and the Omega ,’ says the Lord God, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’” (1:8) “...I [Jesus] am <i>the first and the last...</i> ” (1:17)	“I [Jesus] am the Alpha and the Omega , <i>the first and the last</i> , the beginning and the end.” (22:13)
“ <u>Grace to you...from Jesus Christ</u> the faithful witness... <i>Amen.</i> ” (1:4, 5, 7)	“ <u>The grace of the Lord Jesus</u> be with you all. <i>Amen.</i> ” (22:21)

Of additional significance are the final blessings in chapter 22. Not only are they parallel to the introductory blessing in 1:3, but they also serve to complete the series of *seven* blessings throughout the entire book.

<i>The Seven Blessings in Revelation</i>	
Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and [<i>blessed</i>] are those who hear, and [<i>blessed</i> are those] who keep what is written in it.	1:3
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.	14:13
Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on.	16:15
Blessed are those invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.	19:9
Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection.	20:6
Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.	22:7
Blessed are those who wash their robes.	22:14

Tom Schreiner summarizes the importance of this well: “Given the significance of numbers in Revelation, especially the import of the number seven (fifty-five occurrences), it seems significant that there are seven blessings. The sevenfold blessing probably signifies completeness and fullness in the blessing promised. The contents of the blessings all relate to future reward promised to believers, to bliss they will experience after a period of testing.”¹

¹ Thomas Schreiner, “Revelation” in *ESV Expository Commentary: Hebrews-Revelation*, vol. 12. Edited by Iain M. Duguid, et al. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2019): 551.