

Three times in Revelation 22, Jesus says, "I am coming soon!" (vv7,12,20), and in v12 adds: "...bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds." There are many wonders and mysteries surrounding the second coming of our Lord. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can study and reflect upon His Word to understand to our best ability some of the things to look for. This is important. We don't want to be ignorant to obvious information He has revealed to us.

But perhaps more importantly, we should be about living out our faith by loving, witnessing, and serving others in the name of Christ. As true disciples we are called to reach out to people and help others get on-board with Christ's program, to love like crazy and be well-equipped defenders of the faith—always ready to explain the hope within us (see 1 Peter 3:15). Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End—His program will stand forever.



**Text: Revelation 21:1-7, 22:12-16**

## **God's PROMISE**

**Christ is not only the Alpha and the Omega of all \_\_\_\_\_, He is the Alpha and Omega of \_\_\_\_\_ existence, \_\_\_\_\_ life.**

1. Jesus, the risen Lord says, "I Am \_\_\_\_\_."

  - a) Aligning our lives with the Lord's program is earning \_\_\_\_\_ - rewards based on \_\_\_\_\_ (our faith in action).
  - b) Jesus operates from strength so He can \_\_\_\_\_ us for daily living.

2. This world -man's program - is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Jesus promises to make everything \_\_\_\_\_!

### **One Year Bible Reading**

July 26: 2 Chronicles 17:1-18:34, Romans 9:25-10:13, Psalm 20:1-9, Prov. 20:2-3  
July 27: 2 Chronicles 19:1-20:37, Romans 10:14-11:12, Psalm 21:1-13, Prov. 20:4-6  
July 28: 2 Chronicles 21:1-23:21, Romans 11:13-36, Psalm 22:1-18, Proverbs 20:7  
July 29: 2 Chronicles 24:1-25:28, Romans 12:1-21, Psalm 22:19-31, Prov. 20:8-10  
July 30: 2 Chronicles 26:1-28:27, Romans 13:1-14, Psalm 23:1-6, Proverbs 20:11  
July 31: 2 Chronicles 29:1-36, Romans 14:1-23, Psalm 24:1-10, Proverbs 20:12  
August 1: 2 Chronicles 30:1-31:21, Romans 15:1-22, Psalm 25:1-15, Prov. 20:13-15

**July 25 & 26, 2015**

# PROMISES

Life Group Lesson • Week of July 26

When the LORD revealed Himself to Moses on Mount Sinai, God told Moses, “I AM WHO I AM” (Exodus 3:14). Our LORD is God of the past, God of the present, and God of the future. He dwells in the eternal present, and stands apart from time and space as we know it. And yet, “in these final days, He has spoken to us through His Son... The Son radiates God’s own glory and expresses the very character of God, and He sustains everything by the mighty power of His command” (Hebrews 1:2a, 3).

I AM WHO I AM has been revealed to us through His Christ. Christ is unique in that He alone is fully God and fully human. His birth was announced by angels, and He was given the name Jesus before He was born into this world (Matthew 1:21, Luke 1:31). Everything we have ever needed *or will ever need* has been provided through the Son. “For God in all His fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through Him God reconciled everything to Himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ’s blood on the cross” (Colossians 1:19-20).

Jesus *is* the I AM, the Word made flesh. Jesus declares: I AM the bread of life, I AM the light of the world, I AM the gate, I AM the good shepherd, I AM the resurrection and the life, I AM the way, the truth, and the life, I AM the Vine. And finally, as the victorious One, seated in glory at the right hand of the Father, He declares: I AM the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” In other words, I am “A to Z” and everything in-between. I AM WHO I AM.

## Read Revelation 21:1-7, and Revelation 22:12-16

In this life it seems we’re either trying to measure up—“get with the program”—or we’re attempting to establish our own program, our own rule and way of doing things, and expect others to measure up. From the beginning man has struggled with being his own god, and history proves this is always a train-wreck. The truth is, all programs of man will one day end.

But also from the beginning, God has had His program in place and it is good. God’s program is glorious and is embodied in a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. His program has at its core the redemption of humanity, indeed all of creation, for that is the heart of God. This good news is His program includes you and me.

1. John says: “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone” (Revelation 21:1). What is happening here?

Christ is coming to make everything new. The “old heaven and the old earth” disappear – man’s programs have brought on deterioration through the contamination of sin. Look for at least five promises in Revelation 21:2-5a. What are they?

Perhaps you’ve experienced first hand the deterioration of something you had put your hopes in – a job, title or position, achievement, certain political leader – only to be disappointed.

2. Looking back, what has the Lord taught you through that experience?

Have you given that hurt (disappointment) to the Lord—if so, how has He brought good out of bad, hope out of pain, new out of old?

It shouldn’t surprise us when we are faced with sickness, trials, and seasons of testing (see Matthew 4:1, Romans 5:3, James 1:2-4). Jesus said in this world you will have trouble—troubles brought on by sin, the “programs” of man, and sometimes just life itself. “But take heart, because I have overcome the world” (see John 16:33). Because Jesus is victorious over this world we can be too. And God has a program that all of heaven is following, even at this moment. It will never deteriorate, never expire.

Daniel, chapter 2, describes a disturbing dream God gave Nebuchadnezzar who was the Babylonian king during the time of Judah’s exile. None of the wise men and enchanters could tell the king his dream and its meaning, so he orders their execution. Because Daniel and his friends (young Judean exiles) were counted among the wise men, their lives were also at risk. Daniel and his friends pray, and the Lord reveals this disturbing dream to Daniel as well as its meaning.

## Read Daniel 2:24-44

3. “During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever” (v44). According to this verse, what fate awaits the kingdoms of this world?

What happens to the Kingdom “the God of heaven” will set up?

Of the two, which would a wise person seek to align his life (his over-arching purpose, greatest energies, deepest loyalty)?

4. Christ is that rock “cut from a mountain, but not by human hands” (Daniel 2:34). Like the disciples, Jesus is calling us today to be a part of His Kingdom. What was (*and what is*) the purpose of Jesus calling disciples?

While God’s Kingdom is glorious to think about and offers living hope to those who long for Christ’s appearing, the world at large greatly opposes the name of Jesus Christ. Discuss why this is.