

CONCLUSION

These verses parallel 1:1-3. The warning issued here is traditional, and underlines the importance of the prophecy (see 1:3). We read in the Book of Deuteronomy:

You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

– Deuteronomy 4:2⁴

All who hear the words of this oath and bless themselves, thinking in their hearts, ‘We are safe even though we go our own stubborn ways ... All the curses written in this book will descend on them, and the Lord will blot out their names from under heaven.

– Deuteronomy 29:19-20

The Apocalypse concludes with an assurance from the risen Christ himself that he will not delay in coming. The Christian assembly acknowledges its faith in this promise and prays for him to continue coming till there is only love.

The coming of Christ will be complete only when evil has been fully destroyed and the reign of God has come ‘on earth as in heaven’ (Matthew 6:10). Luke has Peter urging the Jerusalem crowd to change their lives in order to bring about this fulfilment of God’s design:

Repent ... so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets.

– Acts 3:20-21

John too looks forward to this completion.⁵ The Christian assembly prays that Jesus will bring to completion his redeeming action in history by continuing to draw all peoples into the church where all will enjoy the spousal intimacy of God’s love.

¹⁸I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this book;

¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away that person's share in the tree of life¹ and in the holy city,² which are described in this book.

²⁰The one who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely, I am coming soon’.³

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints.

Amen.

¹ Compare 7:14 and 22:14.

² Compare 21:2.

³ Compare 1:3; 3:11; 22:7; 22:12.

⁴ See also Deuteronomy 13:1.

⁵ See also 1 Corinthians 15:23. In 1 Corinthians 16:22, Paul quotes the Aramaic *maranâ tha* (‘Our Lord, come!’). A slightly different version is found in the first century catechism, the *Didachê* 10:6, *maran athâ* (‘the Lord comes’).