**TIME ALONE WITH GOD**

Ingredients:

* Half an hour, every day.
* Quiet, so you focus on yourself and on God;
* Prayer, worship, thanksgiving, as your response to God
* Word, so you can ponder His truth
* Life, people and events, so you are aware of Him in these situations

Method:

* Time – a fixed time when you are unlikely to be interrupted is best but more important is to actually start having such a time with God.
* Quiet – A simple method is to be quiet until you are aware you are in God’s presence before you start to respond to Him.
* Word – Read and be familiar with what is said. Meditate on the Word: “What does it say?” “What does it mean?” “How should I respond?” You may use the questions to help you or set them aside.
* Life – Use the time to also be aware of the things that are happening, inside you and around you. Bring these before God and speak to Him.

# Monday and Tuesday

[**REVELATION 22:1-5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022&version=NIV)

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you during the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [REVELATION 22:1-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city.”* Where previously John spoke of the Spring of the Water of Life, now he speaks of it as a river. You drink from the spring but here it is a river flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down in the middle of the main street. What does this picture communicate to you?
2. *“On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.”* Here is a huge tree spanning the width of the river, that fruits every month. The river has the water of life and here is the tree of life that regularly fruits. Clearly there is an emphasis on life but what do you think “life” implies? Physical life—being able to breathe, move, eat and reproduce? Spiritual life—being in fellowship with God? There is a sense of abundance, always available and readily obtainable. What does this picture communicate to you?
3. *“And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”* There is the fruit of the tree of life but also the leaves have healing and restorative powers. If you imagine this to be a physical city in the midst of the new earth, how would this city be viewed? What is the role and blessing of the new Jerusalem? What part will the inhabitants of this city play in the new earth?
4. *“No longer will there be any curse.”* When you read of the river in the city, and the tree of life, it reminds you of the Garden of Eden. What was the curse at the Garden of Eden?
5. *“The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.”* Who would these people be, who would serve the Lord God? Considering how Jesus “reigned”, what do you think it means that we will reign? What would be the task and responsibilities of reigning?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**REVELATION 22:6-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [REVELATION 22:6-11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

From v6 to the end of the chapter, there is a series of sayings that are often not attributed. Since the scenario is set by v6 “the angel said to me”, it is best to assume that all the sayings are the words of Jesus communicated to John by the angel in the first party, except where the text clearly shows that it is the angel speaking to John about himself (v6, 9).

1. *“These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God who inspires the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place.”* Here is a very good characterisation of the word of God, that it is written by inspired people about the things that they have witnessed. How are we to respond to the Word handed down to us?
2. *“Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy written in this scroll.”* How do we “keep” the Word handed down to us? And more specifically, what is it that we should “keep” from what we learned in the Revelation?
3. *“Don’t do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your fellow prophets and with all who keep the words of this scroll. Worship God!”* The angel made a clear distinction between the messenger and the Word. How would you express that distinction and how would that shape the way you respond? Would the same apply to your stewardship of the Gospel, that you should lead those who hear to trust, follow, obey and worship God, and not you the messenger?
4. *“Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near.”* The simplest way to understand “do not seal up the words” would be that these words are to be made known to all and sundry. They are not for an exclusive few. What was the reason given? Would the same apply to your stewardship of the Gospel?
5. *“Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy.”* We are in the Age of the Gospel, where the focus is on repentance and salvation. In the Age of Judgement the window of opportunity for repentance and salvation rapidly closes; you are what you choose to be. Who you choose to be will be what you will be judged to be. What does this mean to you? What is the Age you are in?

# Friday and Saturday

[**REVELATION 22:10-21**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [REVELATION 22:10-21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near. Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy. Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.”* Most translations attribute v10-11 to the angel; the text actually begins with “Then he told me” (ASV). It makes better sense to read vv10-16 as the words of Jesus (spoken by the angel). Who are these words focused on: the wrong, the vile, the right, the holy? What is the message?
2. *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”* In this last message, Jesus makes himself crystal clear: 1) he names himself (“I Jesus”); 2) he declares who he is (“I am …”); 3) he declares what he will do (“I will give”); he declares his judgement (“blessed are”, “outside are”); he declares certain and swift action (“I am coming soon!”). You make your choice, I make my judgement. Read his words again (see question 1): what does Jesus say to you? What is the message for you?
3. *The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.* While the message of Jesus speaks of judgement, its main focus is on the blessedness of the righteous, those who have come to receive life from Jesus. As a response to this, and to the whole Revelation, the invitation is to all to come. The response to all that you learn from the Revelation is to invite those who are still “outside” to come. Will you do so?

1. John ends his letter (see Revelation 1:4) with a warning about our attitude to God’s word, a summary of the message of the Revelation, a response to that message, and a blessing to all who reads the Revelation. Take each and let it resonate in your soul. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. Amen.

# Sunday

**COME, LORD JESUS**

*“And they will reign for ever and ever.”*

We should read Revelation 22:1-5 as a continuation of John’s description of the new Jerusalem and at this point, we get to the central feature of the city: the river of the water of life with the tree of life straddling it. John tells us that the city will be the source of life and healing; this, it would seem, would be the calling of man, as guardians of the river of the water of life and the tree of life. In the midst of God’s wondrous creation, man will be a source of life and healing, where once man was a source of destruction, decay and death. Together with the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, we will now be the true stewards of the vast worlds in God’s creation, and reign with him as his servants for ever and ever.

This is the glory of God’s vision for man and in this vision there is no place for “those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”

Where do you stand as you read God’s Revelation? Will you continue to be one who is about what is wrong and vile? Or will you be one who is about what is right and holy? If you love what is right and holy then you will love Jesus and all that he stands for, and you will open yourself up to him, to follow him and serve him. “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.”

*“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”*

1. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. Read the short sharing above. Does it add anything to your own thoughts?
2. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.