

Lesson 52

Chapter 22

Revelation 22:1-2

1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

The beautiful description of the church that we saw in Chapter 21 continues in the opening verses of Chapter 22. And the first thing we see is “a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” What does that depict?

Water is a common symbol for the blessings of God. Think of Psalm 23, for example: “he leadeth me beside the still waters.” We have also seen water used this way before in this book.

Revelation 7:17 — For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.

That verse was showing us the victorious church, and the victorious church is also what we are seeing here in the opening verses of Chapter 22. Why is the church victorious? The church is victorious because the church is saved. The church is the body of the saved. The water of life in verse 1 and the living

fountains of waters in Chapter 7 are pointing at the same thing — the salvation that comes only through Christ. It is the same water that Jesus told us about.

John 4:14 — *But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

John 7:37-38 — *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

The water in verse 1 is the **water of salvation**, and it flows from the throne of God. That water is spiritual water, but salvation also involves physical water.

Men may try to separate salvation from water, but the Bible says otherwise. Ephesians 4:5 tells us that there is one baptism, and Acts 8:36 confirms that that one baptism is water baptism. And 1 Peter 3:21 tells us what that one baptism does — “baptism doth also now save us.” Men try to complicate that message, but there is nothing complicated about it. “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27). That is about as simple as it gets. The question is not whether men can understand it. The question is whether they will believe it and obey it. And sadly many do not and will not. Here in verse 1 we see the water of salvation.

Is verse 1 a blessing the church enjoys here and now? Absolutely! The church is the pure unblemished bride of Christ washed clean by the blood of the Lamb. We have been sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the word (Ephesians 5:27). We have been saved “by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5). But we’re not saved by works, and baptism is a work! Really? That’s not what the Bible says. Look at the entirety of the verse from Titus 3 that I just quoted.

Titus 3:5 — *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*

We are not saved by our works of righteousness (Titus 3:5), but we are saved by the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5). Is that really so hard to understand? Who will we believe? Christ or Calvin? “Baptism doth also now save us” (1 Peter

3:21). That's not me saying that; that's God saying that. We have already seen how a sea of water is used to depict separation from God. Is it then surprising that we must pass through water to be reconciled to God?

The water of life is available today to all who will drink of it — and the church is cleansed by the blood of Christ because those in the church have partaken of that living water. That is why those in the church do not thirst (John 4:14).

Has the church always enjoyed this blessing? Yes, absolutely! Listen to the prophet Joel.

***Joel 3:18** — And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.*

And that blessing has been enjoyed by the church since the day the church was established. How do we know that? Because Peter quotes Joel's prophecy in Acts 2:16 and says, "this is that!" The church has enjoyed these blessings from the day of its establishment.

In verse 2 we see the tree of life on each side of the river of life. This tree of life has twelve types of fruit, and the fruit is yielded every month — which means the twelve types of fruit are gathered twelve times a year. If we had any doubts that we are reading here about the people of God, this repeated use of the symbolic number twelve should dispel those doubts.

First we saw the river of life, and now we see the tree of life. There is a wonderful promise of **life** here to the first century church that was daily facing death for Jesus's sake. And it is also a wonderful promise of life to the church today. We today live in a culture of death, from the abortion industry to our blood-soaked entertainment industry. We stand apart from this world and show our distinctiveness when we proclaim a message of life to a world of death. The gospel we proclaim is the only pathway to life eternal.

John 5:24** — Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; **but is passed from death unto life.

What does this tree of life represent? This tree provides nourishment for God's people just as the original tree of life did the same thing in the garden. Because

of sin, man was cast out of the garden so that he could not partake of the tree of life (Genesis 3:22). But here we see that tree of life available once again. Why? What has changed? What has changed is that man has been reconciled to God — not **will be** reconciled to God, but **has been** reconciled to God.

***Romans 5:10** — For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

***2 Corinthians 5:17-18** — And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

***Ephesians 2:16** — And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*

We are awaiting many blessings, but our reconciliation to God is not one of them. We already have that blessing. We are enjoying that blessing right here and right now in the church. And because we are reconciled to God, the tree of life is once again available to us just as it was in the garden. And that is not a blessing just for the church in heaven; that is also a blessing for the church right here and right now.

So is this tree of life just for us? No. Verse 2 tells us that it is “for the healing of the nations.” This tree of life is available to all who will hear and obey the gospel of Christ and be healed. As we saw with some of the earlier descriptions, the end of verse 2 seems very difficult to explain if we say that it is happening after the end of the world. If the earth has been destroyed, who are these nations that need healing? I don’t think we are seeing the church in heaven after the earth has been destroyed — I think we are seeing the church right here and right now as it proclaims the gospel to the nations of this world in desperate need of healing.

And let’s think about the end of verse 2 for just a moment. I think we would all agree that the world is in a mess today, and although that condition is hardly new, it does seem that things are worse today than they have been in a very long time. And I don’t just mean this year — I mean our generation and

that of our parents and grandparents. I don't think there has been a more blood-soaked century in the history of mankind than the twentieth century, and this next century is not starting out much better. Greed, immorality, drunkenness, godlessness. We see it all around us. What is the solution? What is the cure? What do the nations of this world need? Verse 2 — they need the healing that can come only from God and the Lamb. They need the gospel. **We will never solve the problems of this world through the wisdom of man — never.** The only way to solve the problems of this world is through the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is the only way that the nations will ever find the healing that they need.

Revelation 22:3-5

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

The beautiful description of the church continues in verses 3-5. Verse 3 tells us there shall be no more curse. What does that mean? We saw something similar in our study of Zechariah.

Zechariah 8:13 — And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong.

There God promised to turn a curse into a blessing, and God does that in the church. How? How did Jesus turn our curse into a blessing? Listen as Paul answers that question.

Galatians 3:13 — *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. What does that mean? That means exactly what verse 3 here says it means — there shall be no more curse! There is no curse in the church! And once again, that is not a blessing just for the church in heaven, that is a blessing that the church is enjoying right here and right now.

Verse 3 also tells us that the throne of God and of the Lamb is in this city. And again, we know that this is also true of the church today. God dwells with his people in the church (Ephesians 2:22), and the church is the eternal **kingdom!** God and the Lamb reign over the entire universe in the eternal kingdom. That is the picture we are seeing here in verse 3, and that is true of the church right here and right now.

But doesn't Hebrews 8:1 tell us that Jesus "is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens"? Doesn't that mean that Jesus is reigning from heaven rather than reigning from the church? No. We don't have to make that choice. Both can be true, and both are true. How can Jesus not be reigning from his eternal **kingdom**, the church? Again, we are looking at the spiritual blessings enjoyed by the church, and one such blessing is that Jesus dwells with his people in the church (Matthew 18:20). And as for Jesus reigning in heaven, isn't that exactly where Paul tells us we are **spiritually** located right here and right now?

Colossians 3:1-4 — *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

So yes, Jesus reigns in heaven at the right hand of God, but Jesus also reigns in his eternal kingdom, the church. And we reign with him in life (Romans 5:17).

Verse 3 ends with a description of God's faithful people — "and his servants shall serve him." We in the church are the servants of Christ (Ephesians 6:6; Colossians 3:24), and again that is something we are right here and right now.

Verse 4 says that those in this city “shall see his face.” Two questions — what does that mean, and whose face? Is this the face of God or the face of the Lamb? Again, I don’t think we have to choose. Just as verse 3 mentions the **throne** of God and of the Lamb, I think verse 4 is describing the **face** of God and of the Lamb. Just as the **throne** of God and of the Lamb depicts the **reign** of God and of the Lamb, I think the **face** of God and of the Lamb depicts the **proximity** of God and of the Lamb. God and the Lamb dwell in the church and are near to their people. “The Lord is at hand” (Philippians 4:5). “In whom we have **boldness** and **access** with confidence by the faith of him” (Ephesians 3:12). We have boldness and access!

The church is not like an earthly kingdom where someone wanting to see the king would have to look at a coin or a statue. In the eternal kingdom the king is dwelling right among his people; so close we can see him. And, of course, this is **spiritually** true of the church right here and right now. The church is a royal priesthood, and as priests we have direct access to the throne. In fact, Hebrews 4:16 says that we may **boldly** approach the throne of grace. Every Christian has the same access to God as the High Priest had under the old covenant. In fact, we have more access — we may boldly approach the throne at any time whereas the High Priest could only enter the holy of holies once a year and did not do so with boldness.

Of course, we know that this description is describing a **spiritual** blessing, just as all of the other descriptions we have seen here. Physically, no man hath seen God at any time (1 John 4:12). And yet those who saw the Word made flesh spiritually saw God the Father — “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). And likewise today, we can spiritually see God the Father through his word — “for now we see through a glass, darkly; **but then face to face**: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Corinthians 13:12). Those in the church have spiritual eyesight, and with our spiritual eyes we can see God the Father. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).

Verse 4 also tells us that “his name shall be in their foreheads.” Whose name? This is the same answer we had for the questions whose throne and whose face. This is the name of God and of the Lamb. Just as the **throne** of God and of the Lamb showed their **reign**, and just as the **face** of God and of the Lamb showed their **proximity**, so the **name** of God and of the Lamb shows their **ownership**. We are not our own; we were bought with a price. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

We have seen this symbol before. In Revelation 7:3 the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads, and in Revelation 14:1 we see that the 144,000 (the church) had the Father's name written on their foreheads. And remember 2 Timothy 2:19 — “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, **having this seal**, The Lord knoweth them that are his.” God knows his people, and that beautiful truth is depicted in this book by God placing his name on his people. Just as we write our own name on things that we own and that are important to us and that we don't want to lose, so God writes his name on his people. Again, this can be true only of the church, and not just of the church in heaven. This is true of the church right here and right now as 2 Timothy 2:19 tell us.

The first half of verse 5 is very similar to verses 23 and 25 from the previous chapter that we have already looked at.

Revelation 21:23 — And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

Revelation 21:25 — And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

Revelation 22:5 — And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.

All that we said earlier about verses 23 and 25 applies equally to verse 5. We are the light of the world — a city that cannot be hid (Matthew 5:14). “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). And again, this is all true of the church right here and right now. Not only are we the light of this world, but we are the **only** light in this world. Those outside of the church are in the power of darkness (Colossians 1:13). But, of course, we are not the source of that light ourselves, but rather God “hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6). The church is the only light in a world filled with darkness. We, like Paul, are sent “to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light” (Acts 26:18). There is no night in the church — how could there ever be night with Jesus in our midst?

Finally, the end of verse 5 tells us that those in this city “shall reign for ever and ever.” Is that just a promise of a future reign or is that true of the church right here and right now? Are we reigning now? Yes. Romans 5:17 says that we reign **in life** through Jesus Christ, and Revelation 5:10 says that we are a king-

dom of priests who reign on earth. In 1 Peter 2:9, we are told that we are a royal priesthood. The church reigns with Christ now and forever! And notice that this reign doesn't end after a thousand years; this reign never ends. We shall reign for ever and ever!

What are we seeing in these verses? What we are seeing here is the triumphant, victorious church of Christ that reigns forever with Jesus. The message to the first century church was not "wait until the end of the world and then you will enjoy these blessings." The message to the first century church was that they were enjoying all of these spiritual blessings right here and right now — they just needed to open their eyes to that spiritual reality. Isn't that what Paul told us in Ephesians 1:3 — "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *who hath* blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." That was the message of comfort the suffering first century church needed to hear, and that was the message they heard.

And isn't that a message of comfort that we also need to hear today? Yes, we are awaiting many wonderful blessings that will come our way after the end of time if we remain faithful unto death, but we also have many wonderful blessings in the church that we can enjoy right here and right now. Yes, physically we suffer, we weep, and we die — but not spiritually. Spiritually we have been made new; spiritually, we have no thirst, no pain, no tears, no death, and no night. Why? Because we are a new creature in Christ. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he *is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things *are become* new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). That is not something that will happen to us when we die or when we get to heaven. That is something that happened to us when we arose from the waters of baptism. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in *newness of life*" (Romans 6:4).

Revelation 22:6-7

6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. 7 Behold,

I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Verse 6 begins the epilogue of the book (something that may have been much anticipated by some after fifty lessons!). How did the *prologue* in Chapter 1 of the book begin? The prologue began with a **time frame**.

***Revelation 1:1** — The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must **shortly** come to pass.*

***Revelation 1:3** — Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for **the time is at hand**.*

And so how does the epilogue in Chapter 22 begin? The epilogue begins the same way, and with the exact same time frame!

***Revelation 22:6** — The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must **shortly** be done.*

And when we get to verse 10 and read that “the time is at hand,” we will see that the time frame is repeated twice in Chapter 22 just as it was in Chapter 1. Verses 6 and 10 in this final chapter should completely put to rest any idea that perhaps the time frame just applied to the beginning of the vision but not to the end. This time frame applies to the entire vision. No other time frame is given.

What can be said for any interpretation of this book that ignores these clear repeated statements? One must certainly work hard to misunderstand them! One must work hard not to notice them as God repeats the time frame over and over in this book! In fact, in any other context I don't think anyone would fail to understand them, but for some reason in this book they are almost universally ignored.

We see the time frame again in verse 7 — “behold, I come quickly.” The Greek word translated “shortly” in verse 6 and the Greek word translated “quickly” in verse 7 come from the same Greek root word. It is the same word we see earlier in the letters to the seven churches:

Revelation 2:16 — *Repent; or else I will come unto thee **quickly**, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

Revelation 3:11 — *Behold, I come **quickly**: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

Now let's think about that for a moment. If the word "quickly" in those two verses was not fulfilled in the lifetime of those first century Christians, then what did those commands mean? "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly." "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast." What meaning would those commands have to those two first century churches if "quickly" meant two thousand years and counting? Those seven congregations aren't around anymore! Either Jesus came quickly while they were still around, or Jesus didn't come to them at all while they had a chance to repent or had an ability to hold fast their crown. On what basis can anyone argue that the word "quickly" in Chapters 1 and 22 has a different meaning than the same word used in Chapters 2 and 3?

But, some might say, the phrase "I come quickly" must refer to the second coming of Christ. Let's pause and put that objection to rest. There are at least three big problems with it.

First, in what sense can we say that Christ came "quickly" if he has not yet come after two thousand years? How is that quick? Yes, God views time differently than we do (2 Peter 3:8), but these time frame verses are not directed to God; they are directed to us. If God does not use words as they mean to us when God is speaking to us, then how are we to understand anything in the Bible? If we start down the road where when God says "quickly" he really means "centuries and centuries," then where else will that road lead us?

Second, some liberal commentators point to this verse and other similar verses to argue that the New Testament writers mistakenly thought Jesus was coming very soon. We need to be careful we don't contribute to that false view by misinterpreting statements such as the one we see here in verse 7. The inspired authors of the New Testament were not mistaken in anything they wrote. In fact, far from saying that Jesus was about about to appear again quickly, Paul said the opposite in 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

Third, the phrase "second coming of Christ" is found nowhere in the Bible. We often say that we should use Bible names for Bible topics, and I agree — and the phrase "second coming of Christ" would be a good place for us to start. Yes,

Jesus will appear again to claim his own and judge the world at the end of time, but nowhere in the Bible is that last great day called the “second coming of Christ.” Perhaps the closest we get to that is in Hebrews 9:28 — “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he **appear the second time** without sin unto salvation.” That is why I prefer to say the “second **appearance**” of Christ rather than the “second coming” of Christ. Or if we use the word “coming,” perhaps we should preface it with the word “literal.” Jesus **literally** came to this world the first time at his birth, and Jesus will **literally** come to this world (or, more precisely, in the sky above this world) at the end of all time. But, as we know from such passages as Matthew 24, Jesus has **figuratively** come in judgment at other times.

Does it matter what we call it? Yes, I think it does. When we use the phrase “second coming” we leave the false impression that every “coming” of Christ in the New Testament after Jesus’ birth must be the second coming, and that just isn’t true. The coming here in verse 7, for example, has a first century time frame and refers to Jesus’ coming in judgment against Rome — not a literal coming as will occur at the end of time, but a figurative coming in judgment. And, as I mentioned a moment ago, we find a second example in Matthew 24.

Matthew 24:30 — *They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

That coming of Christ in Matthew 24:30 must have been a first century event. Why? Because of the time frame given just a few verses later.

Matthew 24:34 — *This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*

The coming of Christ in Matthew 24:30 was a figurative coming of Christ in judgment against Jerusalem. The coming of Christ in verse 7 is the same, except it is a coming against Rome rather than against Jerusalem. Just as Matthew 24:34 provides a first century time frame for the coming in judgment against Jerusalem, so do verses 6 and 10 in this chapter provide a first century time frame for the coming in judgment against Rome.

The Greek word translated “quickly” occurs four times in this chapter in verses 6, 7, 12, and 20! The Greek lexicons tell us that word means “pertaining to a point of time subsequent to another point of time (either an event in the discourse or the time of the discourse itself), with emphasis upon the rel-

actively brief interval between the two points of time” or simply “a very brief period of time.” The same Greek word occurs twice in Matthew 28:7-8.

***Matthew 28:7-8** — And go **quickly**, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed **quickly** from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.*

Is there any doubt what the word “quickly” means in that context? The same word also appears in John 11:28-29.

***John 11:28-29** — And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose **quickly**, and came unto him.*

Is there any doubt what the word “quickly” means in that context? The same inspired author wrote verses 6 and 7 in Revelation 22, using the same word! On what basis can anyone interpret the same word in John 11 and Revelation 22 in such a way that the two occurrences of the word have opposite meanings? Jesus said he was coming **quickly**. If that description by Jesus doesn’t match our understanding of this book, then let’s change our understanding of this book rather than change what Jesus said!

And for the many commentators out there who believe that these chapters apply to the end of time, let me ask them a question — **what could God have written here to convince you otherwise?** If using the word “quickly” four times in a single chapter doesn’t do it, then what would it have taken?

But that then leaves us with a question — in what sense did Jesus come quickly after this book was written? We already know the answer to that! Jesus came in judgment against the persecuting Romans who were murdering Christians and plundering the church. Was that a physical judgment of Rome? No, it was a spiritual judgment, just as the deliverance of the church was not a physical deliverance but was a spiritual deliverance for those who remained faithful unto death. But that judgment happened quickly just as Jesus repeatedly promised it would in this book.

For those keeping track, verse 7 is the sixth of the seven beatitudes in Revelation. “Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” What are those sayings that must be kept? We have seen many, but perhaps

the most pertinent such saying in this context is the one found in Revelation 2:10 — “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

One more comment about verses 6 and 7 — who is the speaker? And is there a different speaker in verse 7 than in verse 6? Some argue that the angel is speaking in verse 6 due to the third person reference to God. Others argue that God or Jesus is speaking in verse 7 due to the first person pronoun “I.” Others respond that in verse 7 an angel may simply be speaking on God’s behalf. In short, we don’t know for sure. Verses 6 and 7 in the original Greek are ambiguous with regard to the speaker’s identity.

People sometimes ask me why I don’t like the New International Version of the Bible, which I recently heard called the “Nearly Inspired Version!” My answer is that I don’t trust the NIV, and verse 6 right here is a prime example why. Verse 6 opens with the phrase “and **he** said unto me.” Who is **he**? The KJV just says “he.” The ESV just says “he.” The ASV just says “he.” The RSV just says “he.” The NRSV just says “he.” The NKJV just says “he.” The NAS just says “he.” And those translations are all correct. The original Greek does not identify the speaker beyond referring to him as “he.” A proper translation of that verse into English should do the same thing. If the original text is ambiguous in some regard, then a proper English translation should maintain that ambiguity so that the reader can resolve the ambiguity from the context.

The NIV does not do that. The NIV translation of verse 6 reads “The **angel** said to me.” The word “angel” is nowhere in the original Greek of verse 6, and yet there it is in the NIV’s translation of verse 6. A reader of the NIV would have no idea that the Greek permitted any other understanding of that verse. The Greek is ambiguous, but the NIV is not. The goal of a translation is **not** to remove ambiguity from the original text. The goal of a translation is to carry any ambiguities in the original text over into English so that the English translation is as close as possible to the meaning conveyed by the original text. A good translation acts like a sheet of glass between you and the original text. The NIV utterly and repeatedly fails in that goal, and that is why I never use it, and I why I don’t trust it.