

## Chapter 22

The New Paradise and its River of Life

**Vs.1-5** belong to chapter 21, since they continue with the description of the Holy City.

**V.1. The 'River of Life'.**

- 'Pure'. No pollution, no germs, no disease.
- 'Proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb'. **Note:** Earthly streams have their source in some mountainous area, but the 'River of Life' has its source in the Throne of God. **Note:** This is a favorable point for those who believe the city will be in the form of a pyramid.
- Dake believes the 'river' will divide into 12 branches, and will flow down the 12 broadways through the 12 gates and into all parts of the earth.

Notice the comparison between the 'river' mentioned in the 'Garden of Eden' (Gen.2:10-14) and the 'river' shown here:

- A. The river in the 'Garden' went out of (proceeded from) Eden, and branched out into 4 rivers. Here, the 'river' flows from the throne of God.
- B. Before God created man, a 'mist' rose up from the earth and 'watered the whole face of the ground' (Gen.2:6). Afterwards, the river flowing out of Eden proved a blessing to the lands of Havilah, Ethiopia, countries east of Assyria, and Persia. Here, we see one great river in the New Jerusalem flowing down from 'the throne of God and of the Lamb' for 1500 miles.

- There are lots of opinions concerning this 'River of Life':
- A. We are not told in Scripture that the waters of this 'river' come to earth, or, that they will have any effect on those who dwell on the earth. This is a 'heavenly river'.
- B. If the waters of this 'river' actually come to earth, they will reach the earthly population in different forms, and not in its wonderful heavenly manner.
- C. The waters of this 'river' will flow out though the 12 gates of the 'city' into all parts of the earth, thereby forming many lakes and rivers in the earth.  
**Note:** The list of opinions goes on, but much depends, I suppose, on whether you believe the New Jerusalem positions itself on the earth or above the earth.

**V.2. The Tree of Life.**

- Rather than there being a divided 1500-mile 'street' (boulevard), with the 'river' flowing down its middle, it seems more likely that there will be 12 major streets, with rows of 'trees of life' along each side of the 'river'.
- Each tree will bear 12 different kinds of fruit, yielding a harvest each month. **Note:** Heaven will still mark time, but not be subject to it as we are today.
- The 'leaves' will be for the healing (preservation of life; health-giving) of the nations (those who are in their immortal earthly bodies). **Note:** Some believe this healing will bring about divine health, not only for those with earthly bodies, but for 'resurrected saints' as well. (I disagree. I don't believe the leaves will be needful at all for resurrected saints - and surely not for their divine health or eternal life.)
- 'The 'healing leaves' indicate the absence of anything that brings physical or spiritual harm' (Full Life Study Bible). **Note:** Even our 'new bodies' will be dependent on the Lord for life, strength, and health.

- Since there will be no sickness in the eon of ages among resurrected saints, there will be no need for their healing. **Note:** Because of that, it's believed the statement concerning divine health and eternal life (mentioned above) is in harmony with what would have taken place in the natural life of Adam had he eaten of the 'Tree of Life' in the midst of the Garden - before sinning.
- Too, it's believed, by some, that the saints of the heavenly city will eat of the tree's fruit, and the nations of the earth will benefit from the tree's leaves. Still others believe the words: street, river, tree, fruit, and leaves are all symbolic.
- The question is asked: Will eating be a necessity for those in their resurrected glorified bodies? (No. They will not have to eat, but will surely be able to.) Possibly, the 'Tree of Life' will be for their pleasure and enjoyment. Yet, there will be no eating meat, since there will be no death.

**Vs.3-5. 'No more curse'.** The 'curse' came as a result of the rebellions of Lucifer and Adam. Here, things will be as if the curse had never come.

- 'And his servants shall serve him'. It's believed that these servants are both faithful angels and redeemed men (those glorified, and those yet in the immortal natural bodies on earth). In that day, all will look upon the face of God, and His name shall be in their foreheads.
- 'No night there'. Eternity with the Lord in the New Jerusalem will be an endless day of brightness and glory. No need of the sun, for the Lord Jesus will be the light, thereof. **Note:** Some believe the Lord Jesus will be the 'light' of all God's creation, forever; while others believe this speaks of Him being the 'light' of the New Jerusalem. There will be 'no night **there**'.

**Vs.6-21. Conclusion of Revelation.**

- A. Jesus places His seal upon this Book. 'These words are faithful and true' (v.6).
- B. Christ declares His return to earth again. (v.7)
- C. Blessings pronounced upon those who keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book. (v.7)
- D. Mistaken worship. 'Him only shalt thou serve' (vs.8,9).
- E. Do not seal the book. (v.10) Daniel was told to 'seal up the words of this prophecy' (Dan.12:4).
- F. Eternal state of man to be as they are when they die. 'Unjust, unjust still, etc.' (v.11). No 'second chance'. No 'reincarnation'.
- G. 'I come quickly'. (Speaks of Jesus' sudden return to this earth.) His message is always 'be ready'.
- H. 'For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie' (v.15). This is not saying that in the eternal state all manner of wicked men will be living just outside the heavenly city. 'It simply describes the future with the imagery of the present' (Mounce).
- I. An invitation given. Not an invitation to come and be saved, but for the redeemed to come enjoy the blessings of the Lord.
- J. A 'warning' to all. No one can change God's Word and escape His judgments. (v.18)
- K. 'Surely, I come quickly' (v.29). **Note:** The last promise in Scripture has to do with the Lord's Second Coming to earth.
- L. 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus' (v.20). The book closes with John longing for the return of Jesus for His people (the rapture of the church).
- M. The last verse of the Old Testament contains a 'curse': 'Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse' (Malachi 4:6). But notice the last words of the New Testament. They speak of 'grace', because grace describes God's dealing with man on the basis of the New Covenant.