

Let's look ahead as if the Rapture occurred 1007 years ago; the Tribulation spanned the next 7 years, ending with the return to Earth of the Lord Jesus Christ at Armageddon when He destroyed all His enemies and established His Millennial Kingdom on Earth which lasted for 1000 years as we ruled and reigned with Him all that time. The Earth became replenished with normal, mortal humans beginning with those who had lived through the Tribulation, who had refused the Mark of the Beast and were able to 'hide out' from the Antichrist's forces who were seeking to hunt them all down and kill them. At that time, just after the Tribulation, those who lived through that terrible time represented some, even possibly as few as two, from every nation, tongue, tribe and family group; they all began to multiply and refill the Earth as the Lord Jesus Christ ruled, from Jerusalem, as the rightful King of kings and Lord of lords.

Also, during that 1000 years of the Millennial Reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Earth became, once again, a sort of paradise with Satan bound in the Bottomless Pit, the Antichrist and False Prophet in the Lake of Fire and all animals no longer afraid of humans or posing any threat to humans. I say, 'a sort of paradise,' because the Earth will still be under God's curse from the time of Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden.

The only drawback to that entire 1000 years will be the fact that, although all their ancestors, who lived through the end of the Tribulation, were saved believers, many of those being born, living, growing and multiplying, during the Millennium, will not have shared their parents' and grandparents' love and submission to the Lord Jesus Christ; they began to hold rebellion in their hearts.

Finally, at the end of the Millennium, Satan was released from the Bottomless Pit; he gathered all those, over the face of the Earth, who held that rebellion in their hearts and they all were led to Jerusalem to, hopefully, finally be able to displace the Lord and King Whom they did hate but, instead, fire came down from Heaven and destroyed them all.

This was followed by the Final Judgment; every lost person since the time of Adam and Eve, all who had rejected God's gracious Salvation in the Person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who had been kept down in Hades after their deaths, were raised up to face the Lord Jesus Christ, not as gracious Savior, but as Righteous and Holy Judge. He judged each one according to their works done while in the flesh, and since none had trusted in God's revelation of Himself, they had no Savior; they had no advocate, they had no hope; they had only their own sinful history to give evidence in their trials before the Rightful King and, so, every one was sentenced to Eternity in the Lake of Fire.

I believe we will have watched that entire, heart-wrenching display, being ever reminded, through each and every one's verdict and sentence, that we were only saved from being one with them, by the Love of our blessed Savior as He took all of our richly deserved punishment upon Himself, suffering and dying in our place on that terrible but wonderful cross so long ago.

Now, the end has come for our present Heaven and Earth. God destroyed it all and then created a New Heaven and a New Earth. The unimaginably wondrous New Jerusalem has just come down from Heaven which will be the dwelling place of God Almighty and the Lord Jesus Christ; we, too, along with saved Israel, will also have our eternal homes within the splendors of New Jerusalem.

'But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men... But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹ Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' 2 Pet 3:7

'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. ² And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared

as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.' Rev 21:1

Before this, John has been describing the outside of New Jerusalem: the walls, the gates, the foundation stones, the Glory of God filling the place with everlasting light and of the nations of peoples around the New Earth bringing their glory and honor unto the Rightful King, the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Now, we will continue to learn even more about our eternal home, New Jerusalem, some of the internal wonders of this incredible place...

Revelation 22:1: '*And he (the angel) shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*'

What do humans need to preserve life? More than food, more than shelter, second only to air... water! Here is the most pure water that has ever been and not only does it preserve life day to day but it enables those who drink it to continue living on and on forever! Jesus said, 'I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.' Who would that be? That would be all who will have put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the Cross.

We first saw a picture of this future truth in Moses and the Rock...

'And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin... and there was no water for the people to drink... And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me... And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel...' Ex 17:1

The Israelites travel through the wilderness of Sin... how appropriate... then Moses strikes the rock and water flows out... water by which to live... Who is the Rock, the Rock of our Salvation? It is the Lord Jesus Christ... He was struck, smitten for our sin... because He was bruised for our iniquities, living water flowed from Him, out to us that we might live eternally.

In New Jerusalem, the River of Life flows out from God's Throne to give life to His children. Previously, a stream of fire proceeded out from His Throne, the fire of judgment through which our works had to pass, to either be burned up as wood, hay and stubble, causing us to suffer the loss of eternal rewards or our works passed through, coming out as gold, silver and precious stones, works that remained which then caused us to gain unimaginable eternal rewards.

'I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.' Dan 7:9

'Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; ¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.' 1 Cor 3:12

Now, in New Jerusalem, our Judgment of works is past; the Final Judgment is past; there is no more curse and Life Eternal flows from His Throne.

'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.' Matt 5:6

'Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 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 4:13

'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.' Rev. 2:7

Verse 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 Tree of Life! God revealed His Tree of Life at the very beginning of His revelation to man, in the Garden of Eden, and at the very end of His final revelation to man in The Revelation.

'And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.' Gen 2:9

'And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: ²³ Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. ²⁴ So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.' Gen 3:22

Adam and Eve had disobeyed God; they had sinned. Their sin had invited evil and darkness to fill the World and, so, for their own best interest, God barred their way to the Tree of Life, lest they eat of it and, so, live forever in their sinful state, living forever in a sinful World, of growing darkness and evil. Think about it... would you, with your present, inherited sin nature, want to live forever in this dark and evil World which only grows darker by the minute as it rushes toward its final, absolute darkness under the soon coming kingdom of the Antichrist? If I couldn't make it, alive, to the Rapture, I'd rather die and wait, in Heaven, for the Rapture when I'd, then, receive a new, glorified eternal sinless body. Thankfully, we will, soon, be changed, in an instant, to be like the Lord Jesus Christ and, then eventually, after ruling and reigning with Him for 1000 years, inherit a New Heaven and New Earth which will be perfect and without sin, forever.

Now in our study, here in New Jerusalem, we see the Tree of Life again as it comes down from Heaven to the New Earth; we assume that God took it up to Heaven when He brought the Great Flood upon the Earth. If He had taken it up sooner, there would have been no necessity for the Cherubim to hedge about the Tree of Life for the next 1000 years before the Flood.

The wording here makes it sound like there are more than one Tree of Life, growing in the middle of Main Street and on both sides of the River of Life but whether there is one or several, the Tree of Life is a very special gift, from God to His children. We, the True Church, the Body and Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, will not need to eat the fruit of the Tree of Life in order to continue living forever; we were changed in an instant, at the Rapture, and given glorified, eternal bodies like that of the Lord Jesus Christ but, even before that, at the moment of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we were given Eternal Life from God; we became His children, the Bride and Body of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; we were given Eternal Life which will never end and we will have no need of being replenished by the Tree of Life... otherwise, ours would not have been genuine Eternal Life.

Even now, we possess Eternal Life; we will never die, even if our mortal bodies do die, we, our souls and spirits, will live forever and, soon, our bodies will also be Eternal... not just everlasting, but Eternal.

Here, again, is more proof that time will never end; God, and we, will mark time forever. The Tree of Life yields 12 kinds of fruit, a different fruit every month... 12 months... 1 year... year after year after year forever. Also, here is another indication that not everyone will possess glorified, eternal bodies: something, or someone, in the nations of the New Earth will be in need of healing: *'...and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.'*

Perhaps the leaves will be used for a healing tea type mixture; maybe they will be chewable; maybe they'll be smoked... incense will surely be made, burned and smelled around God's dwelling place... why couldn't the leaves of the Tree of Life be dried and burned with the smoke being breathed, and smelled, producing a wonderfully fragrant healing incense-type medicine? It doesn't have to be rolled up or stuffed into a pipe to be usefully smoked...

Those coming up to New Jerusalem to honor the King during the Feast of Tabernacles each year could take leaves back to their nations or, perhaps the 'job' of certain angels might be to pick the leaves each day, package them and ship them out to every nation of New Earth and even off-planet, out, throughout the Universe of His ever-increasing government and peace: *'...and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called*

Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. ⁷ **Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever.**' Isa. 9:6

The Tree of Life will bear 12 different kinds of fruit each year forever. Imagine the best fruit you've ever eaten: cherries, peaches, tangerines, pomegranates... any fruit we've yet eaten will be as cardboard, or cotton, in comparison to what is coming... the flavors, the colors, the textures, the sweetness and tartness, perhaps one month's fruit will even be effervescent... fizzing... nothing we've ever tasted, or even imagined could be as wonderful as the fruits of the Tree of Life... nothing!

Verse 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.'*

God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ's thrones will be there, with us and among us; we will have complete and unfettered access to God Almighty, as His chosen, loved and cherished children; He will love us and welcome us into His presence anytime and all the time; imagine: God Almighty pats His knee and opens His arms, inviting and welcoming us to jump up onto His lap and into His embrace as He holds us, kisses us and tells us again, and again, how much He loves us... we might, as children do, say, 'Tell me again, Father...' and He will, again, recount the story of Creation and how that He chose us for Himself, how He intimately 'knew' us before He even created the Universe, how we were always in His heart and in His thoughts and plans... how He planned, from eternity past, that the Lord Jesus Christ would willingly and joyfully go to the Cross in order to purchase us, for Himself. You ask, what do you mean, 'joyfully... to the Cross?' *'...Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross...'* Heb 12:2

He patiently and even joyfully took all our punishment upon Himself in order to eternally have us for Himself!

'... and his servants shall serve him:' Daniel saw millions standing before Him but, we are not among His servants who do serve Him: we are His beloved daughter-in-law, His chosen bride for His Son; also, we are not His servants, we are His friends; certainly, we will joyfully serve Him always, but we are not servants: *'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. ¹⁵ Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. ¹⁶ Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...'* John 15:13

Finally, after the Millennium, in the New Earth, after the present sin-infected, thoroughly cursed creation has been destroyed, there shall be no more curse! But what curse? The first curse from man's sin: *'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. ¹⁷ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; ¹⁸ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ¹⁹ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'* Gen 3:16

God did not say that pregnancy and having children was a curse... not at all! Only that she would be miserable, physically, during her pregnancy. Work was not a curse; only that thorns and thistles would be in the way while he would have to be hot and sweaty. All that, and so much more, will be removed and done away with; Earthly women will still bear children but it will be with joy. Earthly men will still work but it will be with joy. There will still be marriage of Earthly humans but the man will no longer rule over his wife... marriage will be joyful in every respect... no more separation through death.

Then, finally, after 7000 years of cursedness, there will be no more curse.