

Last time, we ended with: *'And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 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. ²⁴ And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.'*

This will be our eternal home but we will not be restricted to being only in this wonderful place. Think about it: in our World today... there are some unbelievably marvelous homes in which people live and, yet, even more wonderful and awe inspiring are some of God's natural wonders: oceans, forests, deserts, canyons, mountains, birds, animals, even insects... nothing, man-made, can compare with God's Creation but, again, think about it: every wonder we see in nature has been tainted by sin; everything is marred and retarded from its potential. We have no clue as to what God's New Creation will be ... no clue, whatsoever!

New Jerusalem will be unimaginably beautiful in every respect but even more glorious will be what God will do throughout His natural Creation, not only on the New Earth but on every planet and star throughout all His New Universe and, eventually, we will be privileged to see and experience, and marvel after, every single thing He will have created, giving Him our glory and praise forever!

Surely, it will take a long, long time to see it all but for us, who have already been given Eternal Life... time is of no consequence. How do I know this to be true? God's Word has told us the invaluable Truth that we are, now, coheirs with the Lord Jesus Christ; He is Heir of all things and we are fully invested, fully privileged, full-fledged but not yet full-flown Children of God! Fledged means, of a young bird, that it has grown its feathers and is ready to fly. Flown means it does now fly. We are full-fledged but not yet full-flown... one day soon!

'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together... He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' Rom 8:16

See that? '... that we may be also **glorified together.**' That doesn't mean all of us together... you and me... that means, us, together with Jesus Christ... when He is fully glorified before all humans and all angels and, I might add, all animals, then He will also fully glorify us as His fully legitimate children... as His heirs... as His beloved daughter-in-law, the chosen Bride for His Son... and make no mistake... God the Father did choose us... each and every one of us and He saw all the eternal potential which He has created within us and one day soon He will, finally, bring all of that planned, invested potential to its fullest, most glorious expression.

And, you caught that I said that the Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified, also, before all animals... I firmly believe that in God's New Creation, animals will no longer be just dumb brute beasts but will, then, fully express the Glory of God; imagine how you might recreate animals if you could and then remember that God is way ahead us with our still imperfect imaginations.

And, of all His New Creation... I don't believe He will merely copy what He did the first time because I know that He is able to do anything, far above our wildest imaginations, and He is unbound by anything which has ever gone before; He will glorify Himself by every glorious surprise He has planned for us. I think that the only thing He will copy will be our Eternal, Glorified bodies which He will fashion after His original, the one He created for His beloved, ever-faithful Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

*'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him;** for we shall see him as he is.'* 1 John 3:2

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

In other words, in New Jerusalem, it will always be day... which reminded me of a verse in Hebrews: *'But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.'* Heb 3:13 And notice what He says, a few verses later: *'And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.'* Heb 3:18

We should always exercise and use our imaginations to their fullest! What if some rewards, some privileges will be withheld from some because of unbelief, because we refused to believe that God was able to do all that we could have imagined, and far, far beyond, but we were afraid to imagine such outlandish things? What if sinful Hollywood turns out to have been more able to imagine grandiose things than God's own children, who should have been the ones to imagine far, far more elaborately than any chintzy Hollywood film?

Verse 26: *'And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.'*

'They shall bring...' Who is 'they?' Our last verse from last time, Verse 24 said, *'And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.'*

These are the nations, throughout the Earth, of God's Elect, those saved from every nation, tribe, tongue and family group.

First, 1000 years before, after Jesus' return at Armageddon, when He established His 1000-year Kingdom, the Earth gradually refurbished and repopulated by people who had lived through the 7-year Tribulation, some from every tribe, nation and tongue: *'And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left (alive after the Tribulation) of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.'* Zech 14:16

These, during the Millennium, were still normal, mortal humans who all still had a sin nature, were still subject to death, although they lived long and healthy lives like the first people did before the Flood, and these were required to come up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles which commemorated the fact that God was finally living among them, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, ruling and reigning from His Temple and Palace in rebuilt Jerusalem. This was not New Jerusalem, which I'm now describing... it was the Earthly Jerusalem, rebuilt after Armageddon and inhabited by the Earthly people of God, Israel, who were now enjoying the fulfillment of all God's Earthly promises to Israel: Israel becomes the head and not the tail, Israel becomes the head of the nations, Israel becomes the most blessed of all nations... all the promises, withheld for 2000 years after they rejected and crucified their King... all, finally, will be fulfilled in the Millennium.

Now, as we look at New Jerusalem, having moved ahead 1000 years, past the Millennium, God has destroyed the present Heavens and Earth and created a New Heavens and a New Earth; then, New Jerusalem will come down from Heaven to the Earth. This is the Eternal home, we assume, of both Israel and the True Church. Moreover, it is the Eternal Home of God Almighty and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, God is truly living among His Children, completely, in every way. New Jerusalem shines with the Glory of God; it is composed of pure, transparent gold and of every beautiful, precious stone. It needs no light from the Sun because the Glory of God shines, eternally throughout... *'And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.'* ²⁶ *And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.'*

Who are 'they' which will bring the glory and honor of the nations into it and who are the nations?

Now, people mistakenly believe that those living forever, throughout the New Earth and Universe do not marry or reproduce; they've been taught that people stop marrying and multiplying; they misunderstand what Jesus said: He was asked, *'In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.'* ²⁴ *And Jesus answering said unto them, **Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?*** ²⁵ *For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven...* ²⁷ *He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: **ye therefore do greatly err.*** Mark 12:23

Did Jesus say anything at all about the mortal humans who trust Him and live through the Millennium and into the New Earth, **never having died and been resurrected from the dead**? The Bible never says that they die and are resurrected. Jesus said, to the Pharisees, that **those who are resurrected from the dead** are those who do not marry nor are given in marriage; He never said any such thing regarding those who never die. As a matter of fact, we, who will be alive to be taken up, alive, in the Rapture, will also never have died, to then be

resurrected from the dead. However, we, the Body and Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will rule and reign with Him forever, very well may not be among those increasing and reproducing but there are many who are not His Body and Bride who do not rule and reign with Him but, rather, are ruled over by Him, and by we who will be His *'under-governors.'*

Here is an example of our needing to take all the different clues that God gives us, in His Word, and to then make an informed understanding of what is to come.

Who is 'they?' Who are those bringing the glory and honor of the nations into New Jerusalem? And who are 'they' which are part of the never-ending increase and expansion of God's Eternal Kingdom: 'Of ***the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end***...?' Isa 9:7

That over which the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns ***will never stop increasing and expanding upward and outward forever!*** The Hebrew word Isaiah used is marbe/mar-beh'... it means: increase/abundance.

His righteous and peaceful reign will never stop increasing out into the farthest reaches of His infinite Universe and we will rule and reign with Him forever!

These multiplying humans, who live forever by eating from the Tree of Life and drinking from the River of Life, will fill up His Universe and they will always continue to honor and worship the Rightful King, bringing their glory and honor to Him, in New Jerusalem.

Now, I know this seems different than what we've always thought, and been taught, but as we look just a little more closely at the Word of God, we begin to notice that it never, at all, says that those living forever will not marry and multiply... only, specifically, those who die and are resurrected from the dead. The rest may very well and, I think, most surely do multiply and increase forever and ever. When God created the first humans, they were perfect and created to live forever but they were also created to reproduce and multiply forever. It's easy to imagine Adam and Eve never having sinned, eating only from the Tree of Life, living forever and they, with their offspring, continuing to live, multiply and fill up the Earth and then to expand out into God's Universe. Shouldn't we imagine that when God fulfills all His plans, that people could be the same as Adam and Eve might have been had they never sinned unto death?

God has wonderful, unimaginable glorious eternal plans for us; shouldn't we be walking in a manner worthy of our calling, looking, always, for His soon return for us in the clouds?

Never forget! Now, today, this, our short, infinitely tiny stretch of time we are living within these Earthly, mortal, dying bodies is our only chance to faithfully serve the King, gaining and accruing infinitely valuable Eternal Rewards. We are not here to change the World; we are not here to strive after some glorious ministry; we are not here to gain the glory and honor of the World. We are here to be His faithful servants; that's it!

'Seek those things which are above... Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.' Col 3:1

Jesus said: '... behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.' Rev 22:12

He was, is and always shall be the God Who creates; *the same yesterday, today and forever!*

Verse 27:*'And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.'*

We've learned that New Jerusalem is absolutely huge in every respect. It is marvelous in its structure being completely of the purest, even transparent gold and filled throughout with the most perfect of every beautiful and precious stones and minerals. Even the gates are each of one single, massive pearl. The 12 gates are always open with each being guarded by an angel of God. The entire city, even the precious foundation stones shine forth with the fiery Glory of God which fills the city throughout.

Now, we learn that nothing evil and sinful can enter the city... but doesn't that sound redundant, obvious... an unnecessary thing to even say... unless it isn't.

What do we recognize, from previously, about that list of sinful ones? Back in verse 8 of this chapter, we read: ***'But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and***

idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.'

So, it's obvious that everyone falling into this category: '*... anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie,*' has already, from the Final Judgment, been consigned to the Lake of Fire.

The gates of New Jerusalem are always open *with an angel guarding each one...* why?

In the old Jerusalem, all the refuse and garbage was taken outside the walls and gates of the city to be thrown down into Gehenna, the Valley of Hinnom where it was burned; the fire of which was never extinguished. It was originally where children were burned as sacrifices to the Ammonite god, Moloch.

In the next chapter, verse 14, we will read: '*Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*'

The first thing we notice in this verse is the implication that there will be those who do not have the right to the Tree of Life and cannot enter into New Jerusalem.

We do not know all the ramifications of all that God will create in the future; it appears that there will be those who will have the choice to obey or not and, so, have or have not the right to the Tree of Life. Even though they may have been born without a sin nature with which to contend, they may still have the ability to disobey and sin and in so doing, not live forever and also risk eternity in the Lake of Fire. If all this is so, then I also believe that the choice will be clear and the risk of punishment will have been made very clear.

What if the Lake of Fire is visible from New Jerusalem and New Jerusalem is visible to those in the Lake of Fire? It may be that part of the torment in the Lake of Fire is to always be able to see what could have been and, for those mortal humans living on Earth, being able to see New Jerusalem, the Lake of Fire remains as a ever-present warning of the danger of disobedience. And, those in the Lake of Fire would turn away from New Jerusalem with its shining glory; they, in the darkness of that place would be unable to endure the light: '*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*'²⁰ *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*'²¹ *But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.'* John 3:19 And seeing the Lake of Fire from New Jerusalem would be an ever-present reminder of all that from which the Lord Jesus Christ saved us, by His Mercy, Grace and Love.

Remember, Adam and Eve were created perfect; they did not have sin natures and, yet, they chose to sin.

Something else: perhaps it will be that, for the mortal humans filling His Kingdom, expanding to the farthest reaches of the Universe, they might sin by omission or in forgetfulness but not in rebellious willfulness and still be able to humbly come before the King, confess their sin and turn from it, receiving His gracious forgiveness.

Remember, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever and His Word is establish forever; it says, 'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' Heb 4:16

Only those whose names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life can enter the city. It is the Lamb's Book because it is by His Sacrifice that we are there. We were chosen, elected and predestinated unto Eternal Life from the foundation of the World. Billions have been born who never were His Elect.

We do not know what God has planned; we do not know the kinds of humans and, perhaps, other peoples He will create forever but through it all... He will be magnified, glorified and exalted forever as He had planned. We'll come back to this...