

heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. 11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

- John also notes that the new heaven and earth will no longer have any sea
- This is remarkable since nearly 75% of the earth surface is covered with water
- Some have taken this to mean that there will no longer be the cold, treacherous waters that destroy ships, separate nations, drown people, and poison people if they drink too much of it...to the ancient people, the sea was a fearful place because it claimed many lives...thus this is a metaphor for the absence of evil
- However, it probably refers to the fact that there will be entirely different climate in the eternal state, one that is not water-based or dependent on the hydrological cycle
- But there will still be water on the new earth – see Rev 22:1-2
- And since flowing rivers go somewhere, it is entirely possible that there will still be large bodies of water on the new earth for swimming, snorkeling, etc.

Its Capital

Revelation 21:2 ~ And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

- The eternal state has a city...with a name, “the new Jerusalem”
- This will be a real place, a real city with real people and real events taking place there
- Cities have streets, buildings, parks, stores...culture, music, art, athletics, events, goods and services
- A city also has people engaged in all kinds of activities and conversations...presumably, all the things that can be done in a city in this life can be done in the heavenly city as well, without the effects of the fall
- This shows that life in the new heaven and earth will likely be similar to life as we know it on earth
- The new earth will still be earth...just made new...the new earth will be earth without all the bad stuff
- It’s a real place...and God uses ordinary, earthly, spatial terms to describe the new heaven and earth
- And that real place is right here back on earth...this world is our home...we are made to live here
- This city was “made ready as a bride adorned for her husband”
- The imagery is taken from a Jewish wedding which had 3 parts
 - Betrothal = like engagement = took place in eternity past when God promised to give His Son a redeemed people
 - Presentation = celebration leading up to the actual ceremony = takes place after the Rapture when believers are taken to heaven
 - Ceremony = the wedding = began at the marriage supper of the lamb and stretches through the Millennium...the final stage is the consummation which corresponds to the eternal state
- This city is further described in vv. 10-27

Its Reality

Revelation 21:3 ~ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,

- The glorious reality and joy of the eternal state is the Person of God...“tabernacle” means “tent, dwelling”
- This is God’s house...heaven is God’s residence...this means that in the eternal state God’s presence will be among his people...he will make his home amongst his people

- He will “dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them”
- The word “dwell” is the verb form of “tabernacle”...God will pitch his tent among his people
- Heaven is God’s home and earth is our home...but in the eternal state, God’s home becomes our home and our home becomes his home...earth is made into heaven and heaven is made into earth
- The result will be that God makes the new heaven and earth his dwelling place
- God’s ultimate plan is not to take us up to live in a realm made for him but to come down and live with us in the realm he made for us
- Rather than our going up to live in God’s home forever, God will come down to live in our home forever
- So, although the present heaven is “up there,” the future, eternal heaven is “down here” where we will dwell together with God
- Heaven will be relocated to earth...when this happens there will be no difference between heaven and earth!
- This will be the full fulfillment of the New Covenant promises:

Jeremiah 31:33 ~ But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people

Ezekiel 37:27 ~ My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people

- The hope of our eternal home is the joy of a God-centered heaven
- The great reality of heaven is that the person of heaven is God himself
- That is our eternal home’s chief appeal...God himself will be there...and God is heaven’s greatest prize
- “Going to heaven without God would be like a bride going on her honeymoon without her groom. A heaven without God would be like a palace without a king.”¹
- “God is the highest good of the reasonable creature, and the enjoyment of him is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of earthly friends are but shadows, but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams, but God is the sun. These are but streams. But God is the fountain. These are but drops; but God is the ocean.”²
- “I’d rather be in hell with Christ, than be in heaven without him.”³

Its Changes

Revelation 21:4-6a ~ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” 5 And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” 6 Then He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end...”

- So glorious will heaven be that it will be missing a number of things present in the present heaven and earth
- There will be no more tears as God will “wipe” them away...“wipe” (*exaleipho*) = “to erase, obliterate”
- This is not saying that there will be tears in heaven which God will wipe away
- It does not mean that people who arrive in heaven will be crying and God will comfort them (cf. Rom 8:1)
- The point is that God will completely obliterate the grief and pain that caused tears in this life
- There will be nothing to be sorry about...no sadness, disappointment, pain, regret, remorse

¹ Randy Alcorn, *Heaven*, 187.

² Jonathan Edwards

³ Martin Luther

- There will be no more death since “death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev 20:14)
- The greatest curse of all will be no more
- There will be no more “mourning, or crying, or pain”
- It’s nearly impossible for our minds to conceive of what this will be like because we are so accustomed to a world ravaged by sin and a life that is frequently acquainted with grief and sorrow
- Suffering is mingled with the very air we breathe ...but the hope of eternity is there will be no more sadness
- These negatives are summed up in a positive in v. 5 ~ I am making all things new
- This means that this life is the only “hell” Christians will ever experience...this is as bad as it gets for us!

Its Residents

Revelation 21:6b-7 ~ ... I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.

- The residents of the new heaven and earth will be those who:
 - Are satisfied with the “spring of the water of life” (cf. John 4:13-14)
 - Will “inherit all things,” an inheritance which is “imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away” (1 Pet 1:4)
 - Receive full fellowship with “his God”...although we have been adopted into God’s family in this life, it is in the eternal state that that adoption will be fully realized (cf. Rom 8:23)

Its Outcasts

Revelation 21:8 ~ But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

- John provides a list of those who will be excluded from any participation in the blessings of the eternal state
- “Notice that the text does not say that anyone who has ever committed any of these sins will be excluded, but people whose lives are characterized in these ways. There is a difference, for instance, between occurrences of lying in one’s life and living a liar’s lifestyle.”⁴
- All those whose lives are characterized by such conduct reveal that they are not genuinely saved and will experience the “second death,” namely eternal torment in hell
- The suffering these individuals will experience stands in marked contrast to the glories of the eternal state believers will experience

THE NEW JERUSALEM

Its Glory

Revelation 21:9-11 ~ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.

- Scripture describes our eternal home as both a country (Heb 11:14-16) and a city (Heb 12:22; 13:14)

⁴ Charles Ryrie, *Revelation*, 167.

- 15 times in Rev 21-22 it is called a city and even describes walls, streets, buildings, residences
- While some people assume that this is all symbolic language, this is going to be an actual city because physically resurrected people have to live in a physically restored city...this will be a spectacular city!
- This city, the crown jewel of heaven, will be the “bride, the wife of the Lamb” (v. 9)
- This spectacular capital city actually takes on the character of the redeemed...because this is the place where the redeemed will live for all eternity, the city itself is viewed as Christ’s bride
- The title “bride of the Lamb” was originally given to the church (cf. Rev 19:7) but it is now enlarged to encompass all the redeemed of all the ages
- One day this city will “come down out of heaven from God” (v. 10)...this emphasizes its divine origin and the fact that it is the city “whose architect and builder is God” (Heb 11:10)
- When this occurs, heaven and earth will be one and the centerpiece of that unified heaven and earth is the holy city, the new Jerusalem, our eternal home
- This city will have “the glory of God [and] her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.” (v. 11)
- John is laboring again to communicate the stunning brilliance of this city which will forever be our home
- Heaven itself is an infinite, eternal expression of the divine glory
- The glory of God is the sum total of his attributes and is manifested as blazing light
- It is the very glory of God that will illuminate all of heaven and earth in our eternal home

Isaiah 60:19 ~ No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory.

Revelation 21:23 ~ And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

- Because of the illuminating brilliance of God’s glory, there will be no need for a light source in heaven
- For thousands of years the sun has risen every day to give light to this earth, but in the eternal state, the light of heaven will be God’s own brilliance and glory...it will permeate all of heaven with breathtaking beauty
- It is so brilliantly light that John describes this city as a “crystal-clear jasper”
- John likely has in mind a beautifully cut diamond...something that is so transparent that light can pass through with sparkling brilliance...the heavenly city is thus pictured as a huge, flawless diamond which refracts the brilliant glazing glory of God

Its Construction

Revelation 21:12-14 ~ It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

- It has massive walls that are “great and high” (v. 12)...normally city walls are meant for keeping people out
- However, since there are no enemies in heaven since they have all been cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:14-15), these walls must serve no functional purpose...they must symbolize the security of our eternal home!
- These walls are not meant to contain keep people in since within these walls are 12 gates, 3 on each side of the city
- Each gate is named for one of the 12 tribes of Israel

- These are some spectacular gates since v. 21 says “the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl”
- These are massive pearls and each gate is carved from a large pearl
- These won't be pearls from some giant variety of oysters, but perfect pearls created by God's own hand
- In fact, many commentators suggest that because a pearl is formed through the oyster's pain, the pearl may symbolize Christ's suffering on our behalf as well as the eternal beauty that can come out of our temporary suffering
- And these massive pearls will serve as the gates which lead in and out of the heavenly city!
- They will be the means by which we will travel in and out of the great city
- And what is unique about these gates is that “In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed” (v. 25)
- In ancient cities, the gates were shut at night to protect the people from robbers or invading armies...to keep out danger...but in heaven, the gates will never be closed as there will be absolutely no threat to the security of heaven and there will be no need to close the gates
- Also, an angel will be posted at each gate (v. 12)...not for security for to represent God's glory
- Thus, any citizen of the new earth will be always welcome, always free to come to the capital city, always free to approach the King's throne...no metal detectors at the entrance...no admissions ticket to get in...no fences to look through or over to get a better look
- All inhabitants of the eternal state will have equal access to the city's parks, museums, lakes, restaurants, libraries, concerts
- Additionally, “the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (v. 14)
- With the gates named after the 12 tribes of Israel and the foundation stones named after the 12 apostles, it shows that this heavenly city will be the dwelling place of all the people of God for all time
- Israel and the church will be brought together in the city of God – our eternal home – to form one people of God for all eternity

Its Measurements

Revelation 21:15-17 ~ The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements.

- John gives the dimensions of this spectacular capital city, a massive cube 1500 miles wide, 1500 miles long, 1500 miles high (actually closer to 1400 miles cubed)
- If it were positioned over the US, it would extend from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and from Colorado to the Atlantic Ocean
- As a cube, it suggests that inhabitants will be able to travel vertically as well as horizontally
- Some have suggested that these are just symbolic measurements but v. 17 indicates that it is measured “according to human measurements which are also angelic measurements”
- In other words, a yard is a yard, a foot is a foot, and a mile is a mile, for both humans and angels
- The fact that precise measurements are given suggests that this describes a real place with real earthly dimensions

- Since it is a cube 1500 miles on each side, it means that this city extends well into what we know as the earth's atmosphere
- But heaven and earth will have been merged and so the atmosphere will have ceased to exist

- 1500 miles square is about 2 million square miles
- To put it into comparison, the city of Grand Rapids is 45 square miles and has about 200,000 people
- Kent County is about 872 square miles and has almost 650,000 people
- The city of Grand Rapids has a population density of about 4,365 people per square mile
- That means if the heavenly city is populated with the same population density as Grand Rapids, it could house 8.7 billion people
- But that's just square miles...including the 1500 miles in height, it comes out to 3.4 billion cubic miles
- If you include the height and calculate the same population density as Grand Rapids, the city of God will be able to accommodate 10 trillion people

Its Materials

Revelation 21:18-21 ~ The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

- The beauty of this city is almost unfathomable
 - The material of the wall was jasper
 - The city was pure gold, like clear glass...the gold of earth is opaque, the gold of heaven is so pure that it is translucent
 - The foundations are made up of jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, amethyst...those are colored stones with various shades of green, blue, red, golden, violet and all kinds of other colors indicating that the heavenly city is a place of immense color and brilliance that will satisfy our love for beauty for all eternity
 - The twelve gates are made of a single pearl...thus nearly 1500 miles high
 - The streets are made of translucent glass...probably for the purpose of letting the light of God's glory blaze unrestricted
- This city will be our eternal home...this is a reminder that this world is simply a whisper and sample of greater joy that awaits us in our eternal home
- We should enjoy the shadows of this life...the Grand Canyon, the beauty of a flower blooming in spring, the joy of a newborn baby, the excitement of skiing down a mountain, the pleasure of a day at the beach, the creativity involved in designing a home
- But they are all faint outlines of the eternal state and its spectacular beauty

Its Relation to God

Revelation 21:22-23 ~ I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

- There will be no temple in heaven, no building, no structure like in the OT
- The reason for this is that God himself is the temple...he himself is the place of worship!

- His presence will permeate heaven and there will be no need for anyone to go anywhere to worship God
 - Believers will constantly be in his presence which will fill the entire new heaven and earth
 - There will never be a moment when they are not in perfect, holy communion with the Lord
 - Everyone will be allowed unimpeded access into God's presence to continually worship Him
 - We will have unhindered access to both God and the Lamb, Jesus Christ...in his presence forever
 - Unfortunately, many people equate life in heaven to an unending, boring church service
 - But there will be no temple, cathedral, church, or chapel...thus, no church services
 - Instead, life in the heavenly city will be ongoing worship and thus, it will be far from boring
 - We will be doing so many other things in heaven...living in a home, eating and drinking, reigning with Christ, working for him, traveling in and out of the city, gathering at feasts
 - But everything we will be doing will be an act of worship
- There will also be no need for the sun (v. 23)

Revelation 22:5 ~ And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

- Some have taken these verses to mean that there is actually no light source at all in heaven, no sun or moon
 - But these verses don't say that...they say that the heavenly city will have no "need" for their light
 - The emphasis isn't on the elimination of the sun and moon; rather, it is on their being overshadowed by the greater light of God (cf. 1 Tim 6:16; 1 John 1:5)
 - This light does not shine from any "source"...it is not radiant light
- This will restore the original pattern that existed before Genesis 1
 - There was light in the original creation before the creation of the sun and moon
 - The sun and moon were not created until day 4 but there was light already on the first day of creation
 - Likely, God's glory provided that light

Its Relation to the Nations

Revelation 21:24-27 ~ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- The reference to nations and kings of the earth have led some to believe that this passage is a recapitulation of the millennial kingdom (i.e. that John is reverting back to the Millennium here)
- However, such a view ignores the chronology of Revelation (cf. "then I saw" in 6:1, 2, 5, 8, 12:7:2; 8:2, 13; 9:1; 10:1; 13:1, 11; 14:1, 6, 14; 15:1; 16:13; 17:3; 19:11, 17, 19; 20:1, 4, 11; the phrase indicates chronological progression)
- "the nations (*ethne*)...the kings of the earth" probably refers to Gentiles in the eternal state
- Thus, in addition to Israel and the church, people from every nation and ethnic group will reside in the heavenly city
- "The idea is not that national identities will be preserved in the eternal state, but rather the opposite. People from every tongue, tribe, and nation – both Jews and Gentiles – will be united as God's people."⁵
- Citizens from outside the heavenly city will regularly travel in and out of it

⁵ John MacArthur, *Revelation 12-22*, 285.

- This implies that there will be other cities on the new earth, cities and town lying beyond the heavenly city
- And nothing unclean will come into our eternal home...only the elect of God, “those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (v. 27), will enter that great city
- Satan and all unbelievers will have been banished forever from the scene

Excursus on an Annihilated/Recreated vs. a Renovated/Renewed Heavens and Earth⁶

Will this new heaven and new earth be an entirely new earth, another ‘out-of-nothing’ creation of God after the first heaven and earth are annihilated? Or is the new heaven and new earth a restoration and renewal of the present planet we live on?

1. Arguments in favor of a completely new planet

- A. John’s reference to the first heaven and earth having “passed away” (Rev 21:1)
- B. Peter uses language describing the entire destruction of the old order

2 Peter 3:7 ~ ...the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire...

2 Peter 3:10-11 ~ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. 11 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved...

2 Peter 3:12 ~ waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn

- C. Other passages

Isaiah 24:20 ~ The earth staggers like a drunken man; it sways like a hut...and it falls, and will not rise again

Psalms 102:25-26 ~ the earth and the heavens...will perish...they will all wear out as a garment

Matthew 24:35 ~ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away

2. Arguments in favor of a renewed earth – this view asserts that God, not Satan, achieves final victory over His “very good” creation

- A. Paul says that creation is longing for glorification not annihilation

Romans 8:19-21 ~ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

- B. Creation’s anticipation for glorification is linked with the glorification of God’s people – people who believe are not annihilated; they are glorified. If the destiny of the earth parallels that of believing mankind, then the creation that exists now will also exist in the future, albeit in a glorified form. Just as creation suffered when man fell because of sin, so too, the creation will be restored when God’s people are given glorified bodies.

⁶ This section adapted from Michael Vlach, *Theology IV Syllabus*, The Master’s Seminary

C. The Bible uses renewal language about the earth

Matthew 19:28 ~ And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Acts 3:21 ~ whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

THE JOYS OF THE ETERNAL STATE

The River of the Water of Life

Revelation 22:1 ~ Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb,

- This crystal-clear celestial river flows out of the throne and right through the middle of the New Jerusalem
- This is the same river spoken of in Ps 46:4-5 ~ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, The holy dwelling places of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.
- It will be like the beautiful river that watered the Garden of Eden
- Some question whether this will be a literal river...regardless, the symbolism is clear: Because this river flows down from the throne of God, it reflects his thirst-quenching, all-satisfying nature
- Its flow symbolizes the flow of everlasting life from God to his people
- This reference to a river should not be confused with the rivers in the millennial kingdom

Ezekiel 47:1 ~ Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar.

Zechariah 14:8 ~ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

- However, the millennial streams anticipate the future river in the New Jerusalem

The Tree of Life

Revelation 22:2 ~ in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- The tree of life is another assurance of the fullness of life in the eternal state
- It is located “on either side of the river,” indicating perhaps that there is a row of trees on either side of the river; thus, “tree” would be collective
- This tree of life is likely related to the similar tree in the Garden of Eden mentioned in Genesis:

Genesis 2:9 ~ Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 3:22 ~ Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”

- The tree of life in the Garden of Eden was in the center of the garden...it was a real tree with special properties to sustain eternal life, making physical death an impossibility if Adam and Eve had eaten of it
- But God, in his mercy, drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden to prevent them from being sustained by the tree of life, and thus live forever in their sinful and cursed condition
- The tree yields fruit constantly...it's the "Fruit of the Month Tree"...it likely symbolizes the blessings of eternal life
- Since there is no time in the eternal state, the use of the term "month" is likely a way to express the joy of eternity using terms we are familiar with
- "The intimation of this passage is that while it is not necessary for believers in the eternal state to sustain life in any way by physical means, they can enjoy that which the tree provides."⁷
- We will likely eat in heaven, but not out of necessity but rather for enjoyment
- Its leaves are for the "healing of the nations"..."healing" = *therapeia* = our word "therapy, therapeutic"
- Since there will be no curse in the eternal state (v. 3), this healing does not refer to the curing of illnesses
- It may refer to the fact that the leaves of the tree enhance the quality of life and promote spiritual blessings/health
- "Rather than specifically meaning 'healing,' it should be understood as 'health-giving,' as the word in its root meaning has the idea of serving or ministering. In other words, the leaves of the tree promote the enjoyment of life in the new Jerusalem, and are not for correcting ills which do not exist."⁸

The Throne of God

Revelation 22:3 ~ There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;

- The curse which came upon all creation as a result of Adam and Eve's sin (Gen 3:16-19) will be entirely reversed and erased forever in the eternal state
- This is what all creation has been longing for since the fall in Genesis 3

Romans 8:18-21 ~ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God

- All creation presently agonizes under the effect of sin's curse...but in the eternal state, it will be set free from the effects of the curse
- "There shall be no pollution or deformity or offensive defect of any kind, seen in any person or thing; but everyone shall be perfectly pure and perfectly lovely in heaven. That blessed world shall be perfectly bright, without any darkness, perfectly fair, without any spot; perfectly clear, without any cloud. No moral or natural defect shall ever enter there; and there nothing will be seen that is sinful or weak or foolish."⁹
- The "throne of God and of the Lamb" will be there (cf. Rev 21:22-23; 22:1)
- God's presence will dwell in the New Jerusalem
- We will be given the wonderful privilege to "serve him" for all eternity

⁷ John Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 331.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁹ Jonathan Edwards, *Heaven – A World of Love*

- “This is a picture of blessedness in service rather than of arduous toil.”¹⁰
- “Paradise is not only the absence of evil but the privilege of serving God in His presence forever.”¹¹

The Blessing of Fellowship

Revelation 22:4-5 ~ they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5 And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

- We will get to see “His face,” referring to the fact that we will have immediate access to the glory of God
- This is not something unglorified humans can do

Exodus 33:20-23 ~ But He said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!” 21 Then the LORD said, “Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; 22 and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. 23 “Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen.”

John 1:18 ~ No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

1 Timothy 6:16 ~ who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

1 John 4:12 ~ No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

- That’s what makes this promise so astounding...when we are perfect and righteous, we will be able to endure the blazing, glorious light from God’s presence without being consumed
- We will have an unhindered view of God’s glory with intimate, unbroken fellowship with him
- We will actually see God with our physical eyes (not just spiritual eyes) in the eternal state
- God’s greatest gift to us is himself, so our longing for eternity is really a longing for God
- To see God will be our greatest joy and we will be able to behold his face for all eternity
- This is the supreme joy of the city of God, and what we were made for

Psalms 27:4 ~ One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord

Psalms 63:1 ~ O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water.

- That “His name will be on their foreheads” indicates that we will personally belong to God
- There will be no need for a “lamp” or the “sun” because the glory of God will illuminate the eternal state
- We will “reign forever and ever” with him

¹⁰ Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 331.

¹¹ Ryrie, *Revelation*, 171.