

# FROM THE END TO ETERNITY



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Cover imagery: The Lion, symbolizing Jesus— referred to in the book of Revelation as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5)—smashes the Antichrist’s global empire represented by the circle on which the serpent, the Devil (Revelation 20:2), had been entwined.

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## Introduction

In the preceding book in this series, *The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist*, we followed the rise of the Antichrist to world power and his eventual doom and destruction at the Battle of Armageddon. This has now brought us to the end of Hell on Earth and to the topic of this book, Heaven on Earth.

Glimpses into this wonderful future are found throughout the Bible as the prophets and other Bible writers recorded the things that were revealed to them. Some passages deal solely with this time period, whereas many other references appear interspersed with prophecies concerning other times.

## INTRODUCTION

This sometimes-confusing phenomenon can be explained by using the analogy of looking at a physical horizon. In the distance there may appear to be a mountain range, and if you were asked to describe what you see you would say just that, that there is a range of mountains ahead. However, as you travel toward them, it becomes clearer that there is not just one mountain range, but several. From a distance the ranges appeared to be blended into one, but they become distinctly separate, sometimes by vast distances, upon closer view. So it was with the prophets of old as they peered into the future. What to them from a distance seemed like events that were contemporaneous are separated by wide intervals of time, and we can see this as we approach the time for their fulfillment.

An example of this can be found in the following prophetic verses penned by the prophet Zechariah 500 years before Jesus' first coming:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.  
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold,  
your King is coming to you; He is just and  
having salvation, lowly and riding on a  
donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim  
and the horse from Jerusalem; the battle  
bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace

to the nations; His dominion shall be “from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the Earth.”<sup>1</sup>

These are two consecutive verses about Jesus. The first talks about His first coming and specifically His entry into Jerusalem riding on a donkey on Palm Sunday. The second has to do with His second coming, when His dominion will be “to the ends of the Earth.” To Zechariah the two events appeared to have been happening at the same time, or the second soon after the first, but as history has borne out, they are separated by thousands of years.

The events that we will cover in this book begin with the end of the Battle of Armageddon and continue through Jesus’ 1000-year reign on Earth—which is commonly called the Millennium—to a rebellion and war that the book of Revelation calls the Battle of Gog and Magog, the destruction of the Earth’s atmosphere and surface, which paves the way for the re-creation of a new paradisiacal surface on the Earth, and, finally, the descent to this re-created Earth of the amazing Heavenly City known in the Bible as “New Jerusalem.”

The Bible tells us quite a lot about all of these events, and from the relevant passages we get many mouth-watering snapshots of the fantastic future our wonderful God has in store.

<sup>1</sup>Zechariah 9:9–10

## INTRODUCTION

After the Battle of Armageddon, at which time the Antichrist's reign on Earth is ended and Satan's power is broken, begins the task of establishing "Thy [God's] Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on the Earth as it is in Heaven."<sup>1</sup> It won't be an overnight process, but from that time forward the Earth will get better and better. And if you have received Jesus as your Savior, this is your future too! And it is one glorious future! You had better not plan on retiring once you leave this world, because there will be lots of challenging work to do both in Heaven and back here on Earth. All the experience and wisdom you have gained in this life is going to be put to good use in the world to come. God needs you to help Him establish Heaven on Earth!

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 6:9–13; "The Lord's Prayer," also called the "Our Father"

## CHAPTER ONE

# The Judgment of the Saints

If you have read *The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist*, you understand that the wars and destruction that occur during the reign of the Antichrist will have a devastating effect on the Earth. There will have been nuclear war followed by the climactic Battle of Armageddon, and Jesus will then return to Earth to set up His Kingdom. Daniel chapter 2 tells us that “in the days of these kings [the ten kings that give their power and allegiance to the Antichrist] shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed ... and it shall stand forever.”<sup>1</sup>

The first event that apparently takes place at the beginning of the Millennium is foretold in chapter 7 of the book of Daniel. This chapter describes a vision Daniel had in which he saw, in allegorical form, the rise and fall of the Antichrist. The allegorical nature of the vision then changes to the following view of God’s throne room.

<sup>1</sup>Daniel 2:44



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I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days [God] was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. ... I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a Kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed. ... Then the Kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.<sup>1</sup>

The saints that it is talking about here and in other passages that we will quote in

<sup>1</sup>Daniel 7:9–10,13–14,27

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this book are not those officially canonized by various churches, such as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, as “saints,” but rather all those who have received Jesus, the wonderful “Son of Man” as He is referred to several times in the Bible, Whose Kingdom is populated by all those who love Him. The saints that suffered under the Antichrist in the Tribulation seem to receive special mention, as is borne out in the following verse from the book of Revelation.

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.<sup>1</sup>

Yet not only those who were persecuted and killed, but all of God’s saints will rule and reign with Him during the Millennium.

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:4

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on His throne.<sup>1</sup> And [they said, "You] have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the Earth."<sup>2</sup> And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has."<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?<sup>4</sup>

God will engage the services of His saints to help Him run the world during the Millennium. Many have already been with Him in Heaven and know a lot more about things than we do. They've lived years, centuries, many even millennia in Heaven, so they would have undoubtedly learned much by this time. The great patriarchs and prophets and heroes of the Bible and Christian history are going to be right up next to Jesus and His heavenly counselors. And the Lord is going to put His dedicated followers of today into positions of responsibility too.

Many people have the idea that after Jesus returns they are going to be way off somewhere in Heaven, perhaps floating peacefully on a

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 3:21

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 5:10

<sup>3</sup>Luke 12:42-44

<sup>4</sup>1 Corinthians 6:2-3

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cloud. But at least some of Heaven, part of the Kingdom of God, is going to be right here on Earth during the Millennium. And God's people are going to be called upon to assist Jesus right here on Earth in His great task of ruling the world.

Wouldn't it be ridiculous, if after living busy, fulfilling lives on Earth full of challenges and fulfilling tasks, we wound up in Heaven with nothing to do but sit on a cloud, wear a white robe, and play a harp while a golden halo hovers over our head—for eternity? That would be incredibly boring. This current life is schooling for what must be done when we start getting our postgraduate course to prepare us for perhaps even greater work to do thereafter.

However, not all the followers of Jesus will share *equally* in responsibilities and rewards. The Lord spoke a parable to His disciples about stewards being given various quantities of money to hold for their master, what they did with it, and how they were rewarded for how they used or invested it. The principle expressed in this parable undoubtedly applies to the blessings and responsibilities believers will receive in this new era. Those rewards will be commensurate with how they used their time, abilities, and resources toward furthering the Kingdom of God and obeying His law to love their fellow man while they were on Earth the first time.

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For the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, "Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them." His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." He also who had received two talents came and said, "Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them." His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." Then he who had received the one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew you to

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be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.” But his lord answered and said to him, “You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”<sup>1</sup>

This parallels what a heavenly messenger told Daniel: “And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 25:14–30

<sup>2</sup>Daniel 12:1–3

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Those who did little or nothing with the resources and opportunities for service for God and others that the Lord had given them will not lose their gift of salvation, and they will still be accepted into Heaven. But they will receive little or no heavenly rewards for their earthly life, or as the case may be, no positions of responsibility and honor in God's Kingdom to come.

Salvation—our entry pass to Heaven—is a gift from God that we cannot earn by our good works, but only through receiving Jesus as our Savior. However, the rewards we receive once we get to Heaven are earned through our works here on Earth. Those who were faithful to do good to others and obey God's laws of "love the Lord your God with all your heart ... [and] your neighbor as yourself"<sup>1</sup> will "shine as the stars"—while those who do not manifest deeds of love on Earth will "awake to shame."

The Lord is going to need and use those who were faithful on Earth before this time, who did what they could with the "talents" they had to further the Kingdom of God when it was still mostly a spiritual entity. God's Kingdom will have been founded on the Earth but it will still be a big job to establish it from one end of the Earth to the other. Those faithful to God now and in the past are going to be the ones entrusted to do it, and that will be part of their

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 22:37,39

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reward. Scripture tells us there will be many other rewards, most likely both spiritual and material blessings, although we don't know all the specifics. The apostle Paul wrote that the "sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us."<sup>1</sup> And Jesus promised a "crown of life" to those who are faithful to Him.<sup>2</sup>

The apostles Peter and Paul both wrote that those who are faithful to God in this life will receive crowns in the next. "Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."<sup>3</sup> "When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away."<sup>4</sup> Perhaps they will resemble halos depicted around the heads of the saints in Christian art. As yet, we don't know exactly what those crowns are, but certainly we won't be disappointed when we receive them!

<sup>1</sup>Romans 8:18

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 2:10

<sup>3</sup>2 Timothy 4:8

<sup>4</sup>1 Peter 5:4

## CHAPTER TWO

# The 1000-year Reign of Jesus Christ

**E**very day, millions of Christians the world over pray the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven." But most don't really appreciate the significance of that prayer and how literally it is going to be fulfilled. It will physically be God's Kingdom come on Earth as it is in Heaven. And it will be truly universal! "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and ... to the ends of the Earth."<sup>1</sup>

## Peace at Last!

The current cruel, selfish, dog-eat-dog world where the strongest and often most unscrupulous prevail will be gone. Then, under the supreme and powerful rule and reign of Jesus Christ, wars will cease and the world will at last be governed fairly and well with true

<sup>1</sup>Psalm 72:8

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justice, liberty, peace, plenty, and happiness for all!

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.<sup>1</sup>

Then the world's first genuine disarmament will occur, all weapons being converted into instruments of peace. There will be peace on Earth under the reign of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Prince of Peace. Today's warmongering will be stopped as God "destroys those who destroy the Earth."<sup>2</sup> He's going to stop all war and abolish the military-industrial complex that thrives on it.

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-3

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 11:18

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All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before [Him]. For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations.<sup>1</sup> He makes wars cease to the end of the Earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.<sup>2</sup>

For the Lord Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the Earth. For God is the King of all the Earth; sing praises with understanding. God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.<sup>3</sup> He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, and will break in pieces the oppressor.<sup>4</sup>

The world is going to have a righteous Judge and a righteous King Who will have a righteous government.—No more corruption, vice, crime, or crooked judges and politicians, but a righteous government and righteous, honest justice for all. “The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers. . . . The whole Earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing.”<sup>5</sup> “All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him. . . . And

<sup>1</sup>Psalm 22:27–28

<sup>2</sup>Psalm 46:9

<sup>3</sup>Psalm 47:2,7–8

<sup>4</sup>Psalm 72:4

<sup>5</sup>Isaiah 14:5,7

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blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole Earth be filled with His glory.”<sup>1</sup>

There’ll be no more hegemonic and exploitive powers and oppressed poor—only the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, dispensing fairness and justice for all, and eternal happiness forever.

Say among the nations, “The Lord reigns; the world also is firmly established, it shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously.” Let the heavens rejoice, and let the Earth be glad; let the sea roar, and all its fullness; let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the Lord. For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the Earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth.<sup>2</sup>

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. His delight is in the fear of the Lord, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity

<sup>1</sup>Psalm 72:11,19

<sup>2</sup>Psalm 96:10–13

for the meek of the Earth; He shall strike the Earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist.<sup>1</sup>

The greatest thrill of all will be that Jesus Himself, God's Son, will personally be here visibly and powerfully ruling and reigning over the entire Earth. God in the person of Jesus Christ is going to run the world fairly and well, and His angelic helpers and saints are going to assist Him.

## **There's a Job for Everyone**

As explained in Chapter 1, God will engage the services of His saints to help Him run the world during His rule on Earth. But they won't be the only ones in His employ. God's going to use everybody He can, including those who were not saved before His Second Coming, but who did not actively follow the Antichrist and therefore survive into the Millennium, who have the skills and know-how to handle a lot of the practical running of the world. God will know who among the survivors can be trusted with positions of responsibility. Among them will be those who, though they did not know the Lord or

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 11:1-5

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receive Him, in the days before Armageddon were righteous rulers, good governors, merciful magistrates and mayors, the just justices and judges, and fair officials. These will be put into service overseeing various levels of government and peace and order, supervised by the angels and saints of Heaven. God and His helpers are going to choose people who have had experience in certain areas and know the languages and cultures to help rebuild, reconstruct, and rule the Earth.

The world will be administered by those who are guided by attributes which modern society considers weaknesses: love, meekness, forgiveness, and faith in God and His Word. Yet they will also have the power and authority, when needed, to enforce God's laws and compel the nations of the Earth to obey His rules of life, love, health, and happiness for a reign of peace on Earth toward men of good will.<sup>1</sup>

### **You'll Use Then What You Know Now**

Some people have strange ideas about their future in Heaven: "Oh, I'm going to know everything then, speak any language, be able to do anything." Some people imagine that they're going to suddenly be catapulted into positions of great responsibility, even though they're doing nothing for Jesus and their fellow man now. That's *not* how it's going to be. God is going to

<sup>1</sup>Luke 2:14

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take the talents that He's already given people and that they have already developed, He's going to take the knowledge they have already learned, He's going to take the experiences they have already been through, He's going to take the languages they already know, and use all these things.

Knowledge is not just going to be handed out on silver platters in the afterlife. People are not going to suddenly receive some gift of absolute total omniscience so that they know everything like God—not even the angels have that. Judging from the Bible, the near-death experiences many people have had, and just common sense and logic, people are going to carry their experiences from this life into the next life. And they'll build on that knowledge and experience as they continue to learn in Heaven.

In addition to the experience and talents and languages that God's people know now, God will grant them access to His supernatural wisdom, as well as other miraculous powers. In many ways they will start out very much as they are right now. Everything the Lord has ever taught them during this life and the things that they are learning now are going to come in handy then. If the lessons of being a faithful and dedicated follower are learned today, then God can trust and bless with a place of usefulness to Him and others tomorrow.

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Jesus is going to use people who lived godly lives who understand this world and its people to assist Him in running the world to come, governing it as it ought to be. God's people will do their best to teach God's love to those who have survived the horrible holocaust of the Plagues of the Wrath of God and the Battle of Armageddon. They will be among the administrators and judges who will oversee and adjudicate with God's loving rules as their rulebook.

## CHAPTER THREE

# Superhuman Bodies!

As explained in Chapter 8 of *The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist*, the saved are going to get heavenly bodies when the Resurrection and the Rapture occurs when Jesus returns and ends the Antichrist's seven-year reign. For those saved who die before these events, it seems they have a kind of heavenly body that is more or less like a ghost, a spiritual body that can somewhat materialize. After-death experiences also indicate that the departed saints already have bodies that can see and even feel, and even be felt under certain circumstances.

But it is at the Resurrection and Rapture that both the living and previously dead saved will receive a new super body that is both physical and spiritual.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep [are physically dead] in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive

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and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

The fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians has one of the most revealing dissertations on this body of the future. There the apostle Paul writes: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men themost pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”<sup>2</sup> Jesus has risen first, and all those who have died in the faith having accepted Jesus as their Savior are going to be able to rise just as Jesus did.

There is a little-noticed passage of Scripture that seems to indicate that those who sincerely loved God, but who died before Jesus’ death and resurrection, were resurrected themselves at the same time as Jesus was. “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection,

<sup>1</sup>1 Thessalonians 4:14–17

<sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 15:19–20

they went into the holy city [Jerusalem] and appeared to many.”<sup>1</sup> These (whose number include perhaps all the other previously dead believers up till that time), and Jesus Himself, are considered part of this “firstfruits” resurrection.

Paul continues in 1 Corinthians 15: “For since by man came death, by Man [that is Jesus] also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.”<sup>2</sup> First there was Jesus, then the firstfruits of that first resurrection—that is, the Old Testament believers—and last all of those who are saved, whether alive or dead, at the time of Christ’s *Second* Coming.

Moving along to the 35<sup>th</sup> verse: “But someone will say, ‘How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?’ Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.”<sup>3</sup> The current physical body is like a seed that is planted in the ground, which then springs forth as a whole new plant. The new heavenly body is going to be much more

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 27:52–53

<sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 15:21–23

<sup>3</sup>1 Corinthians 15:35–38

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wonderful than the present physical body. It'll be like the difference between the grain of wheat and the full-grown stock and head that comes from one grain. Or in terms perhaps more can relate to, a beautiful flowering plant that comes from one tiny seed. That's how much better these new heavenly bodies are going to be.

All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. ... So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory."<sup>1</sup>

This current earthly fleshly body grows old, dies, is buried, and decays back to the dust from which it came. "But it is raised in incorruption." When it's raised again, it will never decay. It will be heavenly and immortal and incorruptible.

"It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."<sup>2</sup> These current bodies

<sup>1</sup>1 Corinthians 15:39–40,42–43

<sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 15:43–44

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are very weak compared to the powerful supernatural powers that resurrection bodies will have. In this passage Paul is not referring to each one's spirit when he is talking about our spiritual body. The saved human spirit inhabits the natural body now and it will also inhabit the supernatural body after the Resurrection.

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

That marvelous heavenly body is worth

<sup>1</sup>1 Corinthians 15:51–58

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working for and suffering for, and worth being steadfast in our labors of love for the Lord and others, because the hard work will not be in vain.

In the third chapter of Philippians, Paul says: “For our citizenship is in Heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”<sup>1</sup>

This new body will be like Jesus’ glorious body—it will be of similar substance with similar attributes and abilities. It will be in the “image of the heavenly Man.”<sup>2</sup> And “when He is revealed, we shall be like Him.”<sup>3</sup> In comparison, this body of the flesh is called a “lowly body.” It’s hard to live with sometimes; sometimes it stinks, it’s hungry, it’s tired, it’s heavy, it gets sick and/or damaged, it suffers, it groans. But the day is coming when it will be changed to a marvelous glorified body like the body of Jesus.

So what was He like? One of the Gospel accounts gives the impression that at His resurrection, Jesus had already walked through the walls of the crypt before the stone sealing the entrance had been removed.

<sup>2</sup>Philippians 3:20–21

<sup>3</sup>1 Corinthians 15:49

<sup>4</sup>1 John 3:2

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Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said."<sup>1</sup>

The first time Jesus met His disciples after His resurrection, He walked right through a locked door into their secret meeting room and nearly scared them to death.

Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 28:1-6

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His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus said He wasn't a spirit or a "ghost" as it is translated in other Bible versions, but rather He had a spiritual body that had some kind of flesh and bones. He could perform certain natural functions like eating and drinking with them, as well as certain supernatural functions like walking through walls.

At a later meeting He told "Doubting" Thomas to touch the wounds in His hands and His side to prove that it was Him, the same body, only glorified, resurrected, now supernatural, but still bearing the same scars.<sup>2</sup> Whether all will still bear their scars and wounds is not known.

Jesus could also dematerialize, disappear, be transported elsewhere where He could materialize and reappear. On some occasions He could hide His identity and disguise His appearance so that His disciples wouldn't recognize Him until He wanted them to.

Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called

<sup>1</sup>Luke 24:36-43

<sup>2</sup>John 20:26-27

Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

And He said to them, "What things?"

So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just

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as the women had said; but Him they did not see.”

Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther.

But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.<sup>1</sup>

And what about the things our bodies enjoy in life today? It is not unthinkable that all of the pleasures of this present physical life can be continued into the next life. It seems apparent from the descriptions of Jesus after His resurrection and other Scriptures included earlier that this new “spiritual” body is similar to the physical body and can eat and drink and

<sup>1</sup>Luke 24:13–31

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be merry, have fun, love, and enjoy all of the present pleasures of this life, but better. It will be an immortal, incorruptible, powerful body that can enjoy such pleasures forever without ever suffering pain or sickness or weariness or death!

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Renewing the Ravaged Earth

In order for the Lord to establish a beautiful, good, clean Heaven on Earth, He'll first have to clean up the Hell on Earth that the Antichrist and his government left behind—and the horrible slaughter left behind after the Plagues of Wrath and the Battle of Armageddon.

When the Battle of Armageddon is over, there will be so many dead bodies left that the Scripture tells us it will take “men regularly employed”—a full-time job—seven months to bury the dead in Israel alone.<sup>1</sup> That being the major battlefield, apparently it will have the highest concentration of slaughter and the most bodies. As a result of that terrible slaughter, there's going to be a very great mess left behind.

God knows how many dead there will be in other parts of the world, but according to the prophet Jeremiah, the dead are going to be “from one end of the Earth even to the other end of the Earth. They shall not be lamented,

<sup>1</sup>Ezekiel 39:14

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or gathered, or buried; they shall become refuse on the ground.”<sup>1</sup> Such is going to be the horrible holocaust of the world’s wars and judgments of God upon the wicked.

In Israel it is going to take seven years to clear away and burn all the wreckage, weapons, and vehicles of war, etc. “Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and bucklers, the bows and arrows, the javelins and spears; and they will make fires with them for seven years.”<sup>2</sup> Now in Ezekiel’s day perhaps they could have burnt weapons, but not so in this day and age, because most weapons are made of steel and other alloys. Could it take that long to melt down and reprocess all that metal? And there will be a lot of other nonmetallic materials that are burnable. It is difficult to know exactly what that means, but in any case we know it will take seven years to accomplish the cleanup.

The meek will inherit the Earth.—But what an Earth! Nuclear war, the Wrath of God, and the Battle of Armageddon would have caused widespread devastation. We can suppose that the regions hardest hit will be the United States, Europe, Russia, and the Middle East, since that is where these wars occur or are most likely to occur. In some countries it could mean very few survivors, living in a desolate aftermath. God’s

<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 25:33

<sup>2</sup>Ezekiel 39:9

people will have their new supernatural bodies, but not the unsaved who have survived the destruction and war.

God may well allow the contaminated, polluted, and possibly radioactive ruins of the great cities and nations of some of the Antichrist's strongholds, and those of his principal enemies to remain for the duration of the Millennium as reminders and memorials to the slaughter of millions and the awful destruction and havoc that humankind wreaked upon the surface of the Earth. Revelation 19:3 says that the smoke from the destruction of Babylon, the great materialistic capitalist system which is destroyed by war at the end of the Antichrist's reign, rises forever and ever, or more correctly for an age and an age. So since that destruction happens just before the Millennium, it is possible that its ruins are still smoking—and possibly right through—the Millennium. Throughout history, when cities were totally destroyed, most of the time they didn't try to salvage them and rebuild them. Instead they built a new city nearby, because it was more trouble to clear away all that rubble than it was to go out and find a new site to build on.

But as for the habitable parts of the Earth, these areas are going to be restored and cared for and will start resembling the original creation, perhaps even becoming as beautiful as the Garden of Eden. However, because a lot

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of these people aren't exactly like Adam and Eve, they're not going to get to simply wander around naked picking fruit off the trees. There are going to be lots of normal, natural people in the world who need to eat. So they're going to have to grow food.

The portions of the Earth's surface which have not been destroyed and which are still in usable condition and still tillable and fertile and useful for agriculture are still going to be needed to grow the food to feed the millions of survivors. God is going to utilize the help of people who have expertise in this area—not just farmers, but also those who know how to set up distribution networks and get the food to the people.

Small industries will most likely also be set up—probably not the huge industrial complexes and factories of today, but small-scale enterprises to supply people shelter, clothing, furniture, and other needs.

Thus will begin the process of restoring the Earth to the original beauty and perfection of the Garden of Eden.<sup>1</sup> The Bible says that the time of Christ's personal reign on Earth will last for 1000 years. How much of this time will be taken up with the restoration of the Earth we don't know, but it sounds like it's going to take a good number of years, and there will certainly be no unemployment.

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:1–4

CHAPTER FIVE

## Life for the Survivors

**B**efore we continue with our discussion of the Millennium we need to go back to the very beginning of history, to the Garden of Eden and the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve sinned by listening to the Devil in the form of a serpent and disobeyed God's command to not eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They were then driven out of the Garden of Eden, at which time God pronounced a series of curses, which remain in effect to this day.

So the Lord God said to the serpent:  
"Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

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To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."<sup>1</sup>

These punishments and handicaps are collectively known as the Curse, and it doesn't get totally lifted until the New Earth is created at the end of the Millennium.<sup>2</sup>

However, it appears from other verses, some of which we will cover in this chapter, that the Curse is partially lifted during the Millennium.

The genealogies of Genesis show men living to almost 1000 years of age before Noah's Flood (circa 2300 B.C.). But after that, people

<sup>1</sup>Genesis 3:14–19

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 22:3

began dying at a considerably younger age. Noah still lived to be 950 years old, but Shem, the only son of Noah that an age at death is listed for, died when he was 600. Abraham, who came along 500 years later, only lived to 170. Then by King David's time at around 1000 B.C., life expectancy was about 70 years. "The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."<sup>1</sup>

A natural lifespan of around 70 is still close to the average today. The reason for this shorter lifespan is not specifically known. Some think it is environmental, that the effect of a greater concentration of cosmic rays hitting the Earth means a faster aging process. Others think it might have more to do with a genetic change due to the narrowing of the human gene pool down to only the eight survivors of the Flood. But whatever the cause, in the Millennium, apparently the longevity humankind enjoyed before the Flood will be restored.

The humans who survive into the Millennium are still going to be living in natural physical bodies and still have children, and still die. Death isn't finally abolished until the end of these 1000 years. "For He [Jesus] must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Psalm 90:10

<sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 15:25–26

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However, people are going to go back and live more naturally and more quietly and more slowly. All indications are that during the Millennium there will be much less disease and sickness, and people will live much longer than they do today. The Bible says that if anybody dies at 100 years old, they'll call him just a child.

No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old. ... They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people. And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.<sup>1</sup>

People won't be dying at the rate they do today, and will live to be much older. However, the Earth won't become overpopulated because the number of people who survive into the Millennium will not be that large and there are indications from the Scriptures that the birth rate will slow down as well.

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 65:20–23

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There will be no more enmity between man and the animals, or among the animals themselves.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.<sup>1</sup>

Since there's nothing that will hurt nor destroy, then it would follow that there will be no venomous snakes or other harmful pests and insects. The thorns and the thistles and the briar and all kinds of creatures that are poisonous, even poisonous flowers and grasses and so on, all these cursed things will be eliminated. Possibly a lot of them will be completely eliminated, although it does say that dust will be the serpent's food,<sup>2</sup> and that children will be playing in the vicinity of vipers and cobras. So it seems there are still snakes of

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 11:6-9

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah 65:25

## LIFE FOR THE SURVIVORS

some variety, although they are presumably no longer poisonous.

After the Flood, God told humankind to eat meat to give them greater strength so that they could survive the rigors of life outside the Garden of Eden. But in the Millennium, if nothing is going to bring pain and hurt, then it would seem that the killing of livestock and game for meat is no longer going to occur. Therefore we can assume that people will revert to the vegetarian diet that was maintained before the Flood. And not only humankind, but all the carnivorous animals will also revert to a herbivorous diet. It appears that the conditions which will make it possible for people to live for hundreds of years will also result in humankind and the carnivorous animals no longer needing meat to survive.

Although much of the Curse will have been removed during the Millennium for those who obey, there will still be conditions.

And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall 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 whichever of the families of the Earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt will not come

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up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.<sup>1</sup>

The Feast of Tabernacles is an old Jewish festival that was observed on the fifteenth day of the seventh month to commemorate the wandering of Israel in the wilderness. We don't know if this is the actual feast that is being celebrated in the Millennium or whether this is symbolic, or whether everyone will need to travel to the physical city of Jerusalem yearly to celebrate it, but what is clear is that those who do not recognize the Lord's authority and worship Him will suffer as a result.

Apparently another part of the Curse or consequence of the Fall of Man was a change in the climate. Adam and Eve were created naked, and they needed no clothes until they sinned and left the Garden. Then God had to clothe them with furs and skins of animals. It must have either suddenly turned cold or it was cold outside of the Garden. With the curse being alleviated, the climate in the Millennium is likely to be more pleasant overall. As far as we know, the

<sup>1</sup>Zechariah 14:16–19

## LIFE FOR THE SURVIVORS

North and South Poles will be frozen and there will probably be tropical and temperate zones. However, the extremes of weather we experience today will most likely be moderated except in specific instances where the Lord will use droughts and possibly other extreme weather conditions as punishments on errant peoples.

Interspersed among the prophecies of Isaiah and other prophets are tantalizing glimpses of what the restored Earth shall look like.

The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the excellency of our God.<sup>1</sup>

God will restore the arid plains and deserts to their former fertile nature, and they will become lush with vegetation. They will be as glorious as Lebanon once was, when it was covered with beautiful forests of giant cedar trees.

One of the major problems in our current age is the continuing depletion of our potable and fresh water resources. But it looks like the Lord is going to reverse that trend.

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 35:1-2

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For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes.<sup>1</sup>

The poor and needy seek water, but there is none, their tongues fail for thirst. I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers in desolate heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree, the myrtle and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the cypress tree and the pine and the box tree together, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to these physical changes that will make our Earth better, many of today's problems will be solved by the removal of our spiritual enemy, the Devil, and all his forces and their evil influences, and the curses they had brought upon the Earth.<sup>3</sup> All of these will have been conquered and banished from the Earth during this 1000-year period, so even

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 35:6-7

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah 41:17-20

<sup>3</sup>Revelation 20:1-3; Jude 6

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the natural forces of creation are no longer struggling to survive against their satanic enemies and the Devil's pests as they are today.

Imagine a life without the enemy of our souls and his afflictions and diseases, and pests and poisonous plants and vicious animals and sadistic wars and the rush of the mad rat race to get ahead. Imagine life in a near perfect environment with all the so-called natural problems and curses, storms, and catastrophes mostly eliminated. No more bugs and blights to eat the crops and destroy the produce. Very little disease and sickness to sap people's energies; no more fighting the elements, the heat and cold and storms of a hostile environment of destructive forces.

Humankind will be tremendously relieved from so many of these threats of stress and strain, and the rush and pressures of the past that caused so many illnesses as well. Everything will move slowly, safely, leisurely, easily, and pleurably, with little or no danger at all.

It's going to be like Heaven on Earth!

## CHAPTER SIX

# Why the Millennium?

**B**esides being a time of peace, plenty, and joy for those who survive the Battle of Armageddon, it appears that the Millennium could be an additional period of grace for those who didn't have a chance to hear the Gospel or know the Lord during this life. They may have never heard the Gospel; they may have never felt the love of Jesus, or known God's will or His ways before. Saint Paul said Jesus "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."<sup>1</sup> That was the whole point of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, and that will undoubtedly remain His prime focus even in the Millennium. Those who have received Jesus as their Savior will have been resurrected and/or raptured into Heaven, so obviously the Millennium and the restored Earth are primarily for the benefit of those who have not received the Lord, but who didn't follow the Antichrist.

<sup>1</sup>1Timothy 2:4

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During the Millennium everyone will be reached with the Gospel. “For the Earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”<sup>1</sup> As anyone knows, the waters completely cover the sea, and likewise the world will be completely covered with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord and the righteous Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The Bible says that during the Millennium the Lord “will destroy on this mountain [His Millennial Kingdom] the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.”<sup>2</sup> The veil is the veil of misunderstanding, the veil of unbelief, the veil of incomprehension of spiritual things.

In the face of the visible rule and reign of Christ on Earth, His second coming in mighty power and glory, His wiping out of the Antichrist and his Kingdom and the imprisonment of Satan, it would stand to reason that most who had never heard of Jesus before are going to believe and receive Him. And most likely there will be many who might have heard something about Jesus, but didn't fully understand, or just couldn't believe until they saw a physical manifestation. To see the coming of the Lord and His taking over the Earth will be pretty strong persuasion, and probably enough to convince almost anybody to believe and receive.

<sup>1</sup>Habakkuk 2:14

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah 25:7

## WHY THE MILLENNIUM?

There are some who say that people only get one chance to receive the Lord, and that's it. Therefore they argue that the Millennium cannot be a second chance for those who had not received Him previously. But if the Lord wants all men to come to know Him, then for many He is going to have to come knocking at the door of their hearts multiple times. Although we only really deserve one chance at salvation, experience will bear out that most of us are given multiple chances throughout our lives to receive Him. We don't deserve all those chances, just as many of these survivors may not deserve them, but thankfully we have a God who is "full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth."<sup>1</sup>

In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. The humble also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Psalm 86:15

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah 29:18-19; 32:1; 40:5

## FROM THE END TO ETERNITY

Everyone on Earth will see His glorious power and Kingdom, and everybody will at least believe in the existence and supremacy of Jesus. His Word says, “No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord.”<sup>1</sup>

However, as we’ll see in the next chapter, there will be some during the Millennium who refuse to receive Jesus as their Savior and who still won’t yield and will remain rebellious and defiant and iniquitous and wicked at heart. It can be understood from the Scriptures that there will be many who will receive Jesus as their King and Savior and will be blessed of the Lord. But sadly and incredibly, others will still rebel.

So the Millennium is going to be another proving ground for humanity, another chance for humanity to receive and accept God’s love through Jesus, or to choose their own way. It’ll also be an opportunity, for those who are willing and receptive, to learn about the ways of God and how to live His laws of love by living for Him and one another.

The saved, those who heard the Gospel and voluntarily received the Lord by faith prior to His return, will be running things under the direct supervision of the Lord and with the help

<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 31:34

## WHY THE MILLENNIUM?

of His good angels. And their main job then will probably be, as Jesus put it, to “feed His sheep.”<sup>1</sup> The survivors will all “know the Lord” and will actually see that He and His Kingdom are real, but they may not know Him well or personally.

So the saints will need to help reeducate the survivors and train them in the ways of the Lord. The survivors are going to be just as human as people are right now; they won't be any more supernatural in their intelligence or in their mental capacities or their learning capacities or the ways they have to learn than people are in this present age. The Scriptures confirm that the Millennium is going to be a period of learning for them:

Many nations shall come and say,  
“Come, and let us go up to the mountain  
of the Lord, to the house of the God of  
Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we  
shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the  
law shall go forth, and the word of the Lord  
from Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup>

The Lord's ways are so different than the way people run things today, so it's going to take a lot of adjustment and reeducation for some people.

<sup>1</sup>John 21:15–17

<sup>2</sup>Micah 4:2

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# The Battle of Gog and Magog

**A**t the beginning of the Millennium something very significant happens which plays a great part in making the next 1000 years so wonderful: The Devil and his demons (those angels who joined Satan in his rebellion against God) are imprisoned. They are therefore absent from the Earth and thus are not able to wreak their havoc on humanity during that time.

Then I saw an angel coming down from Heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:1–3

## THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.<sup>1</sup>

God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.<sup>2</sup>

Think of that—no problems with demons or devils for 1000 years. They're all going to be in prison with Satan. It's going to be a beautiful, wonderful, Heaven on Earth then, with no more Devil, and the Curse largely lifted. Except for one little problem: There are going to be some people on Earth who don't really belong in Heaven on Earth.

Although we won't have to battle with the Devil and his spiritual forces during this millennial period, we'll still have to grapple with the rebellious nature of the willful hearts of men, who will still have free choice to do good or evil. Humanity will still have free will. They will have to choose to love God and be kind to their fellow man. Many will, but others won't. There will be people, and apparently even whole nations, that will rebel against the Lord's rule at some point during the Millennium. As a result, the curses of God are going to fall on them and they're

<sup>1</sup>Jude 6

<sup>2</sup>2 Peter 2:4

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going to have drought and famine and other punishments.<sup>1</sup>

God will be giving humankind a second chance, and He is going to salvage many people. The Lord will mercifully and patiently try this for 1000 years. But even after all that, some of them will still stubbornly refuse Him, and be swayed when the Devil is allowed to tempt them again.

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the Earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the Earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of Heaven and devoured them. The Devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of the Millennium, Satan is going to be released from his prison in the bottomless pit where he's been held for 1000 years. He'll be allowed by God to test those

<sup>1</sup>Zechariah 14:16–19

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 20:7–10

## THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

that live on the Earth who survived into the Millennium—and their descendants—to see if when presented with both sides, they'll remain true believers and choose God over the Devil.

You'll notice Gog and Magog are mentioned in the previous passage. Back in Chapter 11 on Armageddon in *The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist* we read how Ezekiel 38 and 39 refer to the Antichrist as “Gog” and his followers as “Magog.” But even though the Battle of Armageddon and the Battle of Gog and Magog both refer to Gog and Magog, these are not the same battle, but are 1000 years apart. The Battle of Armageddon occurs at the end of the Plagues of the Wrath of God period, just before the beginning of the Millennium. This Battle of Gog and Magog takes place at the very end of the Millennium.

The fact that Gog and Magog feature in both battles would indicate that it is going to be an attempted revival of the same empire and the same forces over which the Antichrist ruled. Only this time, the Devil won't be using the body of a man as he did with the Antichrist, but the Devil himself will personally try to revive his anti-Christ Satanic Kingdom.

Some of those who survived into the Millennium, in spite of the visible, all-powerful Kingdom of Christ on Earth for 1000 years, will not receive Jesus as their Savior and will

again be deceived and misled to follow the Devil when he comes back. Satan probably won't come around with horns and a pitchfork. Based on history we can assume that he will present his lies in as palatable a manner as he does today, appealing to man's selfishness, self-centeredness, pride, and greed.

It shows how clever the Devil is and how gullible many people are. How stupid they are to think that they could actually overthrow the Kingdom of Christ after 1000 years of its supernatural, miraculous, visible, personal reign on Earth!

Imagine ... the saints will have literally come back from the dead. There will be millions, perhaps billions, who will have returned from the dead to rule and reign with Christ on the Earth over the survivors, who will see the miraculous, supernatural powers that the saints have as rulers in the Kingdom of God. They will see it demonstrated, they will know God exists, they will enjoy the greatly improved conditions on the millennial Earth, and they will know that Jesus is the Son of God. And yet some will rebel.

God tests the Millennium's inhabitants and lets the Devil loose again to see who has really changed, reformed, and converted—and who has not. The Devil's going to find a lot of rascals who are willing to follow him, who believe his lies and think he can win, who didn't like the

## THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

Kingdom of God and God's rules of behavior and love. "When Your judgments are in the Earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Thank God some people will learn and will receive it. But—"let grace be shown to the wicked, yet he will not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness he will deal unjustly."<sup>1</sup>

It'll be the last great test for humankind on Earth. Just as Adam and Eve were deceived in the Garden of Eden, and just as the world will soon be deceived by the Antichrist, these rebels during the Millennium will again be deceived by the Devil when he's released, and will follow him into battle against the Kingdom of God.

We're given a good picture of this in the second Psalm:

Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the Earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 26:9–10

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 2:1–5



## THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

So at the end of the Millennium, the Devil-led rebel armies will go “upon the breadth of the Earth and surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city.”<sup>1</sup> There is some debate as to whether the beloved city here refers to earthly Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem, the super city that descends from the sky to the Earth. Some have wondered why the Lord would make Jerusalem—a dusty, dirty, old terrestrial city—His capital on Earth when He has the beautiful heavenly Jerusalem available. Well, why He chooses Jerusalem and why His Word calls it the beloved city is a mystery. It is even referred to spiritually as “Sodom” in Revelation 11:8. It has been associated with war and violence for millennia, not to mention the violent death of many of the Lord’s people and prophets. So whether the references to Jerusalem in the Millennium are literal or figurative, we don’t know. The huge, heavenly New Jerusalem does not come down to Earth until after the Millennium, so He really doesn’t have it available to use as a terrestrial capital. Besides, as will become apparent in the following chapters, an earthly army would have an impossible job of surrounding it simply because of its enormous size.

And what about this “camp of the saints” that the Devil’s forces surround? Is that referring to the resurrected saints of God,

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:9

who have been ruling the Earth with Jesus for the past 1000 years? If they are already “equal unto the angels,”<sup>1</sup> as Jesus said they’d be, then the Devil’s forces would really be no match for them. If they didn’t choose to destroy this enemy army, they could disappear or fly away to Heaven. The Devil’s army certainly could not surround them, let alone threaten them with harm in any realistic way.

So who will Satan’s forces be attacking? Who could it be other than those who are human beings just like them, those who are also still in human bodies with whom they can fight? It sounds like those mortals who come into faith and belief and loyalty to God during the Millennium will be the ones who make up this camp of the saints at this Battle of Gog and Magog. Scripture doesn’t explicitly state this, but logic would seem to bear it out.

Here is a whole new breed of Christians, a whole new race of Christian mortals having to withstand—like their counterparts during the Great Tribulation and many other times in history—Satan’s anti-Christ forces. Satan’s forces are called Gog and Magog again, as it’s almost the same situation as in the Tribulation, but this time they are led by Satan in person, who does not even disguise himself as the Antichrist, but leads his human forces personally.

<sup>1</sup>Luke 20:36

## THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

This time God is so fed up with these rebels that He sends down fire out of heaven to devour them completely. “And fire came down from God out of Heaven and devoured them.”<sup>1</sup> He annihilates all the anti-God, anti-Christ wicked remaining upon the face of the Earth. In fact, He causes such a great fire to come down from Heaven that the entire surface and atmosphere of the Earth will be burned up and purified. God has promised never to destroy the world again with a flood of water (the rainbow is a sign of this promise), but this time, at the very end, He’s going to destroy it with a flood of fire. He’s going to purify it and destroy the pollution, the germs, the contamination, the wicked, the remnants of the Curse, and all evil.

For this they willfully forget: that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the Earth which are now preserved by the same Word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.<sup>2</sup>

Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:9

<sup>2</sup>2 Peter 3:5–7

<sup>3</sup>Revelation 6:14

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The heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up ... the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire.<sup>1</sup>

This terrific cataclysm is only going to burn up and destroy the surface of the Earth and the atmospheric heavens, not the planet itself, because God's Word says that the Earth is established forever.<sup>2</sup> God will then rebuild a new world on the ashes of the old, and the entire surface of the ball is going to be completely re-created to be like the Garden of Eden.<sup>3</sup>

But what about the earthly saints who are there in their camp of the saints? Are they going to be destroyed along with the wicked when the Earth's surface is scorched and the atmosphere is destroyed? They will be spared in some manner. Just how, we do not yet know, but we do know that God's promises are immutable. "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2 Peter 3:10,12

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 78:69

<sup>3</sup>Revelation chapter 21

<sup>4</sup>Isaiah 43:1-2



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Some think there's going to be a second Rapture of these new saints. How God does it, we don't know, because it's not explained. But after all, if He is going to rescue us at the end of the Tribulation with the Rapture, sparing us from the Plagues of Wrath, why shouldn't He rescue His millennial saints with a rapture too, and spare them from the devouring fires that wipe out the forces of the Devil at the Battle of Gog and Magog? That's the way He pulled His saints out at the end of the Great Tribulation. Why not a repeat performance?

Meanwhile, Satan's forces will be destroyed by fire and Satan himself will be cast into Hell. Like the Antichrist and the False Prophet, the Devil won't need or deserve any trial; his judgment has gone on before, and he will be cast straight into the Lake of Fire.

"The Devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the Beast and the False Prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."<sup>1</sup> One thousand years earlier, after the Battle of Armageddon, the Antichrist and the False Prophet were cast into the Lake of Fire, and now the Devil gets to join them!

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:10

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# The Great White Throne Judgment

**I**n *The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist*, Chapters 8 and 9 we discussed how all of the saved, born-again children of God since the time of Christ will be resurrected and/or raptured at the end of the Great Tribulation period when Jesus comes and gathers together His Church, His Bride, to be with Him forever. And in Chapter 2 of this book we found that the *unsaved* who had not received Jesus prior to His return but had not worshiped the Devil and the Antichrist, and are alive at the end of the Battle of Armageddon, survive into the Millennium. But what about the billions of unsaved people who died through the ages *prior* to the Battle of Armageddon? Those who died without knowing Jesus—what has become of them?

The following verse in Revelation gives the answer: “The rest of the dead [those who were not raptured into Heaven] did not live

## THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

again until the thousand years were finished.”<sup>1</sup> After the Millennium, *all* of the unsaved of *all* ages will be resurrected from wherever in the spirit world they have been waiting, for what is termed the “Great White Throne Judgment.”

Don’t confuse this final Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Millennium with the Judgment Seat of Christ,<sup>2</sup> which occurs 1000 years earlier at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Heaven, and which was covered in Chapter 9 of *The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist*. The Judgment Seat of Christ is an entirely different judgment in which the saved, those who have received Jesus as their Savior, are judged by Christ and are rewarded according to their works. For it was when the seventh angel sounded and the kingdoms of this world became the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ that He rewarded His servants the prophets and the saints, and those who feared His name, small and great.<sup>3</sup> “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”<sup>4</sup>

The Great White Throne Judgment is for the *rest* of the dead, all the dead of all ages who were not saved, and therefore were not resurrected at Christ’s Second Coming. It includes all those who lived through the Millennium and yet followed the Devil at the

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:5

<sup>2</sup>Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10

<sup>3</sup>Revelation 11:15,18

<sup>4</sup>Revelation 22:12

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end of it and were then destroyed in the Battle of Gog and Magog. All the people who ever lived, if unsaved, whether they were good or bad in their earthly lives, will have to stand at this Great White Throne Judgment of God.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire.<sup>1</sup>

Now let's compare all this with a few passages that Jesus spoke of Himself:

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 20:11–15

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not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. [Those therefore who are already saved by receiving Jesus in their hearts are not being judged at this judgment.] Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which *all* who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.<sup>1</sup>

From what Jesus was saying here, it seems that God has turned over the matter of executing judgment to Him. All those who are in the grave are going to hear Him and are being resurrected to stand before God and Jesus. The “rest of the dead,” the unsaved of all ages, are at this point living again and are facing two possible outcomes, either the resurrection of life or the resurrection of condemnation. It seems likely that Jesus is referring to the Great White Throne Judgment in this passage.

<sup>1</sup>John 5:24–29

## **By What Criteria Are the Unsaved Judged?**

It is also not coincidental that Jesus refers to Himself in the previous passage we quoted in John as the “Son of Man.” He is alluding here to prophecies in the book of Daniel that His audience at the time were very familiar with. Those prophecies talked about the Son of Man sitting in judgment. He also refers to Himself in this way in the following passage. Remember also, as we read earlier in Revelation 20, that the Book of Life has been opened and that the names in that book undoubtedly correspond to those who have been raised to the resurrection of life. The following passage, spoken by Jesus in the New Testament, explains whose names are written there, and whose are not, and why.

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. *All the nations* will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

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for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.”

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?” And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.”

Then they also will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?” Then He will answer them, saying, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not

do it to Me.” And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

This event cannot be the Judgment Seat of Christ because all those at that judgment were saved Christians, and no saved soul can be cast into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.”<sup>2</sup> But “this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”<sup>3</sup> It is the deeds of those who either rejected the light or never consciously knew or understood the light, that are being judged, as to whether they were good or evil.

The author of Revelation says that he saw “the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened”—several books, a lot of books, maybe millions of books. “And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life”—a very important book. “And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.”<sup>4</sup> This could be their own memories and consciences, or records that God keeps of their words and works. As the Bible states, “The eyes of the Lord

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 25:31–46

<sup>2</sup>Romans 8:1

<sup>3</sup>John 3:19

<sup>4</sup>Revelation 20:12

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are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.”<sup>1</sup>

It is believed by some medical and scientific professionals that you never really forget anything, that everything you’ve ever seen, heard, thought, or done is recorded in your subconscious mind. So certainly God is able to access people’s memory banks and run through their entire lives, in a fraction of a second if necessary, and judge everything they’ve ever done. So this “opening of the books” might be the Lord reading off everything everyone’s ever done, in order to judge him or her fairly.

The Word of God states that there will be degrees of punishment just as there are degrees of reward. God is just and God is thorough and judges “according to their works.”<sup>2</sup> Even “for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”<sup>3</sup> Of those that do get found guilty at this judgment, some deserve to be punished harshly and some deserve to get very little punishment. The worst are going to get plenty of punishment, yet just what they deserve, and no more. God is going to differentiate and judge everybody justly and righteously and mercifully.

<sup>1</sup>Proverbs 15:3

<sup>2</sup>Psalm 62:12; Jeremiah 17:10; Matthew 16:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 2:23; 20:13; 22:12

<sup>3</sup>Matthew 12:36–37

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People will also be held accountable according to how much truth they have heard. Jesus Himself said that they who know the Lord's will, yet still disobey and do things deserving punishment, shall receive more severe punishment. But those who did not know His will and yet did things worthy of punishment shall receive lighter punishment. "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required."<sup>1</sup>

So their being "judged according to their works" means that they will be rewarded or punished according to how good they were or how bad they were, and obviously there's going to be a difference. "For [God] repays man according to his work, and makes man to find a reward according to his way. Surely God will never do wickedly, nor will the Almighty pervert justice."<sup>2</sup>

In addition, Jesus also made specific promises of reward to those who helped His disciples.

**He who receives you receives Me,  
and he who receives Me receives Him who  
sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the**

<sup>1</sup>Luke 12:47-48

<sup>2</sup>Job 34:11-12

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name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.<sup>1</sup>

This is confirmed by the passage quoted earlier in Matthew 25, where Jesus speaks of those who helped "the least of these My brethren" as being rewarded. And who are Jesus' brethren? The Gospel states that "He [Jesus] looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers. For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.'"<sup>2</sup> So Jesus regards those who do God's will, which is to love Him and others, as His brethren.

The Scriptures on the Great White Throne Judgment answer the age-old question: How could God condemn to Hell those who have led good lives just because they haven't received His salvation through Jesus? What about those from other religions who were never taught about Jesus or were so entrenched in their religious traditions, passed down from generation to generation, that they didn't

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 10:40-42

<sup>2</sup>Mark 3:33-35

accept Him because they didn't understand Him? He certainly doesn't condemn them. Those who have done good to others in their lives receive a reward and inherit the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. In the next chapter we will find out exactly what this Kingdom is.

## **Is Hell Forever?**

It would seem that at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment, the rebellious angels who have turned into demons are also judged.

God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to Hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.<sup>1</sup>

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.<sup>2</sup>

The Hell referred to in these verses is not the Lake of Fire, but the deepest, darkest abyss in the netherworld, which in the original Greek is called *Tartarus*. It is the only time in the Bible that this word is used, but it could also correspond to the Bottomless Pit that the Devil is confined in during the Millennium. Obviously, there is a place of everlasting fire

<sup>1</sup>2 Peter 2:4

<sup>2</sup>Jude 6

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prepared for these rebellious angels, as Jesus said there was in Matthew 25, and since we know that the Devil is cast into the Lake of Fire at the end of the Battle of Gog and Magog to join the Antichrist and his False Prophet, it seems that these three are soon joined by the wicked demonic angels and the cursed wicked people who were deemed worthy of Hell at the Great White Throne Judgment.

But the cowardly, unbelieving,  
abominable, murderers, sexually immoral,  
sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have  
their part in the lake which burns with  
fire and brimstone, which is the second  
death.<sup>1</sup>

A word of explanation is needed with this verse, as obviously not everyone who has ever told a lie—or even those who may done immoral acts—is condemned to the Lake of Fire. “All have sinned,”<sup>2</sup> as the Bible says, and yet there is forgiveness for those who acknowledge their wrongdoing. Even the saved in Heaven may have committed serious sins on Earth for which they have repented and been forgiven. So this passage is obviously referring to those who, in their life on Earth, not only committed these sins, but who were unrepentant.

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:8

<sup>2</sup>Romans 3:23

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But what about even these who end up in the Lake of Fire? Is their punishment eternal? We already covered how some will receive “few stripes,” that their punishment is lighter and therefore must come to an end relatively quickly. Although we are jumping ahead here a bit and this will be explained in greater detail in the following chapters, it appears that the Kingdom received by those “blessed of the Father”<sup>1</sup> is apparently the New Earth. Furthermore, it seems that they are joined in time by some of the very types that were listed as having their part in the Lake of Fire, the second death, as borne out in the following passage:

**Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the [Heavenly] City. But outside [that is, living on the New Earth] are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.<sup>2</sup>**

So it seems that after serving their time in the Lake of Fire, and thereby repenting of their wrongdoing, they are given a chance for rehabilitation on the beautiful New Earth that is created after the current Earth is burned up in the Battle of Gog and Magog.

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 25:34

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 22:14–15

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This would seem to be further confirmed by the following Scriptures from the Old Testament. God, apparently speaking to Jesus, says, “Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless Pit.”<sup>1</sup> “He will redeem his soul from going down to the Pit, and his life shall see the light. Behold, God works all these things . . . to bring back his soul from the Pit, that he may be enlightened with the light of life.”<sup>2</sup>

After all, what’s the use of punishing people if it’s totally impossible to ever teach them anything and they’ll never change, never rehabilitate, never learn? It looks like Hell would be a waste of time if it’s used for nothing but to give people eternal suffering.

But what about some of the verses like Revelation 14:10–11 that say that the very wicked, people who worshiped the Antichrist, will be “tormented with fire and brimstone, . . . and the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night”? This sounds like an eternal, perpetual, never-ending punishment. But is it?

Actually, the word translated “forever” in those Scriptures is the Greek word *aeon*, meaning “for an age”—which no doubt is for a long time, but does not necessarily mean “eternal.” “Forever and ever” in the Greek in which these Scriptures were originally written

<sup>1</sup>Zechariah 9:11

<sup>2</sup>Job 33:28–30

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is more accurately rendered “for an age and an age.” *Aeon* is also used in the other New Testament passages on “everlasting” and “eternal” punishment, which again implies that it will be “age-lasting” or “for an age.”

It would be a far greater credit to the justice and the love and the mercy of God if, after they have suffered sufficiently for their sins and been punished enough to pay for their wickedness and served their term, so to speak, paid their debt to His society and repented of their evil ways, that they should then be released in some way and their punishment come to an end.

God is just, God is loving, God is pure, God is holy, God is perfect, and everything will work out perfectly in the long run. There will be perfect judgment and punishment for the wicked, and perfect reward for the righteous who at least did good to others and tried to live a godly life even if they didn't know Him. So although the guilty will be punished for their sins, when their punishment is over and they've learned their lessons, they'll be released—released by the grace of God and the forgiveness of God just like everybody else.

Jesus, while His body lay in the tomb, showed His love also for those who had died without knowing Him by going to the spirits imprisoned in the netherworld to try to set

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them free with salvation. “As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”<sup>1</sup> “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient,”<sup>2</sup> [so] “the Gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”<sup>3</sup>

God’s Word says that “the Lord . . . is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”<sup>4</sup> To show His love to all men, He sent Jesus to live, die and suffer for us: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matthew 12:40

<sup>2</sup>1 Peter 3:18–20

<sup>3</sup>1 Peter 4:6

<sup>4</sup>2 Peter 3:9

<sup>5</sup>John 3:16–17

## CHAPTER NINE

# The New Earth

**S**o now what's left? Only the best, of course. That which those who love God have all been waiting for has finally come—the stupendous New Earth with its new and beautiful atmospheric heavens. And something even better than that, the gigantic, beautiful Heavenly City known as New Jerusalem, which John the Revelator could apparently only compare to the most beautiful thing that he had most likely ever seen before: a bride in all her beauty coming to her wedding.

But we have gotten ahead of the story here. We will look in detail at that amazing Heavenly City in the next chapter, but first let's cover the New Earth and what—from the few glimpses that the Bible gives of it—it is going to be like. But then again we are not strictly limited to what the Bible says, for Saint Paul states, “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through

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His Spirit.”<sup>1</sup> So we will cover what the Bible says as well as let the Spirit extrapolate on some of these things and explore what God has revealed about that wonderful place. If anticipation is 50 percent of enjoyment, then we can have half the joy of being there now!

John the Revelator “saw a new heaven and a new Earth, for the first heaven and the first Earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.”<sup>2</sup> The Earth today is clothed in its surface and its atmosphere, but as we read earlier, during the Battle of Gog and Magog at the end of the Millennium, God burns off the surface and the atmosphere. He then creates a beautiful New Earth with new heavens—this is the ultimate “anti-pollution/clean air act.” He will re-create the surface of the Earth to be like the beautiful Garden of Eden—not *like* a paradise, but *the* Paradise of God. And for those who think this will take a very long time, they only have to look at the book of Genesis to see how quickly the Lord did it the first time. And this time He doesn’t have to make the ball of the Earth, neither the Sun and all the other planets and stars. In fact, if we look at what He has to do, taking the original creation as the precedent, He could accomplish this new creation in three or four days.

<sup>1</sup>1 Corinthians 2:9–10

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 21:1

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He will have to re-create the water and soil and plant life, although the Bible specifically states there will be “no more sea.” There is at least one river that we know of, that we will discuss later, and since this New Earth is going to be absolutely beautiful, it would seem there would be lakes.

We really don’t know if He will have to re-create all the animal life. He could have saved enough aside somehow, as He did in Noah’s Flood, to repopulate the Earth. Since He is going to re-create grass and trees and every sort of beautiful flower and plant, it would seem reasonable to believe that He will populate it all with not just people but also with animals and birds, and fish in the streams and lakes. God’s not going to have His creation defeated. He put many of the animals on Earth to be pets and companions for humankind, so it stands to reason that we’re still going to enjoy animals in the New Earth as well.

The New Earth will be the most beautiful place known to man. Earth as originally created was lovely, but then there was an especially beautiful place called the Garden of Eden. This time it would seem the whole surface of the Earth is going to be like that garden. Perhaps He might even consult those whom He has brought to Heaven as to what they would like!

Today, more than 70 percent of the Earth’s surface is covered by water, so without seas

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there will be lots more room for the billions of resurrected folks of all the ages. The Bible also says that “every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth,”<sup>1</sup> so there will be much more habitable and arable land.

The Earth’s current population is now over six billion. So if all the righteous of all ages are going to be living on the New Earth, there would be a lot more than six billion people, especially if many of those who are initially confined to Hell are rehabilitated and allowed to live on the Earth. But consider this: If a population of six billion were all gathered together on the Australian continent (which is the smallest of the Earth’s continents), each person would have a living space of around 1,280 square meters (about 13,800 square feet). Now that is a lot of elbowroom! It roughly corresponds to a population density of four people per acre. And if you consider that Australia takes up less than 0.4 percent of the Earth’s surface area, then you can see just how much more room there is, even when considering a proportion of that is not habitable. So even if the total population of the New Earth is 10 times as much as the current world’s, there would still be a lot of room for everyone; over six acres per person when you

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 40:4

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consider that much of the space now taken up by oceans, deserts, mountains, and other uninhabitable land will be habitable.

“And there shall be no more Curse.”<sup>1</sup>

Although much of the Curse has been removed during the Millennium, on the New Earth it is going to be completely gone. The last vestiges of the Curse, specifically death, will be defeated. “The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”<sup>2</sup> “There shall be no more death.”<sup>3</sup> All will be new and perfect and pure and the way God intended for it to be in the first place.

The Lord re-creates the Earth’s surface into the most beautiful heavenly land that man has ever known. It will be similar to the beautiful countryside of some places of the Earth today, with rolling greenery, fields and forests, streams and lakes, but it will be far better. There will be no more storms, no more great catastrophes and cataclysms or disasters, but all will be beautiful and peaceful, the very Paradise of God that all men have always longed for. The Millennium was a precursor of the New Earth—almost there, but not quite. The Curse was still partially there, and not everyone was submitted to God’s laws of love. But on the New Earth, for the first time in Earth’s history since the Garden of Eden, all will live together in perfect peace and love and harmony.

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 22:3

<sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 15:26

<sup>3</sup>Revelation 21:4

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The world is going to be similar to the way it would have been if Adam and Eve had never fallen. All the inhabitants have been resurrected, and although they have bodies similar to what they had before, it is a good guess that the bodies must be different in that they are created to live forever. The gradual catabolism or wearing down of our bodies that we now experience must be gone.

In the original Garden of Eden there were two very remarkable trees. One was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This is the one that Eve and then Adam disobeyed and ate from that brought about their fall and banishment from the Garden. And the reason given for their banishment was that they had to be prevented from then eating from the second tree, the Tree of Life.

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever"—therefore the Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore it seems that Adam and Eve could have lived forever if they had partaken of the fruit of the Tree of Life. So if humankind then could have lived forever if their bodies

<sup>1</sup>Genesis 3:22–23

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were nourished with this fruit, if it was the missing ingredient to corporeal immortality, then look what the book of Revelation says will be available once again in the Heavenly City:

And [the angel] showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street"—or, in other words, in the middle of the river, probably on beautiful islands—"and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.<sup>1</sup>

Here is a beautiful river that flows right out of the throne of God and through the center of the Heavenly City, which must be like a beautiful park with all these trees. And the trees are undoubtedly the same kind as the Tree of Life that stood in the Garden of Eden, and now there are many of them.

David the Psalmist once wrote: "There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High."<sup>2</sup> Surely this river of life is what he must have been referring to, as there is no river flowing through the old city of Jerusalem. It seems the prophet Ezekiel also caught a

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 22:1–2

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 46:4

glimpse of this wonderful river and these heavenly trees and described them thus: “Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine.”<sup>1</sup>

The fact that leaves are for healing (or medicine) seems to indicate that there will still be some sort of sickness. Why would the Lord provide medicine if it isn't to be used? But if the Curse is no more—and sickness and disease are previously referred to as part of the Curse—then this would seem to be contradictory. So rather than physical healing, we can only assume that the people who live on the New Earth, outside the Heavenly City, will be in need of spiritual healing.

Some of the inhabitants of this New Earth are not spoken of in the highest terms. “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the City. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.”<sup>2</sup>

This is almost a carbon copy of the list of people who previously had been confined to the Lake of Fire at the Great White Throne

<sup>1</sup>Ezekiel 47:12

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 22:14–15

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Judgment. As we discussed in the previous chapter, it seems that after some of these people serve their time in the Lake of Fire and repent of their evil ways, they are then allowed on to the New Earth. However, it seems they still have a ways to go in being totally rehabilitated. Once they get right with God and start following His rules, then they have the right to the healing and physical immortality contained in the Tree of Life. And since these trees grow inside the Heavenly City, it would be logical that the inhabitants of that city are the ones who are responsible to administer the leaves of healing to those outside.

**The City had no need of the Sun or of the Moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.<sup>1</sup>**

The Heavenly City won't need these lights. Yet the Bible says that the Sun and Moon will be established forever: "Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: his seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the Sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the Moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky."<sup>2</sup> So on the New Earth, away from the City, the Sun, Moon and stars will evidently be visible and there will be daytime and nighttime on the Earth; as well as seasons as the Earth orbits the Sun.

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:23

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 89:35–37

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And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in [the Heavenly City's] light, and the kings of the Earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.<sup>1</sup>

It is a good guess that the “saved” mentioned here does not refer to those of us who have received Jesus’ salvation in this current era and who therefore have residential rights to the Heavenly City, but instead to the people saved from the punishment of the Lake of Fire who are on the outside of the City. The wonderful celestial light of the Heavenly City shines on them because their leaders—kings, as they are referred to here—bring the glory of these nations into the City. In the last chapter we found that the Book of Life contained the names of the people who were given the privilege of living on the New Earth. It seems that those who are rehabilitated from Hell are not accorded the privilege of entering into the City; that is unless their names can eventually be written in that book. Exactly what the glory of the nations would be isn’t revealed. Perhaps

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:24–27

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it is some sort of tribute, although why the Lord would want earthly tribute from these nations is rather baffling. Perhaps it has more to do with bringing the glorious reports of all that has been accomplished in their nations, and their praise and thankfulness to God.

And what will those who enter into the Heavenly City see? Read on.

## CHAPTER TEN

# The Heavenly City

**T**he place the saints are going to dwell with the Lord forever after is not some fanciful dreamland way off in outer space, but an even more amazing dream city that's going to come down from God, out of Heaven, to the New Earth! God's going to come down and live with the saved, and they with Him, in that beautiful dream town. We have a real, down-to-earth God, Who's going to come live with us, and make Heaven on Earth!

John the Revelator tells us some fascinating details about our amazing future heavenly home.

Then one of the seven angels ... talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great City, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was

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like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.<sup>1</sup>

The Heavenly City is so beautiful that the angel likens it unto a gorgeous woman at her wedding, so he figuratively called it “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” Earlier in verse 2, John said that he saw the Holy City descending “as a bride adorned for her husband.” We can be pretty sure that the City itself, as heavenly and beautiful as it is, is not going to be Jesus’ bride; rather the inhabitants of that City, both individually and collectively, are His bride.

The apostle Paul once wrote that we should “be married ... to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.”<sup>2</sup> The believers in Jesus are His bride. The City is the home of Jesus and His bride, and is undoubtedly to be the venue of the wonderful Marriage Supper of the Lamb, where all the believers of all ages are to be formally married to Jesus. Kings who were rich and wealthy often built palaces in honor of their queens. Well, our King has built His queen the greatest palace that has ever existed. Nothing in this world, nothing man has ever built or could build, would even hold a candle to this City.

Earlier, in Revelation chapter 4, John had described what he saw when he was taken up in the spirit to God’s throne room.

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:9–11

<sup>2</sup>Romans 7:4

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Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in Heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.<sup>1</sup>

John compares God in all His glory and His brilliance to a jasper or sardius stone. Jasper is a type of quartz that is usually red in color, and sardius is also a red stone.

As John was watching this Heavenly City descend to Earth, he also described it as looking like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. So at least from a distance it looked like a brilliant, transparent red jewel. So it looked to him not only like a bride, but also, perhaps because of the red color, like a royal bride, a queen fit to marry the King of kings. Later we find out that the walls of this amazing City are transparent gold.

Also she [the City] had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. Now the wall of the City had twelve

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 4:2–3

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foundations [most likely layers] and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.<sup>1</sup>

Why would the City have a big tall protective wall like that and each gate guarded by an angel unless there were some people outside whom they didn't want to get in? This is another indication that there will be people outside who are not qualified to enter the City.

The names of the 12 apostles are inscribed on the various foundations of the wall and the names of the 12 tribes of Israel are inscribed on the gates. What better way could the Lord immortalize and honor them for their great work in laying the foundation and preparation for the whole Church than to put their names on the gates and walls?<sup>2A</sup>

John writes:

And he who talked with me had a gold reed [measuring rod] to measure the City, its gates, and its wall. The City is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the City with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.<sup>2</sup>

The original Greek word translated here in the English as “furlongs” is *stadia*. In its

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:12–14

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 21:15–16

singular form *stadion*, it is the measure of a standard racetrack in the old Greek and Roman world and has given us the English word “stadium.” “Furlong” is an old English word not used much these days except in horse racing events in some countries. It is an eighth of a mile. However, there is a difference in measurement in a *stadion* and a furlong. For the sake of translating this text into something relatable to an English-speaking audience, the original English translators rendered the term “furlongs,” and this is the term still found in the New King James Version of the Bible. Some other modern versions more correctly translate it as *stadia*, which is the Latin rendition of *stadios*.

The length of a *stadion* in classical times differed, but it was about 185 meters (607 feet). So 12,000 *stadios* equals 2220 kilometers or about 1380 miles. So we have a city whose base area is 2220 kilometers by 2220 kilometers, which equals 4,928,400 square kilometers, or nearly 5 million square kilometers. To put that in perspective, that is approximately half of the land area of Europe. And on top of that, it rises to an altitude of 2220 kilometers! Intercontinental passenger airlines usually fly their planes around eight to ten kilometers high, which is around 20–30,000 feet. Talk about out of this world! This City is going to jut right out into space.

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There are only so many shapes that fit the description of being “laid out as a square. . . . Its length, breadth, and height are equal.” One is a cube, another is a pyramid, and a third is an object with a square base but whose sides arch in to form a dome at the top. The most popular concept among Bible commentators who believe in a literal acceptance of this passage is that it is a cube. However, other Bible scholars, such as the authors of the *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, posit that it is a pyramid.

There are Scriptures that seem to support the pyramid idea. Hebrews 12:22 says, “You have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem.” That certainly indicates it is mountain-shaped. And several other Scriptures speak of “the Mountain of the Lord’s House.”<sup>1</sup> And if there’s anything that would look like a mountain, in fact the most mountainous mountain ever, imagine a 2220-kilometer-high pyramid!

Also, as John was watching New Jerusalem descend, a loud voice from Heaven said, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with man.”<sup>2</sup> The ancient Israelite tabernacle was a tent. That City sure is some big tent. If God regards it only as His camping trip quarters, then there must be other wonderful places still to be revealed. But a common shape of tents is pyramidal or conical, which again points to a pyramid.

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 21:3

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No one really knows now why the ancient Egyptians for a long period built the sacred tombs of their kings in a pyramid shape. Could it be that they had some idea that that was the shape of the world to come, so they were trying to imitate it and make sure their kings were introduced into that world in proper form and proper shape?

The capacity of this marvelous Heavenly City is almost beyond comprehension. If it is pyramidal, it would have a total volume of over 3.6 billion cubic kilometers. There is nothing even remotely similar on Earth to compare this with.

So what takes up all the space? We know there are mansions there. Jesus said, “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”<sup>2</sup> The Lord told His prophet Daniel that he would “arise to [his] inheritance at the end of the days.”<sup>3</sup> So apparently those who are faithful to serve God like Daniel did will be receiving an inheritance in this beautiful city, maybe even one of those mansions to call home.

Just think, a mansion that isn’t going to cost you anything there—no upkeep, no expenses, absolutely nothing except what it’s already cost Jesus in His sacrifice in dying for your sins. Its magnificence, or lack of it, will be

<sup>2</sup>John 14:2

<sup>3</sup>Daniel 12:13

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commensurate with your works on Earth, what you already did down here to deserve it. Good works and loving deeds often go unrewarded in this life, but you'll find that whatever you've sacrificed here for God and others will be nothing compared with what you'll receive in return in Heaven.

Besides mansions and living spaces for God's children, what else could be there? Some Bible seers received revelations that there would be something like a world's fair or massive theme parks where God would have a multitude of beautifully designed buildings and pavilions to display and demonstrate just about everything conceivable—the wonders of science and nature, even time travel to view past events as they happened. It would be the ultimate in enjoyment and education. But even the biggest of fairs such as this would only take a fraction of the available floor space in such an enormous place.

We read in the previous chapter that a river flows through the City, lined with trees on each side. So there will no doubt be large parks, and perhaps all manner of landscapes and terrains available for everyone's enjoyment. What else it contains we don't know. We will just have to wait to see all that God has in store for us!

But why would the City be so high? It would be a waste if it was all empty space. It's envisioned that it could have levels,

or floors spaced very far apart. Or perhaps the various buildings or whatever occupies the City actually are suspended in space. That would be the ultimate in three-dimensional living. Whatever the configuration, one thing is obvious: There is plenty of room for an expanding population.

Some Bible interpreters and translators believe that the word translated as “mansions” in the New Testament doesn’t mean large quarters, but something more like different quarters. One translator even claims that our modern equivalent of this word would be apartments—no doubt commodious, luxurious apartments.

Let’s look at this idea a little more closely. If, for example, mounted on the walls of the Heavenly City were floors like a multi-story apartment building with each floor having a generous ten-meter floor to ceiling measurement, then there would be room for 222,000 floors. That would be some skyscraper! If we then were to hazard a guess that the population of the Heavenly City was as high as 20 billion people, then this would average about 90,000 people with living quarters on each level. If each level consisted of a single kilometer-wide strip running around the inside edge of the Heavenly City (in the shape of a pyramid), with the remaining inside space open, then the population density on a

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level would be close to 20 people per square kilometer. By comparison, the population density of Switzerland—not usually thought of as a crowded place—is 182 per square kilometer!

This would mean each occupant in the Heavenly City would have a personal plot of 50,000 square meters, which is about the area of 10 football fields. That’s a lot of space. And this is just the density of the “living quarters,” not the population density of the actual total City. All this is, of course, a little fanciful, as we are not told how the City is going to be divided up with regards to housing, nor do we know how many people will be there. But it is interesting to do the math on things and see just how enormous this place is, and how commodious it will be for our eternal living pleasure.

We are told specifically that there is one thing that is *not* there. “But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”<sup>1</sup> The Lord obviously has no use for a church building or temple there, and one wonders if they are very useful in the here and now. If the donated money spent on church buildings was instead channeled into missionary work, imagine how much more good would be accomplished. If only today’s churches would follow this heavenly example.

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:22

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Now, back to the angel with the golden measuring reed:

Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits [about 65 meters], according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the City was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the City were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.<sup>1</sup>

It is not clear if these foundations of precious gems are at the bottom of the wall as would be the modern understanding of this description, or if each of these foundations are a layer in the wall. The Greek word *themelios* translated as “foundations” can in the original Greek give the impression that it is layers. John does say the wall was made of jasper, but that is also what the first foundation is made of, so it is a bit hard to understand. But either way ... it is a magnificent wall!

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:17–20

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Following is a list of these gems and a description of them.

1. Jasper. An opaque variety of chalcedony, or quartz, usually red.

2. Sapphire. The modern sapphire, a blue variety of corundum.

3. Chalcedony. A translucent variety of quartz occurring in a variety of colors. Agate, bloodstone, carnelian, chrysoprase, flint, jasper, and onyx are all varieties of chalcedony.

4. Emerald. A deep green variety of beryl.

5. Sardonyx. A red and white variety of chalcedony.

6. Sardius. A red stone, considered by many to be carnelian, a reddish-brown variety of chalcedony.

7. Chrysolite. A yellow stone that could have been the same as topaz or some other yellow gem such as beryl, zircon, or a yellow quartz. Its name comes from a Greek word that means "gold stone."

8. Beryl. A hard mineral, beryl ranges in color from bluish green to yellow, white, pink, and deep green.

9. Topaz. A yellowish-green form of chrysolite

10. Chrysoprase. Chrysoprase had a light green color.

11. Jacinth. A yellow-orange variety of the mineral zircon.

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12. Amethyst. A variety of the mineral corundum. Its color varies from light to deep violet.

John the Revelator must have really known his precious stones to be able to give such a detailed description. Whether each of these foundations had these jewels embedded in it or whether each foundation consisted of one solid jewel of these varieties we are not sure, but one thing we do know is that it will be beautiful.

“The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl.”<sup>1</sup> Can you imagine the gates for such a city, whose wall was 65 meters high?—The gates would have to be at least large enough to permit a man to pass standing erect, and probably on horseback, which would mean they would have to be at least 5 meters high—or even higher. If you are wondering about the horseback part, remember that the heavenly armies that descended at Armageddon rode magnificent white chargers, and there is no reason to believe that we will not continue to have and ride these wonderful horses in the Heavenly City.

But can you imagine a pearl that big? That’s the size of the gates, each gate a pearl, twelve gates altogether, three gates on each side of the City, north and south, east and west. It is interesting also to think about the fact that John called them pearls. A pearl is solid. So

<sup>1</sup>Revelation 21:21

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how is a solid pearl a gate? Perhaps there are doors in them, but it would seem more likely that the heavenly citizenry will be able to pass through the pearly gates similar to how Jesus apparently could walk through closed doors in His resurrected body.<sup>1</sup>

“And the street of the City was pure gold, like transparent glass.”<sup>2</sup>—That’s a kind of gold we don’t know anything about today. The gold of this world is not transparent and it doesn’t look like glass. But the gold of the City will be transparent glass-like golden crystal, beautiful. It’s going to be an everlasting crystal gold, more beautiful than any gold in this world.

Not only are the streets made of this pure crystal clear gold, but as we read a few verses earlier, the “City was pure gold, like clear glass.”<sup>3</sup> The whole City is crystal gold. So we’ll be able to see out of the City through those transparent walls, out onto the beautifully re-created New Earth. We’re going to be able to look out there and see and enjoy the view of that beautiful creation.

“The City had no need of the Sun or of the Moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb [Jesus] is its light.”<sup>4</sup> Inside this Heavenly City it will be light all the time, all day and all night, and we’ll never have to sleep unless we want to, because we’ll

<sup>1</sup>John 20:19

<sup>2</sup>Revelation 21:21

<sup>3</sup>Revelation 21:18

<sup>4</sup>Revelation 21:23

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never get tired or weary. And even for those on the outside, it will be a blessing just to live anywhere within sight of that City, to be able to see it at night and thrill to its gorgeous splendor, resplendent with the golden, supernatural, miraculous light of God. God's Word says that even the Sun and the Moon shall be ashamed in comparison with the glory and the beauty and the light of that holy City here on the surface of the Earth. "Then the Moon will be disgraced and the Sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously."<sup>1</sup>

The inhabitants of the New Earth will be able to look up and view that beautiful City and know that God is there, that God now lives on Earth with humanity. He's made His dwelling place here, and that's His beautiful City, His capital City. And even if they are not among the citizens living inside the City, they'll be able to look up from the surface of the Earth and be thankful that they are even there at all.

God's City is going to be perfect and pure and so beautiful. In fact, it's not *going* to be beautiful, it *already* is beautiful. Jesus has been working on it ever since He ascended. Two thousand years ago He told His disciples, "In My Father's house *are* many mansions.

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah 24:23

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... I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”<sup>1</sup> It will be the culmination, the ultimate of Heaven on Earth, inhabited only by heavenly beings and earthlings made heavenly, in a perfect atmosphere, a heavenly environment, with the most excellent housing the world has ever known, the whole place shining like precious stones and jewels. But best of all, it will be full of billions of people living in harmony and love with God and each other, those who received Jesus through the 7,000 years or so since the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden through the Millennium until the New Earth.

Will you be there? You can be. Jesus is waiting to welcome you there. All you have to do is receive Him as your Savior by saying a short prayer like this one.

*Jesus, I accept that You are the Son of God and I ask You to come into my life. Please forgive me for my faults and sins, and when my time on Earth is done, receive me into Your heavenly Kingdom. Help me now to love You and others, and live a life that will please You. Amen.*

<sup>1</sup>John 14:2-3

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If you prayed that prayer with sincerity, then you are now a citizen of Heaven, with full entry rights into the Heavenly City of the future. And Jesus will be there to welcome you on the day that you pass through its heavenly gates. See you there!

### **Notes**

A. There were actually 13 tribes of Israel. Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Jacob (later named Israel), was given double honor, and so his tribe became two, the descendants of his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim. We don't know which tribe gets left off the list. In the case of the apostles, Judas was one of the original 12, and it is very unlikely his name is written on one of these foundations. Paul explained that he—that is, Paul—was “an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Timothy 1:1). Certainly his name would be a worthy replacement.

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