

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

2nd Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 25

Heaven

Heaven

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

These are the books of the Bible we will be memorizing. New books for this month are in bold. If a student can memorize all the books up to this month’s books, you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word.

Objective This lesson will teach the students that the most important aspect about heaven is the unhindered, eternal fellowship we will have with Jesus Christ.

Key Verses

Revelation 21:1-22:5—Main Teaching Passages

Books to Memorize

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1&2 Peter, **1,2,&3 John, Jude, Revelation**

Hook

Hand out a blank sheet of paper to each student. Tell them to draw on the front side what they think heaven looks like. Then have them put the paper away for the lesson.

Today, we are going to look at how the Bible describes heaven. At the end of class, we are going to draw what heaven is like based on the biblical text and then compare what we thought heaven might look like with what the Bible says.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

The last two chapters of the Bible describe for us what heaven is like. In Revelation 21:1-8, we read of John's vision of the new heavens and the new earth with the new Jerusalem as its capital. This is the city where God dwells with His people, and only His people. Then in 21:9-22:5, an angel gives John a tour of the city. The city is glorious, adorned with pure gold and all kinds of crystals, and the streets are pure gold. There are twelve gates to the city, each made of a single, giant pearl, and over each is the name of one of the tribes of Israel. The city has twelve foundations, each made of a different precious stone and having the name of one of the apostles written on it. The city is shaped like a cube, and when the angel measured it, it was about 1,500 miles on each side.

In 21:22-22:5, John describes the features of the city. There is neither sun nor temple, for the Lord is there and He provides the light. Christ's throne is in the city, and from the throne proceeds a clear river with the water of life. The city also contains the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. In 22:3, we read that there is no more curse. All the bad things that have come into the earth as a result of sin (such as death, sorrow, crying, and pain, see 21:4) will be no more. The new Jerusalem will be a city without night, and the gates will never be shut because no bad thing can come in. It will be the place where Christ reigns and we are with Him forever and ever.

LOOK

As we read the description of the new Jerusalem, it's impossible to miss the incredible beauty. No place on earth comes close to the glory and majesty of the city. Gold, one of the most valuable things on earth, is used to pave the streets we walk on in heaven. When we behold the glory of the jewels, pearls, and precious metals, we will be blown away. Yet this is far from the best part about heaven.

The things that are not in heaven are pretty amazing as well. We won't have to worry about death or pain. There will be no evil people or terrible tragedies like the ones we experience all too often on earth. All sadness and crying will be gone, and every affect of Adam and Eve's sin will be wiped out. But this isn't the best part either.

The best part about heaven is not what's there, or even what's not there, but who's there. Heaven is the place where we will have eternal, unhindered, uninterrupted fellowship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For almost all of human history, sin has separated us from God. Even though our fellowship is restored with Him when we are saved, we

The interpretation/
exegesis of the
passage. What does
this passage mean?
How does this passage
apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

do not fully experience that until we get to heaven. Being with the One who made us, loves us, died for us, saved us, and gave us new life for all eternity without sin getting in between us will be the best experience any of us have ever had.

Over the last few months, we have been studying the Gospel. We saw why we needed to be saved and how Jesus saved us through His life, death, and resurrection. We learned about we must do to be saved, the glorious benefits of our salvation, and how we should live as believers. Today, we have seen the final result of our salvation, eternity with Jesus. It's not just about pearly gates or streets of gold. It's about living with our Savior in perfect fellowship for all eternity.

As we have learned, this promise of eternity is available to all of us, but in order to obtain such a future we must put our faith in Jesus Christ. We must confess that we are sinners, believe in His life, death, and resurrection, and ask Him to forgive our sins and be our Lord and Savior. When you do that, you can be sure that you will be spending all of eternity with your Savior in perfect, sinless fellowship.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Give a chance for any students who have not already to ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior.

As a class, review the books of the Bible Matthew-Revelation.

Have the students take out their drawings of heaven from the beginning of class. Ask if what they drew matches what the Bible says. What are the similarities and differences? On the other side of the paper, have them draw heaven again, this time based on Revelation 21-22.

Pray: Thank Jesus for the promise of heaven. Ask Him to help us be faithful until we get there.

Parent Question: What is heaven like?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Revelation 21:1-22:5 by David Guzik

A NEW HEAVENS, A NEW EARTH, AND A NEW JERUSALEM

A. All things made new.

1. ([Rev 21:1](#)) The new heaven and the new earth.

Now I 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.

b. **A new heaven and a new earth:** The idea of a new earth, with a new atmosphere and sky is a familiar theme in the Scriptures. Many of the prophets, both Old and New Testaments, spoke of this **new heaven** and **new earth**.

iv. It's worth remembering that the **new heaven** referred to doesn't mean the *heaven* where God is enthroned. The Bible uses the word *heaven* in three senses. The *first heaven* is the earth's atmosphere, the "blue sky." The *second heaven* is outer space, the "night sky." The *third heaven* is the place where God lives in glory. When the Scriptures speak of a **new heaven**, they mean a new "blue sky" and a new "night sky," not a new heaven where God dwells.

c. **New heaven... new earth:** The ancient Greek word translated **new** here (*kaine*) means "new in character, 'fresh'." It doesn't mean "recent" or "new in time." This isn't just the *next* heaven and the *next* earth; this is the *better* heaven and *better* earth replacing the old (**the first earth had passed away**).

i. Though some disagree (such as Seiss, who argued passionately that this earth will *never* be destroyed) we should understand that this is truly a **new heaven** and a **new earth**, not merely a "remade" heaven and earth. We know this because Jesus said that heaven and earth *shall* pass away, but His Word would live forever ([Luke 21:33](#)). Also, in [Isaiah 65:17](#) God said prophetically that He will create a new heaven and earth, and the ancient Hebrew word for "create" (*bara*) means to "create out of nothing," instead of re-fashioning existing material.

ii. Some take this "newness" as only a spiritual and moral change. But there seems to be a genuine physical transformation in mind: **there was no more sea**.

d. **A new heaven and a new earth:** Is this **new heaven** and **new earth** the Millennial earth shown in [Revelation 20](#), or is it something beyond? It definitely seems to be past the Millennial earth. This is what we think of as "heaven" and "eternity."

i. "In this chapter we see that the history of time is finished; the history of eternity is about to begin." (Barnhouse)

ii. "The eternal state is clearly indicated in the absence of sea, for frequent mention of bodies of water occur in millennial passages (cf. [Psalm 72:8](#); [Isaiah 11:9, 11](#); [Ezekiel 47:10, 15, 17, 18, 20](#); [48:28](#); [Zechariah 9:10](#); [14:8](#)). The evidence of [Revelation 21:1](#) is so specific that most commentators do not question that the eternal state is in view." (Walvoord)

e. **No more sea:** To the Jewish mind, the sea was a place of separation and evil. Already in the Book of Revelation it is shown to be the source of the Satanic beast ([Revelation 13:1](#)) and the place of the dead ([Revelation 20:13](#)).

i. In other passages of Scripture, the **sea** is associated with the heathen ([Isaiah 57:20](#)) and in a more general sense, with the opponents of the Lord that must be conquered ([Psalm 89:9](#)).

2. ([Rev 21:2-4](#)) The New Jerusalem descends from heaven.

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

a. **The holy city, New Jerusalem:** This is the Jerusalem of hope ([Hebrews 12:22](#)), the Jerusalem above ([Galatians 4:26](#)), the place of our real citizenship ([Philippians 3:20](#)).

i. The terms **holy** and **new** distinguish the city. Because it is **holy** and **new**, it is different from any earthly city. The name **Jerusalem** gives it continuity with earth, especially with the place of our redemption.

ii. It is significant that this glorious dwelling place of God and His people is described as **the holy city**. *Cities are places with many people, and people interacting with each other. This isn't isolation, but a perfect community of the people of God.*

iii. The Christian concept of heaven as a city – a place of life, activity, interest, and people – is very different from Hindu conception of a blank Nirvana. "The consummation of the Christian hope is supremely social. It is no 'flight of the alone to the Alone' but life in the redeemed community of heaven." (Hunter)

iv. Man has never known a community unmarred by sin. Adam and Eve only knew a limited community, and community in a larger context only came long after the Fall. Here, in the **New Jerusalem**, we have something totally unique: a sinless, pure, community of righteousness, a **holy city**.

v. Problems arise when believers expect this kind of community *now*, or fail to realize that it *only comes down out of heaven*. This city *is not and never can be* the achievement of man, but only a gift from God.

b. **Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband:** John used the most striking, beautiful image he could think of. The most beautiful thing a man will ever see is his bride coming down the aisle, ready to meet him. John said that this is how beautiful the New Jerusalem will be.

c. **The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them:** Moses' tabernacle represented the dwelling place of God on earth. That was past the *representation* of the dwelling place of God; this **tabernacle of God** is the reality of His presence.

i. **He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people:** This succinctly states essence of *God's desire* and *man's purpose*. Simply, God's desire is to live in close fellowship with man, and man's purpose is to be a people unto God.

ii. *This is the greatest glory of heaven, and the ultimate restoration of what was lost in the Fall. "I do not think the glory of Eden lay in its grassy walks, or in the boughs bending with luscious fruit-but its glory lay in this, that the 'Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day.' Here was Adam's highest privilege, that he had companionship with the Most High." (Spurgeon)*

d. **The former things have passed away:** The New Jerusalem is distinguished by what it does *not* have – no tears, no sorrow, no death or pain. Later it will be shown that the New Jerusalem has no temple, no sacrifice, no sun, no moon, no darkness, no sin, and no abomination.

i. “Man comes into the world with a cry; and goes out of it with a groan, and all between is more or less intoned with helpless wailing... But the Halleluias of the renewed world will drown out the voice of woe forever.” (Seiss)

e. **God will wipe away every tear from their eyes:** “*Every tear,*’ for they be many; – tears of bereaved affection, such as Mary, and Martha, and the widow of Nain wept; – tears of sympathy and mercy, such as Jeremiah and Jesus wept over the sins and the calamities of Jerusalem; – tears of persecuted innocence, tears of contrition and penitence for faults and crimes against the goodness and majesty of heaven; – tears of disappointment and neglect; – tears of yearning for what cannot now be ours; – these, and whatever others ever course the cheeks of mortals, shall then be dried forever.” (Seiss)

i. But the idea of tears in heaven should never be used as a tool of guilt-manipulation on this earth. “There is no just ground for imagining from this text that the saints will shed tears in heaven concerning the failures of their former life on earth. The emphasis here is on the comfort of God, not on the remorse of the saints.” (Walvoord)

3. ([Rev 21:5](#)) All things new.

Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

a. **He who sat on the throne said:** This is an authoritative announcement, coming from the throne of God itself. This is one of the few times in Revelation where we clearly see God speaking directly from His throne.

b. **Behold, I make all things new:** This statement is in the present tense, “*I am making everything new.*” This is the consummation of God’s work of renewal and redemption, having *begun* here and now in our present time.

i. Paul saw this transformation at work on *this side* of eternity: *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day... Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.* ([2 Corinthians 4:16](#), [5:17](#))

c. **All things new:** This is a brief glance at the thinking behind God’s eternal plan – to allow sin and its destruction in order to do a greater work of making **all things new**. At this point in His plan of the ages, the plan is complete. **All things** are **new**.

i. Our instinct is to romantically consider innocence as man’s perfect state, and wish Adam would have never done what he did. But we fail to realize that redeemed man is greater than innocent man, that we gain more in Jesus than we ever lost in Adam. God’s perfect state is one of redemption, not innocence.

ii. When God finally completes this work of making **all things new**, they will *stay new*. “Presumably this means not only that everything will be made new, but also that everything will stay then new. The entropy law will be ‘repealed.’ Nothing will wear out or decay, and no one will age or atrophy anymore.” (H. Morris)

d. **Write, for these words are true and faithful:** John was probably so astounded by these words that he forgot to **write** – and must be told to do so.

B. The nature of the New Jerusalem.

1. ([Rev 21:9-10](#)) An angel will show John the city in greater detail.

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and 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,

a. **I will show you the bride... showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem:** Passages like this make some wonder if the New Jerusalem is a literal *place* at all. Some suggest that it is really just an exotic symbol of the Church, the Bride of Christ.

b. **I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife:** This heavenly city is literal, but it is called **the bride, the Lamb's wife** because it is the place where all God's people are gathered. In this sense the New Jerusalem is certainly *like* the bride; but this association doesn't diminish the reality behind the image. The city is associated with the bride to awe us with a sense of its beauty.

2. ([Rev 21:11-14](#)) The city's brilliance, wall, gates and foundation.

Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Also she 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 foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

a. **Her light was like a most precious stone:** John was first impressed by the *glory* of this city. She shared in the **glory of God**, and it was expressed in the radiant light shining from her.

b. **She had a great and high wall:** The wall was not needed for defense, because there were no more enemies. But the **great and high wall** gave the city definition (this is no cosmic nirvana) and shows that some will be excluded from the city (only the righteous can enter).

c. **Twelve gates... and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:** The names of the tribes on the gates communicate the unity and heritage that the people of God have with Israel. God will never forget the tribes of Israel, even unto eternity.

i. **Three gates on the east, three gates on the north:** Some have thought the arrangement of gates looks back to the camp layout used during the Exodus ([Numbers 2](#)).

d. **The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb:** The foundations are an eternal testimony to the apostles, and their permanent place in God's plan. If it isn't build on the foundation of the apostles, it's isn't the right place for God's people.

i. The New Jerusalem and the church are founded upon the apostles ([Ephesians 2:20](#)).

3. ([Rev 21:15-17](#)) The dimensions of the city.

And he who talked with me had a gold reed 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. Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

a. **The city is laid out as a square:** The New Jerusalem's length, height and width are equal. This means that it is either a cube or a pyramid. A cube is reminiscent of the Holy Place of the tabernacle, suggesting that the en-

tire city is the Holy Place.

b. **He measured the city with the reed:** The size of the New Jerusalem is enormous; **twelve thousand furlongs** equals 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometers). This is the same distance from Maine to Florida; the square footage would approximate the size of the moon.

i. "A city of this size is too large for the imagination to take in. John is certainly conveying the idea of splendour. And, more importantly, that of room for all." (L. Morris)

ii. Henry Morris, guessing that there will have been 100 billion people in the human race through history, and that 20% of them will be saved, calculated that each person would have a "block" with about 75 acres on each face to call their own. This is highly speculative, but illustrates the point that there is plenty of room in the New Jerusalem.

c. **According to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel:** In this case, the cubit measure of a man is the same as an angel's measure of a cubit.

4. ([Rev 21:18-21](#)) The beauty of its structure.

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. The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

a. **The construction of its wall was of jasper:** When we read of **jasper** and **pure gold** and **all kinds of precious stones**, we should take these as literal representations; yet they express realities of another world. We can gain a brief glimpse of what John saw, but we can't even begin to see it in fullness until we see it with our own eyes.

i. John's use of riches in his description "is his way of bringing out the very great value of what God has for His people." (L. Morris)

b. **Jasper... sapphire... chalcedony:** The precise identification of these gemstones in modern terms is difficult, but the impression is of unending, staggering beauty.

i. "The symbolism is not meant to give the impression of wealth and luxury, but to point to the glory and holiness of God." (Johnson)

ii. If there is any Biblical reference point for this assortment of gemstones, it is probably the High Priest's breastplate ([Exodus 28:15-21](#)).

c. **Like clear glass... like transparent glass:** "The constant mention of transparency indicates that the city is designed to transmit the glory of God in the form of light without hindrance." (Walvoord)

i. If the dimensions and descriptions seem confusing or impossible, there are two main principles to keep in mind. First, we must understand the *ideas* communicated in the details (glory, beauty, splendor, and so forth). Second, we must understand that this is the city *whose architect and maker is God* ([Hebrews 11:10](#)). We should expect it to be beyond our comprehension.

C. The temple of the New Jerusalem.

1. ([Rev 21:22-23](#)) God is all in the New Jerusalem.

But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 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.

a. **But I saw no temple in it:** In the ancient world, it was unthinkable to have a great city without many different temples. It's like saying today, "I saw a great city but I saw no bank in it" or "I saw a great city but I saw no shopping mall in it." Nevertheless, in this city there was **no temple in it**.

b. **For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple:** Here, --the temple was not removed, but expanded. Every-thing and every place is holy and the dwelling place of God.

i. Before Jesus the temple was a prophecy. In the Christian era God's people are His temple. In the Millennium the temple will be a memorial. Here the temple is everywhere.

ii. "The inhabitants need no place of worship or sacrifice, the object of all worship being present, and the great sacrifice Himself being there." (Alford)

c. **No temple... no need of the sun or of the moon:** This reminds us that heaven will be a place of *pure* worship. The things we use to help us worship, but often end up *distracting* us in worship (such as buildings, music systems, customs, and so forth) will no longer be an issue. Our focus will be totally on the Person we worship, **the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb**.

i. In heaven, none of our joy, beauty, or knowledge will be based on *created things*, but only on the *Creator*. By faith, you can have it that way *now*. You can decide to trust in God so completely that your *joy*, what you consider *beauty*, and your foundation of *knowledge* are all based on Jesus, and not on anything created.

d. **The Lamb is its light:** Light speaks of *joy*, for in the Scriptures light and joy go together. Light speaks of *beauty*, because without light there is no beauty. Light speaks of *knowledge* and in heaven we will all know Him as He knows us.

2. ([Rev 21:24-27](#)) Access into the city.

And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its 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.

a. **The kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it:** What about these **kings of the earth**? Who are they? This is difficult to understand, and different commentators have different suggestions.

i. "How encouraging to note that not all were destroyed when the nations came to do battle against Jerusalem and the Lord Himself. There will also be 'kings of the earth' who will be a part of the eternal state." (Hocking)

ii. "Among the mysteries of this new heaven and earth this is set forth to us: that, besides the glorified church, there shall still be dwelling on the renewed earth nations, organized by kings, and [[Rev. 22:2](#)] saved by means of the influences of the heavenly city." (Alford)

b. **There shall by no means enter it anything that defiles:** Does this mean that such people will threaten the city? It isn't necessary to say that this is the idea, because all sinners and death have been cast into the Lake of Fire ([Revelation 20:11-15](#)). Instead, "The exhortation warns present readers that the only way to participate in the future city is to turn one's loyalties to the Lamb now." (Johnson)

A. The interior of the New Jerusalem.

1. ([Rev 22:1](#)) A river flowing from the throne of God.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

a. **A pure river of water of life:** Through the Old Testament, prophets used the picture of a river as a powerful expression of richness, provision, and peace ([Isaiah 48:18](#), [Zechariah 14:8](#), [Ezekiel 47:1-9](#)).

i. Or, as expressed by the Psalmist in [Psalm 46:4-5](#): *There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.*

ii. "One of the gladdest things on earth is water. There is nothing in all the world so precious to the eye and the imagination of the inhabitant of the dry, burning and thirsty East, as a plentiful supply of bright, pure, and living water." (Seiss)

iii. Poole wrote that this idea of this river was "To let us know, that in heaven there shall be no want of any thing that can make the saints happy."

b. **Clear as crystal:** God's provision in the New Jerusalem is described with pure, absolutely unpolluted waters. "Its waters are literal waters, of a nature and quality answering to that of the golden city to which they belong. Man on earth never knew such waters, as men on earth never knew such a city; but the city is a sublime reality." (Seiss)

c. **From the throne of God and of the Lamb:** This river of provision comes right from God's throne. Because it comes from God, it cannot be anything other than pure and abundant.

i. Ezekiel saw a glorious river ([Ezekiel 47](#)) flow down from the temple in Jerusalem and into the sea, but that river belongs to the millennial earth. It is perhaps the final preview of this heavenly river. This is a better river with better trees.

2. ([Rev 22:2](#)) The tree of life.

In the middle of its street, 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.

a. **The tree of life:** The Bible begins with a tree of life ([Genesis 3:22-24](#)) which man was not allowed to eat from after the sin at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now we see **the tree of life** again.

i. **In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river:** It's a little hard to picture this heavenly landscaping. John may be describing a large street with a river flowing down the middle, and a large tree – or series of trees – that grows with roots on either side of the river.

ii. This is how John Walvoord sees it: "The visual picture presented is that the river of life flows down through the middle of the city, and the tree is large enough to span the river, so that the river is in the midst of the street, and the tree is on both sides of the river."

iii. Others see that the word **tree** as a collective reference, speaks of rows of trees that stand on either side of the river. "The picture presented to the mind's eye would appear to be that of a wide street, with a river flowing down the center, like some of the broader canals of Holland, with trees growing on either side, all of them of the same kind, all called the tree of life. I do not know how we can make the figure out in any other

way.” (Spurgeon)

iv. Seeing the **tree of life** again points to a restoration of all things. “Now at last, almost at the end of the great drama of the Bible, man may return and legitimately enjoy the blessing which he was banished for illegitimately desiring.” (Preston/Hanson)

b. **Each tree yielding its fruit every month:** From all indications, this describes the world of the new heaven and the new earth, yet we are given a *time indicator*. Apparently, heaven will still mark time, but not be subject to it in the same way we are on this side of eternity.

i. Some people wonder if we will eat in heaven. The best answer is that we can eat, but will not have to. In His resurrection body, Jesus enjoyed food ([Luke 24:41-43](#), [John 21:12-14](#)). Angels ate with Abraham ([Genesis 18:6-8](#)). The great heavenly reunion between Jesus and His people is described as a marriage supper ([Revelation 19:9](#)). Even though man fell by what he ate, God will still allow us to eat in heaven.

ii. “Like the golden table of showbread which ever stood in the ancient Tabernacle and Temple for the priests to eat, so the Tree of Life stands in all the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, with its monthly fruit for the immortal king-priests of heaven.” (Seiss)

c. **The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations:** Why do the **nations** need **healing**? In the ancient Greek language, the word for **healing** can also mean “health-giving,” and this may be the sense here.

i. “The word for ‘healing’ is *therapeian*, from which the English word *therapeutic* is derived, almost directly transliterated from the Greek. Rather than meaning ‘healing,’ it should be understood as ‘health-giving,’ as the word in its root meaning has the idea of serving or ministering.” (Walvoord)

d. **Street... river... tree... fruit... leaves:** Are these pictures of heaven literal or symbolic? It may be that you can’t describe another dimension like heaven without using symbols, but they are symbols *connected* to their reality. What John saw may or may not be exactly like a river on earth, but when we see it we will also say, “That looks like a river.”

i. Even though this great chapter of the Bible tells us of heaven, we should think deeply about it and take in now what we can. “We do not suppose that a man is shooting at a target if he does not look that way; nor can we imagine that a man’s ambition is fixed on heaven if he has no heavenward thoughts or aspirations.” (Spurgeon)

3. ([Rev 22:3-5](#)) What it will be like and what the saints will do.

And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

a. **There shall be no more curse:** In heaven, the curse is gone. Since the fall, man and creation have lived with the effect of the curse described in [Genesis 3:16-19](#): sorrow and pain in childbirth for women, friction between the sexes, the necessity of hard and often futile work for man’s sustenance, and most of all *death*.

i. These aspects of the **curse** will even be present during the Millennium, though they will be greatly mitigated by the perfect rule of Jesus. [Isaiah 65:20](#) shows us that it is still possible for a sinner to be accursed in the millennial earth. But in the new heaven and new earth they are done away with forever. Instead of the **curse, the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it**. That’s quite an exchange.

ii. **The throne of God and of the Lamb:** “Henceforth, eternal praises to his name, the throne of God is the

throne of the Lamb. It is a throne of righteousness, but no less a throne of grace. There, on the throne of the Almighty, mercy reigns. According to the merit of the sacrifice and the virtue of the atonement all the statutes and decrees of the kingdom of heaven are issued. The altar and the throne have become identical. From that throne no fiery bolt can ever again be hurled against the believer, for it is the throne of the Lamb as well as the throne of God." (Spurgeon)

b. **His servants shall serve Him:** Heaven will be a place of work and service for God's people. However, this is a picture of the pure blessedness of service rather than arduous, curse-stained toil.

i. "Heaven is not a place of indolent leisure, but a place where service is done, centering on God." (L. Morris)

c. **They shall see His face:** Heaven will be a place where God's people **see His face**, a place of intimate, face to face fellowship with God. Moses was denied the privilege of seeing God face to face ([Exodus 33:20-23](#)), but everyone in heaven **shall see His face**.

i. **They shall see His face:** "By which I understand two things: first, that they shall literally and physically, with their risen bodies, actually look into the face of Jesus; and secondly, that spiritually their mental faculties shall be enlarged, so that they shall be enabled to look into the very heart, and soul, and character of Christ, so as to understand him, his work, his love, his all in all, as they never understood him before." (Spurgeon)

ii. Because of Jesus, we can know something of the face of God right now: *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* ([2 Corinthians 4:6](#)).

iii. Yet, Paul also anticipated a greater fulfillment of our seeing the face of God: *For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I am also known* ([1 Corinthians 13:12](#)). In that day there will be nothing that obscures our vision of Jesus:

- We will see Jesus clearly because sin is done away with
- We will see Jesus clearly because care and worry are gone
- We will see Jesus clearly because idols are done away with

iv. This will be the greatest glory of heaven: to know God, to know Jesus, more intimately and wonderfully than we ever could on earth. "It is the chief blessing of heaven, the cream of heaven, the heaven of heaven, that the saints shall there see Jesus." (Spurgeon)

v. "To look into the face of Christ signifies to be well acquainted with his person, his office, his character, his work. So the saints in heaven shall have more knowledge of Christ than the most advanced below. As one has said, the babe in Christ admitted to heaven discovers more of Christ in a single hour than is known by all the divines of the assemblies of the church on earth." (Spurgeon)

d. **His name shall be on their foreheads:** Heaven will be a place where God's people will forever be identified with their God, and there will never be any doubt that they belong to Him.

e. **There shall be no more night there:** Heaven will be a place where the darkness of this age will be forever gone. The light is not artificial, even from the sun – God Himself is the light.

f. **They shall reign forever and ever:** Heaven will be a place where God's people enjoy an eternal reign, in contrast to the limited duration of the Millennium. It will never end.