

## Revelation 22:1-10 – The River Of Life And Final Thoughts

**Rev. 22:1-5:** *“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of...”*

As we dive into Revelation 22, let me share what J. Vernon McGee writes regarding what we are about to read,

*“Up to this chapter, the New Jerusalem seems to be all mineral and no vegetable. Its appearance is as the dazzling display of a fabulous jewelry store; we wonder if there is no soft grass to sit upon, no green trees to enjoy, and no water to drink or food to eat. However, here are introduced the elements which add a rich softness to this city of elaborate beauty.”*

- In vs. 1 we read of a river of the water of life. Is it literal? Is it symbolic of God’s holiness and purity? Some have thought it refers to the Holy Spirit, baptism, cleansing of the nations. Why not simply accept that it is a literal river.
- The word for “river” can mean “stream” or “river.” Will we drink of the river? I don’t know. We will not need food or drink to sustain us because we will be glorified bodies. We cannot starve or thirst, but eating may be something we do as part of fellowship and life in the kingdom of God.
- Some see the river and tree of life as symbolizing abundant life.
- This river flows down the middle of the main street of gold (vs. 2), and I think based on the size of the city of the New Jerusalem, this main street is quite wide.
- In vs. 2 we read that on each side of this river are trees or tree of life on each side, which has twelve kinds of fruit, yielding fruit each month. See Rev. 2:7.
- What is the tree of life and why is it in heaven? Here are some ideas of what this tree is for and about:
  - A) Some believe that even in glorified bodies we need to eat of the tree to sustain our bodies and keep them in a glorified, incorruptible state.
  - B) Another view would say that our bodies are permanently glorified, and that eating is just something we enjoy in heaven and the tree of life is available.
  - C) There is the thought that the twelve fruit are symbolic of the abundant variety in heaven. I am assuming they mean the wonders of heaven.
  - D) We will probably be vegetarians in heaven. There is no more death.
- In vs. 2 it speaks of the leaves of the tree were for the “healing of the nations.” The word for “healing” means “curing” and of course “healing.” We get our word “therapeutic” from this word.
- There is a view that the leaves in some way enrich life in heaven.
- There is the thought that there are people who dwell on earth and who dwell in the New Jerusalem during the new heavens and new earth. In that there is a view that thinks that our glorified bodies are different depending on where we dwell. I am personally not sure of that.

J. Vernon McGee writes,

*“Even the leaves of the tree are beneficial—they have a medicinal value. Why healing is needed in a perfect universe is a very good question and a difficult problem to solve...I personally believe that the bodies of the earth dwellers in eternity will be different from the bodies of the believers in the church who are to be like Christ (that is, their bodies will be like His). The bodies of the earth dwellers may need renewing from time to time. This may be the reason that they come up to the New Jerusalem—not only to worship, but also to be renewed physically and spiritually. At least the prevention is there. However, the possibility of sin entering simply is not there.”*

- There is no more sin or disease to be healed.
- The fruit trees and the leaves, though there is no sickness and disease, may somehow contribute to the *“physical well-being of those in the eternal state.”* (Bible Knowledge Commentary)
- Vs. 3 says there is no more sin. There is nothing “accursed,” nothing to be judged or condemned for sin is no more. No sin, no illness, so literal healing for our bodies I do not think is necessary. And God’s servants (all believers) will worship and serve Him.

\*\* Let us go on a little side trip: We have talked about heaven before but there are just some reminders of what heaven will be like:

A) We will not be bored. What we will be able to do I cannot say for sure, but we are not going to get bored.

B) As vs. 4 notes, there is service in heaven. As followers of Christ, we will somehow serve in heaven doing various tasks. As we have mentioned before, there are those who think who we live our lives now will determine some of what we do in heaven as far as leading and administrating.

C) We know we fellowship with others, learn, serve, and I believe we will thoroughly enjoy the beauties of the new heaven and new earth.

- Vs. 4 tells us we will “see His face,” indicating the close relationship we will have with God. One writer says we will be in His “inner circle.” That would be every believer. What an amazing thought, the care of our God.
- Vs. 4 also tells us God’s name is written on our foreheads. We are sealed as His child forever. As we have mentioned before, our personalities are still with us but without the sins and flaws.
- Vs. 5 tells us we need no sun, or streetlamps, no need for any light, for God Himself will shine throughout the city and the universe and be our light.