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Then the Angel Showed Me the River of the Water of Life,
Clear as Crystal
22: 1-2

Then the angel showed me the River of the Water of Life, clear as crystal
DIG: What is the source of the river of life? Where will it flow? What will it do? Where is the Lamb? Why is this important? What was on each side of the river? Is there sickness in the Eternal State? What did the leaves of the tree do? Who will have access to the tree of life and the Holy City?

REFLECT: When you have physical problems, how does the *health-giving* attributes of the tree of life encourage you today? What will it be like to walk down the main thoroughfare of the great City? What will the leaves and fruit of the tree be like?

In this final chapter in the Holy Scriptures **John** continues to describe **the New Jerusalem**, and then ushers us on into eternity. When **he** closes with the last invitation, last warning and last prayer, the Bible is complete. All we need to know will have been revealed and recorded. Now we must wait expectedly for its fulfillment.

We were told at the beginning of the book that there is a blessing for **the one who reads the words of this prophecy (1:3).** So here at the end of **Revelation**, we can finally begin to comprehend, in some small way, **Christ's indescribable gift** of eternal life **(Second Corinthians 9:15)** to sinners who had earned the wage of eternal **death (Romans 6:23)**. Having heard and believed **the word of life (Philippians 2:16)**, having feasted on **the bread of life (John 6:35)** and drunk deeply of the **water of life (Revelation 21:6)**, assured that their names are indelibly written in **the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 3:5)**, and knowing that they will receive **the crown of life (Revelation 2:10)**, they will have eternal access to the **tree of life** (see the commentary on **Revelation Ga – I Am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright Morning Star**).[503]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, As I think of living with **You** forever in eternal peace and joy, my heart is filled to overflowing with gratefulness for who **You** are! **You** are so gracious to give us **Yeshua's** righteousness. **God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (Second Corinthians 5:21)**. **You** have given **Your Spirit** to live within believers: **I [Yeshua] will send Him to you (John 16:7c).** Not only did **You** pay our penalty for our sin, but **You** graciously put our sins **as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us (Psalms 103:12).** We love **You** and delight in worshipping and serving **You**. In the holy name of **Yeshua** and the power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

So far, **John** had only described the outer beauty of **the New Jerusalem**, with merely a quick glance at the golden street within it jasper walls. Now **he** will enter into **the City** itself, getting an introduction to the glory that has been prepared for our delight. The most noticeable of all is the mighty **river** of **clear** sparkling **water (Psalm 46:4)**. **Then the angel showed** him **the river of the water of life (22:1a).** Since there was **no longer any sea (21:1)**, the inexhaustible **water** supply of this mighty **river** will supply whatever hydrologic needs the new earth will have. This **water** will be **as clear as crystal**, just like the jasper walls of **the City (21:11)**. There surely will be an abundance of luxurious grasses, herbs and trees everywhere, as in the original created world. The whole earth will be a well-watered paradise of rich resources and fulfilling ministries for **His** people.[504]

The source of this **river** is not the rain and the hydrologic system, it will constantly flow from **God's throne** to **God's** people. We are reminded that **ADONAI** will make **everything new (21:5)!** We learn from the **Psalms** that **there** will be **a river whose streams make glad the City of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. The LORD is within her (Psalm 46:4-5a).** So while the **river** is literal, its symbolism is clear. Out of **the throne of God and the Lamb** will flow pure water, symbolic of the holiness and purity of **the LORD** and **the City**. This reference to a **river** should not be confused with the Millennial river as seen in **Ezeki'el 47:1**, **12**, or **Zechariah 14:8**. The **river of life** will be part of **the New Jerusalem**. It will flow **down the middle of the great street,** best translated *in the middle of its path,* or **the down the** main thoroughfare **of the City (22:1c)**.[505]

It is significant that **the Lamb** is pictured on **the throne**. Some have said that when **the end** comes and Christ **hands over the Kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all dominion, authority and power** of the devil, that **His** reign will end. But the fact that **He** is pictured on **the throne** during the Eternal

State shows us that **the Messiah** is **King of kings and Lord of lords** for all eternity **(17:14, 19:16)**.

On each side of the river stood the tree of life. The placement of **the street**, **the river**, and **the tree** is less than clear. It seems that the tree is large enough to span **the river**, so that **the river** is **in the middle of the great street**, and **the tree** is on both sides of **the river**. **The tree of life** that existed in the garden of Eden **(Genesis 2:9, 3:11, 22-24)**, will now return. It will be characterized by productivity, bearing **twelve** kinds **of fruit each month** of the year.[506] Just as **Jesus** ate and drank after being raised from the dead, believers will eat and drink in **the Holy City**. The fact that months are identified as such in **the New Jerusalem** indicates that the orbital and rotational motions of the earth will go on as **God** established in the very beginning and that the moon likewise will continue orbiting around the earth.[507]

Presumably this means not only that everything will be made new but also that everything will then *stay* new. The law of entropy will no long apply. Nothing will wear out or decay, no one will age or atrophy any more. Every **tree** will bear **fruit** abundantly and eternally. All things will remain eternally young and fresh and new, just as they were in the week of creation itself.[508]

And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. The word **healing**, or *therapeian,* can be understood as *health-giving.* The English word *therapeutic* is derived from this Greek word. Even though there is no sickness in the Eternal State, the tree's **fruit** and **leaves** seem to contribute to the physical well-being of believers.[509] **The leaves of the tree** will be like supernatural vitamins, since vitamins are taken not to treat illness, but to promote general health. Life in heaven will be fully energized, rich and exciting.[510] The word **nations** means

Gentiles. This again shows that the Jewish-Gentile distinction will continue though there will be no functional difference.

The **tree of** the knowledge of **good and evil (Genesis 3:1-7)** caused Adam and Eve to know right from wrong. It is how they learned what sin was. That **tree** caused their spiritual death (the separation of their soul and spirit from **God**) and their physical death (separation of their soul and spirit from the body), and as a result *cost them* immortality. **The tree of life**, however, does the opposite. Eating **its** fruit *brings them* immortality.[511]