

The First and the Last

*Everything that God does, there's a beginning, a middle, an ending
and the ending is a new beginning!*

Fred R. Coulter—June 29, 2024

Well, everyone's mind is on the news and I'll bring about the debate because that's interesting in itself.

Okay, here's a little humor. If you ask the question, are you better off than you were four years ago? *If so, you're an immigrant!*

NEWS:

#1—Now then, everyone's wondering what's happening in America, what's taking place and what's going to happen. Let's see some things that are not widely reported. One of them is that the Methodist Church had virtually given itself over to wokeism and to satanism. At Duke University, here is the picture entering the church, which says 'you are queerly beloved.' That also shows what happens when people leave God, get all involved in illicit sex. If there's any one thing that affects every human being, it is the sexuality and practices of every man and woman; that is indelibly ingrained in their minds.

#2—*Evangelical Seminaries Go Woke*. This one is in Pasadena at Fuller Theological Seminary. They're accepting all transgenders, all alphabet sexuality, and it's all going to come apart.

#3—This one says the impossible. I'll get some roosters for eggs, and I'll get some bulls for milk. Never happened! You can't change sex.

#4—*The Supreme Court Sides with the Biden Administration on Censorship*. That tells you that if it is disinformation, according to what the government says, they can ban it. Well, you need to think of all the ramifications that that's going to bring.

- Who is the One Who sets what's right and wrong?
- The government?
- Every person? *No!*

God does!

#5—This is south of the border in Mexico. La Presidente Claudia Sheinbaum says, 'We must return to our *Judeo-Aztec* values.'

Have you ever heard of that? That's going back to the ancient religion of the Aztecs, who were direct Satan-worshippers with human sacrifices and cannibalism.

So, she continues: 'Under my administration, Mexican women will once again

have the right to sacrifice her unborn child.' That's where the world is going today.

#6—Back here in America, let's look at another one: Robert Morris, a leading minister on TBN, had to resign because of sexual immorality for two years with an underage girl.

The Bible does not give any sanction to adultery for those who are of age. God says *no adultery!* Now, there is some help, some hope with things here in America that it may get a little better for a while.

#7—A Tennessee governor signs a bill calling for 30 days of prayer and fasting in July. He's asking all the churches and all the people to take a day individually of prayer and fasting. That is a good thing and certainly is needed.

I saw on the news last night that the state of Oklahoma is going to mandate that the Bible be taught and read in the public schools. So, let's see where all of these court cases go.

Then along with that, the growing home-schooling is really getting to the educational people in various states. Home-schooling they find out that:

- they're more well prepared for work
- they understand how to do tasks
- they're more educated
- they're more reliable
- they're more moral

than those coming out of all of the public schools! Then it talks about how the government is beginning to take over more and more and more.

So, those are some of the headlines that we have today.

Let's take a few minutes and look at what God says concerning leaders and kings or in modern parlance today: prime ministers and presidents. Here's what we need to understand concerning the Bible. The Bible is the most important book in the world, and it's for every person, man, woman and child, regardless of age. It's for all those who are in government.

We're going to look at some verses that talk about kings and rulers. All of those who are the begotten children of God today and have the Holy Spirit of God, we find in Rev. 20 that they are going to be appointed as kings and priests to administer the coming Kingdom of God and rule on earth for a thousand years, and then on into eternity after that.

Now, *all the laws that God has set in motion*—whether written in the Bible or found in what is called nature—*are all function automatically!* Remember that every single one of the Ten Commandments, when you keep them, functions automatically in keeping you in contact with God.

When you break them, it functions automatically to leave you to your own devices and then Satan moves in!

Proverbs 29:2: “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; **but** when the wicked rule, the people mourn.”

- Does this not tell you the state of the nation today?
- Isn't that the battle going on? *Yes, it is!*

Verse 4: “The king establishes the land by justice...”—*righteous judgment*; all has to be based on the principles of the Laws of God.

Now notice a perfect description of the whole Biden family right here:

“...**but he who takes bribes tears it down**” (v 4).

- Isn't that happening in America today?
- Why is it so bad? *Because the people in general*—beginning, especially with the teachers of Orthodox Christianity—*have been*:
 - ✓ rejecting God
 - ✓ rejecting His commandments
 - ✓ rejecting His Truth

Now we have so much invasion of satanism, wokeness and witchcraft!

- Can that be turned back?
- How much? *We don't know, we'll have to wait and see!*

It's interesting that all of these are in one chapter here:

Verse 12: “**If a ruler hearkens to lies, all his servants are wicked.**”

Doesn't that tell you what's happening in Washington, D.C., and in all of these the states in America that are run by those people who are satanist and God rejecting?

And they call themselves ‘Democrat’ or ‘Progressive.’ There's nothing democratic about what they do, and there's nothing progressive about what they do. *It is all labeled in the Bible as sin!*

Verse 14: “A king who faithfully judges the poor, his throne shall be established forever.”

Why? *Because truth always wins!* Now, it can be defeated for a while, but truth always wins!

Verse 16: “When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases; but the righteous shall see their fall.”

Now, here is what some of these states are doing. We need to understand that Louisiana, Tennessee and Alabama all are trying to bring back the truth of the public use of the Bible and acknowledging God. Now, even though they're not being called to salvation, that acknowledgement will be recognized by God. So maybe we will have a little respite from all the difficulties that are taking place.

Verse 25: “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever puts his trust in the LORD shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favor, but each man's judgment *comes* from the LORD. An unjust man *is* an abomination to the just, and *he who is* upright in the way *is* an abomination to the wicked” (vs 25-27).

That describes the battle going on today! Just watch it on the news. It's amazing! Absolutely amazing what is taking place.

We don't know what's going to happen, but it is certainly clear that through the debate that *President Biden is completely unfit to be president*, not only because he takes bribes and he's been paid off by the Chinese, but *because*:

- he doesn't have the capacity to think
- he doesn't have the capacity to make right decisions

The only way they can give him any energy is they give him whatever they give him to give him energy. Then yesterday in Raleigh, North Carolina, he had a rally, and one thing he said, he said, ‘One thing I can tell you, I know how to tell the truth!’ *Which was the biggest lie he ever said!* So, that's the way that the news is going today.

The First and the Last

Let's see how this applies over and over again, even in the layout of the Bible, and also in God's instructions to us so that we know what we need to do.

Deut. 8 talks about the beginning of the generation when they were going into the land and what they should do and the commandments they need to keep, and then what was the end of it. So, this is a command and a prophecy:

Here's what Moses is telling them; remember that *they were the first ones to hear God speak the Ten Commandments directly!* When they first heard it, they said, ‘Oh, yes, all that the Lord has said we will do.’ *But they never did it!*

Therefore, they had to wander for 40 years, and the last end of them was that everyone over 20-years-old died in the wilderness.

There's the first and there's the last! Now then, whenever there's the last, ***there's also a new beginning!***

Here in Deut. it's a new beginning with the generation that was under 20 years old, now grown up and ready to go into the 'promised land.' So Moses tells them this:

Deuteronomy 8:1: "All the commandments, which I command you this day, shall you be diligent to observe *and to do* that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land, which the LORD swore to your fathers."

- Isn't that the way?
- How does it start out?

Many times in the Bible, there's the righteous king then an evil king. Then that generation goes, and then there's a righteous king and there's an evil king.

So, we see this action of human nature first and last in the way that God works, as well.

Verse 2: "And you shall **remember** all the way, which the LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness in order to humble you, to prove you, to know what is in your heart..."

That's what God wants to know with us today. *Same thing!* Whenever we have trials and difficulties, God wants to know:

- What are you going to do?
- What are you going to choose?
- How are you going to react?
- Are you always going to choose Me?

"...so that He might make you know..." (V 3).

Now, Jesus quoted this at the beginning of his ministry when he was tempted by Satan the devil.

"...so that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone; **but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD** does man live.

That's always a beginning place. But let's see what God added to this and leads up to what's going to happen if they don't do it, because God always starts out telling what's going to happen. Then he's going to tell a warning what will happen if you don't do what is right.

Verse 4: "Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years." *Everything they had lasted!*

Verse 5: "And you shall consider in your heart... [we need to understand with the heart] ...that **as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you.** And you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God to walk in His ways and to fear Him" (vs 5-6).

So again, over and over and over again, and look at the whole history of the world when it comes to this.

Verse 7: "For the LORD your God brings you into a good land..."

As I covered last time concerning America and everything that God has done for us, that He certainly has done that for America.

"...a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey, a land in which you shall eat bread without scarceness... [that has certainly been true of America] ...You shall not lack any *thing* in it. *It is* a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you may dig copper" (vs 7-9).

It says in Deut. 32:13 that you can suck oil out of the rock.

Now God gives a warning, because when things go well, what's the first thing that people do? *They forget God!* They look at the blessings and take them as automatic that they're always going to be there.

So, He gives a warning here in v 10, and then He tells them what the end of that will be later on, because ***you have the beginning, and you have the ending!*** The beginning is the first and the ending is the last.

Verse 10: "When you have eaten and are full... [Sound like us today?] ...then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land, which He has given you. **Beware** that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command you today" (vs 10-11).

- What happens when you do that?
- Can you choose not to keep the Sabbath?
- Can you choose to break any one of the Ten Commandments?
- Can you choose to lie?
- Can you choose to covet?
- Can you choose to bow down to idols?

Yes!

God leaves all the choices to us because He does not want robots. God wants us to choose to

love Him. That's the whole foundation of everything, so He gives the warning here:

Verse 12: "Lest **when** you have eaten and are full and have built goodly houses and lived in *them*, and **when** your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied" (vs 12-13).

- Isn't that true?
- Don't we have that?

Stop and think, just in your own house:

- How much do you have above and beyond the necessities of living? *Got all kinds of things, yes indeed.*
- What happens when you do that?

Verse 14: "**Then** you become haughty of heart..."

You think in your own ways, and that's right where we are in America. We're beyond that point. We're beyond that many people are that way. There are a few trying to return like in Louisiana and Tennessee, Alabama, and Oklahoma, but we'll see where that goes, and we will see what the Supreme Court will do.

Verse 14: "**Then** you become haughty of heart... [when that happens]: ... **and you forget the LORD your God** Who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage." *That's what happens, people forget!*

Verse 16: "Who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, so that He might humble you and that He might prove you to do you good in your latter end."

Look at it this way: every single trial you go through, it's so that if you go through it and trusting in God, he does you good at your latter end. So, there's the first: you have a trial. Then you have the last, the ending of what is going to be. Is it going to be a blessing or more cursing? Here's what happens:

Verse 17: "**Beware**... [that's another way of saying **being on guard**] ...lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of *my* hand has gotten me this wealth.'"

Isn't that what they say today concerning America?

- look at how industrious we are
- look at all that we have done
- look at how good we are
- let's return to the Judeo-Christian things

Well, that's what got us in trouble in the first place, because it wasn't completely God's way. Now then, God gives another warning here:

Verse 18: "But you shall **remember** the LORD your God, for *it is* He Who gives you power to get wealth...."

That's why he commands tithes and offerings, so that you acknowledge that what you have came first from God. He's able to take care of you when you have tithes and offerings that you give.

"...so that He may confirm His covenant, which He has sworn to your fathers as it is this *very* day" (v 18). **Then He gives another warning!** Now look at:

- remember
- don't forget
- remember
- don't forget

Verse 19: "And it shall be **if** you do at all forget the LORD your God and walk after other gods serving them and worshiping them... [Isn't that what happens over and over again?] ... **I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish—yes, perish.** As the nations whom the LORD destroys before your face" (vs 19-20). *So, there is the command!*

Now we'll see something very interesting with the book of Psalms. Psa. 1 is really interesting, because it tells us what's going to happen in all the rest of the book of Psalms. Maybe you've never thought of it that way, but that's what it is. The very first Psalm tells you many things in summary. So, you can take this Psalm and do a diagram of it with everything else that is mentioned here in summary and bring in all the details to it.

Psalm 1:1: "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful."

Blessings only come if you don't go against God, or if you don't join the wicked. Here's how the blessing comes.

Verse 2: "But his delight is in the Law of the LORD; and in His Law does he meditate day and night."

Think about what we have in the New Testament; Hebrews 10:16: "...says *the* Lord, 'I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds'"—*that's all part of it!*

Then you can take this verse 2 and you can tie in all of Psa. 119.

- I love Your Law
- I love Your Precepts
- I love Your Commandments
- I love Your Word

All of that right there sprouts out from v 2!

Here's what happens: God's blessings will come. They may not come in the timing that you think or the way that you suppose, but they will nevertheless come.

Psalm 1:3: "He shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water which brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not wither, and all that he does shall prosper."

That's what God wants. He wants you to have success. He wants you to enjoy life, but He wants you to love Him and honor Him and let your delight be in God, in His commandments, and in His way.

Now notice, on the other hand we have good and evil. *Note:*

Deuteronomy 30:15: "Behold, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil... [v 19]: I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live." *That's exactly what this says:*

Verse 4: "The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff, which the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish" (vs 4-6).

What do we have right here? *Eternal life!* Eternal death *or* eternal life? You can put that in the first resurrection, and you can also put that in there the second resurrection to the Lake of Fire; the way of the wicked will perish.

You can see that over and over and over again throughout all history, and in individuals' lives and in individual families.

Psalm 2—What do we have here? *Prophecy of Christ!* Isn't that amazing? *Prophecy of the coming Kingdom of God on earth!*

Right here, these first two Psalms, right at the beginning, the first tells you exactly what God does.

Psalm 2:1: "Why did the nations rage and the people plot in vain?"

How many times cannot be applied to the things that wicked people have done? *Over and over and over again!*

Verse 2: "The kings of the earth set themselves...."

What are the prophecies in the book of Daniel in the book of Revelation concerning the

nations and the rising and fall and the ending of them when the Kingdom of God comes on the earth?

"...and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ, saying... [and the saints when they return] ...'Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us'" (vs 2-3).

Isn't that what they want to do? They want to get rid of everything that pertains to God and the Bible.

That's what's going to happen when you have the government who decides what is correct information and what is disinformation. Because everything will be turned upside down and that which is wrong will be declared that which is right, and that which is good will be declared that which is evil. That's precisely what we have today. So, look right here in the second Psalm, and all this that it's teaching us.

Verse 4: "He Who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. 'Yea, I have set My King upon Zion, My Holy mountain'" (vs 4-6).

That is Christ! His second return! Now, He had a type of it when He was in the flesh on the earth as a human being. Remember in the last days before His crucifixion He came into Jerusalem riding on a colt and a foal.

And they said, 'Hosanna, King, and all the religious leaders were furious and wanted to kill Him. So, they came up to Him and they said, 'Tell your disciples to quit saying, 'Hosanna, the highest, the King, the Son of David.'

He said, 'If I did, the rocks would speak out. So, there it is setting up the Kingdom of God.

Verse 7: "I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You.'"

That was on the very day that he was begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary.

Verse 8: "'Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession.'"

What is this telling us? *The Kingdom of God ruling the whole world!* So, this is quite a thing, just in these two Psalms. See how much is there right in the beginning? And within that there's *a beginning and ending* within the beginning and the ending. So, it's quite an amazing thing the way the Bible is structured.

Verse 9: "'You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's

vessel.’ Now therefore, be wise, O kings...” (vs 9-10).

Now it would be good if all the rulers of the world would read the Bible, which they should *but don't!* That would tell them like we read in Prov. 29, what to do and how to act, and what they should bring to the people.

Verse 10: “Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be admonished O judges of the earth.”

- He’s telling the rulers of the earth, ‘go My Way with My Laws’
- He’s telling the judges of the earth, ‘look at the Bible, look at the Scriptures *and find out how to judge righteous judgment*

Verse 11: “Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for His wrath can flame up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him” (vs 11-12).

Now let’s come to the middle section, Psa. 75. Now this is interesting indeed, halfway through, let’s see what we have here. Then we will look at the last two Psalms. Then we will have the beginning, the middle, and the ending. Let’s see what that portrays.

Psalm 75:1: “Unto You, O God, we give thanks; to You we give thanks, for Your name is near, men tell of Your wonderful works. ‘When I appoint the set time, I will judge uprightly. When the earth and all its people are dissolved, I hold up its pillars. Selah”” (vs 1-3).

In other words, when it comes to the point of total destruction, God’s not going to allow it.

Verse 4: “I said to the arrogant, ‘Do not boast’...”

What did we read back there in Deut. 8? Don’t be lifted up and become haughty in heart and mind! There we have the same thing here.

Verse 5: “Do not lift up the horn; do not lift up your horn on high; nor speak with a stiff neck.’ For promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is Judge; He puts down one and sets up another” (vs 5-7).

That ties in with Dan. 2, that He raises up a nation, takes it down, raises up a king, takes him down.

Of course, all the prophecies in the book of Daniel go from that time to the return of Christ. So, what God was doing there in Babylon with Daniel. Remember, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were ruling the province of Babylon. Amazing!

Verse 7: “But God is Judge; He puts down one and sets up another, for in the hand of the LORD there is a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices; and He pours out from it; but the dregs of it, all the wicked of the earth shall drain its dregs and drink them” (vs 7-8).

That’s talking about the seven last plagues at the end, as well as down through time.

Psa. 149-150—Now this is interesting indeed, because these are the last two Psalms; here we have the ending. This talks about the Kingdom of God and goes on into New Jerusalem and the whole situation with the New Heavens and New Earth.

Psalm 149:1: “O praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King” (vs 1-2)—*that’s at the resurrection!*

This is in Jerusalem when Christ returns, and then New Jerusalem when the New Heavens and Earth come. So, this is an amazing thing!

Verse 3: “Let them praise His name in the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the drum and lyre; for the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He crowns the meek with salvation” (vs 3-4).

Everyone shall be rewarded according to their works and the blessing that God gives them and how they live their lives. Isn’t that true? You read what does it say about the faithful one who takes care of the talents. He says, ‘*Enter into the joy of the Lord!*’ There it is right here.

Verse 5: “Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand” (vs 5-6).

We’re going to rule them with a rod of iron. So, there it is.

Verse 7: “To execute vengeance upon the nations and punishments upon the people, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with iron bands, to carry out upon them the judgment written—this honor have all His saints. O praise the LORD!” (vs 7-8).

When it says we’re going to be kings and priests, we’re also going to be judging.

Psa. 150—there are 13 ‘praises’ within this short six-verse Psalm.

Psalm 150:1: “O ¹**praise** the LORD. ²**Praise** God in His sanctuary...”

He will be there in New Jerusalem. The Father and Christ will be there in New Jerusalem.

“...^[#3]**praise** Him in the firmament of His power” (v 1).

Look at the universe and see all the God has made and created and praise Him for it.

Verse 2: “^[#4]**Praise** Him for His mighty acts...”

Look back and see:

- what He’s going to accomplish with the return of Christ
- what He does all through the Millennium
- what He does in the Great White Throne Judgment

All of those things to the praise of God. Think about what it’s going to be. Remember that one sentence there in Rev. 20; it talks about the first resurrection and then it says, **‘and the rest of the dead live not again till the thousand years are finished!’** That’s an amazing thing, **the secret of the second resurrection!**

Verse 2: “^[#4]**Praise** Him for His mighty acts; ^[#5]**praise** Him according to His excellent greatness. ^[#6]**Praise** Him with the sound of the ram’s horn; ^[#7]**praise** Him with the harp and lyre. ^[#8]**Praise** Him with the drum and dance; ^[#9]**praise** Him with stringed instruments and pipes. ^[#10]**Praise** Him on the loud cymbals; ^[#11]**praise** Him with the resounding cymbals. Let everything that breathes ^[#12]**praise** the LORD. O ^[#13]**praise** the LORD!” (vs 2-6).

Tie this last Psalm in with the first Psalm. Let’s also look at this in another way.

We have Gen.1, ‘make man in his image and his likeness.’

Now then, what do we have that God created in Gen. 2 for Adam and Eve to live in? **The Garden of Eden!** Let’s see what is in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2:8: “And the LORD **God planted a garden eastward in Eden**; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. **The Tree of Life also was in the middle of the garden, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil**” (vs 8-9).

- Tree of Life
- Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

showing that God gives us the choice!

We know the rest of the story there with that. So, we have in **the beginning God created!** Then He finishes His work, and we will see that in the book of Revelation here in just a minute. But look at what He has done all the way through here.

Everything that God does, there’s a beginning, there’s a middle, and there’s an ending.

Now, let’s come to Rev. 21, and let’s see how that ties in with Gen. 1, which is the beginning, and this is the ending, **and the ending is a new beginning!** It always works that way. That’s how God does it:

- the beginning and the ending
- the first and the last

That’s why Jesus said, **‘I’m the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending, the Alpha and the Omega.’**

Revelation 21:1: “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth...”

Genesis 1:1: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

Revelation 21:1: “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.”

So, everything’s going to change when the completion of God’s Plan takes place. Amazing!

Verse 3: “And I heard a great voice from heaven say, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men; and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes... [take away the pain] ... and *there* shall not be anymore death, or sorrow, or crying; neither shall *there* be any more pain, because the former things have passed away.’ And He Who sits on the Throne said, **‘Behold, I make all things new.’**....” (vs 3-5).

The first and the last, the beginning and the ending! Whenever there’s an ending, there’s a new beginning; that’s what we have right here, that’s the structure of the whole Bible.

You can probably take this to the beginning and the ending, and you can match that up with many different things in the Bible all the way through.

“...**‘Behold, I make all things new.’** Then He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’ And He said to me, ‘It is done. **I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End....**’” (vs 5-6).

Then He puts in the rest of this verse about those who want to enter into New Jerusalem, you have to do it God’s way:

“...To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the Water of Life” (v 6).

What did we have in the original Garden of Eden? *We had the river and we had the Tree of Life!* That was all taken away because of sin.

You can read all the rest here about what the New Jerusalem is going to look like. And let's see how at the ending that that expands upon what was at the beginning.

Revelation 22:1: "Then he showed me a pure river of *the* Water of Life..."

What is that going to be like? *When I read this, I don't have an idea in my mind what that is going to be like!*

"...clear as crystal, flowing out from the Throne of God and of the Lamb" (v 1).

Just like it was back there in the Garden of Eden. But now with God on the earth, right there at New Jerusalem! Amazing! And you read how He's going to have New Jerusalem made. That's going to be a tremendous place to live.

Verse 2: "*And* in the middle of *the* street, and on this side and that side of the river, *was the* Tree of Life..."

- What did we find in the beginning? ***The Tree of Life!***
- What do we find here at the ***new beginning*** after the ending of everything has taken place? ***The Tree of Life!***
- I don't know how this is going to work
- I don't know what it's going to be like to eat spiritual food
- I have no idea what it's going to be like to drink spiritual wine

When I read about the marriage supper of the Lamb and all that takes place with that, that makes me wonder how that's going to be, ***but it will be!***

"...*the* Tree of Life, producing twelve *manner of* fruits, each month yielding its fruit; and the leaves of the tree *are* for *the* **healing** of the nations" (v 2).

Now the Greek there is 'therapeia,' which means *to also maintain*. So that tells us that something is going to go on in all eternity to maintain what is right and good forever.

Verse 3: "And there shall be no more curse; and the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him, **and they shall see His face; and His name is in their foreheads**" (vs 3-4).

- At the beginning, did not God talk with Adam and Eve?
- Did they not see him?

Of course, they saw Him in what He appeared as a human type form, because no man can look upon the face of God and live. That's what God told Moses when Moses wanted to see God's glory.

He said, 'You can't look on my face and live, but I'll put you in the cleft of a rock and I'll let you see my back parts.' "...**and they shall see His face; and His name is in their foreheads.**"

Verse 5: "And there shall be no night there; for they have no need of a lamp or *the* light of *the* sun, because *the* Lord God enlightens them; and they shall reign into the ages of eternity."

Wow! Way out there "...into the ages of eternity."

- What on earth is that going to be like?
- What's going to happen?

There's the beginning, the ending, the first and the last. When we come to the new beginning, then it also extends on out into the vastness of the universe. Today with the Hubble telescope and the James Webb telescope, ***they can see far out into the universe!*** I'm sure God has caused that to be so that we would have an idea of what is telling us here in Rev. 22.

But you see how you have *the beginning*, you have the physical, and *then the ending*, and *the new beginning*, you have the total spiritual. All of that, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, all the way through.

Verse 6: "...*These words are* faithful and true..."

That is an amazing statement, because when we understand how important that the Bible is, and how important that all the words of eternal life that we have now:

- through Christ
- through the apostles
- through the Word of God
- through the Spirit of God

"...*These words are* faithful and true..." What does that tell us? *Same thing with the marriage supper of the Lamb!* "...*These words are* faithful and true..."

It's going to happen! That's why we need to really understand the power that God has put into His Word. It's always there. *But we don't understand it:*

- **until** we come to God with His Spirit
- **until** we come to the point that we begin to understand

then with exercise of time and trials and testing and so forth, we understand more.

Here it is. This is quite a thing, *where it's the ending and the new beginning!*

Verse 6: "And he said to me, 'These words are faithful and true, and the Lord God of the Holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things that must shortly come to pass.' "**Behold, I am coming quickly....**" (vs 6-7).

To Christ and to God, quickly may not be as quickly as we as human beings think! We think immediately.

"...Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book" (v 7).

What did we read back in Deut. 8? *Same thing!* At the beginning of them going into the 'promised land,' He told them:

- keep the commandments
- obey Me
- follow Me

'I'm going to give you this land!'

Well, that's a type of what's going to be for the Kingdom of God for us. *He's going to bring us into the Kingdom of God!*

What did He tell them there? **Keep the commandments and remember what I said!** Other places He said **remember the Sabbath!**

So you see that all of these things tie together. That's why the world rejects it! That's why they don't understand anything because who has the power of the world today? *None other than Satan the devil!*

1-John 5:19: "**...that the whole world lies in the power of the wicked one**"—*he is deceiving all nations!*

Well, all of that's going to ***come to an end!***
Then:

- the Millennium is going ***to come to an end***
- the Great White Throne Judgment will ***come to an end***

Then there will be the New Heavens and the New Earth ***and there will be no ending, because everything will be eternal from that point on!***

Revelation 22:7: "...Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.... [everything in the Bible from Genesis all the way through] ...Now I, John, was the one who saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who was showing me these things. But he said to me, 'See that you do not do this! For I am a fellow

servant of yours, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. **Worship God**" (vs 7-9).

He gives the blessing of eating of the Tree of Life.

Verse 12: "And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last" (vs 12-13). *He can do that because He's eternal!*

Verse 14: "**Blessed are those who keep His commandments, that they may have the right to eat of the Tree of Life, and may enter by the gates into the city.**"

- no more Satan
- no more sin

because that is the beginning of the ages of eternity for all of us!

- think about that
- think about how many times that you can read in the Bible about a beginning, about an ending

Ephesians is the 5th Epistle of Paul and five is the number of grace.

Let's see what Paul is writing about in Eph. 3, because he knew that what he was doing was leading up to the end of his life; he was in prison and he didn't know how long he was going to live.

But God had given to him and to all of the apostles the understanding what I'm going to read here in the rest of chapter three. ***This is what God wants! This is the great finality right here!*** We are all a part of that:

- with God's Spirit
- with His Laws
- with His Truth
- with His Word
- with everything that God is doing

Ephesians 3:9: "And that I might enlighten all *as to what is* the fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ."

So you see how again and again what Lyall brought in his message—Who Do You Say Jesus Is? #4—what I'm bringing here, it all ties together.

Verse 10: "So that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places."

There are some things that God gives to us to understand that even some of the angels don't understand. That's a hard thing to wrap your mind around, isn't it?

Verse 11: "According to *His* eternal purpose..."

Remember in Titus 1 that the Plan of God was ***before the ages of time!*** So, God is reaching down here to call us to bring us to the knowledge of His Truth so that we can be inspired in these terrible days that are ahead of us, **and we can have our minds fixed on what it needs to be!**

Verse 11: "According to *His* eternal purpose, which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and *direct* access with confidence through His *very* own faith" (vs 11-12).

Isn't that an amazing thing? *Now you think about that!* Sometimes people get all bogged down in prayer and they don't know what to say. Well think on this: ***God has given us the privilege to come before Him,*** and call God the Father ***our Father*** and He hears our prayers directly. Think on that!

That's why daily prayer, daily study is so important, especially in the days with so much evil coming around us.

Verse 13: "So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are *working* for your glory."

That goes for any trial that you may go through. Don't worry about it. Ask God to help you understand and learn from the lesson of it. Go forward from there.

Verse 14: "For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, **that He may grant you...**" (vs 14-16).

This is what God wants to give us. Ultimately, the final fulfillment of that will be at the resurrection. But now with God's Spirit we can partake of it with prayer and study and yieldedness to God through His Spirit that He's given us.

Verse 16: "That He may grant you according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man.**"

- strength within
- faith within
- love within

then all of that expressed outward through the way that we live, act and think!

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith... [*Christ in us is the hope of glory!*] ...and that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend..." (vs 17-18).

God wants us to continue to grow in grace and knowledge with this beyond anything we've ever expected.

"...with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height" (v 18).

God wants us, with His Spirit, to have our knowledge and our vision and our thoughts, everything that we do, be expanded greatly with God's Spirit.

Verse 19: "And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge **so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**"

*Now that is the ending! **The resurrection!***

"...[to]**be filled with all the fullness of God.**"

Is that going to happen? *Of course. it is!*
Down through time all the saints:

- they had the faith of Christ
- they lived through difficult times
- many of them were martyred
- many of them were persecuted, 'chased from pillar to post'

But they firmly believed in God the Father and Jesus Christ, because they held on to this

Verse 20: "Now, to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think..."

So, God has plans for us that we don't even know about. That's amazing to understand.

"...according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 20-21).

- there's the *first*
- there's the *last*
- there's the *beginning*
- there's the *ending*

Christ is the Alpha and the Omega! He's the One, the first and the last to carry it out. This gives you an overarching framework to understand the Bible even more.

That it does agree—Old Testament, New Testament—all the words of God, all the things that are here. ***That we can in these difficult times stay strong, love God and serve Him the way we need to!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Proverbs 29:2, 4, 12, 14, 16, 25-27
- 2) Deuteronomy 8:1-14, 16-20
- 3) Psalm 1:1-2
- 4) Hebrews 10:16
- 5) Psalm 1:3
- 6) Deuteronomy 30:15, 19
- 7) Psalm 1:4-6
- 8) Psalm 2:1-12
- 9) Psalm 75:1-8
- 10) Psalm 149:1-9
- 11) Psalm 150:1-6
- 12) Genesis 2:9
- 13) Revelation 21:1-6
- 14) Revelation 22:1-7
- 15) 1 John 5:19
- 16) Revelation 22:7-9, 12-14
- 17) Ephesians 3:9-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 20
- Deuteronomy 32:13
- Psalm 119
- Daniel 2
- Genesis 1
- Titus 1

Also referenced: Message—*Who Do You Say Jesus Is? #4*—by Lyall Johnston

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