**Healing The Nations**

**Revelation 22:2 “**In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.” These verses have caught the attention of bible students down through the ages. In our studying we have come to the conclusion that all in heaven have new resurrection bodies, and that these new spiritual bodies can’t get sick. If our conclusions are correct, why would there be a need for leaves that heal? Some conclude that the tree is not even a real tree, but is symbolic, if this is true then I suppose we would want to figure out what the symbolism is teaching. If this is a real tree, (and I believe it is,) then I suppose there are several conclusions that one might consider if there is a need for healing in the new heaven and new earth age. One consideration might be that not everyone in the eternal age will have “glorified” spiritual bodies. Another thought might be that the healing of “nations” might be considering groups or different governments of people that the Kings are ruling over. If it is talking about nations rather than individual people we still need an answer to what that healing is referring to. We are not given a lot of scripture concerning this reference to healing other than in the Old Testament there is a scripture that sounds very similar, **Ezekiel 47:12 “**And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.” We find reference to the Tree of Life in Genesis in the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve are blocked from entering back into the garden after they are removed for their sin. The reason for not letting them in is because they might eat from the tree of life and live forever in their sinful bodies. It is clear that the eating of the fruit produces eternal life but those in the New Jerusalem already have eternal life so the benefits must yield some other satisfaction. In the garden we have no information about the value of the leaves. The context of Ezekiel’s information is not clear whether he is talking about the tree in the New Jerusalem. Though we do not have many scriptural references to the scriptures in Revelation, I believe an examination of many facts established by God’s word will help us make some conclusions. Let’s start with some geographical information concerning the location of the tree and proximities of the people near it. We are looking at heaven and earth at the beginning of the eternal ages. Earth as we know it now is gone, the millennial reign has completed, the Devil, his angels, the false prophet and the beast have been cast into the Lake of Fire. Lost mankind from Adams age until the end of the millennial reign have been judged and cast into the Lake of Fire. God has renovated the earth and the New Heaven and New Earth have begun. We are considering a time on earth when only the saved children of God will be with God, His angels, and other creatures of His Kingdom. There appears to be two very distinct areas separate from each other. **Revelation 3:12** Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.” The New Jerusalem sets in the center of this new earth. It’s description is clearly different from the rest of the earth. It is described as having gold streets, walls made of amazing jewels, rivers flowing out of the throne of Christ, a place where the tree of life is available to those who live in it, and a place where the Bride of Christ lives with Him. The size of this city is also staggering when we find it to be a 1500 mile cube, (city foursquare) It is so tall that it would extend up above our present atmosphere and it has twelve gates on the outside of its base and they are 360 miles apart all the way around it. The area on the outside of the city is a place where the nations of saved people live. **Revelation 21:24-26 “**And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.” It appears that saved people who have not met God’s standards of the “Overcommers” are not allowed to live on the inside of the city. It doesn’t appear that it is a terrible place to live as Jesus tells His church in **John 14:2-3 “**In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.” These verses tell us that there are mansions that God’s children will be living in on the outside of the city. The faithful bride is given the promise that Jesus would build them a Mansion where the two of them would live in eternity. The place that Jesus describes in John 14 is the building that His faithful church will dwell with Him in, it is this 1500 mile city foursquare with the streets of Gold and the Tree of Life. God is going to reward His faithful servants, not all the saved will have the same things or live in the same places in the eternal age. **1 Corinthians 3:11-15 “**For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” We further discover from Revelation the second and third chapter as Jesus speaks to His churches, (singular, not a universal church of all the saved,) that to each one He offers something special, that is connected to the inside of the New Jerusalem, to all of those who “Overcome.” The outside of the city is huge. Consider the 1500 mile perimeter of the New Jerusalem, from that point going out, east, west, south, north, as far as is necessary to contain all of the saved from Adams time until the end who were not obedient to the commands of God. What is the percentage today, among people who profess to know Jesus as their Savior, who are obedient to His commandments and would be considered “Overcomers” by the standards of Rev. 2&3? There will no doubt be millions, possibly even billions who live on the outside. There are enough that God sets Kings over them to govern and establish order. We do not have any scripture to inform us what it is like other than Jesus saying they would have mansions to live in. Some have proposed that according to the faithfulness of these on the outside their location could vary in how close they live to the city. Remember there is no sun or moon during this time and Jesus is the light that will light the whole world. I am not indicating that I think scriptures that talk of “outer darkness,” have any reference to the saved that will live outside the city. The one thing that seems clear from scripture is that God’s judgment is always righteous. It is also clear that God does not reward for things not done and that He does reward His children for the good they do. Some may not be faithful enough to be in the Bride of Christ and live in the Mansion of Jesus but have still done many righteous things in their lives that God will reward.

 Does the presence of “leaves for healing” require sickness in the eternal ages? This question might prompt us to look at our bodies today as they are described to us in the scriptures, as well as looking at them as promised for the future. Here is what God who created us says about our bodies: **1 Thessalonians 5:23 “**And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Thus, we discover we have three clearly different parts to our human bodies, a body, a soul, and a spirit. Many believe that man is simply a body and a spirit and at death the spirit leaves the body and at that point death occurs. Many lost people believe that this life is all that we have and when a person dies they are dead all over and go to the grave where the body decays and that the spirit was just an essence that made us function until we die. They would like to believe this because then they will not have to worry about standing before God and being judged for their sins. God tells us that His word, (the bible) is so sharp that it can divide soul and spirit. **Hebrews 4:12 “**For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Because sometimes it seems the soul and spirit are so closely related we almost want to present them as the same thing, but God’s word will not allow this. When God created Adam He breathed life into him and it is this breath from God that gives man life, it is the spirit portion of man. **Genesis 2:7** And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” When a human dies it is the departing of the spirit that leaves the body lifeless. It is this same spirit that connects with God’s Spirit in our relationship with God after we are born again by the Spirit of God. **Romans 8:16 “**The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:” The soul on the other hand, deals with a different aspect of our life. Soul connects to the mental, the process of our reasoning, the decisions we make or do not make. It has to do with our personality and all of the events that make us the person we are. Much is said in scripture about the saving of the soul and very often it is referring to the saving of our lives. It talks more about what we do with our lives after we have been born again. Jesus addresses the issue of the soul after talking to His disciples about building the church on Himself (the rock) and about how they will have the keys to the kingdom in, **Matthew 16:24-27 “**Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” Here He presents the issue of committing our lives (soul) to Him after we are saved. The third person of our threefold being is of course, our bodies. We are born and it is appointed unto us to physically die, after this the judgment. We have much information concerning the recovery of our human bodies at the resurrection when we will get our bodies changed into eternal bodies. I Corinthians the fifteenth chapter presents a great deal of information about this.

 At this point you are saying to yourself whatever happened to the discussion on leaves for the healing of the nations? As I said previously the bible presents a great deal of information to help us come to some conclusions about what this verse might mean, while it does not give us any direct scriptures that explains what the leaves purpose is. I have looked at our earthly body and it’s three parts because we can also look at the function of these three parts in the eternal age which might give us some clues as to the purpose or need for healing effects in eternity. Information on the soul and spirit after death was given to us by Jesus when He provided the story of a Rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. The story is of a Rich man who lived a very prosperous life and knew a beggar by the name of Lazarus who hung out around his property. He knew Lazarus because he had often begged from the rich man for crumbs from his table. It seems that they both died at approximately the same time. Lazarus went to Paradise to be comforted in Abraham’s bosom because he was a born again child of God who had put his faith in the coming Messiah. The rich man went to hell the place where those who do not receive Jesus as their Savior go. Now let’s listen to their conversation. **Luke 16:22-31 “**And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” Both men had evidence of a soul and a spirit in this account. We see the extension of their life, (spirit) from their earthly dwelling, (they were alive.) We also see the extension of their souls, they remembered their time on earth. All of the events, Lazarus remember his beggarly life, and the rich man remembered his sumptuous life. The rich man remembered his father and his brothers as well as having knowledge that his brothers needed to be saved. It is this area of the soul remembering the former life that I feel might give us some insight into why the leaves might have value in the eternal ages. I will address this more fuller in some thoughts towards the end of this article.

 I believe at this point we need to consider the changing of our earthly body at the resurrection into a new eternal body. What kind of changes take place, and what will they be like. We also need to address the issue of whether all saved people will get a new body? **Philippians 3:20-21 “**For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” These verses say we will have new bodies fashioned like the body of our Savior Jesus Christ. One could argue that these verses are talking to faithful members of the church at Philippi but I don’t believe that excludes all of the saved. **1 Corinthians 15:47-49 “**The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” These verses make me believe that we are going to have a heavenly made body and it is hard for me to believe that, that which is made in heaven could need healing. **1 John 3:2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. This is a wonderful promise to the children of God, which we became when we were born again into His family. No matter how difficult living in these human bodies today we have a hope for a new gloriously fashioned body like unto our Saviors. We have plenty of scriptures that indicate all saved people are going to get a new heavenly body at the resurrection, thus I would conclude that the value of the leaves of the tree of life are not for the purpose of healing the new glorified bodies.

 Are we back to square one? I don’t think so, we have eliminated one of the things that the tree of life leaves will not be used for, but we know that the human body has two more aspects, (soul and the spirit,) and at these we will look. The spirit of man, being that part of us that is the essence of life. When we are present at the death of a child of God, we see them breath their last breath and the spirit and soul depart, leaving the body lifeless. The spirit is that breath that allows life in the body and it departs. What happens to it? **2 Corinthians 5:8 “**We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” We clearly see the essence of life present with involved in the account of the rich man and Lazarus. Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man were all exhibiting the all of the attributes of a living being. We are not real sure about what kind of vessel, (bodies) these ones were in as their human fleshly bodies were still in the grave, but their spirit of life was clearly visible. Concerning the spirit of man it would appear that this spirit was acquired through God breathing into Adam the breath of life. That breath came from God and was therefore an eternal breath of life that was passed into God’s human creation. I have difficulty seeing the benefits of “healing leaves” to this part of our eternal bodies.

 The soul of man and especially of the born again man, is an interesting part of our being. It is probably the most complicated part of our being. The soul is the seat of the affections, right or wrong, of love, hate, lusts, and even the appetites of the body. Everything that makes us who we are, (personality) is the make-up of our soul. It is every experience of life that has made us the persons we are. From the day of our birth until the day of our death our soul develops. Our environments shape how our personality or soul develops. Our experiences in our early development as well as all life events mold our souls until it leaves our bodies at death. We hear of people who have gone off to war and they come home with the diagnosis of PTSD (post-traumatic stress syndrome.) We are told that the reasons they are having difficulties in adjusting to life is because of the terrible things they have seen and even participated in. Every action of our lives is shaping the end product of our soul. Hamor said to Jacob, “The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter” (Genesis 34:8). Of David and Jonathan it is written: “The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Samuel 18:1). These passages show the soul to be the seat of the affections. But as the soul loves, so it also hates. We read of those “that are hated of David’s soul” (2 Samuel 5:8). It is in the soul where fleshly lusts, desires, and appetites arise: **1 Peter 2:11 “**Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;” God gives us much information about the soul and the instructions from Jesus in Matthew sixteen encourage us to “save” our souls (lives.) We are told, as God’s children, to pick up our cross and follow Him. We are further told how un-profitable it would be to keep our lives (soul) to ourselves and end up losing it. **Matthew 16:26 “**For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” How much of our life experience will we take into eternity? Will we remember any of our past experiences from this life? The story of Lazarus and the rich man is a rare event given to us by Jesus, where we are allowed to see events in light of persons who have lived here on earth and then died. We probably learn more from the rich man in hell than we do from Lazarus, but Abraham does also give us some insight. **Luke 16:23 “**And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.” He knows Abraham and Lazarus. He is remembering who they were in life and what their significance was to his life. He know that Lazarus knows his family, his father and his brothers. He remembers that his brothers were not living lives that would please God. He remembers the testimony that Lazarus had, even though he was a beggar he had also shown a commitment to God, thus he desires that he go back from the dead and talk to his brothers so they will not come to the horror of hell. Though it is unlikely that this rich man lived at the same time that Abraham lived because he was a Jew and was familiar with the lineage of Abraham he knew who he was. Now Abraham reveals some things about the soul of the dead: **Luke 16:25 “**But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.” He instructs this man to “remember his lifetime” he remembers the good things and the bad things that he had done. So we have a man in hell who can remember his earthly life and it appears from all of the scriptures we have giving information about hell that his memory is not going to leave him, but be with him throughout eternity. One might say, we have not heard much from Lazarus, so is it the same with saved people? This is a good question as I think scripture will reveal that God will wipe some memories away from His children in eternity. One thing is clear from these Scriptures in Luke, Abraham had recognition of the past, he directed the rich man to remember how he had treated Lazarus and the eternal differences between them.

 Let’s consider some things that the saved will not have to remember in eternity. **Psalms 103:12 “**As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” The person who is born again will not be reminded of the horrible sins that were committed before the blood of Jesus cleansed us from them. The murderer, the embezzler, the rapist, the child abuser, and all of the sins that we committed before we were saved will be wiped from our memory just as they have been from God. **Isaiah 43:25 “**I, *even* I, *am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” God’s promise is our hope of not having to remember the sins of our past, (pre-salvation.) **Micah 7:18 “**Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy.” These scriptures make it clear that we will not be burdened with the sins forgiven when we trusted in Jesus as our Savior. So, what about the sins we have committed since the day of our birth into the family of God? We are encouraged to know that the cleansing power of the blood of Christ our Savior did not stop at our birth into God’s family. **1 John 1:9 “**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” The knowledge that we do not have to take memories of our failures with us when we die is part of the amazing life that God offers to those who love Him and keep His commandments. In spite of God’s willingness to cleanse us of all our sins, the scriptures indicate that some will not take advantage of this opportunity. **1 Corinthians 3:12-14 “**Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.” We read here about the judgment of the saved and some do not fare so well. There are many of God’s people who do not pick up their Cross and make Jesus Lord of their lives. Those un-confessed sins we will take with us to this judgment. **Matthew 12:36 “**But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” **Hebrews 10:26 “**For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,” When we look at the seven churches of Asia in Revelation the second and third chapter we see churches with saved, baptized, members being reprimanded for not following Jesus commandments. We some who have not loved Jesus like they should have and we also see some who did give their lives to the Lord. The promises made in these two chapters are to faithful members of the Lord’s church and promises are about living in the New Jerusalem with Jesus. The promises are about walking on the gold streets of the city, wearing the wedding garment, eating the fruit of the tree of life, having new names that identify them as the wife of Christ. **Revelation 21:7 “**He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

 On the outside of this side those who did not meet God’s standards to live in the New Jerusalem, the City of God, live separated into nations that walk in the light of this great city. **Revelation 21:24-27 “**And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.” The sad news is there are many who will live on the outside of the city because they were unwilling to obey God’s commands for righteousness. The question is, will they remember any of their past lives, the opportunities they had to be obedient and take up their cross and follow Jesus. Will those who forsook the Lord in this life, allowing the allure of the world to outweigh the promises God made to the overcomers, remember? It seems to me that there is ample evidence that the soul of man that lives forever will remember, if only to remember the reason they are on the outside of the city, instead of the inside.

 I have said all of this to come back to those “leaves.” Who will need these leaves? It is clear that the leaves are for the nations of the saved that live on the outside of the city. What kind of people will live out there? It seems there will be a wide array of individuals on the outside of the city, all of them, of course, born again children of God. I have no doubt that all in these nations will have eternal resurrection bodies that are fashioned after the body of our Savior. I believe the bodies will be just the same as the bodies that dwell in the New Jerusalem. What the bodies are arrayed in is probably different. Whether any on the outside will have any of the crowns that Jesus promised those who would be faithful, I do not know, that is up to God who will wear those crowns. Some of those in these nations may look very good by our standards of today. Probably some Pastors and deacons, some worship leaders, Sunday school teachers, Seminary Professors, maybe some worldwide Evangelist. The qualification for being in the city, or outside the city, is not made by our standards, but Gods. **2 Timothy 2:5 “**And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.” No doubt these nations will have un-repentant murderers, rapist, child molesters, fornicators, adulterers, liars, cheaters, heretics, embezzlers, politicians, addicted pornography users, non-tithers, recreation addicts, lazy people, wife abusers, husband abusers, and the list goes on, use your imagination. There will people who members of the Lord’s true church who were eligible to be in the Bride of Christ but never made the commitment to follow Jesus with their whole being. No doubt, there will be many sincere people who really did love Jesus who served Him the best they knew how but were never taught the truth. We do not have a lot of information on those who will get saved during the millennial Reign of Christ. Satan will be bound during this thousand year reign and sin will be held down because God will be the government of the world. Of course those getting saved will be those who are still in human bodies and the sin nature will still be there but God will not allow sin actions to take place. As purely as these new children of God may live, they will still not be able to be in the Bride of Christ because He is only going to marry His faithful church, and that will not be an option for them. Therefore, they will not be able to live in the New Jerusalem but will be dwellers of the nations of saved who live on the outside. Whether they will be candidates for the leaves that will care for any disappointments or not we have no way of knowing. It is not clear if everyone in the nations will have need of the healing leaves. There is clear evidence in the scriptures as well as historically that leaves are often used for medicinal purposes. One of the things that was made from them was salves and ointments. The ointments would be used to put on sore aching muscles to relieve pain. From the spiritual application that could be made for these leaves, the disappointment that will exist in the souls of these eternal dwellers will be soothed by these leaves. I can see it as an extension of God’s Grace to His children. Much time could be spent on examining the Grace of God on His people throughout the history of man here on this earth, but here we see His Grace in eternity not wanting His children to suffer. They live on the outside of the city and that is not going to change, therefore, God will not allow them to go through the eternal ages without an application of His Grace.

 It seems that there are so many more areas that could be covered in this study for answer to this question of “why leaves for healing?” but rather than writing a book, maybe this short treatise will at least stir our minds and challenge us in our studies of the scriptures.

 I would be more than willing to further the discussion or hear your thoughts on the subject. I can be reached by e-mail at: denwhar@pacbell.net Thanks for your consideration on this writing. Dennis Wharton