

## Parson to Person

### 1 Corinthians 15

#### (The Resurrection) – Part 23

#### (The New Heaven and 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. 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.’ 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.’ And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.’ 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, 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. 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. 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. 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. 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" (Revelation 21:1–27).*

*"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 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. 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”* (Revelation 22:1–5).

From before the foundations of the world God planned for our redemption in Christ. This demonstrates the fact that God, before the foundations of the world, knew what He would do with creation—and what His creation would do with Him.

God knew that man, His prize mortal creation, would promptly choose to reject His commands and follow the lead of Lucifer—a created angelic being believed to be His most beautiful among the immortal creation. The rebellious acts of Lucifer, Adam, and Eve set in motion a disaster that would need divine intervention.

Many have made the mistake of believing that God was surprised by what occurred—and therefore, worked into His creation a plan B: redemption. However, this is not the case—not at all.

God cannot learn, does not trick Himself into “not knowing,” and is never surprised. Therefore, from before creation, God planned for our redemption in Christ. *“He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you”* (1 Peter 1:20).

Therefore, all that we are learning about the New Heaven and New Earth was in the plan of God—in His redemptive plan—from before the beginning of creation. It was His plan from the beginning to award all believers a perfect relationship with Him, in and for His glory.

This fact provides an interesting understanding of Dispensational Theology and how God has woven His plan into all aspects of His-story. From the beginning we had perfection. In the New Heaven and New Earth, we have perfection again. Everything in between is the process whereby God has revealed His plan of redemption—as the result of our great need—and allowed us to see and experience aspects of His person in ways otherwise impossible by offering to us a free, personal, and glorious relationship with Him, centralized in His sacrificial work at the cross.

The big picture of scripture (seeing the end from the beginning) makes comprehension an uncomplicated joy.

I love you all,  
Pastor Paul