

In our last podcast, we jumped into the final chapter in the Book of **Revelation**. We covered the first verse and discussed the river of the water of life coming from the throne of God and the Lamb. Let's pick back up in verse 2.

## EP192 Revelation 22:2-4

Let's continue with verse 2 and our study about the leaves of the tree, which are purposed for therapy of the nations, and which serve as an indicator or a warning of the signs of the times.

### **Revelation 22:2**

On either side of the river the tree of life, **now** bearing twelve fruits, **now** yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree for therapy of nations.

### **Shade from the Heat**

Leaves also provide a shade, a protection from the heat of the sun, a picture that is symbolic of judgment. We see this when the prophet Jonah went to Nineveh and preached doom to the residents. While he was waiting for God to bring judgment upon the city, he went outside of the city and sat east of it. *"There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city. So, **Yahweh** God appointed a plant, and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant {it was very therapeutic for him}. But God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day, and it attacked the plant, and it withered. When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, 'Death is better to me than life.'"<sup>1</sup>*

*Then God said to Jonah, "Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "I have good reason to be angry, even to death." Then **Yahweh** said, "You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. "Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?"*

In this story, the leaves of the plant served as a picture of God's protection, a message about His therapeutic care, and His mercy during times of judgment. Jonah was under a mini judgment and the leaves provided a temporary therapeutic shade from the heat; however, in due time, judgment came.

Likewise, the people of the city of Ninevah repented at the message Jonah brought, and they humbled themselves in dust and ashes. His message was therapeutic, leaves to temporarily protect them from judgment. But the judgment still came. Approximately 200 years later, the worm of pride and arrogance ate away at their protective covering of mercy, and the judgment of **Yahweh** fell on the people of Ninevah, all in accordance with the words spoken by the prophet Nahum. Sadly, Jonah did not understand the amazing picture that was being painted through his story.

The leaves of the tree of life are **therapeutic** or care giving to the Righteous, the Elect, those permitted

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<sup>1</sup> **Jonah 4:5-11**

to enter the city, and they provide a protection, a shade from the heat of judgment.

### ***Fruit & Leaves***

In like manner, the **Codex** uses the images of trees, the bearing and yielding of fruit that will not fail and leaves that will never wither, as emblematic of a man or woman of God, a bondservant of Jesus Christ who has allowed the tree of life to grow and be expressed in-and-through their lives. We read these verses previously, but they are worth repeating.

### ***Psalm 1:1-3***

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of **Yahweh**, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.

### ***Jeremiah 17:7-8***

Blessed is the man who trusts in **Yahweh** and whose trust is **Yahweh**. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.

As Jesus, the tree of life, lives in-and-through His **Called and Chosen and Faithful** ones, and as the Spirit of God, the river, the very giver of life, flows through them, they become a dependable source of **fruit**: goodness, righteousness, and truth. They also become a source of **leaves** for therapy, safety, and protection for those permitted to enter the holy city. And in their relationship with the bondservants of Jesus Christ, the nations, the people, come to know the signs of the times and God's plans for judgment of this world upon all those who are unclean and are even now practicing abomination and lying.

If we dive a bit deeper into the **Codex**, we find a terribly difficult prophecy found in the book of **Ezekiel**, but at the end of the prophecy, he alludes to this same scene found in **Revelation**.

### ***Ezekiel 47:12***

By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.

## **Eternal Experience**

**Revelation 22:3-4**

There will choose in the **future** to no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will in the **future** choose to be in it, and His bondservants will in the **future** serve Him; they will in the **future** choose to see His face, and His name on their foreheads.

“Suddenly the **Code** takes an abrupt shift from **ETERNITY NOW** to **ETERNITY THEN**. This entire sentence is rendered in the *future* tense. It is hard to fathom, but after all this time through so many passages, we finally get to something that deals exclusively with our **ETERNITY THEN**.

**No Curse**

This first sentence is interesting. This word translated as “*curse*” is not to be understood as some malevolent scourge that is uttered in contempt, or some mystical curse that hangs over the heads of humanity.<sup>2</sup> Rather this Greek word refers to an “accursed thing.” The Greek word, “*katathema*” is comprised of “*kata*,” which is a preposition used to intensify a word, and the word “*anathema*,” which means a thing devoted to destruction—something that has been accursed. It is like a double curse, or a supercharged accursed thing.

The passages that utilize “*anathema*” alone are quite terrifying. “*If anyone does not **now** love the Lord he is commanded to **now** be accursed (“anathema”).*”<sup>3</sup> “*But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should choose to **now** preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have chosen to preach to you, he is commanded to **now** be accursed (“anathema”).*”<sup>4</sup> Paul even once said that he wished he could be accursed (“anathema”), cut off from Christ, for the sake of his brethren, the Jews.<sup>5</sup>

Then add the word “*kata*” to it, “*katathemna*” and we have an intensified form of the word “accursed” or a super-accursed thing. This is the only instance where the word is used in the **Codex**.

Perhaps a better way to render the translation into English would be, “*And every super-accursed thing no more will in the future choose to be.*”<sup>6</sup>

This is fascinating because it implies that in **ETERNITY THEN** there is still a **choice**, there is still an exercise of *personal sovereignty* for all beings. As we have learned, personal sovereignty is the one thing that God does not choose to violate or control; rather in His love He lets others exercise their choice as to whether they want Him or not.

**So, what does this mean?**

Those who are permitted to come to the holy city, to the wife of Christ, to gather for fellowship and worship (those who come to eat from the tree of life and drink from the waters of life), still have a choice. In their earthly experience, they chose to be righteous, in that they chose to care for the bondservants of Jesus Christ, and they accepted them, and loved on them, each in their own way. In so doing they accepted

<sup>2</sup> See **Galatians 3:10-13** where those who hold to the Law are under a *curse*. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us.

<sup>3</sup> **1 Corinthians 16:22**

<sup>4</sup> **Galatians 1:8-9**

<sup>5</sup> **Romans 9:3**

<sup>6</sup> “no longer be” is rendered in the *future middle indicative*

Jesus and the Father.<sup>7</sup> They shed their status of being a “super-accursed thing” and become among those designated as the Righteous.

Having made this choice, they will continue to make this choice, and in the future of **ETERNITY THEN**, they will never choose to rebel or to become a super-accursed thing. *“And every accursed thing no more will in the future choose to be.”* And with this being rendered in the “indicative” we know that it is a statement of fact.

There is an allusion to this experience deep in the **Codex** uncovered in the book of **Zechariah**. It is a passage that deals with the **End Times**, but which has many layers. In this section, it first appears to be addressing the millennial kingdom, the thousand years upon which Jesus will reign upon the earth with His wife. But the imagery is overlapping, specifically when He speaks of Jerusalem. And that is the image we are studying, Jerusalem, or the New Jerusalem (the collective of the wife of Christ—His bondservants).

With that said, **Yahweh**, in reference to Jerusalem, said, *“People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse (literally, a cursed thing), for Jerusalem will dwell in security.”*<sup>8</sup>

Today, our lives are surrounded by that which is accursed and even that which is super-accursed, both in the seen and unseen realms. But in **ETERNITY THEN**, no super-accursed thing will ever enter our lives (our city), for we will all dwell in safety, security, and stability.

### **The Throne**

*“... and the throne of God and of the Lamb will in the **future** choose to be in it.”*

In the Tabernacle, and later the Sanctuary of God, there was the famed Ark of the Covenant, upon which sat the mercy seat between the two cherubim. This box was a physical representation of that which was in the heavenly realm. We examined this in **Revelation 11:19**. *“And the Sanctuary of God which is in heaven was caused to be opened and the ark of His covenant was caused to appear in His Sanctuary, and there choose to be flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.”*

Throughout the **Codex**, and in reference to the Ark of the Covenant, we are told that God was *“enthroned on the Cherubim.”* His throne was literally set above the angels which were affixed to the top of the Ark. And it was from the Mercy Seat, that was between the Cherubim, that He met with and spoke to Moses and brought His word to mankind.<sup>9</sup>

Then, in the very strange image of the *“glory of God,”* which the prophet Ezekiel saw, the throne of God was literally on top of the cherubim as they supported what can only be explained as a mobile throne.<sup>10</sup>

This whole fantastical image of the Cherubim, the living beings, with fire flashing and bright light around it, the crystal expanse above them, and the throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance, and the glory of **Yahweh** on the throne, will in the future choose to be in the city, or literally amongst the bondservants of Jesus Christ. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be present amongst His people. We are told that He

<sup>7</sup> **Matthew 10:40-42; Luke 10:16; John 13:20**

<sup>8</sup> **Zechariah 14:11**. Note: Hebrew “*cherem*” meaning a doomed object

<sup>9</sup> **Exodus 25:21-22; Numbers 7:89; 1 Samuel 4:4; 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 6:2; Psalm 99:1; Isaiah 37:16**. See also **Hebrews 9:5**

<sup>10</sup> **Ezekiel 1:4-28**

**now** tabernacles with His people, but then He will also be enthroned among them.

### Adjudication

**Yahweh** will choose to set up and establish His **throne** in the midst of His bondservants. The presence of a throne speaks of the need to rule and to adjudicate. In **ETERNITY THEN**, in the new heaven and the new earth, there will still be the need for administration and rule of the nations. And in the authority that is granted to us by Jesus, the wife of Christ will be responsible to judge angels and to judge the world.<sup>11</sup>

The bondservants of Jesus sit on Jesus' throne, just as Jesus sits on His Father's throne.<sup>12</sup> In **ETERNITY THEN**, there will be a shared authority and complete unity in the administration and rule of the new heaven and the new earth; a rule that will go on and on, forever.<sup>13</sup>

Once again, those of the nations must even **now** come through the bondservants of God to encounter **Yahweh**, and that will not change in **ETERNITY THEN**. They will still have to then come through His bondservants to experience **Yahweh**. There, in His presence and in ours, they will be judged. Perhaps it is this judgment that ensures there will never be a super-accursed thing in the midst of our fellowship.

### Volitional Employment

*"... and His bondservants will in the **future** serve Him."*

Oddly, the Greek word translated "serve" is not addressing a subordinate servant, a slave, or an attendant. Rather, it is speaking of employment, volitional employment. We can safely translate this part of the verse as follows: *"... and His voluntary slaves will in the **future** be employed by Him."* And, yes, this is rendered in the *future* tense.

This same word was used when speaking of the 144,000 – that great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands.<sup>14</sup>

### Revelation 7:14-16

These **now** are the ones who even **now** choose to be coming out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they **now** are before the throne of God; and they **now serve** {or are employed by} Him day and night in His sanctuary {in the "naos"}; and He who chooses to **now** be sitting on the throne will in the **future** spread His tabernacle over them.

What has always been in **ETERNITY NOW** will continue in **ETERNITY THEN**. The bondservants of Jesus will be in His employ. The use of the word "serve" along with the word "bondservants" speaks to a relationship between **Yahweh** and His bride that now and forever maintains the fundamental principle of **personal sovereignty**. The bride of Christ is not forced into His employ, they are not compelled into His

<sup>11</sup> **1 Corinthians 6:2-3**

<sup>12</sup> Control + Click link: **Error! Reference source not found.**

<sup>13</sup> **Revelation 22:5**

<sup>14</sup> **Revelation 7:9**

service, rather, they volitionally choose, based on their love for their Master, to be His bondservant and to be employed for His purposes.

A prophet named Zacharias (John the Baptists' Father) was once filled with the Holy Spirit and he stated this same truth: *"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He chose to visit us and accomplished redemption for His people ... to have granted us that we **now** having been caused to being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might **now serve** {or be employed by} Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days."*<sup>15</sup>

The Spirit, through Zacharias utilized the *present* tense; therefore, we know that His redemption of our lives was for the purpose of giving us the personal choice to be in His employ so that we might now and forever live just like Jesus lived, doing only what our Father tells us to do, saying only what our Father tells us to say, and going only where our Father tells us to go, and then only **when** He orders it.

The pattern of volitional employment has been set in the now, and this pattern of volitional employment will be preserved through eternity. In other words, it is all about relationship and freedom, or said another way, a relationship in which personal choice and mutual honor is valued.

### ***It's All Personal***

*"... they will the **future** choose to see His face, and His name on their foreheads."* Once again, being rendered in the *future* tense, we know this is a promise for **ETERNITY THEN**.

### **His Face**

According to the **Codex**, this notion of seeing God's face is a powerful image that has both practical and figurative implications.

#### **Practical Implications**

When God was speaking to Moses He said, *"You cannot see my face, for no man can see Me and live!"*<sup>16</sup> In our mortal state, we cannot sustain a pure encounter with the divine and live. Yet, John later tells us that one day we will be like Him, we will share in His divine nature, and the proof is that we will see Him just as He is, we will see Him face-to-face.<sup>17</sup>

The promise to see His face is found across the **Codex**. David once prayed, *"As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake."*<sup>18</sup> The sons of Korah once lamented, *"When shall I come and see the face of God?"*<sup>19</sup> Jesus said that the pure in heart shall see God, and David said that the upright will behold His face.<sup>20</sup>

As for now, no one has seen the Father except for the Son who is from God; He has seen the Father.<sup>21</sup> In that way, Jesus functions sort of like an eclipse between us and the Father, shielding humanity from

<sup>15</sup> **Luke 1:68, 74-75**

<sup>16</sup> **See Exodus 33:30-23**

<sup>17</sup> **1 John 3:2**

<sup>18</sup> **Psalm 17:15**

<sup>19</sup> **Psalm 42:2.** Note: some manuscripts read, "When shall I come and appear before God?"

<sup>20</sup> **Matthew 5:8; Psalm 11:7**

<sup>21</sup> **John 6:46**

death, but giving those who see Jesus a view of the Father as He radiates His glory through the Son.<sup>22</sup>

In like manner, in the Old Testament, Jesus often appeared to mankind as the **Angel of Yahweh** (the “Angel of the Lord”). He appeared in a form that shielded mankind from the glory of God. It was a way for man to see the face of God, but at the same time be protected from death. This was expressed by Gideon, when he said, “*Alas oh **Yahweh** God, for I have seen the Angel of **Yahweh** face to face.*” Then **Yahweh** said to him, “*Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die.*”<sup>23</sup>

Similarly, the parents of Samson had an encounter with the Angel of Yahweh and said, “*We will surely die, for we have seen God.*” “*But his wife said to him, “If **Yahweh** had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have let us hear [things] like this at this time.*”<sup>24</sup>

### Figurative Implications

As usual, this imagery regarding the “face” of God is all about relationship. Seeing the face of God is to be understood as a blessing—a sign of His favor being toward a person (regardless of whether they are doing things right or wrong). In that way, it is a picture of **Yahweh’s GRACE** towards humanity. Thus, when the **Codex** expresses that His face is towards someone, it is a big deal and something to desire. In fact, He honors those who seek His face. Inversely, when His face is turned against someone, it is a sign of relational problems, judgment even.

### Sign of Relational Blessing

When Jacob was on his way to meet his brother Esau, not knowing whether Esau would end his life or let him be, Jacob encountered and wrestled with a man who he later found out was God. After that epic match, he declared that he saw the face of **Yahweh** and yet His life was preserved. Therefore, Jacob called that place, “*Peniel*” or the “face of God.” Jacob took the fact that he lived through such an encounter as an indication that God was going before Him in his encounter with Esau.<sup>25</sup>

Moses used to speak to **Yahweh** face-to-face, just as a man speaks to his friend. And since that time, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom **Yahweh** knew face-to-face.<sup>26</sup>

After God told Gideon that he would not die, in an act of worship and to memorialize that precious moment, *Gideon built an altar there to **Yahweh** and named it **Yahweh Shalom (Yahweh is Peace).***<sup>27</sup>

David so desired to be in the presence of God He prayed, “*Make Your face to shine upon Your servant; save me in Your lovingkindness.*”<sup>28</sup> And, “*O God, restore us and cause Your face to shine upon us, and we will be saved ... O **Yahweh** God of hosts, restore us; cause Your face to shine upon us, and we will be saved.*”<sup>29</sup>

<sup>22</sup> **John 14:8-11**

<sup>23</sup> **Judges 6:22-23**

<sup>24</sup> **Judges 13:22-23**

<sup>25</sup> **Genesis 32:24-32**

<sup>26</sup> **Deuteronomy 34:10-11; Judges 6:22-24**

<sup>27</sup> **Judges 6:22-24**

<sup>28</sup> **Psalms 31:16**

<sup>29</sup> **Psalms 80:3, 19**

And then we have the beautiful verse that has been sung throughout the ages: "**Yahweh** bless you and keep you; **Yahweh** make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; **Yahweh** lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."<sup>30</sup>

### Sign of Relational Problems

Now, when the face of **Yahweh** is turned against someone, it is a sign of serious relational problems, judgment even. Consider some of these passages from the **Codex**.

"Hear, O **Yahweh**, when I cry with my voice, and be gracious to me and answer me. When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, O **Yahweh**, I shall seek." Do not hide Your face from me, do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; do not abandon me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation!"<sup>31</sup>

"O **Yahweh**, by Your favor You have made my mountain to stand strong; You hid Your face, I was dismayed."<sup>32</sup>

"Cain said to **Yahweh**, 'My punishment is too great to bear! Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and **from Your face** I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.'<sup>33</sup>

Job cried out, "Why do You **hide Your face** and consider me Your enemy?"<sup>34</sup> And his friend Elihu declared, "And when He {**Yahweh**} hides His face, who then can behold Him, that is, in regard to both nation and man?"<sup>35</sup>

The Psalmist used this imagery over-and-over again.

"Arouse Yourself, why do You sleep, O **Yahweh**? Awake, do not reject us forever. Why do You hide Your face and forget our affliction and our oppression?"<sup>36</sup> "Answer me, O **Yahweh**, for Your lovingkindness is good; according to the greatness of Your compassion, turn to me, and do not hide Your face from Your servant, for I am in distress; answer me quickly."<sup>37</sup> "O **Yahweh**, why do You reject my soul? Why do You hide Your face from me?"<sup>38</sup>

"Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my distress; incline Your ear to me; in the day when I call answer me quickly."<sup>39</sup> "Answer me quickly, O **Yahweh**, my spirit fails; do not hide Your face from me, or I will become like those who go down to the pit."<sup>40</sup>

There are many more passages that utilize this imagery, but I think you get the point. Seeing the face of **Yahweh** is not just blessing, it is a picture that epitomizes the relationship of **GRACE** that we have with

<sup>30</sup> **Numbers 6:24-26**

<sup>31</sup> **Psalm 27:7-9**

<sup>32</sup> **Psalm 30:7**

<sup>33</sup> **Genesis 4:13-15**

<sup>34</sup> **Job 13:24**

<sup>35</sup> **Job 34:29**

<sup>36</sup> **Psalm 44:23-24**

<sup>37</sup> **Psalm 69:16-17**

<sup>38</sup> **Psalm 88:14**

<sup>39</sup> **Psalm 102:2**

<sup>40</sup> **Psalm 143:7**



Him. Thus, this promise that His bondservants will see His face is a promise that we will never be rejected, we will never be dismayed, and we will never be abandoned. Further, we will always be provided for in everything in that we will be like Him. Yes, we will be folded into the divine. That's a mind-blowing concept.

In addition, "*will see His face*" is rendered in the *future middle indicative*. So, we know it is a future promise that is guaranteed, but it is also something that His bondservants dig down deep in their soul and choose (hence, the *middle voice*). This speaks of the relational reciprocation of those bondservants of Jesus Christ. He called them into His household, and they were and are **willing** to let Him help them choose to be His bondservants and become those who are the **Called and Chosen and Faithful**.<sup>41</sup>

### His Name

"... *they will see His face, and His name on their foreheads.*" Throughout this study, we have learned a lot about the name of God. We know that His name is the **Hayah** (the **I AM**) and that His memorial name to all generations is **Yahweh**.<sup>42</sup> His name is also called "*The Word of God*" and "*King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*" But He also has a name which no one knows except Himself.<sup>43</sup> So which will it be? What name will be inscribed on their foreheads?

Jesus made a promise about His name to the faithful in the church at Philadelphia, "*He who is now overcoming, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which is now coming down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.*"<sup>44</sup>

Though we do not know what name He will use, there will be at least 3 names for sure inscribed on our foreheads. We also know that the 144,000, which is **Code** for the bondservants of God, have the name of the Lamb and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.<sup>45</sup> Once again, the Spirit ensures we do not think of the 144,000 in some odd "tribulation saints" kind of way. For they encompass all who are even now overcoming.

### The Forehead

As to this imagery, the Spirit likely was not wanting us to try and figure out which name(s) will be on their foreheads, but His point is the fact that His name will be on their foreheads. As we discovered when God caused His people to be marked on the forehead prior to judgment, it was a sign that depicted a person's devotion and commitment to love **Yahweh** with one's entire heart, mind, soul, and strength.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the fact that His bondservants will bear His name on their forehead, it is a declaration to all of creation, for all time, that they are His volitional bondservants, employed in His service, and their relationship is forged in love and radical commitment.

Let's stop here and in our next podcast we will discuss how in this city there will be no night, no lamp,

<sup>41</sup> **Revelation 17:14**

<sup>42</sup> **Exodus 3:14-15**

<sup>43</sup> See **Revelation 19:12-16**

<sup>44</sup> **Revelation 3:12-13**

<sup>45</sup> **Revelation 14:1**

<sup>46</sup> See **Exodus 13:8-9; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ezekiel 9:3-6; Revelation 7:3**

and no sun.

I am glad you “tuned in” and have been “ready to listen.”