

In The Ages To Come

In the book of Ephesians we find this remarkable, encouraging passage:

Ephesians 2:4: “But God, who is rich in mercy,
for **his great love wherewith he loved us,**
5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:
7 That **in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace** in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

There is a lot in these verses that merits further study. For example, verse 6 contains a fascinating reference to our sitting “together in heavenly places in Christ”. That verse should certainly get our attention, but it's not what I want to look at right now. Instead I want to explore verse 7: “that in the ages to come He might show us the exceeding riches of His grace”.

When we think of God's grace we often think of salvation from our sins – and so we should, for it is by grace that we are saved. The death of Christ has purchased forgiveness for our sins and bought us freedom from the wrath of God. We know that when we die we will go and be with the Lord, and when Judgment Day comes we will be declared innocent. That is an amazing and precious promise – but there is more.

This passage reminds us that God has bigger plans for us. When Christ spoke of our salvation He repeated time and time again that those who are saved will inherit everlasting life:

Matthew 19:29: “And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and **shall inherit everlasting life.**”

Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous **into life eternal.**”

John 5:24: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, **hath everlasting life**, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

John 6:27: “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth **unto everlasting life**, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

Everlasting life means that we will never die; our existence will never come to an end. We will live on and on forever – not in a dreary eternity of boredom, but in the joyous presence of God Himself. Ephesians 2:7 tells us that God has big plans for us. In the ages to come God is going to show us the *exceeding riches* of His grace! The riches of His grace far exceed our imagination. We have only begun to glimpse what God has planned for us.

This is not the only place where the Bible speaks of the ages to come. They are also mentioned in the book of Revelation:

Revelation 22:3: “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:**
4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and **they shall reign for ever and ever.**"

What will we be doing for all of the endless ages of eternity? We will be serving God. How will we be serving God? By reigning forever and ever. Revelation 1:6 says that God has made us kings and priests, and that is not an idle statement; we *are* kings and we *will* reign.

But who will we be reigning over? After all, a king must have subjects; otherwise he is king over nothing. Revelation 22 does not answer that question, but the book of Isaiah gives us a hint:

Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father**, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Notice what verse seven says: of the *increase* of His government and peace there will be no end. In other words, the kingdom of God *will never stop growing*. It will experience infinite, endless growth for all of eternity.

Since the people in Heaven neither marry nor are given in marriage, we will probably not have children after the resurrection. Since the Heavenly angels don't have children either, that strongly implies that the kingdom's growth must come from somewhere else.

Is it possible that God will continue to create new races in the ages to come? It's true that God worked for six days and then rested on the seventh day, but God did *not* promise to never create anything ever again. In fact, Revelation 21 tells us that one day God will create a new heaven and a new earth. Might God be planning on creating other things in the future as well? If He does, we know that they will be good because Revelation also tells us that after the Great White Throne judgment there will be no more sin, sorrow, pain, or death (Revelation 21:4). No matter what happens in the future, the time of evil will truly be over once and for all.

What I do know is that in the ages to come God will show us the exceeding riches of His grace – and that is an extremely exciting thought. As hard and painful as this life is, it does not begin to compare to the glory that will be revealed in us. Better days are coming – and they *will* last forever.