

“The BIG Picture”

Why the Physical Creation

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We're all familiar with the term “the big picture.” We use it when we want to get the overview of something - when we want to get the proper perspective. It helps us to understand the meaning of something that otherwise may be unclear. It helps us get our bearings.

Perspective is an interesting phenomenon. The further back away from something one looks - the bigger the picture - the better the perspective. Mankind used to think the world was flat - because it viewed the earth from the wrong perspective. We have all seen the earth from outer space - and the planet takes on a much different view the further away we are.

As this point pertains to the plan of God, by standing back and getting a bigger picture – from eternity to eternity - we can better understand it. We need to stand back and understand the reality of the universe - which is what the great God is doing – what His plan is! This perspective will then give us a better understanding of what it is that God wants from us in our day to day lives.

With the bible being the revealed word of God, we can understand things about God's plan that cannot be understood through the assimilation of data through the five senses.

There is nothing that can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or felt that would provide us with the information to understand what God is doing. But, God's Word is revealed knowledge, and reveals to us what it is that He is doing.

And how do we know that the Bible is inspired and is the Word of God as opposed to the Quran or some other work? Because of fulfilled prophecy. No human can accurately predict the future. Even the best psychics that give their predictions in the National Enquirer will only get 3 out of 10 predictions right.

So what does scripture say about the master plan of God and why is it important that we understand the big picture of what it is?

Because the better our perspective of the big picture is, the better the choices we make!

The purpose of my message today, is to revisit the big picture of God's master plan.

So, let's explore the Word of God, and pull out some fascinating nuggets of information that can help us to better see the big picture.

Isaiah 57:15 tells us that God inhabits eternity.

Isaiah 57:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy *place*, With him *who* has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

As we know, we as limited physical beings cannot fully comprehend the concept of eternity.

The concept of living forever or obtaining eternal life can be grasped. It’s out in front of us.

However, we all have meditated on the concept that God has always been, and we give up. It short-circuits our physical mind! We can’t understand how it is that God has always been.

But, the alternative is that God came from nothing. Now, this is clearly impossible! Logic demands that God has always existed because something cannot come from nothing. But how can something have always existed?? This makes no sense to our human minds, yet it is true.

However, in the spirit dimension, it is theorized that time does not exist. That God is outside of space and time. Whatever that means!

At one time I didn’t have anything but a lineal perspective of time, until learning about basic physics which proves that time is not always lineal.

How is it that the spirit dimension functions when it comes to time and eternity? We just don’t know, so we throw up our hands in frustration because none of this makes sense! But nevertheless, we find ourselves here! And we know that God inhabits eternity – both in the past and into what we would call the future!

Let’s take a little tour through eternity!

Christ is the Alpha and the Omega – the beginning and the end. This phrase is found 4 times in scripture – all in Revelation. Let’s turn to two – one at the beginning of the book and one at the end:

Revelation 1:8 (NLT)

⁸“I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,” says the Lord God. “I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come, the Almighty One.”

Revelation 22:13 (NKJV)

¹³*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”*

Revelation 22:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

One of His names is “I Am.” We find this in Ex. 3:14, when He was talking to Moses. He told Moses to tell the people that “I Am” sent him.

The Eternal God has no beginning. He has no end. He just “Is.”

The Bible also tells us that God and the Word have always co-existed. If one were to attempt to articulate this phenomenon, how would one word it?

(John 1:1 NIV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

(John 1:2 NIV) He was with God in the beginning.

How else can this be worded from the human perspective? What better way could there be to explain it?!

Now, the bible reveals two major milestones in the history of God’s creation. Most of us are familiar with them; however let’s review these scriptures once again.

The first major milestone was the creation of the angelic realm. The angelic realm is composed of spirit, and it consists of archangels, living creatures, elders, watchers, and hundreds of millions of angels at a minimum.

Have we considered how long God was in the planning stages? How far back does eternity go? From a lineal time perspective – a human perspective – it seems there must have been a time in eternity before these plans were formulated. Have we considered what God was doing for billions of years PRIOR to even formulating His plan?!

Please turn over to Ezekiel 28 (and Isaiah 14:12-15) where God talks about Lucifer.

(Philip’s note: The actual Hebrew word for this cherub is *Heylel*, meaning Morning Star or Day Star, or Bright One. Lucifer is a Latin word that was kept in the translations. Ezekiel 28:11-15 sounds like a section on the King of Tyre, but as we read, we see it refers to the cherub who rebelled – v. 13-15. Now back to Jeff’s notes.)

(Ezekiel 28:15 NIV)

You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created ...

Here Ezekiel shows that God brought the angelic realm into existence by creating it.

How many millions or billions of years ago did the creation of the angelic realm take place?

Then, continuing:

(Ezek 28:15 NIV)

... till wickedness was found in you.

We are told that Lucifer (or Heylel) was perfect until wickedness or sin was found in him.

After some period of time following the creation of the angelic realm, wickedness [or sin] was introduced for the first time into the universe by this leading cherub.

Do we realize that **up until that point in time, there had NEVER been sin in the universe – EVER?** How long was it from the creation of the angelic realm until Lucifer sinned?

This verse alone could cover millions of years.

Did God factor into His master plan the rebellion of Lucifer? God's plan is logical and perfect - therefore I believe the answer must be yes. More on this concept later.

Now, let's make a couple of observations regarding the period in eternity that preceded the creation of the angelic realm.

1. **First, for the eternity preceding the angelic creation, God and the Word existed in the spirit dimension because the physical hadn't been created yet!** This is absolute proof that the spirit dimension is superior to the physical dimension! If anything physical was superior, then it would have been in existence from the beginning as God's dwelling place! This may seem obvious. However this is a critical point that will also become relevant later in the sermon.

2. **The second observation is noticing certain conditions that existed at the time of the angelic creation.** Ezekiel 28 reveals to us a few more nuggets of truth that help us to understand.

(Ezekiel 28:13 NIV)

You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared.

Notice, here in verse 13, it tells us that there are precious stones in the spirit realm. There are settings and mountings and gold in the spirit realm. There's jewelry in the spirit dimension!

Continuing on in verse 14:

(Ezekiel 28:14 NIV)

You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you.
You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones.

We are given more information. There were anointings and ordinations in the spirit realm! In the spirit realm, there is a holy mountain! Hebrews tells us this mountain is called Zion! And there were fiery stones – all spirit in nature.

The point is that for all eternity, God and the Word have existed in a perfect spiritual dimension.

This spiritual dimension has things in it that are in existence in the physical! God literally sits on a throne. As we know, Genesis states that man was created in the image and likeness of the living God (Gen. 1:26). In knowing this, we can learn about God by observing how man functions. We can know about the spirit dimension by observing the physical!

More on this later. Let's get back to our journey through eternity:

We covered the first major milestone – the creation of the angelic realm.

Our **second major milestone** is the physical creation, the universe.

After creating the angelic realm, thousands, millions, or billions of years passed. Then for the first time in eternity, the physical creation appeared.

Psalm 102:25 (NLT)

²⁵ In ages past you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

Job 38:4-7 NKJV

"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. ⁵Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, **⁷When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?**

So, we can clearly see that when the earth was created along with the rest of the universe (assuming they were created at the same time), the angelic realm was there. And, it can be inferred that up to that time, Lucifer had not yet rebelled – otherwise ALL the sons of God would not have been shouting for joy.

Therefore, in plotting this into the timeline of eternity, the physical creation took place in-between the first part of Ezek. 28:15 and the final part of Ezek. 28:15!

According to scientific estimates the universe came into existence about 4.5 billion years ago, - plus or minus a few hundred million years!

So, about 4.5B years ago, if these estimates are truly accurate, the physical universe was created, and the angelic realm was present when it happened.

This takes us to Genesis 1:1

Genesis 1:1 NKJ ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.***

This *beginning* refers to the start of the physical creation.

"God" is the Hebrew plural *Elohim*. The singular is Eloha.

"Created" is the Hebrew *barah*, which means to bring into being.

After completing their planning and design, God and the Word, which are the God Beings who became the Father and Christ now initiate physical laws, matter and life by **converting spirit from their dimension into the three dimensional physical universe**. Notice:

HEBREWS 11:3 NKJ

the things which are seen [the physical creation] were not made of things which are visible.

(Hebrews 11:3 NIV)

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

"Heavens" refers to the area we call outer space and the area we have designated as atmosphere.

The third heaven (**II Corinthians 12:2**) is the area of the spirit dimension where God has always existed, where God's throne is located, and therefore cannot be included as being created at this time, since the third heaven, like God, has always existed.

Scripture also tells us that the Word – Jesus Christ (or Yeshua) - is the one that did the creating according to the will of the Father.

(Colossians 1:15-16 NKJV)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

Ephesians 3:9 tells us the same thing.

So, here we can see that God through the Word who became Jesus Christ created the entire physical universe from the spirit!

The "big bang" theory is probably fairly accurate in the sense that there probably was a great explosion as the physical creation came into existence from the spirit dimension. It's unbelievable the energy contained in just five or ten pounds of plutonium.

(Philip's note: Jeff is challenging us to think "outside the box". Perhaps there are elements of the Big Bang theory that can be plausible. However Yahweh performed the creation – the seen from the unseen – Heb. 11:2-3—is a mystery, but we can consider all possibilities that our limited human minds can grasp. I tend to dismiss the "Big Bang" – but hey, let's be open to possibilities of speculation.)

Now, since we can learn about God by observing man, we know that planning, designing, creating, learning, and re-creating is how man operates. Now, did God just create the physical on a whim? Did everything just get thought of one day and instantly created that same day? I don't think so.

What I mean, is it seems that God very well could have taken millions or billions of years to plan, design, and engineer the physical universe prior to creating it.

There are thousands of species of ants. Thousands of species of birds. Of plants. Of fish. Of bacteria. Each one must have its own unique DNA. Its own unique instinct built in. This had to have taken time in planning and designing and engineering. The physical creation is so awesome, complex, and vast, we can't begin to comprehend the greatness of God.

Now, since the physical creation came into existence after the creation of the angelic realm, it is speculated that this could have been on or about the time when Lucifer discovered that God's plan involved creating a family – members of whom he would be relegated to as a servant!

Mankind's purpose is to be born as spirit beings into God's Kingdom.

In Rev. 1:5, Christ is described as the firstborn from the dead. This proves that the prophets of old have not yet been born into His family.

Rom. 8:29 says that Christ is the firstborn of many ...

Heyl (or Lucifer) realized his destiny was limited – so perhaps he could not stand being relegated to such a low status as serving human beings! By comparison to how great he was – this could have been an insult. He was a “top dog” in the angelic creation, however would be low on the pecking order once billions of God's children had been born. God's plan must be thwarted!

It appears that when this cherub rebelled it involved a “coupe.” We know that Satan and his demons tried to take over rulership of the universe.

Jude 1:6 (NLT)

⁶And I remind you of the angels who did not stay within the limits of authority God gave them but left the place where they belonged. ...

Lucifer (Heyl) seems to have influenced many angels – possibly 1/3 – to the realization that their destiny was limited to being servants – not a part of God's future family!

Perhaps this cherub became the god of this age prior to his sin, or perhaps it was after. (Philip's note: I think he became “god of this age” 2 Cor. 4:4 - after Adam and Eve's sin. John 14:30 – Yeshua calls him the “ruler of this world”) But we know he and the angels were assigned to a specific place, left that place, and have ended up being in authority over the earth as he is right now.

(Ezek 28:17 NIV)

Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth

This makes it clear that this event occurred after the earth had been created. Otherwise Lucifer could not have been thrown to the earth.

It seems plausible that this coup could have been when the earth became without form and void per Gen. 1:2.

So scripture is clear that sin was introduced sometime after the creation of the physical realm! I believe this proves that God knew there would eventually be sin.

The purpose of the physical universe is to facilitate God reproducing Himself. However, there is another purpose for the creating of the physical. We will cover this later in the sermon.

Whether or not He knew it would be Lucifer as opposed to another of His archangels, we can only speculate.

Let's now continue our progression through eternity, and jump forward in time - a time probably less than 1,125 years from now, and examine the destiny of the physical creation!

Revelation 21:1 (NKJV) 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.

II Corinthians 4:18 (NKJ) ***For the things which are seen are temporary,*** *but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

What does temporary mean? The opposite of permanent-or eternal. This is our answer!

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. [when you light a piece of paper and it burns up, it is gone]

2 Peter 3:11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

[dissolved? When one puts a spoonful of sugar or salt into a glass of water, what happens to it when it is dissolved?]

2 Peter 3:12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

2 Pet 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. [NIV the home of righteousness]

Hebrews 12:26-28 (NCV)

²⁶When he spoke before, his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once again I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.”[□]

²⁷The words “once again” clearly show us that everything that was made—things that can be shaken—will be destroyed. Only the things that cannot be shaken will remain.

²⁸So let us be thankful, because we have a kingdom that cannot be shaken. We should worship God in a way that pleases him with respect and fear,

1 John 2:16-17 (NKJV)

¹⁶For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Now, the Lake of Fire talked about in Revelation 20 is probably nothing more than the physical reverting back to the spirit dimension from which it came! It will probably be something like a great nuclear explosion when the entire physical creation - the planets and stars of the universe - will change back to spirit. Anyone not already born of God – changed to spirit, will be destroyed at this moment along with the rest of the physical. It might be kind of like running a film of an explosion in reverse.

Now, this tells us the purpose of the physical creation! Why was the physical creation brought into existence – whenever it was?? *Primarily - for the express purpose to facilitate God reproducing Himself! Otherwise, why would the physical creation cease at the time when God's plan for physical mankind was finished?* Why wouldn't the physical just continue forever - if it were for any other purpose? If the physical creation disappears – dissolves - then this clearly tells us that the existence of the physical was specifically for the purpose of God's plan of reproducing Himself. Once God accomplishes this, then the physical creation is going away.

Now, this is confirmed another way! Let's pause for a moment and consider the condition of the earth at the time of the end of the millennium and the little season! The condition of the earth will be virtually perfect!

The earth will be in a utopian state! After 1,000 years of dressing and keeping the earth, it will be perfect! The deserts will blossom like a rose.

How could the earth be in any more pristine condition? How could it be any more perfect than it will be at this time? It will be virtually a planetary Garden of Eden. The earth that will be burned up will be as close to a perfect physical creation as possible!

So, this makes obvious that after the earth is burned up – dissolved – disappears - the new heaven and earth WILL NOT BE PHYSICAL! IT WOULD MAKE NO SENSE TO DESTROY A PERFECT PHYSICAL CREATION IN ORDER TO RE-CREATE A NEW PHYSICAL CREATION?

(Mat 24:35 NKJV) "Heaven and earth will pass away, ...

Psalm 102:25-26 (NKJV)

²⁵ Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands. ²⁶
They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You
will change them, And they will be changed.

Let's explore this concept a little further.

Isa 65:17 (NKJV) "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; **And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.**

The new spiritual heavens and earth will be so vastly superior to the physical that after a certain period of time, the physical will not be remembered nor come to mind!

Once one owns that first corvette or BMW, how often will a person think about his tricycle – which was the greatest and most awesome possession a 4-year old could own!?

Now, I'd like to explore what is ahead after the physical heavens and earth are restored back to spirit. This is the time when only spirit beings exist. God's plan of reproducing Himself – insofar as the bible reveals – will be complete! The purpose of the physical creation will have been accomplished. This brings us to what I believe is one of the most profound and revealing concepts in scripture.

ROMANS 1:20 KJV For the invisible things of him, **from** the creation of the world, are [a mystery] **clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made**, even his eternal power and Godhead

Romans 1:20 (NIV)

²⁰For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

The invisible (or spirit) things are clearly seen!
The invisible things are understood.

How? By the things that are made, so says Paul!

So, what is ahead?

1 Corinthians 13:12 NIV) **Now** we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; **then** we shall see face to face. **Now I know in part; then I shall know fully**, even as I am fully known.

We can only speculate in part about what God has in store. But when we meditate on this, let's realize that the spiritual dimension is probably more like the physical dimension than we realize. For example, as we read in Ezekiel 28, Lucifer had many precious stones. These were **spiritual**

precious stones.

God sits on a throne! A spiritual throne.

Christ opens a scroll sealed with seven seals to read the events of Revelation! This is a spiritual scroll with spiritual seals.

God has a spiritual temple in the third heaven! A temple is a building! A spiritual building.

There is color in the spirit realm- spiritual color!

A rainbow proceeds out from the throne.

God and the spirit creation have emotions such as joy [the angels shouted with joy], sadness, anger, humor, etc. So do we.

Spirit beings can sing even without air and vocal cords!

There is spiritual fire! [Satan walked about the fiery stones] Yes, without oxygen!

The spirit dimension somehow entails all the things we have in the physical – and certainly much, much more..

Christ and the Saints will ride white spiritual horses at His return to the final battle! God has armies – spiritual armies with spiritual swords! There are spiritual linen clothes and spiritual belts and spiritual breastplates.

There are spiritual trumpets that produce noise!

There are galaxies out there that man cannot see, nor will ever be able to see - even with the Hubble telescope. The stars were made physical so man could see God's glory. Ever seen the Hubble pictures? They are awesome beyond description. The new Hubble telescope is 7 times sharper than what it was last year. These will all be changed to spirit.

(Why were they created in the first place unless purposed for the spiritual? Man will never even have the capability of seeing them?)

The billions upon billions of stars are all counted and named!

Psalm 147:4-5 (NCV)

⁴ He counts the stars and names each one. ⁵ Our Lord is great and very powerful. There is no limit to what he knows.

How is God personally involved in all of our lives individually – at the same time?!

And, of course, we are created after God's own image and likeness. And eventually, the vast majority of mankind will also become spirit!

The point is, as we meditate on these things, we can begin to understand what the spiritual realm is like from the physical. And we can understand what the spiritual is like from what God reveals from scripture! Obviously, the physical is a replica of what it is like in the spirit

dimension!

Hebrews 9:23-24

²³Therefore *it was* necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

²⁴For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

We are made in God's image and likeness. We are "copies" so to speak. The physical is a copy or a replica of the spirit dimension!

Our Savior ate food with His disciples. Walked through locked doors.

Now, we know that Jesus Christ lived as a physical human being on this earth. He has experienced both existences - as a spirit being and as a physical human being. If you were to ask Him which existence is preferable, I think we know what His answer would be!

Let's understanding how incredibly superior the spirit dimension is! Virtually all the good things that we enjoy in this physical life, will also be enjoyed in the spirit dimension!

Yes, one can enjoy a fine meal and a glass of fine wine as a spirit being! Christ does not drink the wine of the Passover cup until drinking it anew in the kingdom, right?

Wouldn't God and Jesus Christ be living as physical beings if it were a superior existence? Why would They have us live in a physical dimension – the INFERIOR dimension as future spirit beings? This is why the physical is going to disappear, be dissolved, be changed - to something vastly superior!

Let's continue our progression through eternity which bring us to the time just after the physical creation is gone:

Revelation 21:1-2 (NLT)

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a beautiful bride prepared for her husband.

This city is coming down out of heaven from God. This is where God dwells. This is the city which contains the "Father house" that Christ refers to in John. Is this not where Christ dwells as well? And if where Christ dwells, won't it be where the Bride dwells as well? We know that Christ and the Bride will "reign" on the earth during the millennium, but assuming the "little season" is about 100 years, this is will for 100 years after the time ruling in the millennium is over with. Won't this where the Bride will be living?

Revelation 21:9-10 (NLT)

⁹Then one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls containing the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come with me! I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

¹⁰So he took me in spirit[□] to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

Since this city is descending from heaven, the Bride is in heaven with the city!

MORE ON THE NEW JERUSALEM

Now, we are going to digress and have some fun. And by doing so, I think we are going to come away with perhaps a much different picture of New Jerusalem. I know I have in doing the research on this!

Revelation 21:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.

¹⁶The 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.

8 furlongs equals one mile.

Revelation 21:15 (NRSVA)

¹⁵The angel[□] who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. ¹⁶The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width; and he measured the city with his rod, fifteen hundred miles;[□] its length and width and height are equal.

Let's stop and ponder this for a minute. 1,500 miles by 1,500 miles?

It's about 1,500 miles from Spokane to San Diego. And it's about 1,500 miles from Seattle to about Kansas City, Kansas. When the city touches down onto a spiritual earth, it will take up a space equal to the entire United States from the Pacific Ocean to about Kansas City Kansas!!!

Isn't the internet great when it comes to information? You can find out anything about anything. Of course there is a site that tells us that the entire United States of America is 3.537 million square miles. 1,500 miles squared is an area of 2.25 million square miles. This is 64% - or about 2/3 of the entire area of the United States. This is the area that New Jerusalem will occupy!! (God is not against "big cities!" when HE is the builder and does it right).

This is 7,920,000 feet long by 7,920,000 feet wide, or a total of 27.878 million sq. ft. of area!

Stop and think about this. How big is New York City? Los Angeles? Tokyo? Mexico City? They would- combined- all fit in a little corner of New Jerusalem!

Now that we can kind of wrap our minds around this, let's take the next step – which we won't be able to comprehend.

This city is also 7,920,000 feet high! 1,500 miles high. As a spiritual city, and as spirit beings,

gravity will not be relevant. Therefore up will be no different than down or sideways. Driving a car @ 70 mph non-stop would take 21 hours to reach the top of the city!

Is New Jerusalem in the form of a cube or a pyramid? Either one fits the criteria. I personally feel it will be a pyramid. The great pyramids of Egypt were built in the pre-flood world with technology that cannot be replicated even to this day. We have a produce pyramid on our kitchen counter.

(Philip: I agree it could appear somewhat pyramidal or even as a mountain. Interestingly, the Bible often refers to the "Mountain of the LORD". I think the New Jerusalem will literally appear as a huge mountain. But that's somewhat pyramidal.)

The volume or area in terms of cubic miles is mind-staggering. A cube would contain 3.375 BILLION cubic miles. A pyramid would contain about 1/3 this volume, or 1.125 Billion cubic miles. Again, the internet calculated the volume of a 1,500 by 1,500 by 1,500 mile pyramid!

We can't get our minds around the vastness of this city. Perhaps this can help a little bit.

Let's first take 25% of the area of a pyramid shaped New Jerusalem, and designate it to housing (with the other 75% to common areas such as streets, parks, yards, etc.). Now let's give each and every spirit being their own house. And let's make it a nice house, say a 2-story house with 5,000 sq. ft. on each floor. Or a total of 10,000 sq. ft.

There would be enough housing for 130.68 billion spirit beings all within this city.

NASA considers outer space to begin at 76 miles above the earth's surface. New Jerusalem will extend 1,424 miles into outer space by today's definition.

Low orbit satellites – such as your Direct TV satellite orbit at about 1,240 miles above the earth – or about 250 miles lower than the top of where New Jerusalem will be!

If one were to build a hotel to the top of New Jerusalem (assuming 12' per story) the hotel would have 660,000 floors. How would you get that many buttons on the wall of the elevator?

(Rev 21:11 NIV) It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

Can there be any doubt that we are talking about a spiritual city that descends from heaven, and a spirit earth that it descends to? A physical city extending 1,424 miles or so into outer space? This makes no sense.

Now, when we have the big picture of what happens to the physical creation in mind, doesn't it change our perspective?

Hopefully we will see God a little bigger, ourselves a little smaller, and have a different perspective on the **awesome and mind-boggling plan of the Great God**.

O.K., we've established that the purpose of the physical is to facilitate God reproducing Himself. In my opinion and in the opinion of others, the understanding that God is reproducing Himself is the greatest knowledge that the human mind can come to know!

What is meant by God "reproducing Himself?"

How does God reproduce Himself?

There are two elements to it. The first is obvious – physical beings will be changed in composition from flesh to spirit. We read about that in 1 Cor. 15.

1 Corinthians 15:12-23; 35-41-58 (NLT)

But, there's more to just being changed from physical to spirit.

God also created the angelic realm as spirit. Making spirit beings has nothing to do with God reproducing Himself! The angels are not His children! So there's more to this than just creating spirit beings – whether by fiat or from the flesh.

The second element involved in the concept of how God reproduces Himself, involves **what** He is! What is God? Whatever God is, this is what He is reproducing!
What is God? God Is ...

(1 John 4:8 NIV)

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

If God is reproducing Himself, and God is love, and God is a spirit, then God is reproducing his spirit of LOVE!

God is reproducing Himself – or His spirit of love! This is what God is doing! This is God's PRIMARY work – His purpose. Every aspect of God's plan, every step is another step towards the ultimate objective - that of reproducing Himself - which is the spirit of love. This was the purpose of the physical creation! This is why we were born!

He is reproducing His spirit of love through the firstfruits now, and through the rest of mankind in the fall harvest at the end of the 1,000 years when everybody that has ever lived from the time of Adam & Eve (except for certain exceptions) will be resurrected and given the opportunity to come to understand what it means to learn God's law – which is a law of love!

With this firmly in mind, we can see the logic behind the theme of 1 John chapters 2, 3, and 4! John had a lifetime full of wisdom, and towards the end of his life, he wrote about the most important topic that he ascertained – love. John knew and clearly emphasizes the reality of our

purpose!

But, there is one more major element to God's plan. There is another major purpose of the physical creation. There is another aspect to eternity. We find this in:

(2 Pet 3:13 NKJV) Nevertheless we, according to His promise, **look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.**

The attribute used to describe the future spiritual heavens and earth is the term "in which righteousness dwells." What does this mean? It means that in order for righteousness to dwell, SIN MUST BE ABSENT.

God's plan must include the permanent and total elimination of sin, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR SIN. Otherwise the possibility for sin could once again arise!

This is the second purpose to the physical creation! It is the mechanism by which sin is permanently eliminated. It is the mechanism by which the POTENTIAL for sin is also permanently eliminated.

Consider this: when Lucifer introduced sin into the universe, God could have isolated him from the rest of the angelic realm. But, God did not do so. God ALLOWED Satan to exert his influence on the angelic realm. God is the spirit of love, and Satan is the spirit of sin. If Satan were to reproduce himself, it would be the spirit of evil – or sin.

Why did God allow the fallen Lucifer to exert his influence on the angelic creation, rather than just destroy him or banish him? He certainly could have.

And, what happened? Satan's spirit of sin was powerful enough to actually turn an estimated 1/3 of the angelic creation!! Satan's influence is real and Satan's influence is a powerful force. Imagine – 1/3 of the angels succumbed to it and turned from God!

It was by this test however, that an estimated 2/3 of the angelic creation proved their eternal commitment to God's spirit of love and rejected Satan's spirit of sin. Thus God can now trust the remaining 2/3 not to sin - forever.

Now, as we know, by creating physical human beings, God can test us while we are still mortal. We must prove that we too can overcome the influence of Satan's spirit of sin before God will grant eternal life. Why? Because the spirit of sin must be eliminated forever!

The heartache and pain and problems associated with the spirit of sin cannot and will not be allowed into eternity! How horrible would it be to have an eternity of war and strife and competition? Therefore it is only those that overcome Satan's spirit of sin that God will allow into eternity.

Let's ask the same question of Adam and Eve. Why were they subjected to Satan's influence? God could have isolated Satan, but He didn't!

What about Christ Himself? He was subjected to the influence of Satan, and overcame him. The firstfruits are being subjected to Satan's influence.

And this makes very clear why Satan is released from his temporary prison in conjunction with the 2nd resurrection. Because all of humanity that is a part of the fall harvest must also be subjected to Satan's spirit of sin!

God requires the rejection of Satan's spirit of sin by all living beings – both in the angelic realm, and at the human level as a part of overcoming. This is the only way God can be sure of no potential for sin for the rest of eternity.

Then, as pictured by the day of Atonement, once Satan has completed influencing all of mankind with his spirit of sin – he too is put away forever. Satan's spirit of sin will be eliminated forever. This is how 2 Peter 3:13 will be fulfilled.

After the physical creation is over and God has successfully pro-created His family, and given His Son a bride, we will all settle into the spiritual realm, and live with eternal joy, happiness, and fulfillment into the rest of eternity. What then? Who knows ...

So how does this perspective help us today? How is this relevant to us in our day to day lives?

If we must sort out a problem – first use the perspective of the big picture, and often times the answer will clearly materialize.

It should help us to focus on what is important in life. Materiality is completely irrelevant when it comes to the big picture. Status and power are completely irrelevant when it comes to the big picture. It should help us to recognize the destiny of Satan and his spirit of sin. And it should help us recognize our destiny if we fight and overcome Satan's spirit of sin.

Our life has great purpose. Learning to develop the character that God wants us to have will make us – by analogy - trees with branches of low-hanging fruit of the Holy Spirit – which is God's spirit of love.

That's why this message is part one of a four-part series on love. This is the foundation for the next three messages, which will deal with the subject of love. Part 3 will cover our love towards God. Part 4 will cover our love for each other. And part 2 will be the mystery topic – which is the necessary foundation that parts 3 and 4 will be built on. Stay tuned!

Conclusion In conclusion, I started out with the goal of hoping to answer the question: **What is the big picture of what God is doing? I hope we see God a little bigger than before and ourselves as a little smaller than before.** We must always remember that the purpose of

God is to reproduce Himself - His spirit of love! His secondary purpose includes the permanent elimination of Satan's spirit of sin.

When we view the physical creation as a temporary time frame sandwiched between eternity on either side of it, then we see how the physical creation fits into the big picture of what God is doing.

The big picture will give us clarity in addressing day to day issues and problems. Wise solutions will materialize before our very eyes. The big picture will guide us into wise choices.

I hope this information has been helpful. **The compass we need to stay on course is not an organization, nor is it any man. It is the big picture of what God is doing as revealed in His Word.** I hope I've done justice to God's Word in covering this subject. Let's all praise and thank the Eternal God for calling us to *begin* to understand the big picture.