



SEE THE SEA IN A WHOLE NEW WAY

*The wealth on the seas will be brought to you,
to you the riches of the nations will come.*

ISAIAH 60:5, NIV

AS SOMEONE WHO LOVES TO SNORKEL and marvel at multicolored fish, great sea turtles, dolphins, seals, rays, and eels, I sympathize with people's resistance to the words "no longer any sea" in Revelation 21:1 (NIV). Many Bible scholars, Charles Spurgeon among them, believe this actually means an end to all the shipwrecks, drownings, flooding, poisoned salt water, and death associated with the oceans under the Curse. Certainly this passage doesn't say there won't be large bodies of water. Revelation tells us a great river will flow through the New Jerusalem (22:1-2). Flowing rivers go somewhere, so we might expect that the New Earth could have, if not oceans exactly as we now know them, vast sea-like lakes brimming with life. Since the psalmist celebrates "the fish in the sea, and everything that swims the ocean currents" (Psalm 8:7-9), I believe that on the New Earth we'll swim, dive, and play with God's creatures of the deep!



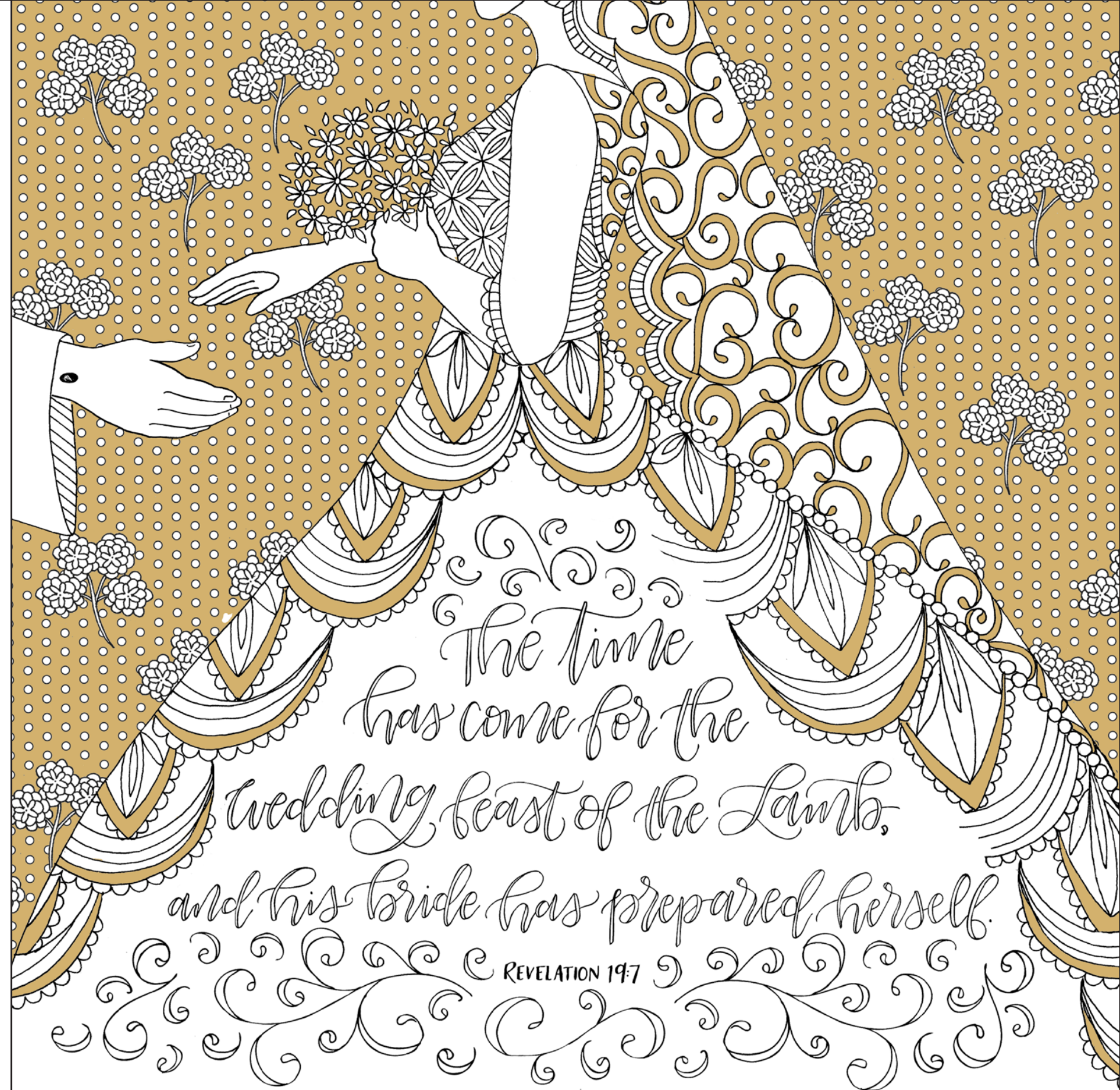


AT LAST, WE'LL HAVE TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself.

REVELATION 19:7

THE PHRASE “TIME SHALL BE NO MORE” is found in an old hymn. Despite its use in a few older Bible translations, it doesn’t reflect the meaning of Revelation 10:6, which speaks of no more delay in the fulfillment of God’s end times plan. There actually *is* time in the present Heaven (Revelation 8:1), and there will be time on the New Earth—Revelation 22:2 says that the tree of life will produce a fresh crop of fruit each month. People imagine time is an enemy because the clock seems to move slowly when we’re having a root canal and quickly when we’re doing what we love. But time isn’t the problem—the Curse is. Once the Curse has ended, as God promises it will (Revelation 22:3), time will never work against us. On the New Earth, time will always bring us gain, not loss—and we won’t run out of it. It will extend happiness, not suffering. It will draw us closer not to death but to God, who is Life. The passing of time will bring new adventures that need not end. When we see God face-to-face, time will pass, but we’ll be lost in Him. We’ll delight in time because it’s part of what God calls “very good.”





WILL WE REUNITE WITH OUR BELOVED PETS?

What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

ROMANS 8:18-21

GOD LOVES TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS to His children (Matthew 7:9-11). So if it would make you happy to have one or more of your pets with you on the New Earth, that may be a good enough reason for God to make it happen. He could (1) create entirely new animals; (2) bring animals back to life, giving them new bodies that will last forever; or (3) create brand-new animals *and* bring some old ones back to life. Romans 8:21 says that even nonhuman creation looks forward to being raised with God's children—what could that be if not animals? Only God knows for sure what He plans to do. But wouldn't it be just like Him to recreate the same pets He entrusted to us in this life? What a delightful reunion that would be! As the animal kingdom fell on the coat-tails of humanity, so it will rise with our redemption on a resurrected Earth.

