

HEAVEN - A PLACE OF ETERNAL HAPPINESS

Rev. 21:1 - 22:7

I. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT THE CHILDREN OF GOD HAVE A GLORIOUS INHERITANCE.

- A. Rom. 8:17: "And if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."
- B. Col. 1:12: "Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."
- C. Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."
- D. Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."
- E. Eph. 1:11: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will."
- F. Eph. 1:13-14: "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."
- G. Eph. 1:18: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."
- H. Heb. 9:15: "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance."
- I. 1 Peter 1:3-4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."

- J. Luke 10:20: "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

II. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT HEAVEN IS A PLACE.

- A. Heb. 11:8-16: "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would afterward receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God... These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.
- B. John 14:1-6 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know." Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
- C. Where is Heaven located?
1. The Three Heavens:
 - a. The air where the birds fly.
 - b. The firmament - the stars, sun, moon, etc.
 - c. The Third Heaven - The abode of God.

2 Cor. 12:2: "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago - whether in body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows - such a one was caught up to the third heaven."
 2. The location of being up, above is only relative.

Psalms 14:2: "The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God."

NOTE: God has the capacity to make heaven large enough for every person who makes plans to go there.

III. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS FOR HEAVEN.

A. It is called the New Jerusalem.

Rev. 21:1-2: "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."

B. It is called the City of God.

Heb. 12:22: "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels."

C. It is called the Paradise of God.

Rev. 2:7: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

D. It is called Our Father's House.

John 14:1-2 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you."

IV. IN THE LAST FEW PARAGRAPHS OF THE BIBLE, GOD GIVES A DESCRIPTION OF HEAVEN.

A. First, Heaven is an Exalted Country.

1. Jehovah of Host - His Throne, His Court is there.

Ps. 11:4: "The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men."

2. Christ is there at God's right hand.

Acts 2:33, 7:56: "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. ... And said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

3. The Holy Spirit and all the Angelic Hosts.
4. The Redeemed of all the ages.

Rev. 7:14-15: "And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them."

- B. Second: Heaven is a Holy Country.
1. Not polluted with sin.
 2. Violence, corruptions, vice, crime, not there.
- C. Third: Heaven is a Healthful Country.
1. No affliction: bodily, mentally, spiritual.
 2. Inhabitants never sick.
 - a. How those racked with pain must desire it.
- D. Fourth: Heaven is a Happier Country.
1. No disquietude, grief, pain.
 2. No foes, false friends, imperfect brethren.
 3. No poverty, bereavement, toil, fears, temptation.
No death.
- E. Fifth: Heaven is an Abiding Country.
1. Not pilgrims - but permanent residents.
 2. Not visitors - inhabit forever.
 3. An Inheritance Incorruptible.
- F. Sixth: Christians truly desire this Country.

1. They have secured a title to it.
2. They are laboring to enter it. (Heb. 4:9).
3. They pray for it - they talk about it - they live in hope of it.

V. HEAVEN IS A PREPARED PLACE FOR A PREPARED PEOPLE.

A. We cannot stay here.

1. The sentence of death is universal. (Job 14:1-2).
2. We have no continuing city. (Heb. 13:14).
3. Death is not annihilation. (Eccl. 12:7).

B. Who is going to go to Heaven?

1. Universalism - Says everyone.
2. Calvinism - Only a few of the elect.
3. The Bible - All who obey God.

Heb. 5:8-9: "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him."

C. God wants man to be saved. (2 Peter 3:9).

D. Christ wants man to be saved. (Matt. 11:28-30).

E. The Holy Spirit wants man to be saved. (Rev. 22:17).

F. Man must make the choice of his eternal abode.

[Grandfather's Song, "When I come to the Gates of Gold, I believe they will open wide for me - They will open wide - Open wide - I'll pass thru their portals free --"]

1. There is only one of two ways:
 - a. Ps. 1: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly"
 - b. Matt. 7:13-14: "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction"

VI. WHEN WE ALL GET TO HEAVEN, WHAT A DAY OF REJOICING THAT WILL BE!

A. It will be a day for making new friends.

1. Talk to Abraham about offering Isaac on Mount Moriah.
2. Talk to Moses about Mount Pisgah.
3. Talk to Samuel about Saul.
4. Talk to Elijah to ask him about his conversation on Mount of Transfiguration.
5. Talk to Peter to ask him about the special and private appearance of Christ.
6. Talk to Paul about his sermon on Mar's Hill.

B. It will be a day of reunion.

1. Friends, relatives: mothers, fathers, children who have gone on before.

C. It will be a day for praising God.

1. Clarence Macartney has a vivid picture of this in his book:

"Here in front of the throne, and in the Inner Circle, just as the angel had told me, I found Abraham, and Joseph, and Moses, and Samuel, and Elijah, and David, and Isaiah, and John the Baptist, and John the Divine, and Peter. They were all listening with rapt and eager countenance to one who was speaking to them as he stood there between them and the Throne of the Lamb. I wondered at first if I could understand what he was saying, or if the language of Heaven would be strange to me. But as I drew nearer, I heard the familiar words, for it was Paul who was speaking. He told the story of that day at Damascus when Christ appeared to him. I heard him pronounce again that beautiful lyric of Christian love, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." I heard him say again, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." I heard him say again, "God, forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." I heard him say again those words, which more than any other he wrote and spoke explaining the grandeur of his life, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." At that, Abraham,

Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, David, Isaiah, John the Baptist, John the Divine and Peter sprang to their feet, and with David the sweet singer of Israel leading them, and all heaven, angels and archangels, and all the blood-washed company of the redeemed joining in the song, they sang together. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."

D. Nothing is worth missing Heaven.

1. All that is worthwhile in life is yours now.
2. The splendors of Heaven are yours eternally.
 - a. "There's a mansion now empty, Just waiting for me,
at the end of life's troublesome way."
 - b. "And when I come to the Gates of God, I believe they
will open wide...."