

# Heaven...

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## Chapter One

"Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool." Acts 7:49.

God says, HEAVEN IS MY THRONE. Heaven—the very word, conjures up for us visions of rapture, bliss and joy and expectations which no other word in the entire English language is able to do. In our minds heaven is associated with everything which stands for peace and for tranquility. There is hardly a word in our language, associated with such bliss and joy and happiness, reunion and expectation. When we wish to express the very superlative of joy and beauty, we call it "heavenly." Yet very few people know a great deal about what heaven really is. Very, very few have any clear idea of the Bible picture of heaven, and comparatively few are even interested to search and investigate it in the only Book which contains a description of it. In a previous series of messages we studied the awesome subject of "hell", and we are now so happy that we can come with a series on a much more pleasant subject, the subject of "heaven."

### Only Two Places

All men will spend an eternity somewhere, in one of two places prepared by Almighty God. According to the Bible every single human will live forever, either in heaven or in hell, either with the Lord or with the Devil. This being so, it is the part of wisdom that we should find out everything we possibly can about our future abode, and happily, we have a Book which tells us all we need to know both about hell and about heaven.

### Definition of the Term

Before referring you to a number of passages in the Bible describing for us some of the glories and the beauties and the joys and expectations of heaven, we must first define the word. The word, heaven, occurs almost six hundred times in the Scriptures in both the Old and the New Testament. In our English Bible we have just one word for heaven, but when we turn to the original we find there are at least six words which are translated in our Bible by the one word, "heaven". Three of these occur in the Old Testament and are Hebrew words, and three occur in the New Testament in the Greek.

The three Hebrew words are:

1. Shamayim—a general term for the heavens in general.
2. Galgal—commonly used for the atmospheric heaven enveloping the earth.
3. Shackaq—usually referring to the third heaven, and these three words correspond to the three different heavens mentioned throughout the Scriptures for us.

The three Greek words in the New Testament are very similar to the Hebrew ones in their meaning. They are as follows:

1. Ouranos
2. Mesouranema
3. Epouranios

"Ouranos" again refers usually to the immediate heavens around the earth, while the "mesouranema" is the middle sky, and refers to the planetary heavens, while the third, "epouranios", means above, or beyond the skies. Now we hope that these words do not scare you from a further study of the subject of heaven, but we mention them because they will have a bearing upon the Bible revelation of this great truth. Generally speaking, then, these three words refer to the three heavens revealed in the Bible, the lower heaven, "ouranos", which we call the atmospheric heaven, the air and the clouds about the earth; the second heaven called "mesouranema" or middle heaven, and usually refers to the planetary or astronomical heavens, also called the starry heaven. And then there is the third heaven, the "epouranios", the upper or the uttermost heaven beyond the sky, called in Scripture, the "heaven of heavens", and the particular dwelling place of God.

There is no Scriptural basis for believing in seven heavens. Men talk about the seventh heaven, but the Bible reveals only three, the atmospheric, the planetary and the third heaven, or the heaven of heavens. In this series of messages we shall deal only with the last of these, the third heaven, the place where the Throne of God is today, to which Jesus went at His ascension, where our departed loved ones who died in the faith are now awaiting us.

### **Not Much Known**

Of the almost six hundred times the word, heaven, occurs in the Bible, by far the majority of the references are to the first two heavens, that is, the lower and the middle heavens. In only comparatively few of the instances does it refer to the heaven of heavens—the third heaven, the particular dwelling place of God, and the saints of God. It is rather surprising that a close study of the subject of heaven reveals the fact

that the Bible has but comparatively little to say about this heaven. We do not know, for instance, with any degree of certainty, where it is, we do not know how large it is, and many other details about its appointments and its structure are left unrevealed.

### **Not New Earth**

Again, many of the Bible pictures of the future bliss of the saints have no connection with heaven at all, but are descriptions of the glories of the millennial kingdom. The many, many passages, for instance, which tell of the cessation of wars, nature at rest, the earth restored, the animals at peace, Jesus the King sitting on the Throne of David in Jerusalem, are not pictures of heaven at all, but descriptions of the glory of the millennial age of Christ's reign after His return to set up His Kingdom here upon the earth. We give this warning so that you will not confuse the Kingdom of Heaven with heaven itself, for there is a tremendous difference between the two.

### **Not New Jerusalem**

Again, that glorious description of a beautiful city in Revelation 21 with its jasper walls, pearly gates, and golden streets is not heaven either, although very closely associated with heaven and giving us a picture of the real heaven. This beautiful city is the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, and not heaven at all. John tells us very definitely in Revelation 21:2 that this city came down, from God OUT OF HEAVEN. In verse 10 John says he saw it descending OUT OF HEAVEN from God.

### **Where Is Heaven?**

Again, before taking up the many positive revelations about conditions in heaven, we want to dispose of two other questions which I anticipate will be asked by many unless the answer is given now. The first question is, "where is heaven located?" and the second question is, "when was heaven created?" We are referring, of course, only to the third or upper heaven. Where is it? The question is asked again and again. To this we cannot give a positive answer. There have been many conjectures and I merely pass on one of them. There are those who locate heaven in the north, beyond the visible universe. They point out the fact that astronomers have definitely located an apparently empty space in the region of the North Star. Wherever the telescope is trained, they tell us, there are stars, stars, stars, and stars, innumerable stars stretching away to distances of millions of light years. Each time more powerful telescopes are invented, more stars come into focus. But there is one spot in the starry heavens, we are

told, where no stars seem to appear, only an empty place with a luminous glow. This is seized upon by some to locate heaven in this empty place. And to substantiate this, the following Scriptures are usually quoted:

"He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." Job 26:7

Another Scripture which is frequently used is in Psalm 76, verse 6:

"For promotion [translated by some, salvation] cometh neither from the east, nor from the west nor from the south." Psalm 75:6

It is argued from this, that, if salvation cometh neither from the east nor the west nor the south, it must of necessity come from the north, and so they say, heaven must be in the north, in the empty place in the heavens. Now there is the argument which they use. You can take it or leave it. Personally I am inclined to leave it alone. I have taken time for this rather flimsy argument only because it will eliminate our answering the question which we know would be raised by some of you.

### **Is It Up or Down?**

Again, heaven is said to be UP, and hell is usually-designated as being DOWN. But up is up only in a relative sense, for up is down, and down is up depending on the time of the day that we look at it. The earth being a globe, [rotates] once in twenty-four hours so that if you are on top of the earth at noon, you would be on the bottom side of the earth at mid-night in relation to the rest of the universe. The terms, up and down, therefore, are relative terms and simply mean that it is outside this earth, away in space from this world. And so we must leave the question again unanswered, and I trust that we have not wasted time in discussing this.

The second question is, "When was heaven created?" Again we do not know positively. In Genesis 1:1 we read:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

But this refers as we see by studying the passage carefully, to the atmospheric and the planetary heavens. When these were created, the heaven of heavens, the dwelling place of God, was already in existence, for Job tells us that the angels of heaven were present at this original creation. He hears God say:

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?..."

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Job 38:4a, 7

### **Not Know Many Things**

There are then some things, yes, many things which God has not been pleased to reveal to us now. Heaven is so glorious, so wonderful, that in these earthly temples we would not be able to stand the revelation of its glory. It would utterly slay us. Only after we have been released from this clod of clay will we be able to bear the glory of that wonderful vision.

Only a few men have been privileged to get a glimpse into heaven while still here upon the earth, and in each instance they were overcome and overwhelmed by the vision, Isaiah caught a glimpse of it in Isaiah 6, and was utterly confounded and cried out:

"Woe is me! for I am undone." Isaiah 6:5

Stephen caught a little glimpse just before he entered into heaven itself, and that glimpse of heaven with Jesus standing there transformed his whole being so that we read of him:

"And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, [Stephen], saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Acts 6:15

Paul too caught a glimpse of heaven, and tells us he was caught up to the Third Heaven. So wonderful was this sight, so glorious the scene, so marvelous, exquisitely, indescribably, superlatively beautiful, that Paul said it defied all description. It simply could not be put in words, neither was he allowed to, for he says that he heard there:

"...unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." 2 Cor. 12:4

Peter too had just a wee glimpse of heaven when he saw the great sheet descend, but evidently was not able to look inside. John, the Apostle, had two glimpses of heaven. Once when the door was opened in Revelation 1 and he fell down as one dead, and then again when the door was opened in Revelation 19 at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus. We hope to deal with that subject in a future message. I say, we HOPE to deal with this subject, for it may be that before that time comes we shall have the joy and the thrill, the unspeakable experience of seeing it for ourselves. It does seem that it cannot be long now, before the door in heaven will swing open once again and He who said, "I will come again", will descend from heaven, with a

shout, and we shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. What a wonderful prospect for the believer! Hallelujah, what a blessed hope! Heaven at last, at the end of the road. To see our loved ones again, to meet the dear ones gone before to be united in the place where there will be no more sorrow, no more weeping, no pain, no sickness, no parting, no sin, no temptation, but joy unspeakable, joy forever. And best of all, we shall see Him, see Him who died, who arose, who is preparing a place for us up there. Yes, that will be glory for us.

"Just a few more days to be filled with praise  
And to tell the old, old story.  
Then when twilight falls and my Saviour calls  
I shall go to Him in Glory.

Just a few more years to be filled with tears,  
And the journey will be ended.  
Then I'll rise and climb where the sands of time  
With eternity are blended.

What a joy t'will be when His face I see,  
He for whom my heart is yearning.  
Never more to die, never more to cry,  
For that day my heart is yearning.

I'll exchange my cross for a starry crown,  
Where the gales swing outward never.  
At His feet I'll lay every burden down,  
And with Jesus reign forever."

HEAVEN—HEAVEN! Heaven with father and mother and sister and brothers, and with all the saints of God, and WITH JESUS. Oh. it is no wonder that God has not been pleased to reveal more of the glories of heaven. We just couldn't stand it now. We'd be spoiled for this old world and wouldn't want to stay here another minute. Sometimes we do grow so homesick for heaven, but we must continue to carry on. There are still souls to be won, precious souls to win for Him. And so we are willing to stay, with that glorious hope ever beckoning us on.

Oh, my friend, are you ready for your home in heaven? You will soon reach the end of the road and then eternity. And may I press the question upon you, then WHERE? Where will you spend eternity? You can still settle it now for there is an open door into heaven waiting for you. It is Jesus Himself who said, "I am the Door, by Me if any man enter in, He shall be saved."

Why not trust Him now, and believe His promise. Receive Christ before it is forever too late.

## **Chapter Two**

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Phil. 3:20

The word translated "conversation" in this verse is "politeuma," and means "citizenship." It may, therefore, be translated, "For our citizenship is in heaven." Every believer is already a citizen of heaven, and while here on earth, we are but strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors of another country, representing our King in heaven among men upon the earth. Some day the King will call His ambassadors home to heaven, to return only when Jesus shall be King over all the earth.

Since we are citizens of heaven, and heaven is our future home, we should seek to learn all about it before we go. The King has given us His own description of that place so that we may know something of that which awaits us beyond the sunset. In our first message on this subject we reminded you of some things that we do NOT know about heaven. We do not know, for instance, for certain where it is, or when it was created. Today we take up some of the things we DO know about heaven as revealed in God's precious Word, the Bible.

### **Heaven Is a Place**

First of all, we emphasize the fact that heaven is a definite place. It is not merely a condition or a sentiment or a figure. It is an actual place where actual, literal things exist. Somewhere in this great universe, or beyond, there is a place prepared by God, which in a special sense is the place of His administration and abode, with a tabernacle and a temple and a throne. In this place Jesus in His literal, human, resurrection body is seated, surrounded by angels and the saints of God. In this heaven there is being prepared today, a great city, a literal city, of gigantic proportions with streets of gold, and gates of pearl, walls of jasper—called the New Jerusalem. Some day this literal city will actually descend from God out of heaven to be suspended in the atmosphere above the earth, between earth and heaven to be the dwelling place of God's redeemed people.

Yes, heaven is an actual place somewhere. To deny this is to destroy heaven itself. I fear that many people do not think of it as a place, but to them heaven is a vague, ethereal, unreal figure only. We sing the song:

"O, Hallelujah, yes 'tis heaven.  
'Tis heaven to know my sins forgiven,  
On land or sea, what matters where,  
Where Jesus is, 'tis heaven there."

Now I agree that this is a very beautiful sentiment, and I love it, but it is not true to fact at all. Surely we have a taste of heaven when we realize our Saviour's nearness, but it is not strictly true that "where Jesus is, 'tis "heaven there." When Jesus hung on the Cross, it was not "heaven there," but hell instead. Now please don't misunderstand. I have no objection to singing that song. Personally, I do love it for its sentiment, and do sing it and enjoy it, but when we do, let us remember it is only a wonderful sentiment, but heaven itself is a literal place, where Jesus is in bodily form right this every moment.

### **What Is in Heaven?**

While we do not know where heaven is or how long it is since it was created, or how large it is, there are many things which we do know about heaven. It is, first of all, the place where God dwells in a very special sense. David says in Psalm 11:4:

"The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven..." Psalm 11:4

Isaiah the Prophet tells us in Isaiah 66:1:

"Thus saith the LORD. The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool..." Isaiah 66:1

Of course, we realize that God is infinite, He is boundless, omnipresent. He cannot be contained in or confined to any one certain place, for He is omnipresent. Even the heaven is too small for Him. Solomon said at the dedication of the temple in 1st Kings 8:27:

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"

And in 2nd Chronicles 2:6 he says again:

"...seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?"

When the Bible speaks, therefore, of heaven as God's dwelling place, it does not imply that He is confined to heaven, for He is infinite, filling



all things and is omnipresent. It means rather that heaven is the center of His administration, the seat of His authority and the place from which He issues His edicts, commands and sovereign decrees. Heaven in this sense then is the throne of God, and He is the central figure in heaven.

### **Around the Throne**

Around this throne in heaven are the inhabitants of this wonderful place. First we are told, there are the seraphim and the cherubim, special supernatural beings called "living creatures" whose function it is to give glory, honor and praise to God as they cry:

"Holy, holy, holy. Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Rev. 4:8

### **The Angelic Hosts**

These cherubim and seraphim are not to be confused with the next group of heaven's inhabitants, the angels. In heaven are an innumerable company of angels. (Hebrews 12:22). They are the messengers of heaven. While the living creatures, the seraphim, seldom or never leave heaven, but remain about the throne, the angels are constantly coming and going from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven. They are called "ministering spirits" sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation. (Hebrews 1:14).

Their function seems to be to receive orders and messages from the Throne and bring them down to us. It was an angel sent from heaven to encourage Hagar, angels came to call on Abraham, and warn Lot to flee from Sodom. It was angels who ordained and gave the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai. (Galatians 3:19). God's message was sent by angels to Gideon, to Daniel, to Elijah. It was angels who announced the birth of Jesus, and warned Joseph to flee with the Child Jesus to Egypt. It was an angel who delivered Peter from prison, commissioned Philip, spoke to Cornelius, and revealed to Paul during the storm in Acts 27, that no one would perish. Angels are sent to protect God's people, and to represent little children in heaven. Heaven is a place, then, of tremendous activity. With countless angels coming and going while the living creatures chant their "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty."

### **The Third Company**

Then there is a third company who are grouped about the throne in heaven. They are the saints of God who have gone on before. All the

saved of all ages who have died since Adam are all there in heaven. Adam, Abel, Noah, Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Peter, John, Paul, Stephen, the first martyr, Cornelius, and his family, the Philippian jailor, Lydia, Timothy, Titus, the martyrs of the early church, Wesley and Whitfield and Moody, and Billy Sunday, and dad and mother and sister and brother, yes they're all there, and countless billions of others. It is estimated that there are slightly over two billion people alive today on this earth, but what an insignificantly small group is this compared with that innumerable host in heaven today. Billions upon billions have already entered throughout the past generations, and all of them happy and blessed, waiting for the climax of the ages, when they will come back with Jesus to receive new resurrection bodies and then to dwell with Him in the new heavens and the new earth and the New Jerusalem forever and ever. In the place where sorrow and distress, heartache, parting, death and pain will be no more. Oh, as we keep our eyes on that wonderful goal, which may occur any day, we will not become discouraged or weary but press on and on, laboring for Him. It is only a few more days and then—Only Glory Bye and Bye.

"Here the dearest of ties we must sever,  
Tears of sorrow we shed every day.  
But no parting, no sighing forever,  
When I've gone the last mile of the way.

When I've gone the last mile of the way,  
I will rest, at the dawn of that day.  
And oh, the joys that await me,  
When I've gone the last mile of the way.

I'm bound for that beautiful city,  
The Lord hath prepared for His own,  
Where all the redeemed of all ages,  
Sing glory, around the great Throne.

Sometimes I grow homesick for heaven.  
And the glories I there shall behold.  
What a joy it will be when my Saviour I see,  
In that beautiful city of gold."

And this brings us to an unpleasant aspect of our subject, and one on which I am loathe to speak. But duty certainly demands it, and I must discharge my solemn obligation. We have been speaking of the occupants of heaven, the blessed ones who are there now. We must call your attention, however, to those, who are missing in heaven,

those who are NOT there. All men do not go to heaven, and we must remind you that those who are not bound for heaven are bound for only one other place, and that is the Bible hell. There is no in-between place. It is either one or the other.

The Bible plainly tells us who will be missing. I read these awful words in Revelation 21:7:

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Rev. 21:7-8

And again in Revelation 21:27 John says:

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Rev. 21:27

Still another Scripture—Revelation 22:15:

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Rev. 22:15

And a final passage, from Revelation 20:15:

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:15

I refrain from extensive comment on these verses except only to ask you, my friend, "Is your name written in the Lamb's book of life? Are you heaven-bound?" That is the most important question that can possibly engage your attention. Soon this life will end, and then, ETERNITY, ETERNITY. And I would press upon you the question, Where will you spend eternity? Heaven's door is still open, and it is only the part of wisdom and good judgment and common sense to prepare for that which you know is absolutely inevitable.

My friend, if you were informed that sometime soon, maybe next week, you would be called upon to make a trip, say to Africa or South America, what would you do? The trip must be made. You cannot avoid it. Surely you would be a fool, knowing that you must go, if you did not investigate and get all the information possible concerning the trip and the land to which you were going. You would inquire about

the cost of the trip, the equipment needed, the best route to take, the climate, the provisions to take along, the language, the customs of the people, the accommodations you would find, you would arrange for a passport, and your visa. You would get literature, books and folders to tell you all about these things, and consult an authority who could arrange for the trip. You would be a fool if you neglected to do these things.

But what kind of a fool is that man or woman, who knowing he is going to make the trip into eternity, makes no enquiry or preparation. After a few brief years or days here on earth that trip must be undertaken by each and every one of us. Why then not get all the information possible and consult the only Authority who can arrange for a successful journey, and a safe arrival. The information is contained in a book called the Bible, the Authority and the Guide who will guarantee your safe arrival is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. For he said,

"I am the way, the truth and the life ... I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved."

### **Chapter Three**

"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." Rev. 11:19

Among the furnishings and the buildings in heaven, we are told, there is a temple and in this temple is the ark of the covenant of God which He gave to Moses and the children of Israel in days gone by. This temple, however, is only one of many buildings which are today in heaven. There is also a tabernacle, house of many mansions and a great city, the New Jerusalem, being even now prepared for the eternal habitation of God's redeemed people.

### **The Furnishings of Heaven**

In our previous message we emphasized the fact that heaven is a definite place, a literal place, located somewhere in God's great universe. It must be an immense place when we realize that it is the abode of an innumerable company of angels, and the countless billions of the saints of all the ages who have gone on before, We have seen that this heaven is occupied by God, as the center of all the worship and adoration. It is the place where Jesus Christ is sitting on the Throne of God with Him. Here too are the living creatures, and the angels, and all the hosts of the redeemed. Today in our message we want to look at some of the contents of this marvelous and wonderful

place. The Bible mentions a number of them.

We have already mentioned the Throne in the center, surrounded by the occupants of heaven. Here too in this heaven are two buildings, called a tabernacle and a temple. John in Revelation sees heaven opened, and in chapter 15, verse 5 he says:

"And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened." Rev. 15:5

Here the two buildings are combined and called the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony, I have often wondered what happened to that wonderful tabernacle in the wilderness, built at such tremendous cost by Moses after the pattern which God Himself gave to him. Later the temple of Solomon was built, after this same pattern of the tabernacle, but on a greatly enlarged scale, and the tabernacle disappears from view, and we hear no more about it. What happened to it is not recorded, except that here in Revelation John finally sees it in heaven and it seems to be a part of the temple which God is preparing in heaven. Is it too much to assume that God took it up into heaven as an eternal memorial of His faithfulness to His people, together with the ark of the covenant, with its blood sprinkled upon it?

### **The Temple**

In the verse at the beginning of this message from Revelation 11:19 John sees the temple of God opened in heaven, and in it was this ark of the testimony. That wonderful article of furniture, the ark, containing the golden pot of manna, the rod of Aaron that budded, and the tables of stone, are in heaven today according to this record. And that manna preserved in a golden pot by Moses (Exodus 16:33) is still in existence and will form part of our food in heaven. John in Revelation 2:17 definitely tells us:

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna..."  
Rev. 2:17

As Jesus broke the few loaves and fishes and fed the multitude, so too this manna in heaven will be multiplied, possibly again by His own precious, pierced hands to be the food of the saints forever throughout eternity. So often we are asked, "Will we eat in heaven?" To this question we can answer both no and yes. The souls of the saints now in heaven probably do not eat at this present time, for they have no physical bodies, but we are sure that when Jesus comes again and all the saints receive their new resurrection bodies that we shall indeed eat. We shall not need to eat, for there we shall hunger no more,

neither thirst any more; but we can and we will eat. Jesus proved His humanity you will remember, after His resurrection, by eating before His disciples on the shores of the lake of Galilee in His resurrection body. Yes, there is food in heaven, manna, and at least twelve different kinds of fruits on the one tree of life which grew on either side of the river of life. Eating will be one of the joys of heaven.

### **The Library of Heaven**

Heaven also contains a library. In this library are many, many books of records, records, records, records, seemingly without number. There are books recording the works and deeds of men. In these books is recorded every word spoken, every single thought of the heart of man. On the record found in these books men will be rewarded according to their deeds. Unless these records are destroyed by having your name entered into another book in heaven, even the book of life, all these records will be made public at some future date. Jesus Himself said:

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear [whispered] in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops." Luke 12:2-3

Or listen once again to Jesus as He tells us in Matthew 12:36:

"But I say unto you. That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Matt. 12:36

Realizing that these are the words of the eternal Son of God, spoken not by man, but by Jesus Himself, it certainly makes one tremble. If I were not saved, I think the very thought that my every word, my every deed, my every thought, is recorded in the library of heaven, and will be brought up for judgment would scare me half to death or drive me completely mad. I fear that men do not believe these words or they would do something about it, and do it immediately. If you really believe that some day every evil thought, every single idle word and deed and act, everything that you have ever done in secret and darkness will be publicized to all the universe, you certainly would not rest until you had done everything to have those records expunged and destroyed. You may think that your deeds are not known to anyone at all, that they have been done in secret. You'd be ashamed if men knew your secret life. For all the world you wouldn't want even your wife or your husband possibly to know, or your children, your friends to know what your real inner life is. But listen, somebody DOES know. God

knows, God sees, and He records it all and some day heaven and earth will also know. Do not fear man more than you do God, my friend? Listen, God sees it all, and God knows it all. John in the book of Revelation sees the sinners at the judgment and records this:

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. 20:12

Now you may possibly say, "Is there nothing that I can do about it? I certainly don't want that record of my whole life to stand." Then listen, my friend I have the best news in the world for you. There is also a book of life in heaven. In this great library, this book of life contains the names of other individuals. Whether you believe these to be literal books in heaven or only figures, makes no difference at all; the fact remains, that your whole life is recorded in heaven.

### **Blotted Out**

You can have the record destroyed and forgotten, forever. If you will receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour, He promises not only to record your name in the Book of Life of the redeemed, but will blot out the record of your sins, and justify you in His sight forever, so that you shall stand before Him as though you have never sinned. The past will be blotted out forever. We can promise you this on the authority of the Word of God Himself, for listen to this good news:

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44:22

And in Acts 3:19 we have this as Peter tells us:

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:19

And again in Hebrews 8:12 we read this:

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 8:12

Again in Isaiah 38:17 we read these precious words:

"Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to

my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." Isa. 38:17

One more precious promise, again in Isaiah 43:25:

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isa. 43:25

With such precious and wonderful promises, my friend, certainly you cannot afford to put off this matter of salvation another single moment. Why not receive Him by faith, repent, believe, and clear the record for eternity, and be heaven-bound.

And then heaven will become your hope, and your eternal home. The Bible mentions at least four things about heaven which are exceedingly precious. It will be a place of:

1. Realization of our dream of peace.
2. Relaxation from all our labors.
3. Expectation of full redemption,
4. Satisfaction, full and complete.

Four things—Realization, Relaxation, Expectation, and Satisfaction.

### **Realization**

In heaven alone is perfect peace ever realized. When the angels announced the birth of the Prince of peace they chanted: "Peace on earth, good will toward men." But that was nineteen hundred years ago, and it has not yet been realized. There has been no peace on earth, because the Prince of peace was rejected when He came the first time, but there is peace in heaven now for He is there and there will be peace on earth when Jesus comes again, when every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. The disciples on the day that Jesus went to Jerusalem on the so-called Triumphal Entry, cried out as follows:

"Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." Luke 19:38

Yes, indeed, there is peace in heaven today, and you may know heaven's peace in your heart, if you will only receive the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Relaxation**

Heaven is also a place of relaxation. It is a place of complete and perfect rest. John says in Revelation 14:13:



"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13

It is also a place of EXPECTATION. The souls under the altar of heaven in Revelation 6:10 are anxiously awaiting the day when they will return with Jesus to receive their new resurrection bodies. They cry out, "How long, Oh Lord, how long." One of these days the time of expectation will end in complete, perfect realization when:

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16-17

And then, finally, heaven is a place of SATISFACTION, where every care will be forgotten and every hope realized, and every need supplied. The passages bearing on this great truth are so precious and so wonderful, that we fear that we may detract from some of their sweetness and loveliness, by even trying to frame them in human words of our own; and so we quote them,

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. 7:16-17

And so while we do not know where heaven is, and it is not necessary that we should know, and we do not know when it was created, and we do not know how large it is, there are a great many things which God in His gracious and wonderful love has been pleased to reveal to us. We know that our loved ones gone before in heaven are at rest and are peacefully awaiting that grand and glorious day when Jesus shall come and we shall be reunited with them in resurrection bodies, never to part again. We know that there they are continually praising God, there they understand all the affairs of life, from heaven they behold the things that God is doing here upon the earth, with an understanding which only the presence of God can give. And then this closing

thought. Heaven is for eternity. It is forever. Here we have joys, but we know that they must pass and they must cease. And sometimes even the realization of the brevity of our joys, spoils them even while we are enjoying them. But heaven will be forever. No more parting, no more tears, no more death, no more sorrow, no more sighing, but we shall reign with Him forever and ever.

## **Chapter Four**

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye 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 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14-1-3

Nineteen hundred years ago the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour ascended into the heaven of heavens, where He is today seated at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. There are a number of reasons why Christ is today at the right hand of God in His intercessory work. First of all, He is there to represent us, and to stand before God, and to declare us righteous in His sight until we are presented perfect before Him at His coming. He is there to present His precious blood, to prepare us to reign with Him forever. Jesus is there to protect us against the accusations of the accuser of the brethren. But He is also there preparing something for the saints of God. He said to His disciples, and therefore, also to us:

"In my Father's house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you."

Many have pointed out that the word, "mansions", in this particular passage means literally, "resting places." Jesus is in heaven today preparing a great, great home with countless rooms or resting places for the saints of God, to be the abode of the redeemed forever and ever.

## **The Holy City**

When all the saints of all the ages have been brought safely home, and the wicked have been banished forever from the sight of God, and a new heaven and a new earth have been created, the Lord Himself will unveil this great city of many mansions to which He referred in John 14. This magnificent home is described in great detail in Revelation 21 and 22. In these chapters it is called by John the Apostle, the "Holy City", and "the New Jerusalem", and also "the Lamb's Wife." It is called the "Bride of the Lamb" because it will be the dwelling place

and the abode of the redeemed, the church of Jesus Christ, forever and ever.

Now this holy city, this new Jerusalem, is NOT heaven. It is, indeed, a part of heaven, and it originates in heaven, and was built in heaven, but it is not heaven itself, for John says in Revelation 21:2:

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."  
Rev. 21:2

It, therefore, descends from heaven, and apparently will be suspended in the air above the earth, between heaven and earth. There is no mention made that it comes all the way down to earth, but is suspended in mid-air and so will probably be the dwelling place of the saints over the earth, rather than actually being upon the earth. The dimensions of the city then are given. So huge is this city that John is carried away to a great and a high mountain, and there he beheld a city built like a perfect cube. We are told that it was fifteen hundred miles long, fifteen hundred miles wide, and fifteen hundred miles high. These are the dimensions given by John and there is no reason to doubt these dimensions as being literal. It is well to remember that while this is not heaven, it is yet a part of heaven. Someone has said that the holy city will be a heaven in miniature, and a reflection of the heaven of heavens, the abode of Almighty God. If this be so, we can only imagine what heaven itself must be when God finally unveils this also for the saints of God, but this particular new Jerusalem is called a city, a literal city, containing one billion, eight hundred and twenty-five million cubic miles. We are told that there are streets in this city, apparently superimposed one upon the other, on many different levels, while through the middle of the streets runs the river of life, and upon its banks on either side the tree of life for the sustenance of God's saints forever and ever.

If we take these dimensions which are given here by the Holy Spirit, and there is no reason whatsoever why they should not be literal dimensions, then it would mean that if this city were placed on the earth, it would reach from Boston to Miami, from Buffalo to Denver, and tower fifteen hundred miles up into the atmosphere. If we allow one apartment, 50 feet by 50 feet, and ten feet high (which is quite a spacious apartment) it would provide over ten thousand large apartments for every square mile, and over five million apartments for every cubic mile. This would mean that the entire city, divided into apartments, 50 by 50 by 10, would accommodate forty-one thousand trillion apartments for the saints of God. I merely mention these facts

because skeptics have often pointed out there will not be room for all the saints of God upon this earth when we consider all the billions who have been redeemed from all the ages, However, this is answered in this wonderful structure which God Himself has so graphically and vividly described for us in the book of the Revelation. Surely this must have been at least part of what Jesus was referring to when He said in John 14:

"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." John 14:2

### **Is This Literal?**

But I hear some of you asking, "But surely you do not think that this is the description of an actual city, surely this is not to be taken literally, but figuratively and symbolically? This surely cannot refer to a real city?" But to this we have only one answer. Taking it literally, presents no problem, while if we begin to spiritualize, we are in a maze of difficulty which no one could possibly answer. Why not take this description literally as God has given it to us? If man can build great cities, why cannot God build greater? If God could create a universe, countless billions of light years in extent, He certainly can make a city which is only a mere fifteen hundred miles in cubic measure. To build this city made of gold, garnished with all manner of precious stones, its gates of huge pearls and the precious stones, whose is the world, and who made the entire universe is no problem to the Almighty. If it is not a literal city, then why did Jesus Himself say:

"If it were not so. I would have told you."

I declare that those words settle it once and forever for me. Jesus said, "If it were not so, I would have told you." We must, therefore, rest upon the words and the promise of our precious Saviour.

### **The City's Illumination**

It is a supernatural city. It comes down from heaven. It is supernatural in its architecture, its composition, its beauty, its costliness. The lighting system of this city is supernatural and described in this wonderful chapter. As I have flown over some of our great cities at night, and seen the myriads of lights twinkling in the darkness below, I have often marvelled at the ingenuity of man in being able to construct the intricate maze and network of wires and cables, transformers and switches, needed to supply all that light in an orderly fashion to a million homes, and thousands of industrial plants and thousands of miles of streets. But this is merely a toy candle compared to the

illumination of the Holy City, which John describes. He tells us:

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there." Rev. 21:23-25

The entire new earth will be illumined by the light of this wonderful city. There will be nations dwelling and living upon the new earth, who bring their wealth and their honor into the city of gold. He who said, "I am the Light of the world" will lighten the whole and the entire earth. Israel will be settled in her land forever, never to be disturbed again. The saved nations will inhabit the earth while the church dwells with Christ and reigns from the Holy City over the entire earth. The Bible plainly says:

"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." Rev. 22:5

After having been told about its illumination and its lighting system, we are told of its water supply.

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev. 22:1

A great spring issues from the central throne, in the midst of heaven, forming a great river which winds through the almost endless streets of the city. It contains no ordinary water, but it is distinctly called "the water of life," for only those whose names have been written in the Book of Life will have access to its water.

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Rev. 22:2

In addition to water there is food as well, food which God will grant the saints to eat when they are in this eternal city. Can you visualize these millions of miles of boulevard in this great celestial city, the clear crystal river flowing through the street, the tree of life—the tree which God placed in the Garden of Eden, and was guarded by an angel until it was moved to heaven, growing in profusion on either side of this river? We have often wondered why God placed cherubims at the

gateway of the garden of Eden. Certainly it was not only to keep Adam away from the tree of life, but it distinctly tells us that it was to guard the way of the tree of life. This tree was to be preserved for the enjoyment of God's saints throughout all eternity, and so evidently this cherubim guarded the tree of life in Paradise until the earth was destroyed by the flood, and then this tree was transplanted into heaven where it is awaiting its transplantation into the house of many mansions, the Holy Jerusalem, which our Lord is preparing.

It is truly a remarkable tree. It bears twelve crops a year, one crop each month, and twelve different manner of fruits grow upon the one tree. The Bible is completely silent as to what kind of fruits they are, but certainly it will be our food, and it will allow a choice for each one's taste and the leaves will keep the nations free from illness forever.

### **No Temple Therein**

Before we close, we must mention one thing which is absent in that city in heaven. We have already pointed out that there will be those who will be absent among men, who have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, but there is also one building which was very prominent in the worship of God here upon earth, and which we also saw was in heaven now, but which will be absent in this new Jerusalem. John tells us about the absence of this building and says:

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Rev. 21:22

Here on earth God commanded the tabernacle to be built as the place of meeting with His people, in it was the altar of sacrifice, and a great veil which separated God from the people. But now sin is no more in that new Jerusalem. There is no more need of any altar, no more need of a holy of holies, for every obstacle between God and His people is forever gone. And so God now becomes the temple and Jesus our tabernacle and meeting place forever. In Revelation 21:3 we read:

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Rev. 21:3

There is still another thing which will be missing in this new Jerusalem, and is mentioned in Revelation 22:3:

"And there shall be no more curse." Rev. 22:3

Everything is going to be completely perfect; there will be no night, no temple, no curse, no tears, no suffering, no sighing, no death, no dying.

This then is the future home of all the redeemed. Soon our blessed Lord will return to take out His Bride, then to purify the earth, to be followed by His Kingdom reign, to complete the work of Christ, God's dealing with man in time, and then eternity. And the next event must be near at hand.

But someone probably says, "I can't believe this is all literally true." Listen, my friend, God says it is, and knowing that men would doubt it, the Holy Spirit is careful to remind us of its certainty, and so this section of the Bible giving this description of the heavenly city closes with these solemn warning words:

"And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."  
Rev. 22:6-7

Believe it my friend and prepare for an inevitable Eternity.

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