

What Happens When We Die?

Heaven

Heaven and hell are _____ places for a _____ people!

- Matthew 25:41 - *Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons.'*
- John 14:1-3 - *Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.*

Heaven is the most pleasant and yet one of the most difficult of topics. Biblical evidence, though limited, is sufficient to give us an appetizer of the glory that is ours in Christ Jesus!

- I Corinthians 2:9 - *That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him."*
- II Corinthians 12:2-4 - *I was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.*

A completely new dwelling place is reserved for the people of God . . .

- II Peter 3:10, 12b-13 - *But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness.*

Heaven Is a Wonderful Place

I. Heavenly Family

- A. _____ with loved ones who died in Christ
- B. No _____.
 - Luke 20:35, 36 - *But in the age to come, those worthy of being raised from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage. And they will never die again. In this respect they will be like angels. They are children of God and children of the resurrection.*
- C. Enjoy fellowship with people of faith who have gone before us
- D. Relationships elevated to new levels of complete _____

II. Heavenly Activities

- A. Won't be we bored with being "good" all the time?
- B. Worship, praise, and _____
 - Psalm 73:25,26 - *Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth.*
 - Revelation 5:11-14 - *Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders. And they sang in a mighty chorus: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered—to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They sang: "Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever." And the four living beings said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the Lamb.*
 - Revelation 7:11,12 - *And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their faces to the ground and worshiped God. They sang, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom^[SEP] and thanksgiving and honor^[SEP] and power and strength belong to our God^[SEP] forever and ever! Amen."*
 - Revelation 11:16-17 - *The twenty-four elders sitting on their thrones before God fell with their faces to the ground and worshiped him. And they said, "We give thanks to you, Lord God, the Almighty, the one who is and who always was, for now you have assumed your great power and have begun to reign.*
 - Revelation 19:5-7a - *And from the throne came a voice that said, "Praise our God, all his servants, all who fear him, from the least to the greatest." Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: "Praise the Lord! For*

the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him.

C.

- Revelation 22:3, 5 - *No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever.*
1. no limitations of sin
 2. no physical restrictions

III. Heavenly Landscaping

A. New heaven and earth

- Revelation. 20:11 - *And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide.*
- Revelation 21:1,5a - *Then 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. And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!"*
- II Peter 3:10-13 - *But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness.*

B. New look – _____ sea

- Revelation 21:1 - *Then 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.*
1. 3/4 of the earth's surface is water and is uninhabitable
 2. 1/2 of the earth's land is uninhabitable
 3. there will be 8 times more habitable area on earth!

C. The Curse is _____

- Genesis 3:16-19 - *Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. ^[SEP] And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you. And to the*

man he said, " Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return."

1. Soil
2. Toil
3. Limitations
4. Habitation
5. Childbirth

D. The Home of Believers

Meet your _____: God, Jesus, Angels, The Church, Old Testament and Tribulation Saints

- Revelation 21:3, 27 - *I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. Nothing evil will be allowed to enter, nor anyone who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty—but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.*
- Revelation 22:3, 4 - *No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads.*
- Hebrews 12:22-24 - *No, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to countless thousands of angels in a joyful gathering. You have come to the assembly of God's firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge over all things. You have come to the spirits of the righteous ones in heaven who have now been made perfect. You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks of forgiveness instead of crying out for vengeance like the blood of Abel.*

E. Forget the _____, we're still in a city: New Jerusalem

1. The Designer: God Himself
- Hebrews 11:8-10 - *It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give*

him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise. Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God.

2. The design:

- *Revelation 21:10-27 - So he took me in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious stone—like jasper as clear as crystal. The city wall was broad and high, with twelve gates guarded by twelve angels. And the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were written on the gates. There were three gates on each side—east, north, south, and west. The wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The angel who talked to me held in his hand a gold measuring stick to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. When he measured it, he found it was a square, as wide as it was long. In fact, its length and width and height were each 1,400 miles. Then he measured the walls and found them to be 216 feet thick (according to the human standard used by the angel). The wall was made of jasper, and the city was pure gold, as clear as glass. The wall of the city was built on foundation stones inlaid with twelve precious stones: the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were made of pearls—each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass. I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. The nations will walk in its light, and the kings of the world will enter the city in all their glory. Its gates will never be closed at the end of day because there is no night there. And all the nations will bring their glory and honor into the city. Nothing evil will be allowed to enter, nor anyone who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty—but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.*

New Jerusalem has foundations, gates, walls, and streets. It has the measurements of a cube (21:16), which may signify either a geometric

cube or a pyramid. Its foundations are garnished with “every kind of precious stone”

- Revelation 21:19-21 - *The wall of the city was built on foundation stones inlaid with twelve precious stones: the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were made of pearls—each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass.*

. . . twelve of which are mentioned. It has twelve gates bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel

- Revelation 21:12 - *The city wall was broad and high, with twelve gates guarded by twelve angels. And the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were written on the gates.*

. . . and the twelve foundations bear the names of the twelve apostles

- Revelation 21:14 - *The wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

The wall is jasper and the city is pure gold

- Revelation 21:18 - *The wall was made of jasper, and the city was pure gold, as clear as glass.*

Every gate is a pearl

- Revelation 21:21 - *The twelve gates were made of pearls—each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass.*

. . . and the gates are never closed

- Revelation 21:25 - *Its gates will never be closed at the end of day because there is no night there.*

. . . though twelve angels stand before them

- Revelation 21:12 - *The city wall was broad and high, with twelve gates guarded by twelve angels. And the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were written on the gates.*

Its street are pure gold

- Revelation 21:21 - *The twelve gates were made of pearls—each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass.*

. . . and there is a river of life and the tree of life

- Revelation 22:1, 2 - *Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations.*

The city has “no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb...”

- Revelation 21:23 - *And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light.*

Some saints would take these words of Revelation symbolically. For me, there seems to be no good reason not to take it quite literally!

A _____ flows through the city

- Revelation 22:1, 2 - *Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations.*

Best of all, _____ is there!

- Revelation 22:3-5 - *No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever.*

The Scriptures begin and end with the perfect plan: Paradise!

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him (1 Corinthians 2:9; NLT)

THINGS NOT FOUND IN...

HEAVEN

HELL

SEA

Then 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. (Revelation 21:1)

WATER

“The rich man shouted, ‘Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames.’ (Luke 16:24)

3/4 of the earth’s surface is water and uninhabitable. 1/2 of the earth’s land cannot be lived on.
God’s redesign of the earth will give us 8 times more land to live on!

TEARS, PAIN, CRYING, DEATH

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” (Revelation 21:4)

REST

Then a third angel followed them, shouting, “Anyone who worships the beast and his statue or who accepts his mark on the forehead or on the hand must drink the wine of God’s anger. It has been poured full strength into God’s cup of wrath. And they will be tormented with fire and burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb. The smoke of their torment will rise forever and ever, and they will have no relief day or night, for they have worshiped the beast and his statue and have accepted the mark of his name.” (Revelation 14:9-11)

SUN, MOON, LAMPS

And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 21:23; 22:5)

LIGHT

But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 8:12)

In heaven, everything will be bright and transparent: no shadows, no night, and no darkness. Hell is a place of fire and darkness. This combination is not found in our world. Hell is a place of punishment, pain and torment that will continue for all eternity in total darkness...

HUNGER, THIRST, HEAT

They will never again be hungry or thirsty; they will never be scorched by the heat of the sun. For the Lamb on the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes.” (Revelation 7:16, 17)

RELIEF

Then the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur, joining the beast and the false prophet. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:10, 15)

SATAN, SIN, SICKNESS

Nothing evil will be allowed to enter, nor anyone who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty—but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 21:27; 22:3; 22:5)

GOD

In flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don’t know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power. (II Thessalonians 1:8, 9)

Here is the bottom line: the fullness of God is found in heaven, and the absence of God in hell.
God does not send us to either, we choose!

Some commonly asked questions about heaven:

- 1) Do all dogs go to heaven?
- 2) How will we recognize each other in heaven?
- 3) Won't I be bored out of my mind floating on a cloud playing a harp for eternity?
 - A. We will _____ the Lamb of God Who has taken away our sin!
 - B. We will _____ the Lord

“Better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven”

--John Milton, English poet

- C. We will _____ with Him
- 4) Where do people go when they die?
 - A. Paradise
 - B. Hades
- 5) What questions do you have?

God wants you to live forever with Him in this incredible place He has prepared. Are you ready? Let me ask you...

1. Have you come to a place in your spiritual journey that you know for certain if you died tonight you'd go to heaven?

2. Suppose you were to die and be taken to the very presence of God and He would ask, “Why should I let you into my heaven?” What would you say?

- *Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth... (Colossians 3:1, 2; NLT)*

Heaven is a heartbeat away... Are you ready?

