

## **The Reality Of Heaven**

### Heaven 1

#### **Introduction.**

- I. One of the most important subjects in the Bible is the subject of heaven.
  - A. This is a subject that is scoffed at by infidels.
    1. They call it a "myth" or "fairy tale."
    2. They call it "wishful thinking" or "pie in the sky."
    3. They contend that those who believe in it are stupid or duped or both.
    4. They exhort us to live for the here and now and forget the nonsense of heaven.
  - B. They deny the afterlife and believe when man is dead that is the end of his existence.
    1. Along with this thinking is there is no accountability, and morality is decided by each person or by society
    2. Death is the end of man's existence.
- II. In contrast to the scoffing of infidels and the doubts of millions of people, the Bible teaches "The Reality Of Heaven."
  - A. The purpose of this lesson is to affirm "The Reality of Heaven," and the lessons to follow will explore many questions about heaven and seek to answer them from the Bible.
  - B. This will not be an exhaustive study, but it will take an in depth at look what the Bible teaches about heaven.
  - C. Even those who believe in heaven have many questions about it and many misunderstandings about it.
  - D. The Bible does not answer all our questions, but it does answer many of them.

#### **I. Heaven Is A Real Place**

- A. The patriarchs look forward to heaven.
  1. Hebrews 11:10,16; Psalms 23:6

HEB 11:10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

HEB 11:16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

PSA 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

2. Ecclesiastes 12:5.

ECC 12:5 Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective. **For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street.**

a. KJV “man goeth to his everlasting home”

b. NASB “man goes to his eternal home”

B. Jesus spoke of heaven as the place where God dwells. (Matt. 6:9;10:32, 33; 12:50; 16:17). See 1 Kgs. 8:27

1. God's throne is there. (Matt. 23:22).

2. Jesus is seated "at the right hand of God." (Mk. 16:19; Acts 2:32,33; 7:56).

C. Jesus spoke of heaven as a real place. (Matt. 5:11,12; 6:9).

D. Jesus promised to go and prepare a place for His followers. (Jn. 14:1-3).

1. He taught heaven is real.

2. He was also teaching heaven is not on this earth.

E. Jesus urged men to lay up treasures in heaven. (Matt. 6:19-21).

F. He promises His followers “eternal life” “in the age to come.” (Mk. 10:30).

G. The Hebrew writer spoke of "the city which is to come." (Heb. 13:14).

HEB 13:14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

## Comments

1. The location of heaven is not known.

a. It is a spiritual city somewhere in the vast universe.

b. Flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. (1 Cor. 15:50).

2. Heaven is not what we want it to be, but it is what Jesus has prepared. (Jn. 14:1-3).

a. Many believe heaven will be a continuation of whatever they like in this world.

b. There is no evidence for this concept.

3. Heaven is a place prepared those made in the image of God. (Gen. 1:26, 27).

a. It is not for the lower creation.

b. It is not for all men, though God desires that all men be saved. (1 Tim. 2:4).

c. It is for those who experience the new birth (Jn. 3:1-5), and who practice righteousness. (1 Jn. 2:29).

## II. Reasons For Believing In Heaven

A. I believe in heaven because **it is promised**. (Jn.14:1-3; Matt. 25:46; Rev. 2:7; 14:13).

1. This is not a promise of weak, finite, fallible men.
2. It is a promise from the Omnipotent One who created the world and who made us.
3. It is a promise of One who cannot lie. (Heb. 6:18).

B. I believe in heaven because **it is reasonable**.

1. Why would God put in man a longing for something that does not exist?
2. If there is no heaven or hell, all the injustices of life can never be corrected if this world is all there is.
  - a. There is no hope for justice against the heinous crimes committed, but never punished.
  - b. The person who lives a good life and experiences hardships and suffering may never be rewarded.
  - c.. The person who lives a good life and stands for the right is foolish. (1 Cor. 15:32).
  - d. The Christian is to be pitied if there is no afterlife. (1 Cor. 15:18,19).

C. I believe in heaven because **life is robbed of all purpose if there is no hope beyond the grave**.

1. All that man endeavors to accomplish has no meaning if he merely expires forever like the animals.
2. Life becomes vain and useless without the afterlife.
3. A life with purpose demands a life to come and a relationship with the Creator. (Eccles. 12:13,14).

D. I believe in the reality of heaven **because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ**. (Matt. 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-11; Lk. 24:1-12; Jn. 20:1-18).

1. The resurrection of Christ is supported by many eye-witnesses. (1 Cor. 15:5-9).
2. The resurrection of Christ is supported by the fact men have never been able to explain the empty tomb or the courage of the apostles apart from His resurrection.
3. Jesus is "the firstfruits of those who sleep." (1 Cor. 15:20).
4. Jesus abolished death and brought immortality to light. (2 Tim. 1:10).
5. He will raised all men. (1 Cor. 15:21, 22). See John 5:28, 29.

## III. Heaven Is The Home Of The Righteous

A. Jesus said He is the one and only way to heaven. (Jn. 14:6; 8:24; Acts 4:12).

1. Some erroneously believe there are many roads or ways to heaven.

2. The Bible teaches the way to heaven is by trusting and obeying Jesus.
- B. God gave His Son for those who believe. (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8).
- C. Jesus boldly proclaimed those who believe in Him will have eternal life. (Jn. 3:36; 5:24).
1. He promised to raise up those who believe in Him. (Jn. 11:24, 25).
  2. Paul taught the Christian lives in hope of eternal life. (Tit. 1:2).
  3. The epistle of 1<sup>st</sup> John was written that we may “know” that we have “eternal life.” (1 Jn. 5:13).
  4. Jesus promised that the righteous will be rewarded with eternal life. (Matt. 25:46).
- D. Peter reassured the scattered saints throughout Asia Minor that they had "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not way, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. 1:4).
- E. Paul taught heaven is where the Christian has his citizenship. (Phil. 3:20).
- F. Jesus taught our names are written in heaven. (Lk. 10:20).
- G. Paul taught the righteous will be with Jesus forevermore. (1 Thess. 4:17).

**H. Heaven is reserved:**

1. For those who accept Christ (Jn. 14:6).
2. For the children of God (1 Jn. 3:1,2).
3. For those who have their names written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 20:15; 21:27).
4. For those who are pure in heart. (Matt. 5:8).
5. For those who practice the Christian graces. (2 Pet. 1:5-11).
6. For those who do not practice “the works of the flesh.” (Gal. 5:21).
- 7 For those who “are persecuted for righteousness sake.” (Matt. 5:10-12).
8. For those who are "faithful unto death." (Rev. 2:10).

**Conclusion.**

- I. Yes, heaven is a real place.
- II. Our minds should be set on heaven (Col. 3:1, 2), and we should live in hope of it.

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