

The Hope of Heaven



A bible study on our eternal destiny

Introduction

Have you ever wondered what truly awaits us beyond this life? Heaven is not just a distant, abstract concept—it is our glorious future and the destination toward which every believer's heart is traveling.

Studying heaven does more than just answer our curiosities; it breathes life into our weary days, fuels our hope when we face trials, and anchors our purpose in the promises of an eternal God. By exploring what Scripture reveals about our eternal home, we can begin to align our hearts more closely with the Father's eternal plan, experiencing a peace and perspective that changes how we live *today*.

Beyond Human Speculation

Throughout history, humanity has been captivated by the mystery of the afterlife. Countless religions, cultures, and songwriters have attempted to paint a picture of what they imagine heaven to be—often filling in the blanks with their own hopes, dreams, and ideals. While these expressions speak to a universal longing for something more, they ultimately remain human speculation. How fortunate we are that we do not have to rely on guesswork! Christ, the "Faithful Witness," has pulled back the curtain for us. Through His Word, we have been given reliable, authoritative, and hope-filled truth about our eternal home. We don't have to wonder; we can know.

The Physical Nature of Heaven

The Bible suggests that heaven has a tangible, physical dimension. Following His resurrection, Jesus demonstrated that He possessed a physical, flesh-and-bone body (Luke 24:39). Furthermore, Scripture describes the future New Jerusalem as a physical, perfect, and eternal home where God will dwell directly with His people (Revelation 21:1–4).

Part 1: The Present Heaven – Where God Dwells

The Bible speaks of heaven primarily as God's dwelling place and the current home of believers who have passed away.

Key Verse: "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

- **God's Throne:** Heaven is not an abstract concept; it is the center of divine authority.
"The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all." — Psalm 103:19
- **A Prepared Place:** Jesus promised that He was returning to heaven to prepare a specific place for His followers.
"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
- **Immediate Presence:** For the believer, leaving this earthly life means instantly being with Christ.
"We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." — 2 Corinthians 5:8

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Jesus describing heaven as a "Father's house" with "many mansions" change your perspective of it?
2. What comfort does 2 Corinthians 5:8 give you regarding loved ones who died in Christ?

Fill-in-the-Blank Questions:

3. "The Lord has established His _____ in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all."
— Psalm 103:19
4. "The Lord has established His throne in _____, and His kingdom rules over all."
— Psalm 103:19
5. "In My Father's house are many _____; if it were not so, I would have told you."
— John 14:2
6. "I go to _____ a place for you." — John 14:2
7. "We are _____, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." — 2 Corinthians 5:8
8. "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the _____ and to be present with the Lord." — 2 Corinthians 5:8

Digging Deeper:

Read Hebrews 12:22-24. Consider the descriptions of the "heavenly Jerusalem" and the "innumerable company of angels" to better understand the grandeur of where God dwells.

Part 2: The Future Heaven – The New Jerusalem

Scripture reveals that God will ultimately bring heaven and earth together. He will create a physical, perfect, eternal home for us.

Key Verse: "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." — Revelation 21:4

- **A New Creation:** The current broken world will pass away to make room for a perfect creation.

"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." — Revelation 21:1

- **God Living with Man:** The ultimate prize of heaven is unbroken fellowship with God.
"And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.'" — Revelation 21:3
- **No More Suffering:** Heaven means the permanent end of all earthly pain.
"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." — Revelation 21:4

Discussion Questions:

1. Revelation 21:3 emphasizes God dwelling *with* us. Why is His presence more important than the physical beauty of heaven?
2. Which "former thing" (death, sorrow, crying, pain) are you most looking forward to seeing abolished?

Fill-in-the-Blank Questions:

3. "Now I saw a new heaven and a new _____, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away." — Revelation 21:1
4. "Also there was no more _____." — Revelation 21:1
5. "And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the _____ of God is with men'." — Revelation 21:3
6. "And God will wipe away every _____ from their eyes." — Revelation 21:4
7. "There shall be no more death, nor _____, nor crying." — Revelation 21:4
8. "There shall be no more pain, for the former things have _____ away." — Revelation 21:4

Digging Deeper:

Read Revelation 21:10-12. Note the description of the "great and high wall" and the twelve gates. How does the imagery of a prepared city influence your hope for our future home?

Part 3: What is NOT in Heaven

We can understand the perfection of heaven by looking at what is strictly excluded.

Key Verse: "There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever." — Revelation 22:5

- **No Impurity or Sin:** Evil, deception, and sin cannot corrupt the new creation.
"But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." — Revelation 21:27
- **No Darkness:** There is no need for created light because God's glory illuminates everything.
"There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever." — Revelation 22:5

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the complete absence of sin and deceit alter how we will interact with one another in heaven?
2. How does the imagery of constant light impact your view of heaven's atmosphere?

Fill-in-the-Blank Questions:

3. "But there shall by no means enter it anything that _____, or causes an abomination or a lie." — Revelation 21:27
4. "But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a _____." — Revelation 21:27
5. "But only those who are written in the Lamb's _____ of Life." — Revelation 21:27
6. "There shall be no _____ there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun." — Revelation 22:5
7. "They need no lamp nor light of the _____, for the Lord gives them light." — Revelation 22:5
8. "And they shall _____ forever and ever." — Revelation 22:5

Digging Deeper:

Read Revelation 22:3. Reflect on the promise: "And there shall be no more curse." Why is the absence of the curse just as important as the beauty of the city?

Part 4: How Heaven Impacts Our Earthly Life

Believing in heaven is not just about waiting for the future. It radically changes how we live right now.

Key Verse: "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." — Colossians 3:2

- **Shifting Our Priorities:** We are commanded to focus on eternal things rather than temporary earthly possessions.

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." — Colossians 3:1–2

- **An Enduring Hope:** Our current struggles are minor compared to the weight of glory waiting for us.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory..." — 2 Corinthians 4:17

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it practically look like to "set your mind on things above" during a busy work week?
2. How can remembering heaven help you endure a "light affliction" or trial you are currently facing?

Fill-in-the-Blank Questions:

3. "If then you were raised with _____, seek those things which are above." — Colossians 3:1
4. "Set your _____ on things above, not on things on the earth." — Colossians 3:2
5. "For our light _____, which is but for a moment, is working for us..." — 2 Corinthians 4:17
6. "...working for us a far more exceeding and eternal _____ of glory." — 2 Corinthians 4:17
7. "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are _____." — Colossians 3:1
8. "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the _____." — Colossians 3:2

Digging Deeper:

Read Philippians 3:20. Paul reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven." How does being a "citizen of heaven" affect your behavior and values here on earth?

Conclusion

Our hope for heaven is far more than a simple anticipation of a future destination; it is a transformative reality that brings profound peace, purpose, and joy to our lives today. As we have explored throughout this study, the promise of our eternal home with God informs our present identity and reshapes our earthly priorities.

May you be encouraged to live each day with an eternal perspective, anchoring your soul in the certainty of God's promises. By trusting in the glorious future He has prepared, we can navigate the challenges of this world with strength, knowing that our citizenship is in heaven and our true home awaits us.