

## The Everlasting Beginning

Heaven is a very real place.

- I know it's real because Jesus said *<sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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 14:2-3)*
- I know heaven is real because the author of Hebrews wrote that Abraham dwelled in tents, but he was looking for a city that had foundations, a city whose builder and maker was God.
- I know heaven is real because the Apostle Paul visited heaven while he was still alive. Listen to what Paul wrote the Corinthian Christians: *<sup>2</sup> I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago-- whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- such a man was caught up to the third heaven. <sup>3</sup> And I know how such a man-- whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows-- <sup>4</sup> was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. (2Co 12:2-4)*

Paul writes that he was caught up to the third heaven and he didn't know if he was in his body or in his spirit.

What does that tell us? You can go to heaven in your spirit or you can go to heaven with a body.

... Jesus is in heaven right now in His resurrected body. And one day every child of God will also have a resurrected body. So, there must be a place where our literal bodies will dwell for eternity in the presence of God and that place is called heaven—it is a real place.

### 1. The Geography of Heaven

*(Rev 21:1-2) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.*

John writes that he saw a new heaven and a new earth and the “holy city” the new Jerusalem coming down from God.



How will God make heaven and earth new? Look at what Peter writes:

*(2Pet. 3:10-13)<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. <sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, <sup>12</sup> looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! <sup>13</sup> But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.*

Just as you and I are made new creatures in Christ Jesus all things will be made new. The landscape of heaven and earth will be transformed through the purifying power of God.

## 2. The Government of Heaven

*(Rev 21:3-8) <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, <sup>4</sup> and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." <sup>5</sup> And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." <sup>6</sup> Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the*

*Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. <sup>7</sup> "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. <sup>8</sup> "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

A nation is only as good as its government and there is no better government than God—God is the government of Heaven. Heaven is majestic because Jesus rules heaven in majesty. When Jesus rules in majesty there will be no more sorrow.

A philosopher once said, “*Man is the only creature that when he is born he can do nothing for himself except cry.*” But, God is going to turn every tear into a triumph, every hurt into a hallelujah, and every Calvary into an Easter.

### **Why will there be no more sorrow?**

Rev. 21:27 tells us why: *and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

There will be no more tears because behind every sorrow, sickness, and pain is sin. .

## **3. The Glory of Heaven**

*(Rev 21:9-23)<sup>9</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."<sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, <sup>11</sup>having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. <sup>12</sup> It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. <sup>13</sup> There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. <sup>14</sup> And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup> The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. <sup>16</sup> The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. <sup>17</sup> And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. <sup>18</sup> The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. <sup>19</sup>*

*The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; <sup>20</sup> the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. <sup>21</sup> And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. <sup>22</sup> I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.*

What a glorious place! There is no need for the sun, moon, or stars in the heavenly city because it shines with the fantastic brightness of the glory of God. The brilliance and glow of colored jewels, all the vibrant colors of the rainbow, and gold so pure it is translucent.

John says that this city has walls. **Why are there walls around the heavenly city?**

*Certainly not to keep anyone in because the gates are open and certainly not to keep the wicked out because the wicked are in hell.* The walls of this city are for the glory of God. In a sense, they are monumental walls engraved with the names of the **12 tribes of Israel** and the **12 apostles**. This will be a place where the Jew and the Gentile will be together and we will all be one in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I think it is interesting that Rev. 15:3 says the new song we sing will be the song of Moses the servant of God and the son of the Lamb. [Our Jewish friends look to Moses and we look to Jesus but in Heaven we will sing the song of redemption together.]

It is a city foursquare and the perimeter of it measures 1500 miles and the length, width, and depth are equal measurements. This means that each side is about 375 miles long so that means the entire area of this city is about 140,625 miles or 90 million acres.

Have you ever heard someone say that there won't be enough room in heaven? Now you can see how foolish that is because each level would be large enough for about 100 billion people and everybody could have their own ranch.

Heaven will be a magnificent and glorious place and what will we do when we enter the city? We will be looking for the bridegroom.

#### **4. The Godliness of Heaven**

*(Rev 21:24-27) <sup>24</sup> The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. <sup>25</sup> In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; <sup>26</sup> and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; <sup>27</sup> and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Who is going to populate heaven?

- Every little aborted baby
- Every mentally challenged child that was ever born
- Every single person, from every single nation, from every single period of history that has put their faith and trust in God.

Heaven is a “made new” place for “made new” people.

## **5. The Gladness of Heaven**

*(Rev 22:1-5) Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, <sup>2</sup> in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup> There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; <sup>4</sup> they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.*

- Heaven is a place of satisfaction where inward thirst will be forever quenched.
- Heaven is a place of sufficiency filled with everything we will ever need.

There are trees filled with ever-ripening fruit for the healing of the nations and the glow of health will be upon everyone there.

*(Rev 22:6-13) <sup>6</sup> And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place. <sup>7</sup> "And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book." <sup>8</sup> I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the*

*words of this book. Worship God." <sup>10</sup> And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. <sup>11</sup> "Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy." <sup>12</sup> "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. <sup>13</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."*

- Heaven is a place of service because we will forever serve our Lord.
- Heaven is a place of sight because we will see our Lord face to face.
- Heaven is a place for the righteous because when we see him we shall be as he is.

## 6. The Grace of Heaven

*(Rev 22:14-17) <sup>14</sup> Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. <sup>15</sup> Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. <sup>16</sup> "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." <sup>17</sup> The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.*

Here is heaven's last invitation. Jesus is telling us that he both created David and descended from David. He is the Messiah of whom David wrote— "the bright and morning star."

Jesus says, "whoever wants to can take of the water of life FREELY!" If you don't take it is only because you don't want to. **Notice this invitation is given by the Holy Spirit and the bride—who is the bride??**

... That is us-the church. Here is the purpose of the church—to invite people to go to heaven with us. We are supposed to be like Jesus and not want people to go to hell.

The gospel is as simple as drinking a glass of water—if you're thirsty for more than the world can give you just come to Jesus and drink from the fountain.

*(Rev 22:18-19) <sup>18</sup> I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; <sup>19</sup> and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God*

*will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.*

The urge to change and revise God's word is as old as the garden of Eden. The serpent asked Eve the question, "**Has God said?**"

I want to warn you against anyone who tries to put a question mark over the bible. I don't know who is saved or who is lost but I do know anyone who tries to subtract or add to the bible is not a good person.

John ends the record of his revelation with the prayer that every heavy heart and weeping eye prays.

*<sup>20</sup> He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. <sup>21</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. (Rev 22:20-21)*

John was working in the rock quarries on the Isle of Patmos. He had been persecuted and abused. He was all alone. Jesus appears to John and says to him, "Sit down and I am going to reveal the future to you."

John sits down and all the warnings, intrigue, and glory of this great book is unfolded before his eyes. John sees the wonder of the new heaven and new earth and then God gives one final warning, "John tell people to not change one word of this revelation...and John, I am coming soon."

And John clapped his hands and shouted, "Amen, Come Lord Jesus!"