

III. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT HEAVEN AND WHY A PERSON SHOULD WANT TO GO THERE

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A. HEAVEN IS DESCRIBED AS A REAL PLACE WHERE THOSE SAVED WILL DWELL WITH THE LORD.

1. This place called "heaven" is where the throne of God is (Isa. 66:1; Acts 7:49).
2. This place called "heaven" is the place from which God reigns (Psa. 11:4; 135:6) and rules the universe (Dan. 4:35).
3. This place called "heaven" is located somewhere above the stars (II Cor. 12:1,2). The first heaven is the atmospheric heaven with its clouds. The second heaven is the stellar heavens with its stars and galaxies. The third heaven is that realm beyond the stellar heavens. The throne of God is located somewhere in that realm.
4. This place called "heaven" is referred to as the Father's house (John 14:2) and the place from which Christ was sent (Jn. 6:38,50,51; 8:18,42).

B. HEAVEN IS DESCRIBED IN A NUMBER OF WAYS WHICH ILLUSTRATE THE PLEASURES OF THAT WONDERFUL PLACE.

1. Heaven is described as a place of rest (Heb. 4:9; Rev. 14:13).
2. Heaven is described as a place of joy (Psa. 16:11; Luke 15:7,10; Jude 24) and rejoicing (Rev. 5:9-12).
3. Heaven is described as paradise (II Cor. 12:2,4).
4. Heaven is described as a holy place from which the wicked are excluded (Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5; I Cor. 6:9,10).

C. HEAVEN IS DESCRIBED IN A PRESENT AND A FUTURISTIC ASPECT.

1. In its present aspect.
 - a. Being in heaven will mean being in the Lord's presence (II Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 1:21-23). This in itself will mean everlasting joy and pleasure (Psa. 16:11).
 - b. Being in heaven will mean being in paradise (II Cor. 12:1-4). It will mean having no needs which are not met (Rev. 7:9-17).
 - c. Being in heaven will mean receiving a place which the Lord has prepared for His own (Jn. 14:1-3; I Cor. 2:9,10; II Cor. 5:1).
 - d. Being in heaven will mean having manifold reasons to rejoice and praise the Lord (Rev. 5:9-13).

- e. Being in heaven will be a temporary abode for the saints of God until their souls are reunited with their bodies at the rapture.

2. In it's future aspect.

- a. Being in heaven will mean having our bodies resurrected at the rapture (I Thess. 4:13-17).
- b. Being in heaven will mean being rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ and receiving all the things which the Lord has promised believers (I Cor. 2:9,10; II Cor. 5:10).
- c. Being in heaven will mean returning with the Lord at His Second Coming and ruling and reigning with Him on this earth (Rev. 19:11-16; 20:4)
- d. Being in heaven will mean dwelling with Christ in the new Jerusalem for all eternity.
 - (1) This new Jerusalem will be a beautiful city which will descend from heaven upon the earth (Rev. 21:9,10).
 - (2) This new Jerusalem is described as having beautiful gates, foundations, and beautiful walls and streets. It will be a garden paradise with a beautiful river and the Lamb will lighten that city (Rev. 21:11-22:5).
 - (3) This new Jerusalem will be the eternal abode for all those in Christ.

D. HEAVEN IS DESCRIBED AS A PLACE THAT CALLS FOR PERSONAL PREPARATIONS

1. Notice what this involves.

- a. Preparing for heaven involves coming to repentance and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:36; 6:40).
- b. It involves receiving Christ as one's Saviour and being born again (Jn. 1:12; 3:3, 5; I Jn. 5:12).

2. Notice what this excludes.

- a. No one will enter heaven because he is religious or sincere in his belief (Matt. 7:21-23; Rom. 10:1-3).
- b. No one will enter heaven on the basis of his good works (Eph. 2:8,9; Titus 3:5).
- c. No one will enter heaven by accident or chance.