

Heaven

In truth, what does the Bible reveal concerning this magnificent spiritual realm from where God rules? And how many souls of mankind have entered her gates?

Joh 3:13 And **no man** hath ascended up to heaven, **but** He that came down from heaven, *even* **the Son of man** which is in heaven.

Enoch

Gen 5:24 And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him.

Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated (*Gk.3346- From G3326 and G5087; to transfer, that is, [literally] transport, [by implication] exchange, [reflexively] change sides*) that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Col 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated (*Gk.3179- From G3326 and G2476; to transfer, that is, carry away, depose or [figuratively] exchange*) us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

- Just as **Enoch** went from the physical realm into the spiritual without experiencing death, so does the **Christian**, when first converting, from their worldly, carnal existence into the new **Godly**, spiritual life. **Enoch** didn't experience the "sting" of death (*1 Cor 15:55-56*) just as the faithful saint will not experience the "second death" found in the "lake of fire and brimstone" (*Rev 20:14-15*).

Elijah

2Ki 2:11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven (*Heb.- 8064- lofty; the sky [visible arch in which the clouds move, as well as to the higher ether where the celestial bodies revolve]*).

- Either way, **Elijah** vanished into the physical sky out of **Elisha's** view. But he did not go to **Heaven**.

Jesus & Heaven

Joh 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** In My Father's house (*Gk.3614- residence, an abode; by implication a family*) are many mansions (*Gk.3438- a staying, that is, a residence*): if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a** place for you. **3** 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.

- Jesus was telling the apostles that they too would have to wait for **His** return. The church (*a.k.a.- the kingdom*) is "**Heaven on Earth**" until **Jesus** comes back. In her is where **God's** will is being done as in **Heaven**. In other words, the only place

righteousness can exist is within the collective redeemed. But some might say “*I thought the kingdom hasn’t come yet*”.

Mat 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

Mat 16:28 Verily I say unto you, There be **some standing here**, which shall **not taste of death, till they see** the Son of man coming in His kingdom.

Mar 9:1 And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be **some of them that stand here**, which shall **not taste of death, till they have seen** the kingdom of God come with power.

- Even the apostles didn’t understand the concept of the kingdom that was to come. All they did understand was that Jesus was going to rule over it.

Act 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, **wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?** 7 And He said unto them, **It is not for you to know** the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. 8 **But ye shall receive power**, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Act 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (*the 12 apostles*) were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all **filled with the Holy Ghost**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

- Jesus’ “coming” in Mat 16:28 was in reference to the Holy Spirit’s coming on the day of Pentecost after Jesus ascended to the right hand of God. The kingdom of God that came with power that day was none other than His church. If the millennialists were correct in their teaching of the “still coming” kingdom there would be a few very old people still living today who would have had to hear Jesus speak those words.

Eph 4:8 Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high (*sat down at the right hand of God*), He led **captivity** (*those who are in bondage to sin...*) captive (*...became servants of Christ*), and **gave gifts** unto men (**Eph 4:11-13*). 9 (Now that He ascended (*went back to Heaven*), what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth (*lower parts of the earth could be Palestine in comparison to Heaven or the physical tomb in which Christ was lain but not referring to the spiritual realm of Paradise since that realm is understood as the third heaven*)? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens (*1st, 2nd and 3rd*), that He might fill all things.)

- * Eph 4:11 And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 **For the perfecting of the saints**, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Heb 1:3 Who being the brightness of *His* glory, and the express image of His person (**Jn 14:9*), and upholding all things by the word of His power, **when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; At this point He became our advocate (1 Jn 2:1) having removed our servitude to sin unto death making us free from sin and alive unto righteousness.**

** Joh 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?*

Paradise vs. Heaven

Physical Description of a Spiritual Place

- **Heaven** is not the place depicted in cartoons where people are welcomed in by **St. Peter** who sits at a “pearly” gate with feathered pen in hand while looking over a log of names to see who gets to go in and who gets sent to the other place. It’s not a place where everyone there gets his/her own cloud, white garment, halo, wings and harp. Other than being clothed in white (*Rev 7:9; 19:14*) those are items that were added by artists sometime after the first century.

Paradise

Luk 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, **Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.**

Php 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and **to be with Christ** (*outside the physical realm in the spirit realm*); which is far better:

2Ti 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day (*resurrection*): and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

2Co 12:2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the **third heaven**. (*First-terrestrial -earth and sky; second being the celestial – above the sky. Both are physical [I Cor 15:40]*) 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4 How that he was caught up into **paradise** (*Gk.3857- a park, that is, [specifically] an Eden*), and heard unspeakable (*Gk.731- inexpressible*) words, which it is not lawful (*Gk.1832- it is right [through the figurative idea of being out in public]*) for a man to utter. (*See also Rev 10:4 concerning the “seven thunders” whose words John was not to record.*)

- If the apostle **Paul** was having a very difficult time describing the place where **Jesus** and the thief went after their deaths, imagine how difficult it must have been for **John** to describe the highest plain of existence, **Heaven**. In **Revelation**

chapter 4 John describes the throne of God with Him seated there along with the power that surrounds Him. Here (in chapter 21) John describes the bride of Christ, the church in all her glory. He did so, for the most part, by using common, very costly elements as examples that were known to be in existence but with greater emphasis on their magnificence.

Rev 21:18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. (*Polished to a mirrored finish.*)

Rev 21:19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. ...

Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates (*Not just one...*) were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl (*...very big pearl!*): and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

- In Rev 21:25 these gates are never shut. This proves that the place under discussion here is the future state of the church. The realm of Heaven though has to be closed off because of Rev 22:15. “For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven (*Gk.3772- [through the idea of elevation]*) and a new earth (*Gk.1093- a region: -country, world*) (thus in this context it would mean “a higher plain of existence”- spiritual): for the first heaven and the first earth (*the lower plain of existence- physical*) were passed away (*John here seeing something that has not yet transpired*); and there was no more sea (*here referring to the realm of paradise where the righteous dead are separated from God until Jesus comes. Once He comes the saints will no longer be apart from the Father*). 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem (*the future state of the church and capital city of Heaven*), coming (*present/perfect- thus continually. Heb 12:28 “...we receiving a kingdom...”*) down from God out of heaven (*shows origin*), prepared (*being prepared in anticipation of Christ's coming; Eph 5:27 “That He might present [her] to Himself a glorious church...holy and without blemish.”*) as a bride (*church*) adorned for her husband (*Christ*).

- The New Jerusalem is not Heaven but part of it. She is the focal point of the dwelling place of God, thus the capital city. Her origin, where she was created in the mind of God in eternity, is Heaven where she is to live for all the age of eternity when Jesus returns to claim her. After which the physical “heavens and earth” are to be destroyed. The present state of the church is the “camp of the saints”, a.k.a. the “church militant” with her weapon of choice being the “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (*Eph 6:17*). Also according to Rev 20:9 she is the “beloved city”.

Rev 21:9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious,

even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; **12** And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the **twelve tribes** of the **children of Israel**:

- These names are symbolic and represent ownership of an inheritance that was/is promised to those who “serve the Lord Christ” ...

Col 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord **ye** (*Christians/spiritual Israel*) **shall receive** the reward of **the inheritance**: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

...but in order to receive this inheritance we have to be made fit for it.

Col 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which **hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance** of the saints in light:

Gal 6:16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the **Israel of God** (*spiritual Israel*).

Jas 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the **twelve tribes** (*spiritual Israel*) which are scattered abroad, greeting.

- **Heaven** is more than just a **Utopia**. If **Hell** is such a place of tortuous agony then **Heaven** is quite the opposite. Very few have been privileged to see into this awe inspiring realm that awaits the faithful after the resurrection and judgment.

Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord **will come** as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. **11** *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, **12** Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? **13** Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth (*higher plain of existence, i.e., Heaven*), wherein dwelleth righteousness.

- We have already received the kingdom (*church*) but are looking forward to that home in **Heaven**. The same home that was promised to those of faith under the Old Covenant.

Heb 11:16 But now they (*the faithful before the New Testament*) desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city (*New Jerusalem, future state of the church*).

Heb 11:39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise (*the kingdom, the church*): **40** God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect (*Gk.0548- to complete, that is, [literally] accomplish*).

- The church had to come in order for all the world to be accepted into the fold. There was no "Israel" before Jacob so those before him weren't considered "the Israel of God" (*Gal 6:16*). Physical Israel was chosen in order to bring about "spiritual" Israel in which those who were not considered part of the inheritance, a.k.a. the Gentiles, then could be because of Abraham's faith.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. *29* And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and **heirs according to the promise.**

1Jn 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us **eternal life**, and **this life is in** His Son. *12* He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. *13* These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know that ye have eternal life**, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

- God has given us a road map to point us in the right direction. If we follow this map, a.k.a. the Bible, seeking to do His will for us, we can get to Heaven. He has not left us without hope.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

- Are you absolutely sure you have eternal life? Would you really want to risk all of eternity on not knowing?

1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring (*not send*) with Him (*back to Heaven*).

Hear: *Romans 10:17* ... "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Believe: *Heb 11:6* ... "for he that commeth to God must believe that He is" ...

Repent: *Lk 13:3* ... "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Confess: *Mat 10:32* "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in Heaven."

Be baptized: *Acts 22:16* "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Remain faithful: *Rom 6:4* ... "even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Charli Yana
August 12, 2012

www.searchfortruth.church