

9 Things to Know About Heaven Before You Die

“Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool. What house will you build me? said the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?” (Acts 7:49).

The universe is massive, beautiful and intriguing in so many ways. Can you imagine a place even greater? Can you imagine a place so beautiful that words cannot describe it? Can you image a place where there is no pain, no sorrow and no death? Heaven is that place. It is the dwelling place of God, where He resides on His holy throne and governs (Ps 11:4, 33:13).

“the Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all” (Ps. 103:19).

Here are answers to a few of the questions I most frequently receive about heaven:

How do we know there is a heaven?

The simple answer is, “It is written.” God tells us through His word. Jesus confirmed it. The apostle Paul witnessed it, whether in the body or spirit, we do not know (2 Cor. 12: 2). It was so profound to him that words could not adequately describe it. As we witness our earthly creation around us, that also affirms the existence of heaven as created by God.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

God dwells in the third heaven, and the apostle Paul heard things while caught up in heaven, too wonderful and magnificent to even speak. (2 Cor 12:1-4) Heaven is described as being high above the earth (Ps. 103:11).

The Bible declares that God wrote eternity in the heart of man

(Eccl. 3:11). Jesus demonstrated it. He was a real man who was really resurrected from the dead. The resurrected Jesus was the first fruits of those who had already died and for us today. More than 500 people witnessed his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20). He walked on this earth for 40 days in his glorified body and then ascended into heaven (1 Cor 15:43). His resurrection and ascension are proof enough that heaven is real. Additionally, at the moment of Jesus' ascension, when He was "taken up," all looked to the sky and watched in amazement (Acts 1:9-12).

Most everyone believes that heaven does actually exist. The word is clear that there will be no more pain, sickness, hunger or death. It is clear that there will be food fit for a King's feast. It is clear that it is a real place with streets of gold and gates of pearls. It will have rivers, trees and a crystal sea. However, many people have questions about heaven. Below are some questions that are frequently asked, along with the biblical answer.

Will I recognize my loved ones?

Yes. The word confirms this. Jesus taught that many would come and join Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: grandfather, father and son in heaven.

"And I say to you that many will come from the east and west and will dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11).

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man recognized Father Abraham and Lazarus. Although he was in torment, he could see across the great chasm and clearly identify them.

Will I be married to my spouse?

No. In heaven we will not be married. We will be like angels. This can sometimes be difficult to accept, but we need to

understand that we will not be devoid of love because God is love. Our love and devotion will be totally directed toward God.

“For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in heaven” (Matt. 22:30).

Will I be with the child I lost?

David writes, “Am I able to bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me” (2 Sam. 12:23b).

The children who have passed on into eternity will be with Jesus in heaven, even those who have been aborted or miscarried. How can I be sure? Because God created that soul before the child was even formed in the womb. Those souls came from God and will go back to God.

Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; and before you were born I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet to the nations” (Jer. 1:4-5).

Jesus said that one must receive the kingdom like a little child when he was teaching about the kingdom. He demonstrates great love and compassion for the little children.

“‘Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter it.’ And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:15-16).

Additionally, in Deuteronomy we see God promising that the children who did not know good or evil would inherit the land. The promised land is a foreshadow of our heavenly journey home, and here we can see that the little ones will enter in.

“And your children, who in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in, and to them will I give it,

and they shall possess it" (Deut. 1:39),

Will we look the same as we do now, and what age will we be?

There has been much ink spilled on this subject. We just do not know what age we will be. We do know that Moses and Elijah, on the Mount of Transfiguration, were each identifiable (Luke 9:28-36) This offers strong proof that we too will be identifiable one to another. There are different ages represented in heaven, so it is only speculation as to how old we will appear to be. We will be so far beyond and better than any condition we experienced here on earth, and our physical appearance will be of little importance.

When we die, will we be in limbo or will we be with Jesus?

We will not be in limbo or "soul sleep", as some falsely teach. We will be with Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. To be away from the body is to be at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

Will we have an actual mansion in heaven?

The Greek word used for mansion in John 14:2 actually means "dwelling places" or "many abodes." The New American Standard Bible most closely agrees with the original Greek translation. Here again, because of our limited understanding, we cannot fathom what awaits us. If the streets are made of gold, which they are, and the gates made of pearl, which they are, then why would we think that our eternal dwelling place would be anything less.

"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2, NASB).

Does heaven come down here, correcting our fallen earth?

At the rapture, Jesus comes back for His church and at the second coming He comes back with His church. It is at the

second coming that Jesus will meet us in the air with the saints that have gone before us. Then there will be a new heaven and a new earth. The new heaven will come and be the heavenly city, New Jerusalem, where we will live in our glorified bodies at our new heavenly home, eternally with Him.

“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’” (Rev. 21:3).

Just as heaven is real, the same can be said of hell. Many choose to ignore that reality. Hell is a place of separation and punishment where there will be weeping gnashing of teeth in utter darkness (Matt. 8:12, 22:13).

Please understand that there are only two paths in life that will lead you into eternity, and your final destination will be either heaven or hell.

Do you know today where your eternal home will be?

Do you know without a doubt, that you are heaven-bound?

Jesus died, was buried, was raised from the dead on the third day, and He sits at the right hand of God, the Father. If you believe in your heart and you confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior, the Word of God says you will be saved. Heaven will be your eternal home. Today is the day of salvation!

“For to me, to continue living is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor to me. Yet I do not know” (Phil. 1:21-22b). {eoa}

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