

## **11. Are Heaven And Hell Real Places?**

Yes Henrietta, Heaven and Hell are real places! Heaven is a wonderful place where all Christians will spend eternity with Jesus. Though the Bible describes Heaven, the grandeur and splendor of the place absolutely escapes our imagination. A contemporary song does a pretty good job of telling us that we can only imagine what Heaven is going to be like.

### **11.1 My Father's House**

In John 14:1-3, Jesus said that he was going to His Father's house to prepare a place for His loved ones. During the life of a Christian on Earth, we are subject to pain, trials and all sorts of troubles. Enduring such problems are well worth it knowing that our Father has a place prepared for us. Jesus went on to say in John 14:6 that there was only one way to the Father and that way was through Him.

### **11.2 Heaven is a Prepared Place**

In Revelation 21:1-2, Jesus revealed to John that Heaven is a special prepared place. It is perfect and no sin is allowed in Heaven where Holy God lives. The sinful scars from life on Earth will be removed by God Himself.

### **11.3 There will be No Suffering in Heaven**

Jesus went on to explain to John that there will be no tears, death, mourning, suffering, pain or crying there. All things are made new. The Christian will be totally liberated from sin and decay. Physical objects on Earth have a limited life due to rot and decay. Not so in Heaven; all things are eternal. This includes the Christian's heavenly body. There will be no need for hospitals, wheelchairs, walkers, braces, medicine, Insurance payments, etc. there. This is found in Revelation 21: 3-4.

### **11.4 Heaven is a Physical Place**

Revelation 21: 15-16 tells us that Heaven is measured 1,400 miles wide and long and high. That is a cube from Mexico to Canada and from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic coast of the USA by 1400 miles in altitude! There is plenty of room for everyone in Heaven. No Christian should have any fear that Heaven will be overcrowded. God wants all to forsake their sin and come live with Him forever in Heaven according to II Peter 3:9.

### **11.5 Heaven is a Spectacular and Secure Place**

The walls are made of Jasper and the foundations are decorated with precious stones according to Revelation 21: 18-21. There are twelve gates each made of a single pearl. The pearly gates of Heaven represent the way to enter. Jesus declared in John 14:6 that He was the only way to the Father in Heaven. Whereas oysters suffer much to coat a grain of painful sand with mother of pearl, Jesus suffered much so that we can enter Heaven through Him.

The streets of Heaven are of pure gold! Just think about how we labor for gold here on Earth. Gold is the standard for many monetary systems. Men have labored under

unmerciful and extreme conditions to mine gold. Fortunes have been made with gold but many lost everything in quest for gold. Some have likened gold as Heavenly asphalt. What men of Earth consider extremely valuable, God uses for us to walk on!

The spectacularness of Heaven represents the Glory of God. The beauty of Heaven escapes our ability to fathom. So it is with the Glory of God. It is beyond the comprehension of man.

There are twelve foundations for Heaven. Heaven is a very secure place. Foundations determine the strength and stability of structure. The walls are two hundred feet thick. With the foundations and thick walls, there is no danger of evil slipping into Heaven.

### **11.6 Heaven is where God Is**

God's glory supplies all light in Heaven according to Revelation 21: 23. No impurities or sin will ever enter into Heaven where Holy God lives. Only those whose names have been written in the Book of Life are permitted to enter where God is. Overcomers will inherit lodging in Heaven according to Revelation 21: 7. Overcomers are those that have overcome pride, self, doubts, religious tradition, etc. and have lived with a close relationship with Christ.

### **11.7 Some Are Outside the Walls of Heaven**

Revelation 21: 8 indicates that those outside the wall (of Heaven) will be eternally separated from God in a place prepared for Satan and his demons. This place is called Hell. Hell has opposite characteristic of every good thing in Heaven.

Heaven is my Father's house. The Father is not present in Hell. Heaven is a prepared place. Hell is a desolate and turbulent place. Heaven is a place of no suffering. Hell is a place of great pain and gnashing of teeth. Heaven is a physical place with foundations, walls, and is adorned magnificently. Hell is a bottomless pit of darkness.

Heaven is a spectacular and secure place. Hell is like a bottomless lake of fire enshrouded in total darkness. There is no security in Hell. Each occupant will be subject to torment and torture eternally. People in Hell will not recognize others who are there because of the total darkness. Each occupant of Hell will be alone with his pride, selfishness, greed, etc. God does not force people to join Him in Heaven and He does not send people to Hell. Remember that we are free agents with a mind and will. **We choose** where we will spend eternity.



## The Book of Life

### Contains:

The names of the saved .....Philippians 4:3  
The deeds of the righteous ...Malachi 3:16 - 18



### Excludes:

Renegades ..... Exodus. 32:33; Ps 69: 28  
Apostates ..... Revelation 13:8; Rev. 17:8



### Affords:

Joy ..... Luke 10:20  
Hope ..... Hebrews 12:23



Books of the deeds and words spoken by all men from the beginning of mankind will be opened according to Revelation 20:11. Those whose names have been struck from the Book of Life will be judged for their unforgiven sinful deeds and will be sentenced to eternal separation from holy God in Hell.

Hell is described as an

awful place of darkness yet of burning flames. The flame will be from burning sulfur that gives off blue-like almost invisible light. It will be a place of anguish and gnashing of teeth! No one will be recognized there.

Die 9

#### Philippians 4: 3

Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

#### Malachi 3: 16 - 18

Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in His presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored His name. They will be mine, says the Lord Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not."

Christians are called to be co-workers with Christ.

Your deeds accomplished through the Holy Spirit are being recorded for eternal rewards.

Die 10

#### Exodus 32: 33

Then to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me I will blot out of my book."

#### Psalms 69: 28

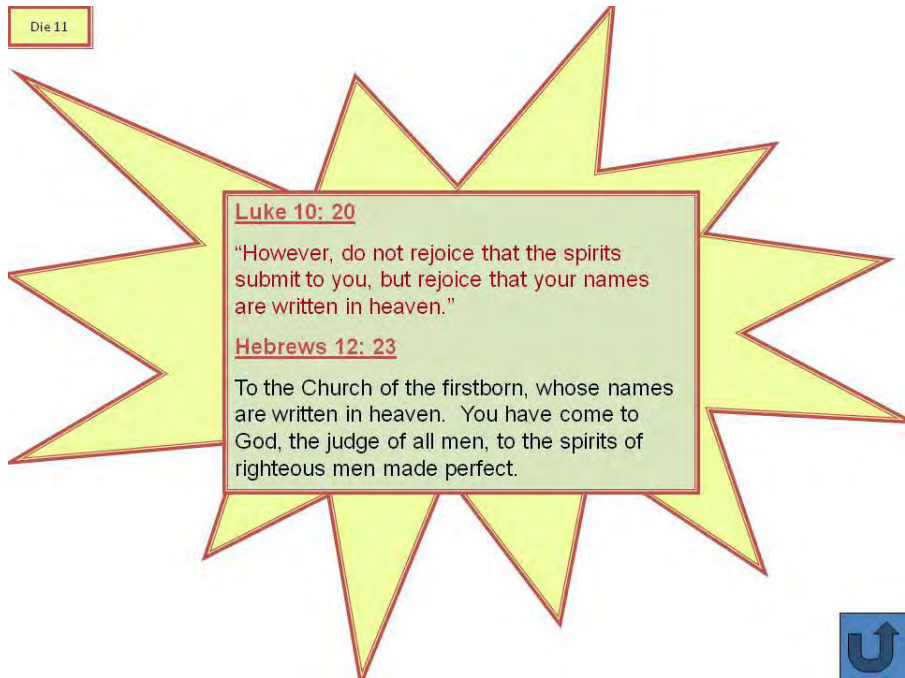
May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous.

#### Revelation 13: 8

All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast – all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

#### Revelation 17: 8

The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.



## 12.1 Thoughts On Hell

A friend of Papaw's wrote the following while a high school student. Chris served with the US Navy in far away places is now back in the homeland.

"It has many names: Hell, Hades, Satan's Dwelling, The Lake of Fire, The Second Death; these names all refer to one horrible place. It is a place of darkness, fire, gnashing of teeth, and (above all) eternal separation from God. Most people do not worry about Hell because they cannot comprehend how terrifying of a place it really is. Sometimes when one sins he will jokingly say, "Well, I guess I'm going to Hell now." If we truly understood the meaning of that statement then that kind of talk would not exist. Some have been led to believe that Hell is just a word, and not an actual place. I believe that Hell should be brought up more often in sermons so that the public might be more informed about it.

Some people say that Hell cannot exist because the Bible states that Hell is a lake of fire, yet it is completely void of light. Hell, the lake of fire, burns with sulfur according to Revelation 21:10. The interesting thing about sulfur is that it produces absolutely no light when it burns, thus the heat and burning fire is there but there is no light.

Others believe that they will be released from Hell by the mercy of God after a very long time, but eternity means eternity. Yes, God is merciful and, yes, he probably would release you from Hell after a long time, that is, if he remembered about you. What some fail to understand is that once God throws you into the lake of fire, He removes you from his memory. If you go to Hell God sets up an eternal barrier between you and Him. When you go to Hell you are completely separated from God. Yes, the fire might be painful, but the terror of Hell is that you are completely and eternally alone. Forever separated from family, friends, and God.

Being in Hell is referred to as the second death because to truly die is to be set apart from God. When God leaves you alone in Hell you are basically dead because you are no longer in fellowship with your Creator; you're God.

There are no leaders of Hell. Satan does not own Hell. He will be thrown in the lake of fire just like everybody else who did not accept Jesus as his or her own personal Lord and Savior. Satan and all of his demons who followed him will be weeping and gnashing their teeth along with the sinful, unrepentant men who will also be in Hell.

Now that you have a better understanding of the reality of Hell, I hope that you will be more serious and cautious when you think about joking about it. I pray that this message has allowed you to possibly be more serious when talking about Hell to others.

Chris Curry  
US Navy"

## **12.2 Assurance of Heaven**

The Holy God who created you in His image will provide you with the assurance of where you will spend the rest of your (eternal) life if you will accept your part of the covenant contract He offers you. John 3:16 is perhaps the most quoted scripture in the Bible, *"For God so loved the (people of) the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall never perish (in Hell) but have everlasting life (with God)."* You are one of those whosoever's. God loves you and wants to forgive you for all of your sins. Mammy calls I John 1:9 the Christian's bar of soap. It states, *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*

## **13. Rewards in Heaven**

There are many biblical references about rewards in Heaven for the Christian. Some people reason that just getting there will be enough and we should not serve God so that

we will be rewarded. According to the Bible, we have no choice in the matter; Jesus wants to reward those that faithfully serve Him while living on Earth.

When Jesus returns to Earth to close out this present age, he will bring rewards that will last for ever. According to Matthew 16:27, *For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.* This verse suggests that rewards will not be the same for all but will be according to the Christian's works.

Just thinking about spending a long time in a place makes Papaw want to prepare to really enjoy his visit. When his grandson Will visits for an overnight stay, he brings several selections of DVDs, all sorts of electronic paraphernalia, books, his favorite blanket and pillow, etc. Now eternity is about as long a period of time that Papaw can think of to spend in a place. The point is Jesus recognizes how we are and wants to provide rewards that we will enjoy for the long stay. Awards that are truly earned are much more appreciated than just free gifts. Jesus says in Revelation 22: 12, *“And behold, I am coming quickly and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”*

### **13.1 Now's the Time**

These scriptures inform the Bible student that our Heavenly experience will be determined by the choices we make now and how we live our lives on Earth. Once we cease to live in these physical bodies, our opportunity for laying up treasure in Heaven will have past. The Bible is very clear about this. There is no mention of reincarnation or any way to change our choices at a later time.

God has specific purposes for everyone who becomes a Christian. Though salvation is provided by the Grace of God and we must only trust Him for it, the saved life is intended to fulfill a life of God's purpose. Doing so will result in treasure being stored up in Heaven for the faithful Christian that obeys God rather than living a life for self. Ephesians 2:8-10 tells us, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”*

### **13.2 Motive is Everything**

Motive has everything to do with how one's deeds will survive the test for eternal rewards. Matthew 6:1 records, *“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen of them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in Heaven.”* Our motives must be to bring Glory to God rather than to build up our egos and reputation. True good works must always be to sincerely try to improve the well-being of others. Paul wrote, *“Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing”* (1 Corinthians 13:3).

### **13.3 Deeds that are Rewarded**

The Christian does not have to be a “Spiritual Giant” to earn rewards in Heaven. The great Commandment to Love thy God with all thy being and thy neighbor as yourself needs to be obeyed. After all, it is the great Commandment not the great Suggestion. Are you a good and faithful husband? Are you a loving and caring Mom? How do you relate to your employer? Do you really try to render a day’s productivity for a day’s pay? Do you seek to spend time with your Heavenly Father to learn what His will is for your life? Are you eager to fulfill God’s will for your life instead of charting a selfish course through life?

Do you make time for others? Any Christian can lay up treasure in Heaven by the way he or she treats other people. Acts of comfort, kindness and encouragement are all recorded in the Books used to review our life’s activity at Jesus’ Bema.

The Bible also emphasizes works performed through the Church are recorded. Teaching a class, worship through music, ministering to Youth, children, keeping the nursery are ways to make deposits in Heaven. Hebrews 6:10 states, *“For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints.”*

### **13.4 Seven Deeds that God Rewards**

1) We are instructed to do all things as unto the Lord. Do you think of the tasks you are paid to do by your employer as deeds deserving of Heavenly rewards? You should strive to be the very best employee and look for ways to make your employer successful.

2) Our deeds of secret worship, fasting and prayer are recorded in the Books. *“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”* Matthew 6:6.

3) Simple ministry to the poor, prisoners, widows and orphans are always noticed by God. James 1:25 informs us, *“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their troubles, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”*

4) A major arena for performing righteous deeds is within the family. All other institutions are build on this the first institution established by God Himself,. *“But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”* 1 Timothy 5:4-8. *“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”* Colossians 3:18-20.

5) God rewards those that serve others. *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.”* This Great Commission is found in Matthew 28: 19 – 20a.

*“Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.”* John 4: 35b-36

6) God is pleased if we share our resources with others. *“But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”* Matthew 6: 3-4.

*“And everyone who has left houses...or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.”* Matthew 19:29

7) Following Christ with an undivided heart will result in Heavenly rewards. Then Jesus said to His disciples, *“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.”* Matthew 16: 24-27.