

A PLACE CALLED "HEAVEN"

INTRODUCTION

- I. The word "heaven" is found hundreds of times in the Old and New Testaments.
 - A. The Jewish concept was that there are 3 heavens: (1) The atmosphere around the earth where the birds fly; (2) The region of the sun, moon and stars; and (3) The abode of God and all things eternal.
 1. This is in harmony with scripture. Matt. 8:20; Gen. 22:17; Matt. 6:9; cf 2 Cor. 12:2
 2. The first 2 heavens were created by God, whose abode is IN the 3rd heaven.
 - B. In our lesson today, we are concerned about the third heaven, the future home of the saved.
- II. Now let's consider "A place called heaven."
 - A. Some say we should not refer to heaven as a "place", and at the same time they have difficulty defining it, or finding a better word FOR heaven.
 1. It has been suggested that heaven is just a mental state, and not a "place" for the righteous.
 2. Bro. A. W. Dicus, gospel preacher in Florida;, wrote 2 hymns on the existence of God--"Our God, He is Alive," and "I believe."
 - a. He stated that there "IS" beyond the azure blue, a GOD, who is alive, and exists in reality.
 - b. Is that God "just a mental state" or does He live in a "mental state?"
 - B. The Bible describes it AS a place,.
 1. Jesus uses the word "place" in John 14 when describing where He was about to go. John 14:1-3
 - a. He said He was going to prepare a "place", in verse 2, which was in His "Father's house."
 - b. He used the word "go" (from the Greek word *poreuomai* to describe His departure, where He was going "unto the Father", Who is "in heaven". John 14:12, 28; Acts 1:11; John 3:13; Heb. 8:1; 9:24
 2. These passages show that there is indeed "a place called heaven."

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, this place called "heaven" is ETERNAL.

- A. If GOD is eternal, His abode or habitation is also eternal. Isa. 57:15; Psa. 2:4; Matt. 6:9
- B. Something eternal is contrasted with things temporal. 2 Cor. 4:17-18
 1. God IS, and has always been, so He is eternal.
 2. God exists, so His place of existence is eternal.

II. 2nd, this place called "heaven" has MANY DESCRIPTIONS.

- A. As a place of our inheritance as heirs of God, it is described in many ways.
 1. It is a place **promised** by God. Tit. 1:2; 3:7
 2. It is a place for **children** of God. Gal. 3:26-29; Rom. 8:17
 3. It is a place for **sanctified** people. Acts 26:18; cf 1 Cor. 6:9-11
 4. It is a place of **incorruption**. Matt. 6:19-21; 1 Pet. 1:4
 5. It is a place where **no evil exists**. Rev. 21:22-27
 6. It is a place of **joy and happiness**. Matt. 25:23
 7. It is a place of eternal **reward** for faithfulness. 2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 5:12
 8. It is a place of **rest** from labor. Matt. 11:28-29; Rev. 14:13
 9. It is a place of **no more pain or death**. Rev. 21:4
 10. It is place where the **names of God's people** have been recorded in the Lamb's book of life. Phil. 3:20; 4:3; Rev. 3:4-5; 20:15; 21:17
- B. Then, it is a place CONTRASTED with another place, called HELL—where all wicked will be cast for eternity. Matt. 8:12

CONCLUSION

- I. Don't you want to go to heaven to be with Christ, the angels and faithful loved ones, forever and ever?

- A. One moment in heaven will be worth all our service to God on earth, and one moment in hell will be only a start of endless punishment and agony.
 - B. Heaven will be worth every moment of suffering and living for the Lord in this life
- II. If you want to go to heaven, you need to make your **reservations** here on earth.
- A. If you take a vacation here, and expect to have a nice motel room and an enjoyable time in some vacation land, you need to make your reservation before you go.
 - B. Likewise, to go to heaven after this life, you need to make your reservation now, for it is “reserved” for people of God. 1 Pet. 1:4
- III. This reservation involves becoming a Christian by believing in Jesus, confessing that faith, repenting of sin, and being immersed in water to be saved, and then living a faithful Christian life until death.

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