

ARE YOU READY FOR HEAVEN?

Heaven is real and we must do all we can to make it to our eternal home.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ More than 72% of North Americans of varying faith groups believe in heaven. But what is heaven?
- ❖ In 2 Corinthians 12:2, the Apostle Paul says, "Such a man was caught up to the third heaven." Based on Paul's words, we can conclude there is also a first and a second heaven.
- ❖ The first heaven is called the atmospheric heaven—or that which we see around us—which includes the air we breathe, the clouds, rain and snow.
- ❖ Genesis 1:14-18 outlines what is considered as the second heaven, where the stars and galaxies appear.
- ❖ Then there is the third heaven, where God in His glory and majesty dwells with an innumerable host of angels while His presence covers the world at the same time.
- ❖ God's throne is in the third heaven and it is from that place of authority that He presides and rules over the affairs of men. It is from there He hears our prayers and the worship offered up to Him (1 Kings 8:30).
- ❖ This is what Paul had a glimpse of. It was of such glory that it left him speechless (2 Corinthians 12:2-4).
- ❖ The heaven we are anticipating is a dimension we have never experienced. It is a different sphere of life and living all together. We can only imagine and speak based on the information we have so far.
- ❖ In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul encouraged the saints whose family members, or friends, had passed away. He told them not to sorrow as if they had no hope (vv. 14-18).
- ❖ The above passage is the only place in the Bible that expresses the idea of a rapture. It says the dead in Christ shall rise first and everyone else who are alive, who are in Christ, in whom the Spirit of God dwells, will be "caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (v. 17, cf. Romans 8:11: The Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead will quicken our mortal bodies).
- ❖ In Revelation 21 John got a glimpse of the history of eternity, saying in verse 1 that he "saw a new heaven and a new earth."
- ❖ After the rapture, Armageddon and the Millennium, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. The atmospheric heaven—the blue and night sky—will be different; there will be no sun, moon, stars or clouds.
- ❖ We will have a purified, fresh, clean earth that will be delivered from sin. This new heaven and new earth will replace the old, cursed creation. Everything that makes this earth tragic and unlovable will be gone.
- ❖ There will be a physical transformation of the first heaven and of the earth as we know it. The new earth will be a place without fear, without insecurities, flaws, stress, disappointments, wars or rumors of war.
- ❖ John used the most beautiful image one could ever see—a man watching his bride coming down the aisle—to describe the holy city (Rev. 21:2), then verse 3 goes on to say that "God himself shall be with them...."

KEY SCRIPTURE: Revelation 21:1-7

- ❖ Our eternal home is not somewhere in the sky; it will be heaven on earth. We will be on the new earth, in the presence of the eternal God forever. Are you ready for heaven?
- ❖ If heaven was not real, we would not need to put on the entire armour of God (Ephesians 6:11), the Bible would not warn us about the enemy and his devices (2 Cor. 2:11) and the Scriptures would not encourage us to be steadfast and unmovable (1 Cor. 15:58), to fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12).
- ❖ We have a hope beyond this world we live in and we need to fight to keep that hope alive.
- ❖ Jesus said, "In My Father's house are many [rooms]" (John 14:2). There will be rooms for every saint. We don't know what they'll look like, but God will provide everything we need.
- ❖ We need to have heaven on our minds. We must hold on to that hope, our eternal hope. We must hold to God's unchanging hands. Don't let go! Don't quit! Our labour is not in vain in the Lord.
- ❖ John had a glimpse of the throne room in Revelation 4:1-11 and of the One who sits upon the throne. It's going to be glorious! It's going to be joy unspeakable and full of glory.
- ❖ Are you ready for heaven? Are you ready for worship at a higher level?
- ❖ The world is in a messed-up state, but if we are acting like those without hope, having anxiety and sleepless nights, we have a problem.
- ❖ We need to get out of that carnal mindset and turn our eyes upon the Lord. We need to "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Eph. 6:10). Our hope is in God.
- ❖ What we have in the Scriptures is an appetizer, a foretaste of the glory, splendour and majesty of a world and kingdom our eyes have not yet beheld and our bodies have not experienced. One thing is certain: He is coming.
- ❖ So, are you ready for heaven?

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. "Are you ready for heaven?" Looking through Scripture, make a checklist of preparations we should make to be ready for heaven.
2. Review your checklist and tick off any items you believe you already have "packed." What items are missing? For any items that are yet to be "packed", pray and ask God for His help.

PRAYER TIME

Lord, I do not know the day nor the hour of Your appearing, but I do know I want to be ready. Guide me, Lord, and lead me in Your way. Amen.

WEEK OF SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2020

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🤔 (Think about)

⚡ (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ➡️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE
WORD

Start-up: When going on a trip, what type of preparations do you make? Have you ever forgotten to do anything and, if so, what was the consequence?