

Heaven

Believers know that heaven is a wonderful place and we all look forward to being there. The Bible tells us why—God reveals things to those of us who love Him, because we have the Holy Ghost living inside our hearts.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10

But as it is written, **Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:** for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

We are going to look at some of the things God has told us about our eternal home. Paul tells us that as long as we are here on this earth, we are absent from the Lord (in heaven,) but as soon as we leave this body, we believers are present with the Lord. There is no time in between.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather

to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

How do we know that to be with Christ is to be in heaven?

Ephesians 2:4-6

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

Paul told the Philippians that he would rather be with the Lord (desire to depart and to be with Christ,) but it was better for the Philippians that he remained with them (abide in the flesh.)

Philippians 1:21-24

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For **I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:**

Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

We will also be with our loved ones who are saved. God is the God of the living!

Mark 12:26-27

And **as touching the dead, that they rise**: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush **God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living**: ye therefore do greatly err.

Luke 20:37-38

Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when **he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.**

The Bible says that Abraham was gathered unto his people. He was reunited with friends and family.

Genesis 25:8

Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; **and was gathered to his people.**

Isaac was gathered unto his people.

Genesis 35:29

And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Jacob was gathered unto his people.

Genesis 49:33

And when **Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.**

God told Moses that he would be gathered unto his people like his brother, Aaron, was.

Numbers 27:13

And when thou hast seen it, **thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered.**

And we will be gathered unto our people, the saved ones who have died before us.

Paul is the only person who we know for sure visited heaven and then came back to earth. Notice that he talks about his experience in the third person, like someone else was having the experience. He explains that this is so he would not glory in himself. He was concerned about someone thinking that he was above other people.

2 Corinthians 12:1-6

It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 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.** And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) **How that**

he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

We learn several things about going to heaven, from Paul's account.

First: There are 3 heavens. Paul was caught up to the third heaven so that means there are 2 others. The Bible describes the different heavens. The first is directly above the dry land, earth, where the birds fly.

Genesis 1:20

And God said, **Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.**

The second heaven mentioned is where the moon, sun, and stars are.

Genesis 1:14-15

And God said, **Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night**; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And **let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth**: and it was so.

The third heaven is where God resides, where His throne is.

Psalm 103:19

The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Notice, all of heaven is God's throne room!

Acts 7:49

Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

We also know that Jesus Christ is there, sitting at the right hand of His father.

Romans 8:34

Who is he that condemneth? It is **Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God**, who also maketh intercession for us.

Ephesians 1:20

Which he wrought in **Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,**

Colossians 3:1

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where **Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.**

Hebrews 8:1-2

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: **We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;** A minister of the sanctuary, and **of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.**

And Jesus is still a man

1 Timothy 2:5-6

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

The second thing we learn from Paul's account of his trip to the third heaven is: The third heaven is also known as paradise. The definition is given in the repetition in the verses following.

2 Corinthians 12:2-4

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**. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) **How that he was caught up into paradise**, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

The third thing we learn is: Paul does not know whether he was in his body or out of his body

when he went to heaven. Repetition of the verses here shows the importance of what he is saying.

2 Corinthians 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. And I knew such a man, **(whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)** How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

For us this means that we will not feel differently when we leave our body, whether it is when we die, or when we meet the Lord in the air at the adoption, the redemption of our bodies. We will not feel that we are “floating” around as a disembodied soul and spirit.

Last, we learn: Paul was not allowed to tell what he heard in heaven, he says they were “unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

The apostle John was allowed to see into heaven. He saw Jesus Christ with white hair and eyes like a flame of fire. He was clothed in gold. His feet were like burning brass in a fire and His voice sounded like many waters (maybe like Niagara Falls.) The sword coming out of His mouth is the word of God and it was like looking at the sun to see Him. (Remember Jesus' Transfiguration?)

Revelation 1:12-16

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, **I saw seven golden candlesticks**; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And **he had in his right hand seven stars**: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

John has another look into heaven, and the future. Notice, John knew that he had left his body because he says “I was in the spirit,” unlike Paul’s description of his trip when he did not know whether or not he was in his body.

Revelation 4:1-5

After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, **Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit:** and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are **the seven Spirits of God.**

Did you know there were 7 spirits of God? Each of them rests in Jesus. These are not the Holy Ghost, sometimes referred to as the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 11:1-2

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the **spirit of the LORD** shall rest upon him, **the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;**

There are some strange-looking beasts around the throne of God. Their worship of God is non-stop.

Revelation 4:6-8

And **before the throne** there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and **round about the throne, were four beasts** full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: **and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy,**

Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

These four beasts are seraphims. We know they are seraphims because Isaiah described them when he got the chance to see God on His throne.

Isaiah 6:2-4

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the **Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.** And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Revelation 7:9-10

After this I beheld, and, lo, a **great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with**

white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

You have probably heard the next phrase, “there is no new thing under the sun.” Have you ever stopped to think about what that means? The earth is “under the sun” and the second heaven is where the sun is located. What the scripture is telling us is there is nothing that is found on the earth (under the sun) that is not also found in heaven. There will be many things we see in heaven that are familiar to us!

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and **there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.**

For example, God’s instructions to Moses for the tabernacle in the wilderness was a pattern of the one in heaven. We know what God’s tabernacle

looks like from the instructions Moses was given. The cherubims are actually *on each end of God's throne*, the mercy seat.

Exodus 25:8-9, 17-22

And **let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.** According to all that I shew thee, **after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof**, even so shall ye make it.

¹⁷And **thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold:** two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And **thou shalt make two cherubims of gold**, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And **make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end:** even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. **And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings**, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. **And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.** And **there I will**

meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

Remember, Satan is a cherub (cherubims is plural.) See what a high position Satan had? He was on one end of God's throne covering it.

Ezekiel 28:14-15

Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

The book of 2 Chronicles gives us an idea about how big the cherubims are. Each wing is 5 cubits, which is about 7 and one half feet long. The total wingspan of the 2 cherubims over the mercy seat is 30 feet. We also find out about the colors of the vail of the tabernacle, blue, purple, and crimson, made of fine linen with cherubims on it.

2 Chronicles 3:10-14

And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image work, and overlaid them with gold. And **the wings of the cherubims were twenty cubits long**: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub. And **one wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub.** The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were inward. And **he made the vail of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen,** and wrought cherubims thereon.

Ten times in the Old Testament, it is referenced that God dwells, or sits, between the cherubims. The mercy seat is God's throne.

Psalms 99:1

The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.

The writer of Hebrews verifies that Moses was told by God to make a tabernacle after the pattern that he was shown when he was with God on Mount Sinai.

Hebrews 8:4-5

For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, **as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.**

“The mount” refers to Mount Sinai, where the Lord met Moses and gave him the Law.

Exodus 19:20

And **the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount:** and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

So we know that everything we see here on earth is also in heaven. There is nothing new under the sun.

We are told about things that the apostle John saw in heaven in the book of Revelation. He writes of white horses with riders on them who are clothed in clean, white linen. So, heaven has horses, and armies, and clean, white linen cloth!

Revelation 19:14

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Angels act as armies, even in heaven. In the future, angel armies will fight one another, one army under the command of Michael the archangel and the other under the command of the dragon, also known as the devil and Satan.

Revelation 12:7-10

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in

heaven. And the **great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan**, which deceiveth the whole world: **he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him**. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for **the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night**.

We know that there is rejoicing in heaven.

Luke 15:7

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Luke 15:10

Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

There will be rejoicing in heaven in the future when Satan and his angel army is cast out by Michael and his angel army.

Revelation 12:10-12

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Therefore **rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.** Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

God will create new heavens and a new earth because Satan and his angels have made them unclean.

Job 15:15

Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

Isaiah 65:17

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Isaiah 66:22

For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

2 Peter 3:12-13

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?** Nevertheless we, according to his promise, **look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.**

There are things in heaven right now, waiting to be brought to earth. The new Jerusalem, the city from which Christ will reign on earth, is currently in heaven. It will come down after He comes to earth the second time—to set up His kingdom.

Revelation 21:1-2

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Heaven will be our home for eternity. We will have a body fit for heaven. It will be incorruptible and eternal. Our body will be like the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will not flesh and blood.

1 Corinthians 15:48-50

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

It will be flesh and bone.

Luke 24:39

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for **a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.**

Philippians 3:20-21

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, **the Lord Jesus**

Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Jesus was able to eat when He had His resurrection body. Since we will have a body “like unto His glorious body,” we will be able to eat, too.

Luke 24:41-43

And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, **Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.**

Jesus tells us that we will not marry in the resurrection and that we cannot die any more. We will be like the angels in these respects.

Luke 20:34-36

And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and **the resurrection**

from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Three of Jesus' disciples saw what Jesus actually looks like while He was here on earth. It was at the Transfiguration. (See page 13.)

Luke 9:27-29

But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God. And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, **he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.**

Matthew 17:1-2

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

Mark 9:1-3

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. And after six days Jesus taketh with him **Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.**

John had another look into heaven. He saw the Second Coming of Jesus Christ!

Revelation 19:11-17

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine

linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

John also saw inside the temple of God in heaven! He saw the ark of the Testament!

Revelation 11:19

And **the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament:** and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

This is an example of something that had been on earth but is now in heaven! The ark was on earth in the tabernacle that Moses set up!

Exodus 25:21-22

And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

The same ark was in the temple that Solomon built.

1 Kings 8:5-7

And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude. **And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.**

The ark contains the tables of stone upon which God wrote the Law (the Testament or Covenant.) There is no written record of how or when it went from earth to heaven.

1 Kings 8:9

There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

Moses brought out the people to meet with God before he went up to meet with God Himself. The thunder, lightning, and thick cloud, plus the voice of trumpet sounds like being at the throne of God.

Exodus 19:16-20

And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. **And mount Sinai was**

altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

A lot of what we know about heaven sounds very strange to us now. Rest assured that if you believe that the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ paid for your sins, you will see heaven for yourself!

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.