

A Sneak Peek at Coming Events # 6
A Sneak Peek at Heaven
Rev 21:1-8

Introduction:

1. We want to look at heaven today – the last address of the believer
2. The book of Philippians says that our citizenship is in heaven
Phil 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:
3. It behooves us then to find out as much about it as we can
4. We are far too attached to this earth
 - a. We are only here for a short time – 70-80 yrs
 - b. We will live forever in heaven or hell for millions of years
5. Everything that is of value already is or will be in heaven
 - a. Our Father is in heaven – Matt 6:9
9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
 - b. Our Savior is in heaven – Heb 1:3
3b ...sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
 - c. Our saved loved ones are in heaven
 - d. Our inheritance is in heaven – 1 Pet 1:4
4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
 - e. Our eternal rewards are there – Matt 5:12
12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven...
6. The Bible does not tell us a whole lot about heaven, and there are a whole lot more questions that I have answers
7. The Bible does not tell us a whole lot about heaven, but it tells us enough about heaven

I. Heaven is a Real Place – vs 1a

1a And I saw a new heaven and a new earth...

A. What John Saw

1. John has seen the doom of the wicked and now he sees the bliss of the blessed
2. When God placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, God had everything prepared for them.
3. Our first parents sinned and ushered in death and decay to God's beautiful world
4. New heaven and new earth - fresh, unworn, unused
 - a) *We are used to a spoiled creation*
 - b) *The new heaven here is a new atmospheric and space heaven (first and second heaven)*
 - c) *The first heaven and earth have been defiled by sin and need to be remade and cleansed*
5. The third heaven, God's dwelling place has never been defiled and is not remade
6. New heaven and earth is a common Bible theme
 - a) *Isa 65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*
 - b) *Ps 102:25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*
 - c) *2Pe 3:12 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? 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*
7. Jesus said that heaven and earth would pass away but God's Word would endure

B. John Saw a Real Place

1. The dimensions are given (vs 15-17)
2. The materials (vs 18-21) are detailed
3. Not a state of mind
 - a) *Not just a place in someone's imagination - not an attitude*
 - b) *Not some 4th dimension / science fiction thing*
4. Heaven is a real place because God created it just like He did the rest of the universe - Gen 1:1

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

 - a) *Would God create an imaginary place?*
 - b) *Would God create a place that exists only in someone's mind?*
5. Heaven is a real place because Jesus is there preparing it

Joh 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.
6. Heaven is a real place because the Bible speaks of heaven as a place, not a concept or an idea

Isa 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

II. Heaven is a Readied Place

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

A. A Pure City - "holy city"

1. This is not the Jerusalem of today
2. Mankind has never known a pure city.
3. Adam and Eve knew purity, but they did not live in a city or community

B. A Prepared City - "prepared"

1. The Lord has been preparing a place for us for 2000+ yrs
2. Prepared as a bride prepares for her wedding day
 - a) *The hair The makeup The dress*
 - b) *The auditorium, flowers and decorations*
3. John used the most striking, beautiful image he could
 - a) *Imagine trying to explain something beautiful to a blind person*
 - b) *Take a blind person to the mountains of WV in the fall of the year when the leaves are changing and try to get the blind person to see the beauty of the scenery. "It amazing, it's beautiful, it's breathtaking" but the blind person has no idea what you are talking about. The most beautiful thing a man sees is his bride coming down the aisle, ready to meet him. This is how beautiful heaven will be*

III. Heaven is a Place of Relationship

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

1. The tabernacle speaks of God's presence among his people
2. At first God walked with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden
3. "I do not think the glory of Eden lay in its grassy walks, or in the boughs bending with luscious fruit, but its glory lay in this, the Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day. Here was Adam's highest privilege, that he had companionship with the Most High." Spurgeon
4. Later he dwelt with Israel in the tabernacle and temple
5. Then, after that, Jesus came to earth to live among us for a time
6. Today God dwells in His people - 1Cor 6:19-20 ←

IV. Heaven is a Place of Relief

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

- What won't be in heaven ←
- Tears, death, sorrow, crying and pain are incompatible with life everlasting

A. No Sadness - "wipe away all tears"

1. "wipe" = obliterate, erase, blot out
2. There will be no cause for tears
3. No more tears of bereavement
 - a) *Remember the tears of Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus*
 - b) *Remember the tears of the widow of Nain*
4. No more tears of sympathy and mercy
 - a) *As Jesus who wept over sins and coming destruction of Jerusalem*
 - b) *As Jeremiah wept over the sins of the children of Israel*
5. No more tears of persecution
 - a) *Like the Israelites who suffered under the whips of the Egyptian taskmasters*
 - b) *The like the parents of Moses who carefully tucked him into the basket to float him in the Nile River*
 - c) *Like the tears of the parents who lost boys in the days of King Herod shortly after Jesus was born*
6. No more tears of repentance
7. No more tears of disappointment
8. No tears from wayward loved ones
9. God will remove all tears by uniting us with loved ones
10. God will remove all tears by banishing Satan and his demons
11. "Man enters this world with a cry and goes out of it with a groan and in-between life is more or less intoned with helpless wailing... But the halleluias of heaven will drown out the voice of woe forever." Seiss

B. No Separation - no death

1. How different is heaven from earth where graves are so common
 - a) *Here death spares no one*
 - b) *Our best friend dies*
 - c) *A spouse of 50 years dies*
 - d) *Here the wise, the good, the useful, the lovely die*
 - e) *Mothers, fathers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters die*
2. No untimely separations by death in heaven
 - a) *No graves will be dug in heaven*
 - b) *No funeral processions, no funeral homes*
 - c) *No more sad farewells caused by death*

C. No Sorrows - "no sorrow"

1. Jesus Experienced Pain and Suffering
 - a) *He was called the man of sorrows.*
 - b) *In pain and suffering He saved us*
 - c) *Jesus took on the human nature and became the man of sorrows since sorrow is part of the human condition*
2. Imagine how different earth would be if all sorrow was gone - that is how different heaven will be
 - a) *We cannot escape sorrow here - No one rises in the morning with absolute certainty that he will not be sorrowing by evening*
 - b) *Like a shadow, sorrow and suffering follow the rich and poor alike*
3. No more broken hearts
4. Thank God there is a boundary where sorrow cannot reach

D. No Suffering - No pain or hurts

1. Pain is a terrible thing to have to deal with on a daily basis
2. Pain makes people think of God – what do people say when they are in intense pain – “Oh, God!”
3. Walk down the halls of the nursing home and hear the screams of pain and wish you have the power to end all pain
4. What we wish for here will be the reality of the heavenly life
5. I wonder if those who have the most pain here on earth have a greater capacity to enjoy heaven when they get there? Who enjoys a glass of cold water more, the person who has been sitting in the air conditioning all day watching TV or the person who has been working outside in the yard all day in the summer heat and they feel dehydrated.

V. Heaven is a Restricted Place – vs 8

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

- Those mentioned here will not be seen in heaven
- The sins enumerated here are unmistakable evidences of an unsaved condition
- These people have ruined earth, but they won't ruin heaven
- Often the world considers Christians to be "losers" but in the end, it is the lost who are the losers

A. The Fearful

1. Too afraid to trust Christ as Savior
2. Afraid about what others would think
3. Afraid of what others would say
4. Afraid of persecution

B. The Unbelieving

1. They wouldn't trust God or His Word
2. They trample of the blood of Jesus underfoot
3. They mock the cross and the Savior
4. Here is the terrible end of those who will not trust Christ as Savior
 - a) *Joh 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*
 - b) *Joh 16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

C. The Abominable

1. "abominable" = to excite disgust, to feel disgust, to abhor
2. These are the polluted
3. They became contaminated with the filth of this world

D. The Murderers

1. Ever since Cain murdered Abel, there has been a continual disregard for human lives
2. Here on earth we have to worry about murderers, but not in heaven
3. Here on earth the murderer often spends a few years in prison and then he gets out
4. Though the sentence may not be too bad here, there is another sentence to face
5. This also includes infant murderers

E. The Whoremongers

1. Sexual promiscuity is sanctioned widely in our day, but God's law still stands
2. **Ex 20:14** Thou shalt not commit adultery.
3. **Heb 13:4** Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

F. And Sorcerers

1. Witchcraft, spiritism, magic, demon worship were common in the ancient world
2. All who practice these will not have a part of heaven
3. Under Mosaic law such practices were punishable by death – Deut 18:10-12 ←

G. And Idolaters

1. Many worship idols and false gods which is prohibited by God in Ex 20:3-5
3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;
2. A person's greatest idol is himself

H. And all liars

1. Satan was the first liar and he is the father of lies
2. One is never more like the devil than when he is lying

VI. Heaven is a Reachable Place

A. You Must Be Born Again

B. Trust Jesus as Savior

Conclusion:

1. Make sure you know where you are going.
2. Billy Graham tells the story of a time when Albert Einstein was going on a train to an out-of-town engagement. The conductor stopped by to punch his ticket. The great scientist, preoccupied with his work, with great embarrassment rummaged through his coat pockets and briefcase to no avail. He could not find his ticket. The conductor said, "We all know who you are, Dr. Einstein. I'm sure you bought a ticket. Don't worry about it. Everything is okay." The conductor walked on down the aisle punching other tickets. Before he moved to the next car, he looked back and saw Dr. Einstein down on his hands and knees looking under his seat trying to find his ticket. He came back and gently said, "Dr. Einstein, please don't worry about it. I know who you are." Einstein looked up and said, "I too know who I am. What I don't know is where I'm going!"

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? **20** For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

That Won't Be in Heaven

Suppose that we were traveling in northern Alaska and we met an Eskimo from the North Pole area. That area was all that he knew. Ice and snow, polar bears, seals, fish and penguins. Suppose he asked about North Carolina. You try to explain the beach in the east with it's sand and vacationers. You try to describe the hills and mountains in the western part of the state. The Eskimo cannot imagine what these are like since he has never seen the mountains or a beach. You try to explain the golf courses, the shopping centers, and the restaurants. The Eskimo is confused and can't understand what you are talking about. You realize that it might help the Eskimo if you could tell him what is not in North Carolina. Our land is not covered all year by ice and snow and there are no seals or polar bears in North Carolina – no igloos and no whale blubber. It helps the Eskimo to understand when he knows what is not in NC. This is the method that the Holy Spirit uses here. Since we cannot relate to what is in heaven, He tells us what is not in heaven.

De 18:10 There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, **11** Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. **12** For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.