

..., The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

— Matthew 13:31-32 —

Where is Heaven

God Reigns in Heaven

Suppose someone asked you to point to heaven. Which way would you be pointing? Up, right? What about twelve hours from now? What if you were on the other side of the earth, or any place on the planet for that matter? You could be pointing in an infinite number of directions. If you think of it this way, heaven is all around us. The earth is inside heaven. In Isaiah, God says,

Isaiah 66:1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest?

The Bible mentions three heavens.

Genesis 1:1-8 In the beginning **God created the heaven and the earth**. And the earth was without form, and void; and **darkness** *was* upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the surface of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. **And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night**. And the evening and the morning were the first day. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so. And **God called the firmament Heaven**. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

The firmament is the sky. **God called the sky, heaven**. During the daytime we see the blue sky, the clouds, the sun, and occasionally, the moon. The atmosphere of the earth is the first heaven. At night, we look up and see the moon and the stars. With the aid of a telescope, we may see planets, galaxies, and other celestial bodies all surrounded by darkness. The universe is the second heaven, which also includes the earth and its atmosphere. Therefore, we live in heaven.

Deuteronomy 10:14 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *is* the LORD's thy God, the earth *also*, with all that therein *is*.

There is nothing in creation that is not in heaven. Then where is the heaven in which God dwells?

The apostle Paul speaks of a **third heaven** in 2 Corinthians.

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**.

2 Corinthians 12:4 How that he was caught up to **paradise**, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Paul called this heaven "paradise."

In blessing the temple that he built for Israel, Solomon said,

1 Kings 8:27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

Even heaven cannot contain God. Although mentioned many times in the Bible, God does not tell us much about this heaven of heavens.

God probably did not tell us more about heaven because it is more than our mortal minds could envisage. It is like trying to imagine infinity or eternity. It is beyond our ability to comprehend. Speaking of our resurrection into the kingdom of God, 1 Corinthians 13:12 says,

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.

We must wait until “kingdom come” to understand.

God Reigns on Earth

Revelation 21 and 22 concisely describes the heaven that is our hope and our eternity.

Revelation 21:1-3 **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. 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.**

The Bible tells us that God is going to recreate everything. In this new heaven and new earth, the earth will be the throne of God instead of His footstool. The holy city, New Jerusalem, will be His house and our new home. Jesus said in John 14:2-3,

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. And if 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.

If Jesus is coming again to receive us unto Himself, where will He be? Where will His Father’s house be? Where will we be? Revelation 20 tells us that the kingdom of God will begin with Christ conquering and ruling this world for a thousand years.

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 Then *cometh* the end, **when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;** when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. **And when all things shall be subdued unto him then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God maybe all in all.**

The world that we know is going to become the kingdom of God in two stages. For a thousand years, Christ is going to rule this world with a “rod of iron.” (Revelation 21:1 and Isaiah 65:17-18)

Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.**

The earth is our home now; it will be forever. The Bible never promised that we would go to where God is. It promised just the opposite. God is coming to be with us. When Jesus taught us to pray in Matthew, He said,

Matthew 6:10 **Thy kingdom come.** Thy will be done **in earth**, as *it is* in heaven.

He also said in Matthew 5:5,

Blessed *are* the meek: for they **shall inherit the earth.**

It seems apparent that the meek do not own the earth at this time. Jesus was quoting Psalm 37:8-11.

Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but **those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.** For yet a little while, and the wicked *shall not be*: yea,, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it *shall not be*. But **the meek shall inherit the earth**; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

And verses 28-29,

For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. **The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.**

The World To Come

Jesus gave us a number of parables to help us understand the kingdom of heaven. They can only be understood with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 13:24-30 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together **first the tares**, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Jesus explained this parable in Matthew 13:37-43.

He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; **The field is the world**; the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so it shall be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and shall gather **out of his kingdom** all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun **in the kingdom of their Father.** Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

This parable shows that Christ is going to send His angels to take the wicked **out of His kingdom**, and then the righteous will shine forth in **the kingdom of their Father.**

Proverbs 2:21-22 For **the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall**

remain in it. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

Proverbs 10:30 **The righteous shall never be removed:** but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

Jesus said,

Luke 18:29-30 ... Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and **in the world to come** life everlasting.

What is life everlasting? It is eternal life. Eternal life where? In the world to come. God did not promise that we would go to heaven when we die if we believe in His Son. He promised everlasting life in the world. In all of these instances, the word "world" is translated from the Greek word kosmos. This simply means the universe or the creation.

The often quoted and much misunderstood John 3:16 is taken out of context without verse 17.

For God so loved **the world** that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into **the world** to condemn **the world**; but that **the world through him might be saved.**

Jesus not only came to save humanity, but He came to save **the world**. God loves His creation; the earth was not created in vain. When the Bible talks about the end of the world, it is not talking about the end of the earth. It is talking about the end of man's version of civilization. The earth was created to be inhabited.

Isaiah 45:17-18 *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded **world without end**. For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, **he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited:** I *am* the LORD; and *there* is none else.

"Where is heaven" is not really the question because heaven is all there is. The only thing that exists outside of heaven is God. The heaven of heavens is a spiritual dimension, and the physical heaven is in it. We cannot see the spiritual heaven because we are still physical. It is only because of God's gift of the Holy Spirit that we are able to conceive the fact of a spiritual dimension through faith. The spiritual heaven permeates all of creation.

So where is heaven? It is all around us. It is right here. When Jesus returns, Revelation 11:15 tells us,

..., The kingdoms of **this world** are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign **for ever and ever**.

2 Peter 3:7-14 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat¹, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 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. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Revelation 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Revelation 22:20 ...Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

How is it that God attributes any significance to mankind?

Psalm 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

We are less than a colony of ants to the creator of the universe, yet He loves us just the same. The universe may be infinitely large². We are only micro-organisms swarming on a tiny speck of dust suspended in a vast expanse. , we do not know, yet the building blocks of creation may be infinitely small. Matter seems to be composed of things that appear to have no substance at all. At the sub-atomic level is it simply energy? Scientists continue to identify, as yet, undiscovered particles. Will they ever get to the bottom of it the way they are going about it? If they ever could solve the mystery, I submit that what they would discover is spirit, and that Spirit is God. But alas, I do not believe spirit can be discerned by physical science.

Now that we know where heaven is, “What is Hell?”

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