
Is Heaven Real?



SEVERAL YEARS BACK there was a popular song titled “If I Ruled the World.” The songwriter said that every day would be like the first day of spring, everyone would be free as a bird, and there would be sunshine in every person’s sky. What would you do if you ruled the world? Would vegetables taste like chocolate chip cookies? Maybe you’d go right for the biggies, such as world peace.

What kind of world would God make? It’s recorded in the Bible. God already made a perfect world, and He will re-make it very soon.

Thoughts to Remember:

- ♦ In Genesis we see the world God originally created. There was no sin, no suffering, and no sadness. No one starved, there were no wars and no disappointed hopes. All was beautiful and peaceful. We read about this same lovely world in Revelation. What happened between Genesis and Revelation? Why do we look around today and see violence, suffering, and death?
- ♦ It can be discouraging to live in today’s world with all its frustration, fear, and grief. You were never meant to live a hard life in a sinful world; you were meant to live a life of love and joy in a perfect world. This world is not your real home. As we read God’s Word, we discover that we won’t be in this sinful world much longer—very soon we’re going home!
- ♦ God gave Adam and Eve perfect physical bodies and a lovely environment. But they rebelled, putting their own opinions above God’s command. God had to tell them to leave the garden and its Tree of Life, lest they eat from it and become immortal sinners.
- ♦ God promised that this sinful world would be restored. The ancient prophets looked forward to this restoration: **“And that he may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began”** (Acts 3:21, 20). **“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells”** (2 Peter 3:13).
- ♦ Our problem, our challenge in a secular society, is that our minds become confused. Cars, houses, clothes, television personalities become our gods. Our minds focus only on what we

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see now. But one day there will be a new world with no suffering, heartache, sorrow, or death; *that's* reality. Everything else is sham, a pretense, make-believe.

- If you've lost a wife, a husband, or a loved one to death, one day you will see your loved one again. Christ is coming soon to restore all that has been lost. Even our bodies will be restored to the bodies God intended us to have: "...And we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:52, 53). "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to his glorious body" (Philippians 3:20, 21). We'll still have our personalities, and our friends will still know us.

- What about the unsaved? They will suffer the results of their choice and be destroyed, missing out on the joys of heaven. They sold their birthright for temporary pleasures and ambitions here on Earth—so they will miss out on Earth II. "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away" (Revelation 21:1).

- "Then I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 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'" (Revelation 21:2, 3). The universe revolves around God's throne—and God moves His throne to return it to its former glory. The wicked see the city and move to attack: "They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them" (Revelation 20:9).

- Out of the ashes of this old world, God makes a new world. "And God will wipe every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4). "These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb" (Revelation 14:4). "...The leopard shall lie down with the young kid...They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain" (Isaiah 11:6, 9).

- "They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; and my elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them" (Isaiah 65:21-23).

The "take-home" message for you . . .

- If you're uncertain about taking this step of faith into new Bible doctrines you've learned, think of Abraham's experience. God asked him to go on a journey, and in faith, he went, not knowing where his journey would end. You have the advantage: you know where your journey will end...eternally in a lovely, perfect world with God.

Just between you . . . and God:

- Perhaps on Sabbaths in heaven, Jesus will visit people. One Sabbath He visits you. He walks through your garden, telling you all about the plants. "This fruit tree here," He says, "is the only one of its kind in the universe. I made it and planted it in your yard because I know your tastes, and I knew you'd like it." He puts His arm around you and says, "Is there anything more I can do for you?" He draws your attention to the tokens of His love, the scars still on His hands. You've never been in the presence of someone who loves you this much before. Let His love win your heart, and serve and praise Him for eternity!

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