

Heaven's Beauty

By Mark Hatfield

So many people today have a desire to go to heaven! The many scriptures that describe this beautiful place, set our heart at ease knowing that such a place exists for the souls of man . It is always helpful to recall what the Bible says about heaven, that we might be encouraged to be faithful in order to receive the "mansion" prepared for those who follow the Lord (John 14:1-6; Revelation 2:10). Let us look to the Bible and see what God says about this beautiful place called heaven...

HEAVEN IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE FOR ITS CITIZENS

Just the simple fact that God is there, makes it a wonderful place to be (I Thess. 4:17). Jesus is at the right hand of God, and will be there forever as well. The Bible also informs the reader that we will be with the faithful that have gone on before us. Just to know that we will be able to spend eternity with our Lord should create a picture in our hearts that never fades. To know that God has called us citizens of His dwelling place should make us revere Him (Phil. 3:20)

HEAVEN IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE FOR ITS CONTENTS

As we look through the pages of the New Testament we find the revealed beauty of heaven. In Revelation 21, the city of heaven is said to be overlaid with all kinds of precious elements, stones and gems. In verse 18 we are told, "And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass". For us as humans, this is something incomprehensible. Never has such a city been seen, yet God has prepared such (21:2) for those who come to Him. Every foundation was made of a precious stone and the streets were pure gold (vs. 19-21).

Probably the most beautiful point of all is made in the next two verses. In verses 21-22, John recorded, "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." To think of the powerful glory of God shining on all the faithful makes heaven a beautiful place.

HEAVEN IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE FOR ITS PROMISES

We live in a world of sorrow and tears, yet God has prepared a place of joy and comfort for the righteous to dwell in. In Revelation 21:4, the Bible says, "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." The former things mentioned here are the struggles and strife that we deal with today. If we will be obedient to receive the promise of God we can put away all of the terrible attributes of this life. Peter described our promise from God as "an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you..." but then made the qualifying statement, "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:4-5). It must be our earnest desire to finish the race set before us that we might receive the rewards of heaven. God has made the promises, but will we accept

them by faith, and do as he has commanded? Because these are promises that will never be broken, heaven is a beautiful place.

HEAVEN IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE FOR ITS DURATION

Once one recognizes the beauty of someone or something, they always want it to last forever. When the faithful enter heaven, it is for eternity. The Bible says, "so shall we ever be with the Lord" I Thess 4:17. When someone chooses to live this life for God, there reward is eternal life. Paul said, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" Romans 6:23. While eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, we must accept the gift on the Lord's term. By inspiration, the Bible reveals, "he is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). When we think of the extent of time of being in heaven as forever, we can truly see why heaven is a beautiful place. When I think about heaven I am reminded of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. The phrase in this passage that should ever be before us is in verse 25 when it says, "thou in thy lifetime". This phrase teaches us that we have this lifetime to make sure we have that eternal lifetime. Heaven is a beautiful place for its duration, but only to those who enjoy its pleasures. For those who don't obey the gospel it is said of one, "and in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments" (Luke 16:23). Be sure to honor God and prepare for this beautiful place before it is too late!