

The Bible Speaks

“The smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.” Revelation 14:11.

NOTE-This passage has reference not to the last judgment but to the “torment” of the wicked when the plagues are poured out upon them. Revelation 15: 1; 16:1, 2. The Greek word *aeon* here translated “forever” does not always mean “without end,” but is to be understood by the context. In 1 Samuel 1:22,28, for instance, “forever” means “as long as he lives.” See also Exodus 21:6; Jonah 1:17; 2:6. Thus torment “forever” means while life lasts. When life ceases the torment will cease.

10. What examples have we of “everlasting destruction” which corroborate the fact that neither sinners nor the fires of hell burn forever?

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Jude 1:7. See also 2 Peter 2:6.

11. What name given to the fiery judgment finally settles for us the fate of the wicked?

“Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” Revelation 20:14. See also Revelation 21:8.

9. God’s Eternal Kingdom

Heaven Bound

I. WHAT is “heaven”?

a. God’s dwelling place. “Is not God in the height of heaven?” Job 22:12. “Hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place.” 1 Kings 8:30.

b. The place of His throne. “Immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.” Revelation 4:2. “The Lord’s throne is in heaven.” Psalm 11:4.

2. Who dwell with the Father in heaven?

a. Christ. “Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He [Jesus] had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Hebrews 1:3.

b. The angels. “A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands [angels] ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.” Daniel 7:10.

c. Certain saints translated without seeing death. “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death.” Hebrews 11:5. “There appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirl wind into heaven.” 2 Kings 2:11. See also Matthew 17:3.

3. What is Jesus’ desire for all who love and serve Him?

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou has given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou has given Me.” John 17:24.

4. What is He now preparing in heaven for their occupation?

“I go to prepare a place for you.” John 14:2.

5. How may we co-operate in storing up treasure in heaven?

“Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust does corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” Matthew 6:20.

6. When will the saints be privileged to enter the heavenly mansions?

“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” John 14:3.

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7. Is It Intended that the righteous should dwell forever In heaven?

“The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord’s: but the earth hath He given to the children of men.” Psalm 115:16. See also Isaiah 45:18.

8. Where are they to enjoy their eternal reward?

“Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.” Proverbs 11:31.

NOTE “God’s kingdom is a kingdom for the earth, for the whole of creation; it aims at becoming a kingdom on earth. It is not a metaphysical realm behind or above this world, lying behind the things of this world or hovering over them. That is the direct and simple import of the New Testament message of the kingdom of God.” H. D. Wendland, *The Kingdom of God*, page 146.

9. For how long will heaven be their temporary home?

“I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Revelation 20:4.

10. How will the earth be prepared for the reception of the saints?

“As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.” Isaiah 66:22.

11. How spectacular will be their return to the renewed earth?

“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.” Revelation 21:1, 2. See also verse 10.

12. What promises will then be fulfilled?

a. Saints inherit the earth. “Evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.” Psalm 37:9.

b. They will dwell there forever. “The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.” Verse 29.

God’s New Earth

1. How completely will the earth be renovated for the occupation of the redeemed?

“Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind!” Isaiah 65:17.

NOTE. “Redemption reaches just as far as the effects of sin have gone. Sin has not torn down one thing which Christ will not rebuild. It has not destroyed one thing which redemption will not replace; has not lost one thing which redemption will not regain; has not impaired one thing which redemption will not repair.” J. A. Huffman, *Redemption Completed*, page 40.

2. What transformations will God effect in inanimate nature?

a. Productivity restored. “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” Isaiah 35:1. See also Isaiah 32:15.

b. All trace of the curse removed. “Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree.” Isaiah 55:13.

c. Extremes of climate eliminated. “Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.” Revelation 7:16.

d. Nature will again rejoice and sing. “The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” Isaiah 55:12.

3. What harmony will be restored among the animal creation?

“No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there.”

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Isaiah 35:9. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, said the Lord." Isaiah 65:25. See also Isaiah 11:6-9.

4. How abundant will be the sustenance of the redeemed?

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." Revelation 7:16, 17.

5. Of what, in particular, will they be privileged to partake?

a. The tree of life. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14.

b. Water of life. "He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Revelation 21:6.

6. What perfection of health will they enjoy?

a. All disease eliminated. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." Isaiah 33:24. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Isaiah 35:5, 6.

b. All pain banished. "Neither shall there be any more pain." Revelation 21:4

7. How developed will be their knowledge and understanding?

"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." 1 Corinthians 13:12.

8. Above all, what will have been removed from the hearts of men?

"An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it." Isaiah 35:8. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Revelation 21:27.

9. How will the redeemed occupy themselves?

a. Build and inhabit. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them." Isaiah 65:21.

b. Sow and reap. "And they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." Verse 21.

c. Administer their great inheritance. "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34.

10. What security of possession will all enjoy?

a. Possessions will be secure to all. "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Isaiah 32:18.

b. None will be robbed of the reward of their labor. "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." Isaiah 65:22.

11. What harmony will reign among men?

a. Wars will have ceased forever. "He makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder; He burns the chariot in the fire." Psalm 46:9.

b. Peace will have come to stay. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Isaiah 32:17.

12. What joy will the redeemed find in the life and occupations of the kingdom?

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24. "You shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace." Isaiah 55:12. See also Zephaniah 3:16, 17.

13. What will pass forever from their experience?

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow,

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nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4.
"There shall be no more curse." Revelation 22:3.

14. What will be the greatest privilege of the kingdom?

"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." Revelation 21:3. "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face." Revelation 22:1 4.

NOTE. "What passage of Scripture conveys the sweetest description of heaven?" a teacher asked a class in which the famous Thomas a Kempis was a pupil. One student replied: "There shall be no more sorrow there." Another: "There shall be no more death." Another: "They shall see His face." But Thomas, the youngest in the class, responded: "And His servants shall serve Him."

Who Will Be There?

I. WHAT did Jesus promise to His disciples?

"I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom." Luke 22:29, 30.

2. To what does Paul declare the redeemed are called?

"That you would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory." 1 Thessalonians 2:12.

3. How universal did he declare the gospel invitation to be?

"There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Romans 10:12,13.

NOTE - Among the kingdoms of men there are discriminations as to who may or may not be granted the privileges of citizenship. Some nationalities are completely barred to certain countries. But in the kingdom of God there are no prohibitions. "All" are invited. "Whosoever will" may come.

"Thus are all invited to come. The Lord's love for mankind would not be satisfied in merely preparing the blessings of eternal life, opening the way to them, and announcing that all might come who would; but He sends out an earnest invitation to come. He sets it forth as a favor done to Himself if those invited will come and partake of the infinite blessings provided by His infinite love. His invitation, how gracious, how full, how free! None of those who are finally lost will ever have occasion to complain that the provisions made for their salvation were not sufficiently ample. They can never reasonably object that the light given to show them the way of life was not sufficiently clear. They can never excuse themselves on the ground that the invitations and entreaties that Mercy has given them to turn and live, were not sufficiently full and free. From the very beginning, there has been a power exerted as strong as could be exerted and still leave man his own free agent,-a power to draw him heavenward, and raise him from the abyss into which he has fallen. Come! has been the entreaty of the Spirit from the lips of God Himself, from the lips of His prophets, from the lips of His apostles, and from the lips of His Son, even while, in His infinite compassion and humility, He was paying the debt of our transgression." - Uriah Smith, The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, Revised Edition, P. 777.

4. What transfer of citizenship will God effect on behalf of those who seek an entrance into His kingdom?

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son!" Colossians 1:12, 13.

5. What price has Jesus paid for our spiritual "naturalization"?

"Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ,

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as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1 Peter 1:18,19.

6. How may we indicate our acceptance of the divine invitation?

a. Love to God. “The seed also of His servants shall inherit it: and they that love His name shall dwell therein. Psalm 69:36.

b. Obedience to His commandments. “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:1+

7. Into what spiritual fellowship are the subjects of Christ’s kingdom even now being gathered together?

“You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. That you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

NOTE-Amidst the kingdoms of men there is in process of formation another kingdom, not outward and temporal, but invisible and spiritual. It is called “the kingdom of grace” to distinguish it from the future “kingdom of glory,” its visible and final expression. Its subjects are scattered over the face of the earth. They differ in color, and dress, and customs. They speak many tongues. Yet they are bound together by the ties of a common allegiance to the coming King and a common citizenship in the coming kingdom of God.

8. What privileges of the kingdom are already theirs?

“And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.” Hebrews 6:5.

NOTE-Though the subjects of the kingdom must wait a little longer for their full inheritance, the spiritual privileges of the kingdom are immediately available. Its joy lights up their faces and shines forth from their countenances. Its peace possesses their hearts in the midst of the clash and confusion of the kingdoms of men.

9. What has God given to the redeemed as an “earnest” of their full inheritance?

In whom also after that you believed, you were seated with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.” Ephesians 1:13, 14.

10. With what universal proclamation will the gospel invitation close?

“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.” Matthew 24:14.

11. From whence will the subjects of the kingdom be drawn?

“I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 8:11.

12. What epoch-making event will immediately follow the close of the gospel witness?

“Then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14.

13. What wonderful day will then dawn for the saints?

“The Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” Daniel 7:22.

14. What welcome will they receive at the hands of the King?

“Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:34.

NOTE – “This is the reward of the saints. This is the restoration of a sin-cursed world. This is Paradise restored. For this Christ is calling His people today, not to be the subjects but the sovereigns of the coming age.” - A. B. Simpson, Back to Patmos, pages 82, 83.

15. How will they feel as they enter into the promised inheritance?

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“The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Isaiah 35:10.

10. Living for Christ

How to Pray

1. WHAT counsel does Jesus give to those who seek communion with God in prayer?

“When thou prays, enter into thy closet, and when thou has shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which sees in secret shall reward thee openly.” Matthew 6:6.

NOTE. “Prayer is likely to be undervalued by all but wise people because it is so silent and so secret. We are often deceived into thinking that noise is more important than silence. War sounds far more important than the noiseless growing of a crop of wheat, yet the silent wheat feeds millions, while war destroys them.”-Frank C. Laubach, *Prayer, the Mightiest Force in the World*, page 24.

2. How shall we show reverence when approaching God in prayer?

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 3:14. “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.” Psalm 95:6.

3. What, however, is more important than the physical posture?

“Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.” Lamentations 3:41. See also 1 Chronicles 22:19.

4. In whose name should our petitions be made to God?

“Whatsoever you shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in My name, I will do it.” John 14:13,14.

NOTE “To pray in Christ’s name means something more than adding ‘for Christ’s sake’ to our petitions.... To pray in the name of Christ is to pray as one who is at one with Christ, whose mind is the mind of Christ, whose desires are the desires of Christ, and whose purpose is at one with that of Christ.”-Samuel Chadwick, *The Path of Prayer*, page 52.

“When we pray, of whom are we thinking? Of God or of our selves? When we open our prayers with ‘Our Father,’ do we say it as a spoiled child comes to its parent and says ‘father,’ while it is not thinking at all of the father, but only of what it wants to get from him? When we say ‘Hallowed by Thy name,’ are we really thinking of God’s name, or of ourselves?” - Ralph W. Sockman, *The Highway of God*, page 141.

5. What help are we promised in making our petitions to God?

“Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered. And He that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:26, 27.

6. What are the essential conditions of effectual prayer?

a. Faith. “All things, whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.” Matthew 21:22.

b. Readiness to obey the will of God. “The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry.” Psalm 34:15.

7. On the other hand, what will prevent God from hearing our prayers?

a. Cherished sin. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Psalm 66:18. See also Isaiah 59:1-3.

b. Unholy desires. “You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it