

40. Our Paradise Home

“LANGUAGE is altogether too feeble to attempt a description of heaven. As the scene rises before me, I am lost in amazement. Carried away with the surpassing splendor and excellent glory, I lay down the pen, and exclaim, ‘O, what love! What wondrous love!’ The most exalted language fails to describe the glory of heaven or the matchless depths of a Savior’s love.” - EW 289.

“O, the transporting, rapturous scene
That rises to my sight!
Sweet fields arrayed in living green,
And rivers of delight.”
Samuel Stennett.

SELECTED REFERENCES

GC 676-678; EW 39,40; 288,289; 9T 286-288; [6] Pages 359-376; [10] Pages 755-783; [4] Pages 354-364.

Memorize: Isaiah 64:4.

A. NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH.

2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1,5-7; Isaiah 65:17-19; 60:18-20.

“A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon it as our home. Christ assured His disciples that He went to prepare mansions for them in the Father’s house. Those who accept the teachings of God’s word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode. . . . Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God.

“In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called a country. Hebrews 11:14-16. There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God’s people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home.” - GC 674, 675.

B. ETERNAL PLANTS AND FLOWERS, GENTLE BEASTS.

Isaiah 55:13; 35:1, 2; 65:25; 11:6-9; Ezekiel 47:12.

“I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out, ‘They will never fade.’” - 1T 68; EW 18.

“Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. And I saw the little ones climb, or, if they chose, use their little wings and fly to the top of the mountains, and pluck the never-fading flowers.” 1T 69; EW 19.

“Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts, the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf, all together in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed on peacefully after.” - 1T 68; EW 18.

C. THE POPULATION-THEIR HOMES AND EMPLOYMENT.

Matthew 5:5; Psalm 37:10, 11; John 14:1-3; Isaiah 32:17, 18; 65: 21,24; 2 Samuel 7:10; Isaiah 33:17, 20,24; 35:3-6, 9, 10;

Revelation 21:4; Zepheniah 3:9.

1. Fascinating, tireless, fruitful labor.

“In the city of God ‘there shall be no night.’ None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning, and shall ever be far from its close.” - GC 676.

Service: “ ‘His servants shall serve Him.’ Revelation 22:1 The life on earth is the beginning of the life in heaven; education on earth is an initiation into the principles of heaven; the lifework here is a training for the life work there. What we now are, in character and holy service, is the sure foreshadowing

of what we shall be. . . . Christ's work below is His work above, and our reward for working with Him in this world will be the greater power and wider privilege of working with Him in the world to come. 'You are My witnesses, says the Lord, that I am God.' This also we shall be in eternity. . . . The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin. They have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption, nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings? In the future state, untrammelled by the limitations of sinful humanity, it is in service that our greatest joy and our highest education will be found witnessing, and ever as we witness learning anew 'the riches of the glory of this mystery, 'which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.'" - Ed 307-309.

2. Interesting study-intellectual development.

"Heaven is a school; its field of study, the universe; its teacher, the Infinite One." - Ed 301.

"There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body." - GC 677.

3. Harmonious social life with the angels.

"There we shall know even as also we are known. There the loves and sympathies that God has planted in the soul will find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages, the sacred fellowship that binds together 'the whole family in heaven and earth. All are among the experiences of the hereafter.'" - Ed 306; GC 677.

"Then the nations will own no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving. . . . Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming, 'There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.'" - 8T 42.

D. THE METROPOLIS OF THE UNIVERSE.

Revelation 21:2, 9-27; 22:1-5; Isaiah 66:22, 23; Revelation 5:13; 14:1-3.

1. The Holy City, New Jerusalem.

"There is the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the glorified new earth, 'a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.' Isaiah 62:3. . . . The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with unfading light. 'The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.'" - GC 676.

"Its light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. The city has a wall great and high, with twelve gates, three in each side. It is laid out in a perfect square. Its measure, John declares, is twelve thousand furlongs. Reckoning eight furlongs to a mile, the entire distance around the city would be fifteen hundred English miles, or three hundred seventy-five miles on a side, covering a larger area than England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales and the adjacent islands. The city is larger than the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois combined, a city compared with which London, Paris, and New York City sink into insignificance. Indeed, its size must be enormous, as all the nations of the saved are to bring their honor and glory into it. . . .

" 'The wall of it was of jasper.' . . . The Oriental jasper is exceedingly hard, and almost indestructible. Columns of this stone have lasted thousands of years, and have been scarcely affected by the ravages of temperature or time. . . . 'The foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.'

"The first is jasper, a stone of a beautiful sea-green color; sometimes, however, of various colors, as purple, with red veins. There are many varieties.

"The second is sapphire, a stone of a very fine sky-blue color, next in hardness to the diamond, and transparent.

"Third, chalcedony, is a species of agate or onyx of rather waxy luster, presenting a great variety

of colors, the yellow and red being the most beautiful and valuable. It is very rare.

“The fourth is emerald. This is a stone of a very bright green color without any mixture, and is one of the most beautiful gems known. It also is rare.

“The fifth is sardonyx, a species of agate. It is sometimes red and sometimes of a flesh color.

“The sixth is sardius, or a sardine stone. This is a blood red precious stone.

“The seventh, chrysolite, is a transparent precious stone, having the color of gold with a mixture of green, possessing a fine luster. It is sometimes termed the ‘gold stone.’ It is a variety of topaz.

“The beryl, a very hard, transparent, bluish-green gem, of great luster and beauty.

“The ninth is topaz, a highly valued gem of sherry-yellow color, with occasional pale tinges of green or red. It was one of the twelve gems in the high priest’s breastplate.

“The tenth is chrysoprasus. Its color is green, inclining to gold. It differs from the chrysolite only in having a bluish hue.

“The eleventh, jacinth, is a precious stone of a dead red color, with a mixture of yellow. It is the same as the cinnamon stone.

“The twelfth is amethyst, a very beautiful gem, generally of a purple or violet color, composed of a strong blue and deep green. Its color is seldom uniform, being generally cloudy, and having zigzag stripes.” - S. H. Lane, in “Our Paradise Home,” pages 118-120.

When we consider that the glory of God and of the Lamb will shine through all these and blend the colors in dazzling splendor, we may well conclude it will present a scene of glory of which no mind can form any adequate conception.

2. Worship and music of the royal city.

“We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us, that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, ‘Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!’ and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven’s arches ring.” - EW 17.

“With unutterable love, Jesus welcomes His faithful ones to the ‘joy of their Lord.’ The Savior’s joy is in seeing, in the kingdom of glory, the souls that have been saved by His agony and humiliation. And the redeemed will be sharers in His joy, as they behold, among the blessed, those who have been won to Christ through their prayers, their labors, and their loving sacrifice. As they gather about the great white throne, gladness unspeakable will fill their hearts, when they behold those whom they have won for Christ, and see that one has gained others, and these still others, all brought into the haven of rest, there to lay their crowns at Jesus’ feet, and praise Him through the endless cycles of eternity.” - GC 647.

“Perhaps in heaven some day, to me Some sainted one shall come and say, ‘All hail, beloved, but for thee My soul to death had fallen a prey. And, O the rapture of the thought, One soul to glory to have brought!’” -Author unknown.

3. The throne of God and of the Lamb. Revelation 21:3; 22:3; Habakkuk 3:3,4 (note margin); Zechariah 13:6.

“I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.’ The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. ‘Now we see through a glass, darkly.’ We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in His presence, and behold the glory of His countenance. . . . All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God’s redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they, wing their tireless flight to worlds afar, worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe, and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. . . . With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation,-suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity.” - GC 676, 677.

“And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. . . . From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that GOD IS LOVE.” - GC 678.

KEY TEXTS

John 14:1-3 Isaiah 65:17-25 Revelation 21
2 Peter 3:10-13 Isaiah 35; 11:6-9 Revelation 22:1-6

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. Why should we not speculate beyond that which is revealed, of conditions in this state of existence?
2. What essentials of a modern earth city will not be in the New Jerusalem?
3. Why does the future life have no appeal to the unconverted?
4. What relation does our present lifework bear to our future lifework?
5. Write a brief testimony of your response to the spiritual appeal of this study.

TEST QUESTIONS

Answer With Ample Bible Proof

1. Is the Bible heaven symbolical or literal?
2. How will the redeemed be employed in the earth made new?
3. What holy days will there be through the ages to come?
4. What features of ideal living conditions are mentioned?
5. What facts and events of old earth history will be remembered?

PROJECT

In the light of the knowledge contained in this section, prepare a paper explaining the following texts. Rearrange as necessary. Use other clearer Scripture references freely in substantiating each statement of the facts. Seek to make each point clear, logical, and thoroughly Biblical.

Ecclesiastes 12:7	Luke 23:43	Matthew 25:40
Revelation 6:9, 10	Luke 16:19-31	Revelation 20:10
2 Corinthians 5:8	Mark 9:43-48	1 Samuel 28:11-15
Philippians 1:21-23	Isaiah 66:24	1 Peter 3:18-20

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