

God's Answers For Today

when Christ returns, which is “the resurrection of life”, and the second resurrection at the close of the period which is “the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:29. At the close of the thousand years, all of the unrighteous will have already endured one death, either before or at the Second Advent. When they are raised, it is but to receive “the second death “from which there will be no awakening. Thus John leaves us this benediction, “Blessed and holy is he that bath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death bath no power.” Revelation 20:6. It is by mercifully inflicting this “second death” on the ungodly that God makes the “full end” referred to by Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 4:27.)

Amidst that dreadful holocaust, the saints will be secure in the city, just as godly Noah was secure in his ark upon the desolating waters of the Flood. And from those cleansing fires will emerge “a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness,” which the saints will possess forever. (2 Peter 3 .13.)

These striking facts about the millennium help us to see how it is possible for the saints to go to heaven above, and yet “inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5. “But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.” Psalm 37:11, 29.

After this earth's millennial night, comes the glorious noonday splendor of the eternal day. The “utter end “of sin has at last been made. “Affliction shall not rise up the second time,” for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Nahum 1:9.)

What Will Heaven Be Like?

LET US heed our blessed Savior's admonition and “look up.” Let us catch a vision of the things which are in store for those who love God. For “we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” Hebrews 10:39. We are heavenward, homeward bound! The thrill of wholesome, joyful anticipation should buoy our spirits up, and inspire us to live our days with hope and courage. Imagine the wondrous scene when Christ gathers to Himself His faithful followers, when the cruel fetters of the tomb release their saintly victims, and they, together with the living saints, are transfigured into immortal beings with an eternity of bliss before them. Picture that glorified host, accompanied by the great angelic throng, as they are led by Christ their King up through the limitless distances of the starry heavens, to the gates of the heavenly Zion, the New Jerusalem. Listen as the command to the angel door-keepers rings forth: “Open You the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in.” Isaiah 26:2. Picture with rapture the scene as that nation of saints who keep the commandments of God, and who therefore” have right to the tree of life,” triumphantly “enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14. The cares and sufferings, the burdens and trials of this world will seem very, very trivial to the glorified saints in that great day. (2 Corinthians 4:17.)

The city will be surpassingly splendid, for its streets will be of gold, its mighty walls of beautiful green jasper, its twelve gates of pearl, and its twelve foundations made entirely of various precious stones. jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprasus, jacinth, and amethyst. (Revelation 21:18-21.) Its gigantic walls will be 375 miles in length on each side (verse 16), enclosing a city of over 140,000 square miles-two hundred times bigger than London, and twice as big as the whole of Great Britain. For size and splendor, the very best this world has ever seen will be utterly insignificant in comparison.

Within will be the tree of life whose fruit and leaves will be “for the healing (service) of the inhabitants (Revelation 22:2), and the crystal waters of the river of life will emerge from the throne of God in the city center. (Revelation 22:1,2.) Imagine the glittering, shimmering splendor of that great city, as the glory of God shines through those jasper walls and foundations of precious stones. Our glorious rainbow is but a diminutive foretaste of the colorful scenes which will forever charm the eyes of the redeemed.

And think of the company! Once more and forever we will see our departed loved ones. Wives will be united to husbands, and husbands to wives. Little children, torn away by the hand of death, will be restored to their parents. And we shall mingle as brothers and sisters with Adam, Noah, Abraham and Joseph, with, David, Daniel, Peter, and Paul-an innumerable host of saints from every age. What stories of redeeming grace all will have to tell!

Best of all, our Savior will be there. (Revelation 22:3, 4.) For all eternity He will be our Teacher and constant Associate.

This is the city which John saw would descend to this earth at the close of the millennium. (Revelation 21:2.) This is the city which is destined to be the everlasting capital of our world when it is

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completely purified and made new. That new world will be a veritable heaven on earth. All will be righteous and holy, for no sinner will be there. (Revelation 21:8; Isaiah 35:8.) There will be no sickness (Isaiah 33:24), and no more sorrow, or crying, or suffering, or pain, or death. (Revelation 21:4.) There "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. Happy, happy release from all irksome physical troubles. And that wonderful heavenly horde will be one of perfect security. (2 Samuel 7:10.) War will never again rear its hideous head, but every heart will pulsate with everlasting joy and love. (Isaiah 35:10.)

All around today we see signs that the earth is getting old "like a garment." Psalm 102:25,26. We see appalling loss of fertility. We see, every year, the loss of millions of acres of good land, by erosion. We see vast areas which once enjoyed sub-tropical climates and which brought forth prolific vegetation, but which now are lifeless, frozen wastes. We see terrifying deserts daily extending their suffocating barrenness. We see disintegration, decay, and rapidly diminishing resources.

But that new world will maintain its wealth and glory forever, and the process of disintegration and decay will simply cease to operate. (1 Peter 1:4; Matthew 6:20.) The erstwhile "wilderness and solitary place" will bring forth luxuriant vegetation, and in the whole world there will be nothing to hurt or to destroy. (Isaiah 65:25.)

Though all the saints will have their city dwelling, built and prepared by the Lord Himself (John 14:2), they will nevertheless occupy the whole earth, and among their other activities "they shall build "their own country dwellings, "and inhabit them. And they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." Isaiah 65:21,22.

The Lord will be present immediately He is called (Isaiah 65:24), to give guidance and instruction. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 11:9. A surpassing, thrill, especially for those who love travelling, will be the opportunities of certain ones to "follow the Lamb whither so ever He goes." Revelation 14:4. They will have the privilege of going with Him as He visits other planets and other worlds of His far-flung universe. Those with astronomical interests will need no telescopes for their observations. They will be able actually to visit those gigantic and splendid worlds whose precise nature is today shrouded in mystery. And there they will be able to tell redemption's joyful story to the unfallen inhabitants.

One great link with that original Eden world of Adam's day will be the weekly Sabbath. "It shall come to pass that from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, said the Lord." Isaiah 66:23. Wherever on this globe the saints may be during the week, they will all make their way each Sabbath day to the New Jerusalem, and unite in worship as one huge congregation before God's throne of glory. There they will see and hear their Lord and there they will lift their voices in glorious harmonies of praise and adoration to the One who loved them and gave Himself for them.

**"Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry, "To be exalted thus"
"Worthy the Lamb," our hearts reply, "For He was slain for us."**

**The whole creation join in one, To bless the sacred name
Of Him that sits upon the throne, And to adore the Lamb.**

Isaac Watts

Says John They sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints." Revelation 15:1

On the tomb of Dr. John Conder in Bunhill Fields, London, is the inscription:

"I HAVE SINNED - I HAVE TRUSTED - I HAVE REPENTED - I HAVE LOVED - I REST - I SHALL RISE-AND THROUGH THE GRACE OF CHRIST, HOWEVER UNWORTHY - I SHALL REIGN." Glorious assurance which all may have, for the Lord of love who has given us so many great and precious promises, and who has given us through His Word a picture of the bliss to come, is One in whom we may safely put our trust.

"God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son 'of man, that He should repent: bath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" Numbers 23:19.