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Heaven is Not Our Home

I've said it many times in my life and have heard the same saying from multiple people. When you get to Heaven and stand between the pearly gates, you will be happy, and as we walk the streets of gold, we will be very blessed. It is an idea that is so cemented in our Christian folklore that it can be hard to consider anything else. I was surprised when I read in the Bible that the 12 pearly gates and the streets of gold are not in Heaven.

It isn't the most significant error to consider that we will spend eternity in Heaven with God, but still, it limits the view of the complete redemption plan of God for His children. You see, Heaven is not our home. It was never God's intention for men to ever end up there, let alone live there. Adam was created in the very image of God, his creator; he was given the tree of life, which essentially allowed him and all his offspring to live forever and never die. This was the Lord's original plan in which Adam messed up with his rebellion and sin.

Mankind was never supposed to end up in Heaven or Hell, which means that neither of these places was made for us. This entire universe was given to Adam as his home and his house to oversee as its caretaker. Then it all changed with the bite of one apple of sin from the tree of knowledge of good and evil when instantly, the entire human race was chained to sin and destined to hell. I constantly share with anyone that will listen that God doesn't send people to hell; Adam did that.

The reason this is an important issue to discuss is because the church is missing an opportunity to show the world that God has a plan to restore everything that was ruined by sin and return it back into righteousness. Even you, who started in sin, have gained a new righteous nature at your salvation, but that's not the finish; it was just the beginning. You will also receive a new glorified body at the sound of the trumpet of God.

It says in 1 Corinthians 15:50-52, *"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."*

There is so much more to God's redemption plan than only getting you to Heaven. He is also restoring His whole creation to righteousness, including this earth and the universe. The scripture says the heavens will be dissolved, meaning that our universe, including this earth, will be quickened into a new earth and the universe restored into complete righteousness.

2 Peter 3:10-13 reads, *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for*

and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

Every single thing given to the first Adam has been stained by sin, and God is going to destroy it all and then restore it back into all of its glory for His children to live in for eternity. Heaven is not our home; it is only a holding place until it is redeemed by the final Adam, Jesus. The Apostle John had a vision of all this, and he shared with us many details of how eternity will look for us. He tells us of a new Heaven and new earth and a New Jerusalem in revelation 21.

It is almost indescribable, but John does give us a very vivid mental image of it by writing about *"the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass"* (Rev 21:21). There is gold that is so pure that one can see through it! I'm not sure how that works, but he also writes, *"its wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass"* (Rev 21:18). Apparently, not only are the streets made of transparent gold, but the city itself is gloriously beautiful. John adds that *"The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst"* (Rev 21:19-20).

John also tells us that there is no more temple because the *"temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb"* (Rev 21:22-23). It is by this light that *"the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations"* (Rev 21:24-26), which is worthy of our Lord's Glory.

This new world and the new universe will be home for God's righteous children for all of eternity. This incredible plan tells us that God never gave up on Adam even after he rebelled and destroyed so much by his sin. It should encourage you that your Heavenly Father will never give up on you, even in your struggles and imperfections. He is truly faithful and wonderful!

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