

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE DIE?

Part 4: What Can We Know About Heaven & Hell?

"Can you find out the deep things of God?

Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?

It is higher than heaven—what can you do?

Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?" (Zophar the Naamathite, Job 11:7-8)

...therefore, let's not hesitate to say to some questions, "I don't know." There are "secret things" that "belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever" (Deut 29:29) that we might have hope, and "in this hope we are saved," even as we hope "for what we do not see" and "wait for it with patience" (Rom 8:24-25).

Our September itinerary:

- ◆ September 2: orientation
- ◆ September 9: where are those who have died?
- ◆ September 16: the linchpin of resurrection
- ◆ **September 23**: what can we know about heaven and hell?
- ◆ September 30: your questions (ask via jason.hardin@gmail.com or 614-286-6288)

What can we know about hell?

- ◆ There is a place "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41).
- ◆ God has promised not to overlook evil (Rom 12:17-21).
- ◆ A day has been "fixed" on which God "will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:24-31).
 - Some will be told to "depart" (Matt 7:21-23; 25:31-33, 41-46). Why? They have "no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Eph 5:3-5).
 - Where are they "cast"? (Luke 12:5; Matt 5:29)
- ◆ Jesus described and warned about the "hell of fire," using the Greek word *Gehenna* (*ge*, "valley" and *henna*, "Hinnom")—originally, a ravine on the south side of Jerusalem (Josh 15:8; 2 Chron 33:6; Jer 7:31; 2 Kings 23:10)—to describe:
 - A place of eternal, unquenchable fire (Matt 5:21-22, 29-30; 10:26-28; 18:7-9; Mark 9:42-48; James 3:6; Rev 19:20).
 - A place of gloomy, utter darkness (Matt 25:30; 2 Pet 2:4, 17; Jude 6, 13).

- A place of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord (2 Thes 1:5-10; Phil 3:18-19; 2 Pet 3:7; Rev 20:10-15; 21:7-8).

What can we know about heaven?

- ◆ There is a place prepared for those who have “died in faith” (Heb 11:10, 13-16).
- ◆ David poetically looked forward to a place defined by the presence of the LORD (Psa 23:6; 16:11).
- ◆ In his sermon on the mount, Jesus:
 - Described “heaven” as “the throne of God” (Matt 5:34).
 - Taught his disciples to pray, “Our Father in heaven” (Matt 6:9).
 - Encouraged his disciples to “lay up for” themselves “treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Matt 6:19-20).
- ◆ In Matthew 18:10, Jesus described angels “in heaven” as “always” seeing “the face of my Father who is in heaven.” In Luke 15, he described “joy in heaven over one sinner who repents” (15:7) and specifically highlighted “joy before the angels of God” (15:10).
- ◆ In John 14:1-6, Jesus described his “Father’s house” to the disciples as having “many rooms,” promising that he was going to “prepare a place... that where I am you may be also.”
- ◆ 1 Peter 3:22 describes Jesus as having “gone into heaven” and being “at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.”
- ◆ In the last book of the Bible, full of apocalyptic imagery, we read of:
 - A throne in heaven where the One seated on the throne is worshiped day and night (Rev 4).
 - God’s temple in heaven (11:19, 14:17)
 - The holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (21:2-22:5).
 - “The dwelling place of God is with man” (21:3).
 - “And I saw no temple in the city, for its 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” (21:22-23).
 - “No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever” (22:3-5).

For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. (1 Thes 5:9-11)

Notes: