

Death And Heaven

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Heb. 9:27

To reach heaven, the home of the righteous souls, one must go by way of death. There is no other way.

Death is an inevitable appointment. Heb. 9:27, *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”*

Life on this earth is constantly filled with appointments, but many of those appointments are never filled. There is one appointment, however, that every person born into this world must fill. It’s not a matter of forgetting it; it’s not a matter of choice. *“...it is appointed unto men once to die...”*

The moment of death is uncertain. 1 Sam. 20:3, *“... but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.”*

Whether one lives on this earth one day, or one hundred years, there is just one step into the death chamber.

Death may be ugly; it may be beautiful. For the faithful child of God, death is the graduation exercise, and accomplishment of the past and the beginning of an endless eternity of joy, peace, and extreme happiness.

Universality of death

Death is universal. Every hour of every day death is ever about us.

The evidence of death in nature sometime comes beautifully. A beautiful rosebud may blossom into an adorable flower with radiant beauty and with a delightful fragrance that perfumes the air, yet, it too fades away into death.

One has only to take a drive into the mountains in the fall to see the beauty in the color of millions of dying leaves of maple and oak trees, each displaying its own peculiar color, and collectively showing God’s artistic mastery.

Fade as a leaf

Normally, the whole foliage of a tree does not pass away at once. Each leaf of a single tree dies at a different rate; hence the colors.

Some fade and die in the springtime frost while others flourish.

Some die in the summertime storms full of sap or lack of rain.

Others fade away and fall in the autumn when the temperature drops.

How appropriate was the declaration of the prophet of God in Isaiah 64:6: “... *and we all do fade as a leaf; ...*”

Many infants are plucked away while they are yet lovely buds, before they have blossomed into the spring of youth. Or some young men and women fade away before their summertime of life. There are those who have lived a full life and fade and fall in the autumn of their life.

Leaves fall away silently.

One by one they discolor and drop off, but no one can definitely trace the progress of their life and death from the beginning to the end.

So it is with man. No sooner has man begun to live when he begins to die.

Most of us think of death as being far off, but it isn't that way. One begins to die the moment he begins to live.

Death, as we think of it, is just one step away when one may step from this world into the ages of eternity.

When a person leaves this world, he leaves his mortal body.

His immortal soul moves out of his mortal body and will someday “*put on immortality*”. 1 Cor. 15:54-55, “*So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*”

The soul of man never dies

In the very beginning, the Bible says that God breathed into man the breath of life and man became a “*living soul*”.

The hope of heaven would be completely obliterated if the soul of man should die. John 11:26, “*And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die...*”

This body that we have was never intended to be the soul's permanent dwelling place. The soul will abide for eternity in either heaven or hell.

Heaven

Heaven is a place promised by Jesus. John 14:2-3, *“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”*

Jesus did not live in a mansion when He lived upon the earth. Matt. 8:20, *“And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”*

But a mansion designed and built by the heavenly architect will be perfect for joy, peace, and happiness of God’s people.

Heaven is a place of incomparable beauty. There is no place on this old earth that can match the beauty of heaven. Rev. 21:1-22:6, *“And 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. And 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. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And 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. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south*

three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done."

Heavenly Inspiration

Many beautiful scenes of majestic nature, created by God, have inspired millions of fellow-travelers on this earth. Yet, all the incomparable expressions in the words of poets, revealed by the tongues of orators, painted by artists could ever truly describe heaven.

A great multitude will be there.

Rev. 7:9-10, *“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”*

Conclusion

I ask you, do you want to go to heaven? If heaven is not your destination, then hell certainly will be. I plan to go to heaven, do you?

How a person go to heaven? One must become a Christian to do that. The following are the steps necessary to become a Christian:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, “It doesn’t work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him.”
- **Repentance.** Acts 2:38, *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the*

Holy Ghost.” Acts 11:18, “... *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*” If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, “There’s a burglar in my house!” So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, “I’m sorry; I’m sorry!” What is he sorry for? He is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.

- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are “**UNTO**” righteousness, life, or salvation. “Unto” means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, “*But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said “*it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.*” We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. “*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye*

shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? “for the remission of sins”. Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16:15-16).*

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a requirement given by God.*

Baptism is called a burial. *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Rom. 6:4). Our old man is to be dead to us. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” (Rom. 6:3-6). Baptism is God’s blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.*

This doesn’t mean “sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don’t take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not yet become a Christian, won't you consider it today?

