

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Lesson 12: What and Where Is Heaven

We have studied about the Creation of the world and about the entrance of sin and how for nearly 6,000 years God has been pleading with men to turn from sin, so that they might live with Him in heaven.

In our last lesson, we learned about the visions God gave to Daniel. From those visions, we learned that the day is coming soon when God will establish His kingdom. Unlike the history of the nations of this world, this kingdom will last forever.

There are a lot of wrong and silly ideas about Heaven that we hear of or sometimes see in pictures. Some people have the idea that in Heaven people just float around on clouds and play a harp and eat pie all the time. One little boy I read about, thought Heaven was a big room full of hard chairs where you had to sit all the time with a bunch of old people, and be quiet and look very serious.

Many people try and tell us that our future life will be kind of misty and cloud-like, just floating around somewhere as part of something else. Well, I am here to give you the GOOD NEWS! HEAVEN is a Real Place! In Heaven and later in the New Earth, we will be real people and do real things, the kinds of good things you enjoy here and Lots More!

What is Heaven Like?

1. Do we have any clear idea of what heaven will be like? 1 Corinthians 2:9. _____ Hath not seen, nor _____ heard.

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

Note: We are so used to this dark old world that our minds cannot really grasp the peace, joy and beauty of Heaven, but God has not left us without any idea of what to expect. But there was a time that men did once see, hear, and know of the wonderful things God has prepared for His people; that time was at the beginning of the world. As we think about the world before sin marred it, we see a little of what Heaven and the new earth will be like.

2. When God finished His work of Creation, what did He say about it? Genesis 1:31. Behold it was _____ .

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”

Note: The earth, as it was when God had completed His work of Creation, was beautiful to see. Job tells us that as angels looked upon it, they shouted for

joy. See Job 38:1-7. With all its many forms of animal life, and all the many beautiful flowers and trees, it revealed the wonderful love of the Creator.

3. Why did God create this world? Isaiah 45:18. To be
_____.

“For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.”

Note: This world was created to be inhabited. The Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve’s first home, was to have been their home for all time. However, when sin entered, God’s original plan was marred.

4. Whom was man made in the image of? Genesis 1:26. In the Image of
_____.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

Note: God did something wonderful in the Creation of Man, He shared some of His Creative Power with Adam & Eve. He made them able to reproduce their kind and also gave them the care of the animals and planet. By doing this, He was putting them in a position to be able to understand Him as no other being could. By establishing the family, God made it possible for man to better understand the Godhead. Angels do not have families or reproduce, neither were they given a ‘dominion’.

5. What did God place under man’s authority? Genesis 1:26.

F _____; **F** _____; **C** _____ **etc.**

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

6. By choosing to rebel against their Creator, what did Adam and Eve gain? Romans 5:12. _____ by sin.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

Note: When Adam and Eve sinned, they were out of harmony with, and had separated themselves from their Creator. Because God is the Source of all life, to choose to be separated from Him, is to choose death. It is sad that when Satan tempted them, they already HAD what he was offering them—They were already in the IMAGE of God and had DOMINION over the earth—They already had MORE than Satan had. All He wanted to do was to take it away from them—and he did it! So it is with any who listen to Satan’s lies—they think they are gaining something,

but they lose what they have and what God wants them to have.

God's Original Plan yet to be Fulfilled

7. What did Jesus come to bring to men? John 10:10. They might have _____.

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

Note: How true it is that the enemy just wants to hurt and kill—remember this when you are tempted to think that the things God forbids are worth having!!

In Ephesians 3:8-11, Paul tells us that the purpose of his preaching the gospel was to make all see and understand a mystery. In your Bible, it may say all *men*. If it does, the word *men* is probably written in *italics*. This is because the word *men* is not found in the original letter that Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, but it seemed to the translators that this is what Paul meant when he said “all.” If you look down at the next verse, you will understand that Paul is speaking of more than men, because he includes principalities in heavenly places; in other words, the whole universe.

It was God's plan that this ‘mystery’, or secret, of His great wisdom and love, might be shown to the whole universe through His people on earth. Isn't it exciting to think about the fact that if we cooperate with Jesus, we can be a part of God's great plan of revealing to the whole universe His goodness and wisdom and showing the cruel lies that Satan has told about God to be false?

When we listen to Satan, and love his lies and follow his suggestions, our lives can't do this. How Satan laughs at God and how disappointed our heavenly Father must be.

8. To what did Peter look forward? 2 Peter 3:13. New _____ and a New _____.

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Note: God has given us a promise that this old world of ours is to be recreated. The first three chapters of the Bible speak of Eden and the entrance of sin; the last three chapters speak about the end of sin and Eden restored. It will happen and we must be part of it!

9. What is Jesus now preparing for His people? John 14:2, 3. Prepare a _____ for you.

“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.”

Note: Many people read this text and then say Jesus is making mansions—but is that what He said? No—He said they were already there! Jesus is preparing a PLACE for us—this is a job and a part in heaven’s government. It includes making us ready for that PLACE—our characters have to be like Jesus before we can have a place in that wonderful land. No selfishness and sin can enter there, and so Jesus is working as our advocate and High Priest to get all sin out of our lives and make us ready for our place. He can only do this if we choose to cooperate with Him.

When Satan fell, he took a third of Heaven’s angels with him and that left a lot of ‘places’ in heaven empty. Those chosen to fill them must be totally free of all rebellion and the ways of Satan.

10. What is in the middle of this beautiful garden home? Revelation 2:7. The _____ of _____.

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

Note: Paradise is another name for Heaven where God is. John was shown that the tree of life is near the throne of God.

“And he showed 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.” Revelation 22.1,2

11. What is the name of this holy city that is in heaven? Revelation 21:2. New _____.

“And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

Revelation 21:10-12 gives us some idea of the size of this city. It is built in the shape of a great square, 375 miles on each side, or 1,500 miles all the way around. There are three gates on each side of the city, twelve altogether. Each gate is made of one beautiful pearl. See Revelation 21:21. The street is paved with pure gold, and the foundations make it look like it floats on a rainbow of color! What a beautiful place! It is very hard for us to picture in our minds how wonderful it will really be.

Jesus Returns in Fulfillment of His Promise

12. What happens to God’s people at His return? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. The dead shall _____ and those alive will be caught _____ in the _____.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Note: It is important to notice that Jesus will NOT walk on this earth when He returns this time—because there are already many people on earth that claim to be Jesus but He has warned us—believe them not!

13. Whose body will our new bodies be like? Philippians 3:21. It will be like Jesus’ Glorious _____.

“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

14. What will happen to this present earth? 2 Peter 3:10-12. It shall be _____ up.

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

Note: Jesus has promised to return and take His followers to heaven. Every living thing except Satan and his angels will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming and the earth will be all broken up and like a junk heap. At a later time, this earth will be cleansed by fire. All marks of sin will be destroyed and then the earth will be re-created-fresh and sinless, even more beautiful than ever before.

15. What do we have now, that will not be present in the earth made new? Revelation 21:1. No more _____.

“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.”

Note: This does not mean there won’t be any bodies of water, but there will be no huge seas that separate people like there are on this earth. You can see why this was important to John as he was imprisoned on the Isle of Patmos, away from those he loved.

16. After the earth has been purified by fire, what does John see taking place? Revelation 21:2. The _____ came down out of heaven.

“And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

Note: The wonderful promise, “The meek shall inherit the earth,” will be fulfilled. After all traces of sin have been removed, this earth is to be the home of God’s people. This earth; the birth and burial place of Jesus, the place where He

fought His death-struggle with Satan and won; will become the new capital of God's universe. The Holy City is to be on this earth for all time. The redeemed will go forth out of the city, to inhabit the beautiful recreated new earth, Eden restored.

Life on the New Earth

17. What are some of the activities we may look forward to on the new earth? Isaiah 65:17, 21. We will _____ houses and _____ vineyards.

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.”

Note: At Creation, God gave Adam and Eve a Garden for their home. One of the things they did was to care and tend for that garden. “And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” “And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. Genesis 2:9, 15

We are also told that a city is part of the inheritance of the redeemed. Speaking of Abraham, we read in Hebrews 11:10: “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” So, we will have a city home, we will also have a country home where we can have gardens and vineyards to care for. Also that city is not like our cities because John saw the River of Life and the Tree of Life in that city.

18. Will we know each other on the new earth? 1 Corinthians 13:12. We will _____ as we are _____.

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

Note: Here on earth we know people by their voices, their walk, their handshake, their laughter, and their faces. In heaven people will have glorified, sinless bodies; but they will still know each other.

One of the sad things about sin is the effect it has had on the animals. Not only are our hearts made sad by the death of pets, but the animals are often unable to live in peace together. In the new earth, all that will be different. Not only will there be no pets that die, but none of the animals will be wild or fierce. Isaiah tells us that: “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.” Isaiah 65:25

Have you ever had more than one pet and found out that while your pets might love you very much, they didn't get along with each other at all. Well, Isaiah tells us that not only will children have pets, but that they will all get along together. “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down

with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together.” Isaiah 11:6, 7

19. When Jesus returns to gather his children, what will happen to any physical handicaps they may have had? Isaiah 35:5, 6. The blind will _____; the deaf will _____; and the lame will _____.

“Then 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, [deer] and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.”

Note: Jesus will bring an end to all sickness and suffering and death. In the new earth the flowers will never fade, the people will never grow old, and no one will ever die.

20. Who are the blessed ones who will enter in to Heaven? Revelation 22:14. Those who _____ His _____ .

“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

Note: Only those who have become children of God and are willing to obey His commandments will be able to enter into that wonderful home. If we expect to walk the streets of gold, we must walk with Jesus now.

“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” 1 John 2:6