

Heaven & Hell

“The Lamb is All The Glory”

J.C. Ryle: “The man who is about to sail for Australia or New Zealand as a settler is naturally anxious to know something about his future home, its climate, its employments, its inhabitants, its ways, its customs. All these are subjects of deep interest to him. You are leaving the land of your nativity, you are going to spend the rest of your life in a new hemisphere. It would be strange indeed if you did not desire information about your new abode. Now surely, if we hope to dwell for ever in that ‘better country, even an heavenly one,’ we ought to seek all the knowledge we can get about it. Before we go to our eternal home we should try to become acquainted with it.”

Heaven Matters

Reasons contemplation of heaven is neglected

1. Unbiblical views
2. Unheavenly hearts
3. Unspiritual minds

Reasons contemplation of heaven is needed

1. For examination. The study of heaven should lead us to ask the question: Is heaven my destination? Have I really entered through the narrow gate? Am I really walking on the narrow way?
2. For evangelism. Heaven is one of the most powerful evangelistic subjects. God offers eternal joy and peace in His presence to guilty sinners. John 3:16: “not perish, but have everlasting life.”
3. For instruction. God’s people leave themselves much poorer, weaker and troubled by neglecting what the Bible says about heaven.
4. For consolation. How does Christ comfort His disciples in the upper room? By speaking of heaven (John 14:2-3; cf. Job 19:25-26). Note also Christian’s time at the Delectable Mountain (Pilgrim’s Progress).

Heaven’s Glory

What is heaven like? What is heaven about? It is the place of God’s glory. Heaven does not exist for us. Its main purpose is not to make us happy. Heaven is that place where God’s glory is first and uppermost, and where His glory shines. After all, it is His dwelling place, His home, where He most clearly reveals Himself and where His children may see Him as He really is. Donnelly: “It is the place where His glory shines in unimaginable splendour and beauty.” It is the

place where God dwells in His glory, “pulsating with His immediate presence and transcendent glory.”

- Psalm 73:24: “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory.”
- Hebrews 2:10: “... in bringing many sons unto glory...”

Matthew Henry says: grace is glory begun. God’s children may experience at times heaven coming down. “Surely, the Lord is in this place... this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:16-17).

Heaven’s Lamb

Some descriptions in the Bible about heaven are hard to understand. That is because symbolic language is used. For example, Revelation 21. It paints a picture of the holy city as a massive cube, 1500 miles long, broad and high with 12 gates of pearls with 12 foundations. It paints a picture of beauty and wonder, but it is hard to fathom it all. The Bible’s favourite way to picture heaven is being with Jesus.

- John 14:3 “... that where I am, there ye may be also.”
- John 17:24: “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am”
- Luke 23:43: “Today shalt thou be with me.”
- Philippians 1:23: “to depart and to be with Christ”
- 2 Corinthians 4:8: “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord”
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17: “And so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
- Revelation 21:23: The Lamb is the light of heaven.
- Isaiah 33:17: “thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty.”
- 1 John 3:2: “we shall see him as he is.”

There will be *heavenly communion & heavenly contemplation*. His people may be with Him, so that they may behold Him (John 17:24). Is it possible to see Him in His glory? Only when all the remaining sins and infirmities are gone. But then we need eyes to see Him by faith already in this life.

Mr. Standfast in Pilgrims Progress (part 2): I am going now to see that Head that was crowned with thorns and that face that was spat upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith, but now I go where I shall live by sight and shall be with him in whose company I delight myself.

Samuel Rutherford: *The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear bridegroom’s face;
I will not gaze at glory, but on my King of grace.
Not at the crown He giveth, but on His pierced hand;
the Lamb is all the glory of Immanuel’s Land.*