

What is Heaven Like?

What a great question. Like planning for an extended vacation, we all want to know what it will be like before we go. What heaven will be like is addressed in scripture so that's where our answers should be found. For millennia mankind has asked and answered the question with varying degrees of accuracy. It is common for people to wax eloquent with their own imaginations, and we could all do that easily. One might say, "If it's going to be heaven then they must have golf courses and permanently excellent weather," etc.

But we, like Paul wrote to the church in Rome, should ask, "What saith the scriptures?" Romans 4:3. So... what is heaven like? The full answer exceeds the space we have here, but let's address it briefly from a few verses. But recognize that the term, "kingdom of heaven" is also used to describe the Lord's church, but those in that kingdom are the ones bound for heaven itself (Matt. 3:2; 4:17).

First, Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven several times in the beatitudes, but He does not, therein, tell what eternal heaven is like.

Jesus does describe the "kingdom of heaven" as a hidden treasure that brings so much joy that it is worth all we have, Matt. 13:44. (That would apply to the earthly kingdom, the church, as well as the heavenly kingdom. Likewise, it is like a pearl of great price, etc. (several times in Matt. 13 parables). In Matthew, Jesus refers to heaven with "enter into the joy of your master." (vv. 21, 23). *But still, those are comparisons which do not include descriptions of what God's eternal heaven is like.*

For that we first look at Acts 7:56, wherein Stephen, as he is being stoned to death by unbelievers, says, "**Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.**" So, God the Father and Jesus the Son are reigning there.

But *what is it like?* Some think I Corinthians 2:9 say that man can't imagine what God has prepared for us! Most likely, in context, Paul is describing the unspeakable wisdom God has prepared for us, but heaven may very well be implicated, generally, as one of the things God has prepared for us.

"Preacher... you still have not described heaven for us!" True. Let me say that God has given humans some *introductory material, but we are limited to what the human mind can imagine, even with God's own descriptions!*

John 14:2, "In My Father's house are many mansions," KJV.

Rev. 7:9, 10 Multitudes from every nation praising God.

Rev. 7:17, eternal joy, "God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

(OK, now the *good stuff...*)

Rev. 21:10-21, every kind of precious stone, jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, huge pearls etc. Basically, more beauty than the mind of man can imagine. And Jesus, Himself, the Father and Son *are the temple* (v. 22).

What about streets of gold, Rev. 21:21? imagine taking some gold treasure to heaven with you. God lets you in and He asks, "Why did you bring some pavement with you? Beauty beyond imagination, but the real treasure is simply to be with Him for all eternity!

Ray Wallace