

# The Gospel Truth About... **HEAVEN**



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## **THE GOSPEL TRUTH ABOUT HEAVEN!**

**INTRODUCTION:** The subject of heaven is unique and special indeed! One of the things that makes this subject so very unique is the fact that Heaven is that it is one of the most talked about subjects among members of the Church; and at the same time one of the least taught about subjects in the Church!

Consequently, many Christians give way to the fables, legends and out-right false teachings that are available on the subject of Heaven; instead of reading, studying and learning for themselves what the Bible has to say on this most important subject.

That said, it is our goal to shed some light on what the Bible has to say about Heaven. All the while, we recognize that no sermon or Bible study class is exhaustive. Nevertheless, we will do our best to receive a clear picture of what the Bible has to say to us about Heaven.

As we open this series of lessons, let's consider some lyrics from two popular R & B bands from the past. The bands are: **a)** Tavares (*or The Tavares Brothers*); who produced music from the mid 1970's through today. And **b)** The Ohio Players, who originally began in 1959 and is reportedly still making music today.

In talking about "*love*" here are a few lyrics from two of their songs that use the word *Heaven*. Note: These song lyrics were received from a internet website.

### **LYRICS FROM THE MUSIC GROUP: TAVARES-**

#### **Heaven Must Be Missing An Angel**

**Tavares**

*(K. St. Louis/Freddie Perrin)*

*Heaven must be missing an angel  
Missing one angel, child,  
cause you're here with me right now  
Your love is heavenly, baby  
Heavenly to me, baby*

### **LYRICS FROM THE MUSIC GROUP: THE OHIO PLAYERS-**

#### ***"HEAVEN MUST BE LIKE THIS"***

*You know what I think heaven is? I think heaven is you  
You know that place where I can find happiness  
A place close to your loveliness  
Some where to rest my aching mind; Where there's no time to your love divine  
Heaven must be like this. It must be like this.  
Heaven must be like this. It must be like this.*

**NOW THAT** we've read some lyrics from two popular, R & B songs from "yesterday"; let's now consider these rich, righteous and riveting words from two "contemporary" Christian Songs about the subject of *Heaven!*

### I CAN ONLY IMAGINE

By Mercy Me

I Can Only Imagine  
I can only imagine  
What it will be like  
When I walk  
By Your side  
I can only imagine  
What my eyes will see  
When Your face  
Is before me  
I can only imagine  
[Chorus]:  
Surrounded by Your glory, what will my heart feel  
Will I dance for You Jesus or in awe of You be still  
Will I stand in Your presence or to my knees will I fall  
Will I sing hallelujah, will I be able to speak at all  
I can only imagine  
I can only imagine  
When that day comes  
And I find myself  
Standing in the Son  
I can only imagine  
When all I will do  
Is forever  
Forever worship You  
I can only imagine

### STORY BEHIND THE SONG:

Mercy Me's "*I Can Only Imagine*"

By Linda Owen



**Mercy Me** had been a rock band for eight years when its infectious ode to heaven, "*I Can Only Imagine*," began saturating Christian radio. After spending weeks at number

One on the charts, it garnered Dove awards for both *"Pop Song"* and *"Song of the Year,"* as well as a *"Songwriter of the Year"* accolade for lead singer Bart Millard. Almost immediately, the group's 2001 debut album, *Almost There*, was certified gold, and thousands of churches were using *"I Can Only Imagine"* in worship.

The Dallas-based band—which also includes lead guitarist Mike Scheuchzer, drummer Robby Shaffer, bassist Nathan Cochran, and keyboardist Jim Bryson—knew their first hit was something special, but they never "imagined" it impacting people the way it has.

Millard hopes both listeners and worshipers recognize that, *"The song is not about crossing our fingers and hoping that God is out there somewhere, but it's about resting easier at night knowing that there is one true, living God who is crazy in love with us so much so that he desires us to spend eternity with him."*

**Millard's lyrics grew out of a period of tremendous personal pain.** In 1991, his father died after a long battle with cancer. When people told him that his dad would choose heaven over coming back, the 18-year-old began thinking about what his dad was experiencing in heaven. After that, he found himself repeating the phrase *"I can only imagine."* He began writing it on napkins, paper bags, and anything he could find. The phrase resonated in his heart and gave him the strength and hope he needed to move on.

Somehow, wondering about that awesome moment when he too would lay eyes on the Lord helped dull the pain of losing his father. *This isn't a permanent separation*, he told himself. *One day we'll be enjoying God's presence together.*

Years later, in 1999, when Mercy Me was writing songs for its freshman project, Millard stumbled across that simple phrase—*"I can only imagine"*—in an old notebook. About ten minutes later, the song was written.

*"People say it's amazing that it was written in ten minutes, when really it had been on my heart for almost ten years,"* Millard says. In fact, not many days go by that he still doesn't ask himself those questions that form the chorus of his song:

*Surrounded by your glory, what will my heart feel?  
Will I dance for you Jesus or in awe of you be still?  
Will I stand in your presence, or to my knees will I fall?  
Will I sing hallelujah? Will I be able to speak at all?*

**HEAVEN**

By: Mary Mary

**Chorus**

I gotta get myself together, cuz I got someplace to go  
And I'm praying when I get there, I see everyone I know  
I wanna go to heaven, I wanna go to heaven, said I wanna go to heaven, I wanna go to  
heaven, do you wanna Go?

[verse 1]

Can you picture a place where there a smile on every face  
And all the worry, all the stressing, all the pressure's been erased  
Walking down a street that's golden,  
Angels singing perfect weather  
Everybody's got a mansion, y'all it just don't get no better  
I wanna go

**Chorus**

[verse 2]

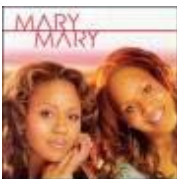
The only way I can explain it, is that in life we go through changes  
Though we know it serves a purpose,  
still sometimes it just seems Worthless  
But this race that I am running, Whether I run it fast or slow  
Long as I just keep on running, I'm gonna make it there someday  
I know

**Chorus**

[bridge]

There's a place for us/one day I wanna see it  
There's a place for us/and you may not believe it  
But I'm just living my life/so I can live again  
Everyday I'm getting ready/'cause I wanna make it in

**Chorus**



Mary Mary

**WE WILL** watch the videos from these two contemporary songs near the end of this Bible Study when we read Revelation Chapter 21.

## **SOME QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE WORD HEAVEN IN THE BIBLE!**

The Popular use of the words: Heaven and Heavens in the Bible.

- ↵ In the King James Version of the Bible the word heaven is used 582 TIMES
- ↵ In the King James version of the Bible the word heavens is used 133 TIMES

**For a total of: 735**

- ↵ In the New King James Version of the Bible the word heavens is used 172 TIMES
- ↵ In the New King James Version of the Bible the word heaven is used 531 TIMES

**For a total of: 703**

### **THE WORD HEAVEN- DEFINED!**

**SHAMAYIM:** *Old Testament, Hebrew*

OT:8064 shamayim (shaw-mah'-yim); dual of an unused singular shameh (shaw-meh'); from an unused root meaning to be lofty; the sky (*as aloft; the dual perhaps alluding to the visible arch in which the clouds move, as well as to the higher ether where the celestial bodies revolve*):

*(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)*

**SHAMAYIM:**

OT:8064 shamayim dual of an unused singular shameh —

Heaven, heavens, sky

- a) visible heavens, sky
- 1) as abode of the stars
- 2) as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.
- b) Heaven (as the abode of God)

*(from The Online Bible Thayer's Greek Lexicon and Brown Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon, Copyright © 1993, Woodside Bible Fellowship, Ontario, Canada. Licensed from the Institute for Creation Research.)*

**OURANOS:** New Testament, Greek-

NT:3772 ouranos (oo-ran-os'); perhaps from the same as NT:3735 (through the idea of elevation); the sky; by extension, heaven (*as the abode of God*); by implication, happiness, power, eternity; specifically, the Gospel (*Christianity*):

KJV - air, heaven ([-ly]), sky.

*(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)*

↳ **Here's** a final definition for your consideration-

**HEAVEN:**

A word that expresses several distinct concepts in the Bible:

1. As used in a **physical sense**, heaven is **the expanse over the earth** (Gen 1:8). The tower of Babel reached upward to heaven (Gen 11:4). God is the possessor of heaven (Gen 14:19). Heaven is the location of the stars (Gen 1:14; 26:4) as well as the source of dew (Gen 27:28).
2. Heaven is also **the dwelling place of God** (Gen 28:17; Rev 12:7-8). It is the source of the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:2,10). Because of the work of Christ on the Cross, heaven is, in part, **present with believers on earth as they obey God's commands** (John 14:2,23).
3. The word heaven is also used as a substitute for the name of God (Luke 15:18,21; John 3:27). The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are often spoken of interchangeably (Matt 4:17; Mark 1:15).

At the end of time a new heaven will be created to surround the new earth. This new heaven will be the place of God's perfect presence (Isa 65:17; 66:22; Rev 21:1). Then there will be a literal fulfillment of heaven on earth.

*(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)*

**1. HEAVEN... GOD'S HOME!:**

*“And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in **heaven Your dwelling place;** and when You hear, forgive.”*  
1<sup>st</sup> Kings 8:30 NKJV

*“In this manner, therefore, pray: **Our Father in heaven,**”*  
-Matthew 6:9 NKJV

**“Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is My throne,**  
*And earth is My footstool.”*  
-Isaiah 66:1 NKJV

**“Heaven is My throne,**  
*And earth is My footstool.’”*  
-Acts 7:49 NKJV

*“In **My Father's house** are many mansions”*  
-John 14:2 NKJV

• **A FEW OF THE MANY TERMS HEAVEN IS IDENTIFIED WITH IN THE BIBLE:**

Check these verses out-

In the Bible Heaven is called...

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| ☞ <i>My Father's House:</i>                      | <i>John 14:2</i>        |
| ☞ <i>A Heavenly Country (or Better Country):</i> | <i>Hebrews 11:16</i>    |
| ☞ <i>A City:</i>                                 | <i>Hebrews 11:16</i>    |
| ☞ <i>Mount Zion:</i>                             | <i>Hebrews 12:22</i>    |
| ☞ <i>The City of The Living GOD:</i>             | <i>Hebrews 12:22</i>    |
| ☞ <i>The Heavenly Jerusalem:</i>                 | <i>Hebrews 12:22</i>    |
| ☞ <i>The City of GOD:</i>                        | <i>Revelation 3:12</i>  |
| ☞ <i>The Great City:</i>                         | <i>Revelation 21:10</i> |
| ☞ <i>The Holy Jerusalem:</i>                     | <i>Revelation 21:10</i> |

**GOD CREATED HEAVEN!:**

*“In the beginning **God created the heavens and the earth.**”*

*-Genesis 1:1*

*“The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven  
And swore by Him who lives forever and ever, **who created heaven and the things that  
are in it,** the earth and the things that are in it.”*

*-Revelation 10:5 & 6 NKJV*

**PEOPLE AND PERSONALITIES IN HEAVEN:**

⇒ **GOD THE FATHER IS IN HEAVEN!**

*“But our **God is in heaven** ;  
He does whatever He pleases.”*

*-Psalm 115:3 NKJV*

*“**The LORD has established His throne in heaven,**  
And His kingdom rules over all.”*

*-Psalm 103:19 NKJV*

*“This will be written for the generation to come,  
That a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.  
For He looked down from the height of **His sanctuary;**  
**From heaven the LORD viewed the earth.**”*

*-Psalm 102:18-19 NKJV*

*“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had  
passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New  
Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her  
husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God  
is with **men,** and **He will dwell with them,** and they shall be His people.*

***God Himself will be with them** and be their God.*

*“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, For the former things have passed away.”*

*Then **He who sat on the throne** said, “Behold, I make all things new.”*

*And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”*

*And He said to me, “It is done! I am the **Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End**. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*

*He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”*

*-Revelation 21:1-7*

⇒ **GOD THE SON, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST- IS IN HEAVEN!**

*“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And **He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.** And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:*

**KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**”

*-Rev. 19:11-16 NKJV*

⇒ **GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT IS IN HEAVEN!**

*“Where can I go from **Your Spirit**?*

*Or where can I flee from Your presence?*

**If I ascend into heaven, You are there;**”

*-Psalm 139:7, 8 NKJV*

⇒ **GOD’S ARMIES ARE IN HEAVEN!**

*“And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.”*

*-Rev. 19:14 NKJV*

⇒ **A MULTITUDE OF SAINTS ARE IN HEAVEN!**

*“After these things I heard a loud voice of **a great multitude in heaven**, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thundering’s, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!”*  
 -Rev. 19:1-6 NKJV

*“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. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**”*  
 Revelation 7:9-14 KJV

\* **H**aving already established that God is in heaven, if the saints are “*present with The LORD*”, they must be in heaven too!

*“So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather **to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.**”*  
 -2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:6-8 NKJV

⇒ **THE PERMANENCE OF HEAVEN:**

*“His seed also **I will make to endure forever,**  
And his throne **as the days of heaven**”  
Psalms 89:29 NKJV*

*“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from  
God, a house not made with hands, **eternal in the heavens**”  
2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:1 NKJV*

**THE POWER SOURCE OF HEAVEN:**

*“The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it,  
for **the glory of God illuminated it.**  
**The Lamb is its light.**”  
-Revelation 21:23 NKJV*

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?**  
*(A Chronology of the Life of CHRISTian Believers)*

⇒ **We are born.**

⇒ **Our bodies die.**

*“And as it is appointed for men to **die once,**”*  
-Heb. 9:27 NKJV

⇒ **Our physical bodies go back to dust.**

*“For **dust you are,***  
*And **to dust you shall return.**”*  
-Gen. 3:19b NKJV

⇒ **When Christians die, our Spirit goes to be with The LORD.**

*“We are confident, yes, well pleased rather **to be absent from the body***  
***and to be present with the Lord.**”*  
-2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:8 NKJV

⇒ **Believers will be raised from the dead. This is a “bodily resurrection”.**

• **JESUS IS THE FIRST TO RISE FROM THE DEAD!**

*“Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come — that the **Christ** would suffer, that **He would be the first to rise from the dead,**”*  
-Acts 26:22, 23 NKJV

⇒ **If JESUS was not raised from the dead, then our faith is in vain. But, the good news is that HE DID RISE FROM THE DEAD!**

*“Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up — if in fact the dead do not rise . For if the dead do not rise , then Christ is not risen.*

*And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!*

*Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.*

*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.*

**“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”**

-1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:12-23 NKJV

- **BELIEVERS RISE FROM THE DEAD!**

**The Rapture of the Church:**

*“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then **we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**”*

-1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:16, 17 NKJV

⇒ **A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE RAPTURE “TYPIFIED” IN THE BIBLE.**

1) **Noah’s Ark-**

Noah and his family were placed in “the Ark of Safety” before the great flood destroyed the earth.

*“And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark , and cover it inside and outside with pitch. And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. You shall make a window for the ark , and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.*

*And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. **But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark — you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.***

-Genesis 6:13-18 NKJV

## 2) **Sodom and Gomorrah-**

Lot and his family were saved, or taken out of Sodom before it was destroyed.

-Read: Genesis 19:1-29

*“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.””*

-1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 15:50-54 NKJV

## ⇒ **BELIEVER’S SHARE IN THE THOUSAND YEAR REIGN OF CHRIST.**

*“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.*

**And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** *But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

*Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”*

-Rev. 20:1-6 NKJV

⇒ **NON-BELIEVERS ARE RAISED FROM THE DEAD!**

*“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years .*

**But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.”**

-Rev. 20:4, 5 NKJV

**THE JUDGMENT!**

**Some Scriptures To Consider:**

*But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written:*

*"As I live, says the LORD,  
Every knee shall bow to Me,  
And every tongue shall confess to God."*

**-Romans 14:20 NKJV**

*“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

**-2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:10, 11 NKJV**

**THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST** is *NOT* The Great White Throne Judgment. The Judgment Seat of **CHRIST** is a time when **CHRISTIANS** are rewarded for the work they have done for The **LORD**.

Consider the following commentary on the question from **www.gotquestions.org**

**Question: "What is the Judgment Seat of Christ / Bema Seat of Christ?"**

**Answer:** Romans 14:10-12 says, *“For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat...so then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.”* 2 Corinthians 5:10 tells us, *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”* In the context of both Scriptures, it is clear that they are referring to Christians, not unbelievers. The Judgment Seat of Christ, therefore, involves believers giving an account of their lives to Christ. The Judgment Seat of Christ does not determine salvation; that was determined by Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf (1 John 2:2), and our faith in Him (John 3:16). All of our sins are forgiven and we will never be condemned for them (Romans 8:1). We should not look at the Judgment Seat of Christ as God judging our sins, but rather as God rewarding us for our lives. Yes, as the Scriptures say, we will have to give an account of our lives. Part of this is surely answering for the sins we committed. However, that is not

going to be the primary focus of the Judgment Seat of Christ.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, believers are rewarded based on how faithfully they served Christ (1 Corinthians 9:4-27; 2 Timothy 2:5). The things we will likely be judged on are how well we obeyed the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), how victorious we were over sin (Romans 6:1-4), how well we controlled our tongue (James 3:1-9), etc. The Bible speaks of believers receiving crowns for different things based on how faithfully they served Christ (1 Corinthians 9:4-27; 2 Timothy 2:5). The various crowns are described in 2 Timothy 2:5; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; and Revelation 2:10. James 1:12 is a good summary of how we should think about the Judgment Seat of Christ, “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him.”

**Recommended Resource:** [Your Eternal Reward: Triumph & Tears at the Judgment Seat of Christ by Erwin Lutzer.](#)

#### b) **The Great White Throne Judgment**

*“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. **And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works,***

*by the things which were written in the books.”*

-Rev. 20:11, 12 NKJV

**PARADISE EARTH/HEAVEN/THE NEW JERUSALEM!**

**OUR SCRIPTURE READING:**

*“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

*And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."  
Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."*

*And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."  
And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

*Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying,  
"Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."  
And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.*

*Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.*

*Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.  
The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.*

*Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.*

*The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.*

*The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl.  
And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.  
But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.*

*The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.*

*Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).  
And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.*

*But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.*

*And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month.  
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.*

*They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.  
There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun,  
for the Lord God gives them light.*

*And they shall reign forever and ever.*

**-Revelation 21:1 through 22:5 NKJV**

**A QUICK NOTE ON “GUARDAIAN ANGELS” AND BELIEVERS  
IN CONNECTION WITH OUR LAST WEEKS STUDY!**

**Some Scriptures To Consider:**

*"Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven **their angels** always see the face of My Father who is in heaven."  
-Matthew 18:10 NKJV*

*"But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except **Michael your prince**."  
-Daniel 10:21 (NKJV)*

*"But before I do that, I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (There is no one to help me against these spirit princes except **Michael, your spirit prince**."  
-Daniel 10:21 (NLT)*

*"At that time **Michael** shall stand up,  
The great **prince who stands watch over the sons of your people**;"  
-Daniel 12:1a (NKJV)*

*"At that time **Michael, the archangel who stands guard over your nation**, will arise."  
-Daniel 12:1a (NLT)*

\* **LET ME HASTEN** to say that my comment last week with regard to each believer having an Angel assigned to them is not a comment that can be clearly and conclusively backed by a specific Bible verse. That said, let me hasten to say that I was in error when I said that I could not remember the address of the Scripture reference I was looking for that would support my statement.

The Scripture reference I could not remember is the one mentioned above, namely, Matthew 18:10. Please forgive me for my comment, made in error. And know that Angels play a most crucial and important role in the lives of believers- as they do the bidding of The **LORD-GOD!**

The word “Angel” appears 199 times in The Bible and is a serious subject indeed. Moreover, it is clear from The Scriptures that our **GOD** uses Angels for His own good purpose and pleasure. These purposes include seeing to the care of The **LORD’s** people.

**IN CONNECTION** with my comments and additional inquiries to the matter of believers having “Guardian Angels” I am providing this brief, albeit beneficial information. Note that the quote below is from the Christian website: **[www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)**.

**Question: "Do we have guardian angels?"**

**Answer:** *Matthew 18:10 states, "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven." In the context, "these little ones" could either apply to those who believe in Him (v. 6) or it could refer to the little children (vv. 3-5). This is the key passage when the discussion of guardian angels comes up. There is no doubt that good angels help protect (Daniel 6:20-23; 2 Kings 6:13-17), reveal information (Acts 7:52-53; Luke 1:11-20), guide (Matthew 1:20-21; Acts 8:26), provide for (Genesis 21-17-20; 1 Kings 19:5-7), and minister to believers in general (Hebrews 1:14). There are many more instances of these in Scripture.*


*The question that arises is whether each person—or each believer—has an angel assigned to him/her. In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel had the archangel (Michael) assigned to it (Daniel 10:21; 12:1), but you nowhere in Scripture does it state that an angel was "assigned" to an individual (they were sometimes sent to individuals, but no mention of "permanent" assignment is given). One commentator states that the Jews had fully developed the belief in guardian angels during the time between the Old and New Testament periods. Some early church fathers believed that each person had not only a good angel assigned to him/her, but also a demon as well. The belief in guardian angels has been around for a long time, but there is no scriptural basis for it.*

*To return to Matthew 18:10, the word "their" is a collective pronoun in the Greek, and refers to the fact that believers are served by angels in general. These angels are pictured "always" watching the face of God so as to hear His command to them to help a believer when it is needed. If one is to take from the Matthew passage that guardian angels are referred to, it would seem that these angels are not in an active duty, but rather "always see the face of" the Father in heaven. The active duty or oversight seems then to come more from God than the angels, which makes perfect sense because God alone is omniscient. He sees every believer at every moment, and He alone knows when one of us needs the intervention of an angel. Because they are continually seeing His face, the angels are at His disposal to help one of His "little ones."*

*In Western society today, it is "in" to believe in angels. We have movies that focus on angels; we have TV series, which portray angels as being assigned to help humans. Scripture makes it clear that although angels possess superhuman power and knowledge, they are created beings just as we are and are "nothing" compared to God. As such, they are not to be worshipped (Exodus 20:1-6; Colossians 2:18). Rather, worship is to be reserved for the Triune God alone. Unfortunately, while the shows about angels give lip service to God, the Son of God is rarely mentioned (if at all). And God says in John 5:23 that if one does not honor the Son, he does not honor the Father who sent Him.*

*It cannot be emphatically answered from Scripture whether each believer has a guardian angel assigned to him/her. But as stated earlier, God does use them in ministering to us. It is scriptural to say that He uses them as He uses us, i.e. He in no way needs us or them to accomplish His purposes, but chooses to use us and them nevertheless (Job 4:18; Job 15:15). In the end, whether we have an angel assigned to protect us or not, we have a greater assurance that God gives: if we are His children through faith in Christ, He works all things together for good (Romans 8:28-30), and that Jesus Christ will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5-6). If we have an omniscient, omnipotent, all-loving God with us, does it really matter whether or not there is a finite angel alongside us?*

**Recommended Resource:** [Angels: Elect & Evil by C. Fred Dickason.](#)

 Additional Recommended Reading: **Angels God's Secret Agents**, by Dr. Billy Graham

**WHAT ABOUT OUR BODIES IN HEAVEN?**

*“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**—  
In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.”  
-1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:51, 52 (NKJV)*

*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and **it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him;**”  
-1<sup>st</sup> John 3:2 (KJV)*

*“**Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared** first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.”  
-Mark 16:9 (NKJV)*

*“Later **He appeared** to the eleven as they sat at the table;”  
-Mark 16:14 (NKJV)*

*“Now as they said these things, **Jesus Himself stood** in the midst of them, **and said** to them, “Peace to you.” But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, “Why are you troubled?  
And why do doubts arise in your hearts? **Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself.** Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have. When He had said this, **He showed them His hands and His feet.** But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” So **they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.** **And He took it and ate** in their presence.”  
-Luke 24:36-43 (NKJV)*

*“Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, ...  
Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for **a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.** When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?”  
So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.  
And He took it and ate in their presence.”  
-Luke 24:36; 39-43 (NKJV)*

- **SOME IMPORTANT OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES ABOVE:**

↵ **The Bible teaches us that we shall “*be like Him*” (*JESUS CHRIST*); where our new bodies are concerned.**

**“... it doth not yet appear what we shall be:  
but we know that, *when he shall appear,* we shall be like him.”  
-1<sup>st</sup> John 3:2b**

↵ **The Resurrected LORD JESUS HAD A BODY!**

**“Now when He rose early on the first day of the week,”  
-Mark 16:9a**

↵ **The LORD JESUS’ body had limbs; legs, feet, eyes, etc.**

**“Jesus Himself stood... and said...  
Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself.”  
-Luke 36, 37 (selected portions)**

↵ **The Resurrected body of The LORD JESUS CHRIST was “*Touchable*”!**

**“...*Handle Me and see, ...*”  
-Luke 24:39b**

↵ **The body of The LORD JESUS had a digestive system. HE was able to eat!**

**“*But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate...”*  
-Luke 24:41, 42, 43a**

↵ **The body of The LORD JESUS had “*flesh and bones*”!**

**“...*for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.*”  
-Luke 24:39c**

## **I. THE PROMISE OF HEAVEN**

*"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

-John 14:1-3 NKJV

## **II. THE PLURALITY OF HEAVENS**

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

-Genesis 1:1 NKJV

*"Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God,"*

-Deuteronomy 10:14a NKJV

*"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a one was caught up to the third heaven."*

-2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 12:2 NKJV

## **III. THE PEOPLE IN HEAVEN**

*"Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city."*

-Revelation 22:14 NKJV

*And they sang a new song, saying:*

*"You are worthy to take the scroll,  
And to open its seals;  
For You were slain,*

*And have redeemed us to God by Your blood  
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,  
10 And have made us kings and priests to our God;  
And we shall reign on the earth."*

-Rev. 5:9, 10 NKJV

#### IV. THE PERFECT PARADISE THAT IS HEAVEN

🔔 A New Heaven and New Earth

*“Then I saw a **new heaven and a new earth**,  
for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared.”  
-Rev. 21:1 NLT*

🔔 The Holy City, called: New Jerusalem

*“Then I, John, saw **the holy city, New Jerusalem**”  
-Rev. 21:2a NKJV*

🔔 **GOD** will “Tabernacle” with men in the New Jerusalem

*“Behold, the **tabernacle of God is with men**, and **He will dwell with them**,  
-Rev. 21:3 NKJV*

*“Look, **the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them**,  
-Rev. 21:3 NLT*

🔔 Tears, death, sorrow, crying and pain will permanently “pass away”.

*“And **God will wipe away every tear from their eyes**; there shall be **no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying**. There shall be **no more pain**,  
for **the former things have passed away**.”  
-Rev. 21:4 NKJV*

🔔 The holy City descends “out of heaven from God”.

*“Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, **coming down out of heaven from God**,”  
-Rev. 21:2 NKJV*

*“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying,  
“Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.”  
And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the **great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God**.”  
-Rev. 21:9, 10 NKJV*

🔔 The City has the “*glory of God*”. The light of the City is as a “*precious stone*”.

“...**having the glory of God**. Her light was like **a most precious stone**,  
like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

-Rev. 21:11 NKJV

🔔 The City has a “*great and high wall*”.

“Also she had **a great and high wall**...”

-Rev. 21:12a NKJV

🔔 The City has “*twelve gates*”.

“...with **twelve gates**.”

-Rev. 21:12b NKJV

🔔 Each City gate has an “*Angel at the gate*”.

“...and **twelve angels at the gates**.”

-Rev. 21:12c NKJV

🔔 Each Gate has a name of one of the “*Twelve Tribes of Israel*”.

“and **names written on them**, which are the names **of the twelve tribes**  
**of the children of Israel**.”

-Rev. 21:12d NKJV

🔔 There are “Three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.”

“Three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south,  
and three gates on the west.”

-Rev. 21:13 NKJV

🔔 The wall of the City has “*Twelve foundations*”; each foundation is named for one of the “*Twelve apostles of The Lamb*”.

“*Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations,  
and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”  
-Rev. 21:14 NKJV*

🔔 The City is a perfect “*Cube*”; equal on each side. See Scripture reference below:

“*When he measured it, he found it was a square, as wide as it was long. In fact, it was in the form of a cube, for its length and width and height were each 1,400 miles. Then he measured the walls and found them to be 216 feet thick (the angel used a standard human measure).”  
-Rev. 21:16, 17 NLT*

🔔 The wall of the City is made of “*Jasper*” The City is made of “*Pure gold*”.

“*The construction of its wall was of jasper;  
and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.”  
-Rev. 21:18, 19 NKJV*

🔔 The foundation of the City walls were “*Adorned with all kinds of precious stones*”.

“*The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.”  
-Rev. 21:19, 20 NKJV*

🔔 The Twelve Gates were made of pearl. Each Gate was made “*from a single pearl!*”.

“*The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl.”  
-Rev. 21:21a NKJV*

🔔 The main street was made of “*Pure gold, like transparent glass*”.

“*And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.*”

-Rev. 21:21b NKJV

🔔 The City has no “*Temple*”.

“*But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.*”

-Rev. 21:22 NKJV

🔔 The City has no need for the sun or the moon.

“*The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.*”

-Rev. 21:23, 24 NKJV

🔔 The City gates will never be shut. There is no night in the City.

“*Its gates never close at the end of day because there is no night.”*

-Rev. 21:25a NLT

## V. THE PERMANENCE OF HEAVEN!

The Throne of God and of The Lamb will be in Heaven!

“*For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him.*

*And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads.*

*And there will be no night there — no need for lamps or sun — for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever.”*

-Rev. 22:3, 4, 5 NLT

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**THE GOSPEL TRUTH ABOUT HEAVEN**

*By: Rev. Sherman J. Fort, Pastor/Teacher, CMBC*

**BIBLE STUDY SOURCES:**

1. *The Holy Bible*
2. *The Holy Spirit*
3. *Prayer*
4. *PC Study Bible And Bible Explorer 4*

**ART WORK AND ILLUSTRATIONS:**

3 Pictures are used at the end of the Bible Study which depict “*The Heavenly City*”. Both pictures are the work of Pat Marvenko Smith, Founder [www.RevelationIllustrated.com](http://www.RevelationIllustrated.com)

**NOTE:** As always, we recognize and encourage the CHRISTian Bible Student to remember that ***NO BIBLE STUDY IS EXHAUSTIVE!*** And this brief Bible Study on “*Heaven*” is no exception.

This Bible Study is part of our Study on: Holiness, Heaven, Hell and Home. All of our Bible Studies are free. There is no cost for them. Some Bible Studies are available on the Canaan Church website for free download. The CMBC website address is: [www.mycmbc.org](http://www.mycmbc.org)

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- *The Epistles of John*
- *What The Bible Has To Say About Death And Dying For The CHRISTian Believer*
- *What The Bible Has To Say About Marriage, Divorce And Re-Marriage*
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