

GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE
(Special English Edition)

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HEAVEN

INTRODUCTION

Heaven truly exists as a real place. The existence of heaven is not man's idea. It is not some person's dream or imagination. It is not a folk story. Heaven is not some beautiful place on earth. Heaven is a real place where real people live. Real activity is going on in heaven all the time. Heaven is the place where God the Father lives (John 14:2). Heaven is the place where God the Son speaks on our behalf (Hebrews 4:16; 7:25; 1 John 2:1). Heaven is the place where all believers will live when they die (Philippians 3:20). I pray that this wonderful truth will fill your heart as you expect to go there some day.

IMPORTANCE OF THIS LESSON

- ❑ Many unbelievers say that heaven is the good times you have here on the earth. You are in heaven when you enjoy yourself. They say you make your own heaven here on earth.
- ❑ Almost all religions and false cults in this world offer their followers a place of eternal blessings after death. None of these religions offer a heaven as a home where born again believers will live together with Christ. In heaven the believers will serve Him and praise Him through all eternity
- ❑ It is important to study about heaven because it is a real place where the believers will surely live. Other religions present the followers with an empty hope.
- ❑ Heaven is also important because it is in every believer's future (1 Corinthians 15:19). It is the goal that every believer works for (Philippians 3:14). It is the place where every believer will receive everything that God has promised to him (1 Peter 1:4).

THE LESSON

I. WHERE IS HEAVEN?

A. The Bible speaks of three heavens:

1. In Genesis 1:7-8, God divided the waters. In this way He created a space between the waters on earth and the waters above the earth. God called this space the sky. "And God called the sky HEAVEN." This space is usually called the FIRST Heaven.
2. In Genesis 1:14-18, God placed the sun, moon, and stars in the upper sky to give light upon the earth. This is the SECOND Heaven
3. In 2 Corinthians 12:2, the Apostle Paul says he was caught up to the third heaven.
 - a) Paul talked about the THIRD Heaven. This is the heaven above the stars where God lives (Matthew 6:9).
 - b) One might ask, "Is heaven in outer space?" If by outer space we mean the space beyond the stars, and if the THIRD Heaven is the heaven beyond the stars, then the answer would be, "YES." Up there beyond the stars is God's dwelling place.

- B. The Bible says that heaven is in the NORTH.
1. Isaiah 14:13 – Lucifer, a mighty angel, became Satan, He became proud and tried to take God from His throne. Satan tried to take control of the universe.
Notice what he said, “...I will exalt my throne ABOVE THE STARS OF GOD: (Note: God’s throne is *above the stars*.) I will sit also upon the mountain of the congregation IN THE SIDES OF THE NORTH: (Many times a mountain in the Old Testament refers to a kingdom.): I will climb above the HEIGHTS OF THE CLOUDS: I will be like the most High.”
◆ *Here we see that heaven is spoken of as above the clouds, above the stars, and in “the sides of the north.”*
 2. Psalm 48:2, “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on THE SIDES OF THE NORTH, the city of the great king.”
 3. One other possible reference is Job 26:7, “He stretches out the NORTH over the empty place....”
◆ *It is never wise in Bible study to make doctrines from verses that are not clear. We must not go beyond what God has written. From these verses we can say for certain that there is a PLACE called Heaven. We can be sure that it is out there, up there, somewhere in an area of outer space. God refers to it as “the sides of the north” Jesus called this PLACE “MY FATHER’S HOUSE” (John 14:2).*
- C. Without any doubt, two words are used many times to tell us where heaven is:
1. It is UP.
 - a) Acts 7:55 – This verse says that Stephen looked UP directly INTO HEAVEN, and saw the splendor of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.
 - b) Acts 1:11 –The angels asked the disciples why they stood looking UP into heaven. This same Jesus who was taken UP from them into heaven, will come back in the same way as they saw him go into heaven.
 - c) 2 Kings 2:11 – Elijah went UP into heaven by a whirlwind.
 2. It is ABOVE.
 - a) Colossians 3:1 – Paul says to the believers in the city of Colossee that they should seek those things which are ABOVE, where Christ sits on the right hand of God.
 - b) John 8:23 – This verse says that we are from beneath but Christ is from ABOVE.
- ◆ *Heaven is real. It is UP and ABOVE us. Therefore let us do two things.*
- 1) *LOOK UP...for the time when God will redeem us is coming close (Luke 21:28).*
 - 2) *We must keep our minds thinking about the things ABOVE (Colossians 3:2).*

II. THREE QUESTIONS ABOUT HEAVEN. IS IT A REAL PLACE? ARE PEOPLE LIVING THERE? ARE THINGS HAPPENING THERE?

- A. The Bible talks about heaven as a place God has prepared for believers.
1. John 14:2 – Jesus said that He is going to prepare a place for us.
 2. Hebrews 11:16 – says that they were waiting for a better country – a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God. God has prepared a city for them. Heaven is a place that is specially prepared for special people. These are all the people who have believed on THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- B. Heaven is a place where God the Father does many things:
1. God hears the prayers that come up from the earth (Psalm 65:2; Matthew 6:9).
 2. God sends the answers to our prayers (2 Chronicles 7:14).
 3. God sees everything people do (Psalm 14:2; 2 Chronicles 16:9).
 4. God shows His anger against all ungodliness and unrighteousness people do against God (Romans 1:18).
 5. God opens the windows of heaven and sends blessings to people (Malachi 3:10).
- C. Heaven is the place where the Lord Jesus Christ, our Master, lives (Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1).
1. Christ stands or sits at the right hand of the Father.
 - a) Acts 7:55 – Stephen saw Jesus STANDING on the right hand of God.

- b) Hebrews 1:3 – After Christ Himself provided a way to clean our sins from us he SAT DOWN on the right hand of the Greatness in the highest place.
2. Christ serves as our counselor, our lawyer. He is the one who speaks to the Father for us.
 - a) 1 John 2:1 –If any man commits sin, we have a lawyer with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
 - b) Hebrews 7:25 –Jesus can save completely the people who come to Him. He is able to do this because He always lives to SPEAK TO THE FATHER for them.”
 - c) 1 Timothy 2:5 –There is one God, and one PERSON who speaks to God for men, the man Christ Jesus.
3. Christ possesses the splendor He had before He left the Father to come to earth. Christ had come down from heaven (John 6:51). The Father sent Him (John 17:18). He returned to His Father (John 20:17). Now He has the splendor he had before he came to earth (John 17:5).
4. Christ is waiting to return.
 - a) When He returns he will receive His church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Philippians 3:20).
 - b) When He comes the second time he will rule the earth (Revelation 19:11).
- D. Heaven is a place where the Bible is eternally guarded.
 1. Psalm 119:89 –God’s Word continues forever in heaven.
 2. Matthew 24:35 – The Lord says that heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will not pass away.
 - ◆ *The heaven and earth that we can see will be destroyed (2 Peter 3:10-11), but God guards His Word forever.*
- E. Heaven is the place where a great number of angels live.
 1. Matthew 26:53 – Jesus said that the Father could give twelve armies of angels, if he asked for them.
 2. Luke 15:7,10 – There is joy in the presence of the angels for the salvation of sinners.
- F. Heaven is the place where all the spirits of Christians who have died are living. They are waiting for the resurrection of their bodies This will happen when the Lord comes for His Church (Philippians 3:21).
 1. 2 Corinthians 5:1 – Saints who die before the coming of Christ are living in a spiritual body until the resurrection.
 - ◆ *The Holy Spirit is a great illustration of the fact that it is possible to be a person without a physical body.*
 2. 2 Corinthians 5:6,8 – When we leave this body we are “with the Lord.”
 3. 1 Thessalonians 4:14, 16-17 – Our spirits return with Christ to be united with our resurrected bodies and changed into Christ’s likeness (1 John 3:2).
 4. It is foolish to think that the millions of believers, now in heaven with the Lord, do not engage in any activity.

III. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS MOST OFTEN ASKED ABOUT HEAVEN

- A. Will there be real people in Heaven?
 1. Revelation 21:3 – God lives with real people. He will live with them. They will be His people. God Himself will be with them and He will be their God.
 2. Matthew 17:1-3 – Moses and Elijah appear with Christ out of heaven and speak with Him. Actual names! Real people!
 3. Matthew 8:11 – Many people will come and sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob in the rulership of heaven. Here we see the names of real people.
 4. Revelation 19:14 *The armies of heaven* coming with Christ to smash the power of the Antichrist. Verse 8 of this chapter says that these armies are the believers who live in heaven.
- B. What about names? Will we have new names or will we keep our own names?
 - ◆ *The Bible teaches clearly, that we will keep the same name in heaven that we had on earth.*
 1. Luke 10:20 – Jesus said that we should be happy because God wrote “YOUR NAMES” in heaven.” Not some strange new name, but YOUR name.

2. Philippians 4:3 –Paul asked the believers to help the women who worked with him in the gospel. THEIR NAMES are in the book of life. Their SAME names.
 3. Matthew 17:3 – Moses and Elijah did not have new names in heaven.
 4. God already knows our names:
 - a) Genesis 22:11 – God called Abraham by name out of heaven.
 - b) Genesis 21:17 – God knew Hagar by name and called out of heaven, “What is wrong with you, Hagar?”
 - c) Exodus 33:17 – God said to Moses, “...I know you by name.”
 - d) Acts 9:4 – God called out of heaven to Paul when he was still Saul of Tarsus. God said, “Saul, Saul, why are you doing these bad things against me?”
- ◆ *You should look in the Bible for yourself to find other illustrations of this truth. Indeed, heaven is a place that is filled with real people who have kept their own names.*
- C. What about bodies? Will we have bodies in heaven that we can see? Will these be bodies of flesh and blood?
1. Consider first of all, that millions of Christians will be alive on the earth when Jesus comes on the clouds. The Lord will take these believers up to heaven. They will be with Christ. This happens when Christ takes the church out of the world (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). These Christians never experience death in the body but are taken up into heaven in a body that is resurrected. (Note 1 Corinthians 15:51, where it says that all of us will not die.)
 2. God already took some people up to heaven in a body. Enoch (Genesis 5:24); Elijah (2 Kings 2:11); Moses (Matthew 17:3; compare with Jude 9); and Jesus (Acts 1:9-10).
- ◆ *God has already taken some people up to heaven in their bodies. God will take millions more up to heaven in their bodies. They will not see death. Therefore we should be encouraged to believe that we will have real bodies in heaven that we can see.*
3. What kind of bodies will we have in heaven?
 - a) A body exactly like the body of our risen Lord.
 - 1) 1 John 3:2 says that we will be like Him.
 - 2) Philippians 3:21 tells us that Christ will change our sinful body. It will be just like His glorious body.
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:52, says that Christ will raise the dead with the result that they will never die again and their bodies can never rot. He will change all of us.
 - ◆ *God will CHANGE us so that our bodies will be just like Christ’s body. He will not REPLACE us.*
 - b) What does this mean?
 - 1) It will be a body of flesh and bones.
In Luke 24:39 After the resurrection Christ said to the disciples that a spirit does not have flesh and bones like His body. Christ was not a “spirit” or a ghost and we will not be ghosts or spirits!
 - 2) It will be a body that has no blood. 1 Corinthians 15:50 says that flesh and blood cannot inherit the rule of God. *Why not?*
 - ◆ *Leviticus 17:11 says that the life of the FLESH is in the blood. It is blood spilled on the altar that atones for sin. When Christ died, His blood was spilled on the altar of Calvary for our sins. He arose with the nail prints in his hands, but not the blood (Luke 24:39)! For a human being to live on this earth he must have blood in his body. In heaven that same eternal life which belonged to Christ from the beginning will uphold us! (Compare with John 1:4; 5:26.)*
 4. How will this happen?

Philippians 3:20-21 says that Christ is able to do this through power whereby He is able even to rule all things.

 - ◆ *Christ made the laws that govern us and this universe (Colossians 1:16). Christ has power over all laws. His great power will change us.*

5. YES, we will have bodies in heaven. Our bodies will not have blood. Our bodies will be made of flesh and bones. We will be able to see these bodies. They will live forever and never rot. They will be spiritual bodies that are full of splendor. (Read 1 Corinthians 15:41-54 and Philippians 3:21.)
- D. Will we actually know each other in heaven? What will our relationship be like?
1. 1 Corinthians 13:12 says that at that in heaven I will know fully, exactly as God knows me. God already knows our names and what we are like. (Perhaps, the people who are already in heaven also know us fully (Hebrews 12:1). At that time, in heaven, we WILL KNOW exactly as others know us.
 2. Matthew 8:11 – We are going to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in heaven. We will KNOW them.
 3. Matthew 17:1-4 – Peter knew Moses and Elijah immediately without any introductions or pictures. In other words, we will know those we have known, and we will also know all the other believers.
 4. Acts 1:11 – *this same Jesus shall come*. In other words, if it is going to be the same Jesus, it will be the same Enoch, the same Elijah, the same Moses, and so on. We shall know each other because we have kept our rightful names, our present distinction and characteristics as well! The difference will be that our bodies will be changed. Our bodies will be exactly like His body of splendor (Philippians 3:21).
 - ◆ *Of all the human beings born on this earth, no two are exactly alike. We are all distinct individuals in the eyes of God.*
 5. Our human relationships on earth stop (Matthew 22:30). All of us will be servants of God like the angels We will live with Christ forever. God made sexual and family relationships for this earth (Genesis 1:27-28, and Genesis 2:22-25). We shall surely know each other in heaven. We will be “as the angels.” We will all be sons and servants of God.
- E. Do babies or little children come to ruin or do they go to heaven?
1. Note especially 2 Corinthians 5:21. Here, we see that Christ bore our sins, and he BECAME SIN. Christ became the basic nature of all the sin in the universe. This includes the sin in the natures of babies and little children. At some point all human beings reach an age of understanding. Only God knows what this age is. At the age of understanding a child becomes responsible for his actions. Until then, small children are covered by Christ’s precious sacrifice.
 2. Read Matthew 18:1-14. This is the great children’s chapter. In verse three Christ says that all sinners must become as little children before they can be saved.
 - Verse 10 – Christ says that every child has an angel representing him before the Father.
 - Verse 14 – Christ plainly says that it is not God’s will that any little child be lost.
 - ◆ *I think it is clear, from these verses, that God the Father watches over babies and small children; therefore, they are saved.*
 3. Read 2 Samuel 12:23. A child was born because David failed and sinned. After the child died the servants asked David why he did not fast. He made this remarkable statement: “Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”
 - ◆ *David failed but he was still a “man after God’s own heart.” His faith was in the Lord. He fully expected to go to heaven and to see his child there!*

IV. WHAT WILL HEAVEN BE LIKE?

- A. It will be a place of endless beauty. (Revelation 21). Of course, this is a description of the New Jerusalem. After this earth melts (2 Peter 3:10-11). The new heaven and earth (Revelation 21:1) come down from God. He establishes the New Jerusalem on the new earth (Revelation 21:2). Revelation 21 fully describes its measurements and its beauty.
 - ◆ *I believe this will be the final place to live for all those who put their trust in Christ.*
- B. It will be a place with many dwelling places (John 14:1-2). Some people translate it, “many resting places.” In heaven there will be no more battles to fight, and we will lay down the heavy loads of this life.

- C. It will be “as a bride dressed” (Revelation 21:23). A bride dresses herself carefully. God has decorated heaven for us.
- D. There will be *no night there* (Revelation 22:5). No long nights of pain and suffering. No nights of sorrow and loneliness. No nights of crime and fear. In heaven the sun will never go down.
- E. Heaven will be place of music (Revelation 5:9), and joyful service (Psalm 16:11; Revelation 22:3), in the light of the splendor of God (Revelation 21:11).

V. WHO GOES TO HEAVEN AND WHY?

- A. Who goes to heaven?
 - 1. 1 Peter 1:3 – Those who have been *born again and have a living hope*.
 - 2. Romans 8:17 – Those who are children of God by faith in Christ will receive the splendor that belongs to Christ.
 - 3. 1 John 3:2 – “Sons of God” will be made “like Him.”
- ◆ *Remember, heaven is a place God has prepared for people (Revelation 5:9). These people are the ones who are redeemed by His blood.*
- B. Who does not go to heaven?
 - 1. Revelation 21:8 – Those who fear and those who do not believe, and those who practice what God hates will share in the lake of fire. All murderers and those who commit fornication and those who practice witchcraft will go into the lake of fire. Those who worship idols, and all liars will end up in the lake which burns with fire and sulfur
 - 2. To reject Christ as Savior and Lord will lead to eternal ruin.
In John 8:24, Jesus said that if they did not believe that He was Christ, they would die in their sins.
- ◆ *If you have received Christ, you can be happy because of the glorious hope that is set before you.*

GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE
EXAM – LESSON 15

Questions to be answered by every student enrolled in the Rogma International Free Bible Study Course

Name _____

Address _____

1. Heaven is important to the believer because it is: (Value 4 points)
 - a. a spiritual experience.
 - b. where every believer receives his inheritance.
 - c. made of gold.
2. When Paul said he was “caught up to the third heaven” he meant he was (Value 5 points):
 - a. beyond the stars where God lives.
 - b. on the clouds in the sky.
 - c. in a state of happiness.
3. The first heaven is the: (Value 4 points)
 - a. place where God lives.
 - b. firmament.
 - c. place where God put the stars.
4. The direction of heaven is: (Value 4 points)
 - a. South.
 - b. East.
 - c. North.
5. **Mark** the following verse that states heaven is a prepared place. (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. John 14:2
 - b. Acts 7:55
 - c. John 8:23
6. **Mark** the **three** things God the Father does for the believer from heaven. (Value 12 points)
 - a. He watches everybody.
 - b. He hears our prayers.
 - c. He judges the earth.
 - d. He waits for the believer to die.
 - e. He opens the windows of heaven to send down His blessings.
7. **Mark** the verse that tells us Christ is in heaven. (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. John 12:2
 - b. Matthew 6:9
 - c. Hebrews 1:3
8. Christ serves us in heaven at this time as our: (Value 4 points)
 - a. Intercessor.
 - b. Shield against sin.
 - c. Judge.

9. **Mark** the verse that tells us the Bible will never pass away. (Open Bible) (Value 4 points)
- Matthew 26:53
 - Matthew 24:35
 - Hebrews 1:3
10. A good illustration of the fact that it is possible to be a person without a body is: (Value 4 points)
- Jesus Christ.
 - The Apostle Paul.
 - The Holy Spirit.
11. **Mark** the verse that shows heaven will be occupied with real people. (Open Bible)
(Value 5 points)
- Matthew 17:1-3
 - Luke 10:20
 - Genesis 22:11
12. We know that we will have the same name in heaven as we do here on earth because: (Value 4 points)
- Moses and Elijah had the same names in heaven.
 - we have names on earth.
 - Philip knew Jesus' name when he saw Him.
13. In the rapture of the church: (Value 4 points)
- the believer's body will be transformed into a body like unto Christ's.
 - the believer receives eternal life.
 - the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in the believer.
14. **Mark** the verse that tells us we will know each other in heaven. (Open Bible)
(Value 5 points)
- Philippians 3:21
 - I Corinthians 15:50
 - I Corinthians 13:12
15. We know babies go to heaven when they die because: (Value 4 points)
- after David's baby died he said he would go to him one day.
 - Paul said he saw babies in the third heaven.
 - David went to heaven the same time his baby died.
16. **Mark three** answers that describe what heaven will be like. (Value 15 points)
- It will be a beautiful place.
 - It will have many resting places.
 - It will be a dark place.
 - It will be a place with much music.
 - It will be a very quiet place where nobody talks.
17. According to 1 Peter 1:3 and 1 John 3:2, who goes to heaven upon death? (Open Bible) (Value 6 points)
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18. According to Revelation 21:8 and John 8:24, who does not go to heaven? (Open Bible) (Value 6 points)
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DECISION TIME

Are you sure you are going to heaven? The way to be sure is by accepting Christ as Savior. Confess your sin to Him today and turn away from it and receive Him as your Savior.

You might say something like this:

Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner and will go to ruin. Today I believe that you died on the cross for my sin and that you rose again from the dead. I believe that you are God and therefore I confess the following sins to you _____ and ask you to forgive me. With your help I turn away from my sins and I will no longer do them. I am now committing myself to you and asking you to save me today.

On this _____ day of _____ 20__ I have accepted Christ as my Savior and now I know for sure that I am going to heaven.

Signed _____