

# Heaven: What's Going On Up There? Pt. 2

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## Review

Last week we talked about how people in heaven are alive, active and aware; have heavenly bodies; and how we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.

## Today

We'll answer one of the most commonly asked questions about heaven — will there be sin there?

## Heaven

### Revelation 21:4-5

“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.”

- Old world, former things are gone forever, all things new — never experienced before
- no more death, death is result of what?
  - **Romans 6:23**  
For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Since death is the byproduct of sin... and there will be no more death... we rightly conclude there will be no more sin!

“The freedom of heaven is the freedom from sin; not that the believer just happens to be free from sin, but that he is so constituted or reconstituted that he cannot sin.

He doesn't want to sin, and he doesn't want to want to sin.”<sup>1</sup>

~ Paul Helm

**Question** — *Why would we so eagerly look forward to this eternal freedom from sin?*

**Answer** — Because we see the havoc sin causes in our lives now. It will be done away with, think about it...

- no temptation, no lust of flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life, no sinful thoughts, attitudes or motives, no hatred, rape, war, racism, no guilt or shame for sin committed!
- **Revelation 21:27**  
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.

**Interesting** — *Four times in the last three chapters of the Bible, it is made very clear that sin and sinners have no part in heaven — their portion is the lake of fire, tormented forever.*

**Heaven** — temptation-less, sinless, shameless, guiltless, deathless, FOREVER! That's Heaven!

<sup>1</sup> Stone, Martin. Reason. *Faith and History; Philosophical Essays for Paul Helm* (Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013)

**Opinion** — some think heaven might be boring only because they live a boring spiritual life here.

**God never intended our experience here to be boring —  
it certainly won't be in heaven.**

“...hard to see over the horizon of our own experience... to see as much of heaven as we can while we live on earth, we are going to have to remove the distorted lenses of our current existence.”<sup>2</sup>  
~Randy Alcorn

Heaven — “the *ahh!* of deep satisfaction and the *aha!* of delighted surprise meet,  
and they kiss.”<sup>3</sup>  
~ Pastor/Author Mark Buchanan

**ANYTHING BUT BORING!**

**HERE ARE SEVEN THINGS GOING ON IN HEAVEN!**

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## **1-3 Creativity, Music, Worship**

*...but not quite like we do here...*

### **Revelation 5:9**

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..."

- singing — but it is a new song, new song means creativity
- creativity with sinless resurrected bodies — imagine the music, art, books by Beethoven, Michelangelo, C.S. Lewis etc.

**Application** — *you creative folks haven't even scratched the surface of what you'll be able to produce.*

“I feel within me that future life... for half a century I have been translating my thoughts into prose and verse: history, drama, philosophy, romance, tradition, satire, ode, and song;  
all of these I have tried.

But I feel I haven't given utterance to the thousandth part of what lies within me.”<sup>4</sup>

~ Victor Hugo — 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Poet, Playwright, Novelist, Artist, Statesman...

*Les Miserables, Hunchback of Notre Dame*

“Undistracted and undiminished by sin and the demands of survival,  
mankind will create and innovate at unprecedented levels to the glory of God.”<sup>5</sup>

~ Randy Alcorn

<sup>2</sup> Alcorn, Randy. *Heaven* (Tyndale House, 2011)

<sup>3</sup> Buchanan, Mark. *Things Unseen: Living with Eternity in Your Heart* (Crown Publishing Group, 2012)

<sup>4</sup> Hewett, James S. *Illustrations Unlimited* (Tyndale House Publishers, 1988), 173

<sup>5</sup> Alcorn, Randy. *Heaven* (Tyndale House, 2011)

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## 4 Laughing

### Luke 6:21

Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

- weep now, laugh later, "heaven is compensation for earth's lost privileges"
- "If you're not allowed to laugh in heaven, I don't want to go there." Martin Luther<sup>6</sup>
- "Joy is the serious business of heaven" C.S. Lewis<sup>7</sup>
- **Psalm 16:11**  
You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

**The fullness of joy, laughter, and pleasures forevermore  
await us in the presence of God!**

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## 5 Enjoying God's Animal Kingdom

### Isaiah 11:6-9

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

- Animals there — your personal deceased ones? Evangelist Billy Graham said, "God will prepare everything for our perfect happiness in Heaven, and if it takes my dog being there, I believe he'll be there."<sup>8</sup>
- animals in heaven, all the thrill, none of the danger, they're hanging peacefully together with one another and us... remember we return with Jesus on horses.
- **Revelation 4:7-10**  
The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne...

**Application** — *winged creatures, with eyes all over themselves in heaven speaking, giving glory, honor and thanks... elders respond! The animal kingdom in heaven will be epic!*

<sup>6</sup> Alcorn, Randy. *Heaven* (Tyndale House, 2011)

<sup>7</sup> Root, Jerry. *The Soul of C.S. Lewis* (Tyndale House, 2010), 134

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Nelson. *Ask Billy Graham* (Thomas Nelson, 2010)

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## 6 Serving

### Revelation 7:15

Therefore they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.

### Revelation 22:3

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.

**Application** — *jobs to plan, plans to execute, building, farming, teaching, exploring, creating* — *who knows?*

**Whatever it is, it will only and always be enjoyable,  
no hassles or opposition that comes with serving God on earth —  
huge sense of privilege, fulfillment.**

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## 7 Reigning with Christ

### Revelation 5:10

...And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.

- not just Kings and Priests...
- we shall **reign** with Him
- responsibility, authority given to oversee God's will based on our rewards.

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## Conclusion

I hope you see a little clearer that heaven isn't merely “an eternal church service or sing-a-long”,<sup>9</sup> (John Eldridge), but is in fact our guiltless, shameless, sinless, resurrected bodies filled with creativity, joy, laughter, pleasures forevermore, worshiping God, enjoying the animal kingdom with no threat of harm, serving, ruling and reigning with Christ as kings and priests. The list goes on and on. Let's set our mind on these things, let's understand that our loved ones in heaven now are living, loving, laughing, learning, creating, worshiping, working, reigning etc. And so will we one day!

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## Discussion Questions

1. Why will there be no sin in heaven?
2. Why would we so eagerly look forward to this eternal freedom from sin?
3. With unlimited time and creativity, and your new sanctified imagination, what do you think you might like to create or innovate?
4. Discuss how the animals in heaven live like the ones in the Garden of Eden, before sin entered the world. How will you interact with them?
5. Does the idea of serving, with a sense of privilege and fulfillment, excite you?
6. After these past two Sundays, what do you most look forward to in Heaven?

<sup>9</sup> Eldredge, John. *All Things New* (Thomas Nelson, 2017)

# NOTES