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THE GATHERING CALL

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

What and Where Is Heaven?

In the human soul or mind, there is a
capacity to understand and appreciate
a final reward, which we generally call
heaven. We associate it with the highest
ideals we have, and from time to time
men have given their lives to fulfil the
requirements to enter heaven. Moses
refused the honors of Egypt, choosing
rather the home in heaven, because he
knew he could not have both. Others
refused deliverance from cruel treatment
in order to be entitled to a home beyond.

Most people think too little of this won-
derful end of the true child of God. We
talk too much of this world; we think too
much of it, and too often try to make a
heaven here below, as though this present
state of things were the real goal of a
Christian. The facts are we are now in
a state of probation, that is, we are on
trial, and if we crucify self and hate the
things of this world, we shall be counted
worthy of a home in the next world, which
will be given to us at Jesus' coming.

IT'S A CITY

From the earliest times heaven has
been associated with a great city. Of

John when he says, ". . . . It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3: 2.

The mind of a child of God in the redeemed state will be one of peace and free from the worry and cares of this life. The sins that have made him misery here will not enter there. In this life we often fail to live up to our ideals, but in the next world, clad in immortality made like the Son of God, we shall be able to do even better than our highest ideals of this life.

ARE WE GOING TO THAT COUNTRY?

This question becomes real, when that world itself becomes a reality. Heaven is a place, its center is a city; its king is our Lord of Glory. Its subjects are the people of this world glorified, and made immortal. It will be worth all the sacrifice we are asked to make to hear our names called on that memorable morning when God's people pass in review before His throne. Of this age the poet sang,

"When the trumpet of the Lord shall
 sound,
And time shall be no more,
And the morning breaks eternal, bright
 and fair;
When the saved of earth shall gather

To their home beyond the skies,
When the roll is called up yonder, I'll
be there."

It is the hope of the writer that we may "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world"; that we may prepare for entrance into the kingdom of light and glory. To Sabbath-keepers there is a special promise which others can claim only through ignorance, that is an entrance into the city, because they keep His (God's) commandments. These are the exact words of Jesus:

"Blessed are they that do his (God's) commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22: 14.

C. A. HANSEN.

Abraham we read, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations whose maker and builder is God." Heb. 11:10-16. Abraham did not look in vain, for we read in verse 16, "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God for he hath prepared for them a city."

The sweet singer of Israel could not write his psalms without referring to the city of the great King, and John the beloved, wrapt in holy vision, saw the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. In the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation he gives considerable time to describing the actual structures of the city, and speaks of its size and of the requirements of entering the pearly gates.

Thinking of the final reward Jesus said, "In my father's house are many mansions . . . 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 unto myself that where I am, ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

THIS EARTH OUR FUTURE HOME

Much is said in God's Word about the restoration, and restitution of this world to the Edenic state. This earth was originally man's God-given abode but through sin we have lost our dominion to quite an

extent, and are considered as pilgrims and strangers here below. Heb. 11:13. This condition is not to last forever; there is to be a real reconstruction such as will never come about by this world's cleverest planning, but it will be accomplished when Jesus comes and purifies the earth and plants His redeemed host in it, and destroys the wicked.

I like to study the words of Peter, who associated with the Master, and no doubt heard Him explain how it would come about, or it may have been a direct revelation to Peter, but in any case, he says:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

2 Pet. 3:10.

The atmospheric heavens will be a factor in the final conflagration and would naturally produce a great noise, and the earth and the elements are to melt (not be destroyed), and the works that man has built will be reduced to ashes. Then this planet will be ready for its re-creation which is promised in verse 13 of the same chapter.

"Nevertheless we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The first destruction of the world or age was by the flood, and the second and last one is by fire. There is no reason to doubt that it is literal fire, and that it will thoroughly cleanse this earth from every taint of disease and reminder of sin.

It is in the earth, in its renewed state, that the new Jerusalem will descend from God out of heaven. It is very likely now on some other planet, where God has His throne.

The city is well supplied with water, fruit, and residences, and lighted with God's presence, and will be safe from burglars and disease and will have no cemeteries, prisons or asylums. It will be a nice place to spend the millions of years as they come and go.

THE JOY OF MEETING JESUS

Here is something the heart has seldom contemplated. While on earth his heart was so weighed down with sorrow that he was sad and heartbroken, but when he returns next time, it will be a different story.

Then he came in a manger, and had to flee from his enemies into Egypt, now he will come with clouds, and his enemies will seek refuge. Then he wore a crown of thorns, now he will be crowned with many crowns; then he was surrounded by the jeering mob, now he will gather

about him millions of bright shining angels, and the redeemed for whom he died.

He came as the poorest of men, he will return wrapt in dazzling glory; yet will he love us, and the one desire of his heart will be to make us happy. When he introduces us to the heavenly beings, he will say, "These are my brethren," and before the Father he will say, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am."

Friends, have you ever in your meditation, walked with your Saviour down the avenue paved with 24 karat gold? Have you ever strolled over by the tree of life and partaken of its vitalizing fruit? Have you listened to the sweet murmur of happy voices of the redeemed, as it falls like sweet music on the ear? This and many other happy surprises are awaiting you.

THE PEOPLE

Jesus is a type of what we are to become after our translation or resurrection. He took on our flesh, and passed through death, and took our flesh with Him to Heaven, and will return as He went away. Jesus in His glorified body is a type of what the saints will be. We shall have real bodies, we shall know each other, we shall eat, sing, and praise God, and have a real existence through a long happy eternity. To this agree the words of