

What Is the Reward of the Saved—HEAVEN?

What assurance have we that our departed loved ones have gone to heaven? By WHAT AUTHORITY have we believed that we shall go to heaven, if we're saved?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

THIS MAY be a little shocking—but I want to ask you a candid question: Did you ever look into your Bible to see whether it really does say you will ever go to heaven, if you are saved? Did you ever look into your Bible to see what it reveals about what the saved shall inherit for eternity?

It's going to come as a surprise to most of you to realize that you never did. Of course, you've always *heard* that you'll go to heaven, if you're saved—you've just accepted it, probably—but did you ever stop to *PROVE* it—did you ever try to find it promised in *your Bible*? If you do, you'll probably be even more surprised!

God Makes a Promise

I want you to notice a statement in *your Bible*, as little understood as any passage in this wonderful Book which Bruce Barton said is the Book **NOBODY** understands! It's Galatians 3:16, and 29. This was written primarily for the **GEN-TILE**-born converts in Galatia:

"Now to **ABRAHAM** and his Seed were the **PROMISES** made; . . . and if **YE** be Christ's, then are *ye* Abraham's children, and *heirs* according to the **PROMISE**."

The Christian is not yet a possessor of his reward—he is an heir—and what he shall inherit, if saved, is the **PROMISE** made to Abraham. Whatever shall be the reward of the **SAVED**—wherever we shall spend eternity if **SAVED**—is a definite, specific **PROMISE** of God—and that **PROMISE** was made to Abraham, called, in this same Book of Galatians written for **GEN-TILE** converts, the **FATHER** of the faithful. **IF** one is converted, whether Jew or Gentile—regardless of race or color or sex—**IF** one is **CHRIST'S**, then he becomes one of Abraham's children, and an **HEIR** of the **PROMISE** made to Abraham. What he is to *inherit*, then, is whatever was **PROMISED** to Abraham.

If you'll look into your Bible to find out what God **PROMISED** to Abraham—to find out **WHAT** is the reward to those who are saved—to find out **WHY** we have to be **ABRAHAM'S** children to inherit this promise of salvation—**WHEN** and **HOW** we shall inherit the promise—you're in for a *shocking surprise!*

There is **NO MORE IMPORTANT QUESTION** IN YOUR LIFE—why, *this* matter concerns **YOUR ETERNITY**—and yet you probably never thought to really look into it, for yourself—**IN YOUR OWN BIBLE!** The statement we read from the Book of Galatians actually sums up the **WHOLE** of the Gospel—it is a condensed statement of the very **PURPOSE** and **PLAN** of God for mankind! Your hope of **LIFE ETERNAL**—of salvation—depends altogether on what is stated in that greatly *misunderstood* passage!

Christ Confirmed the PROMISE

In order to **UNDERSTAND** this most important question in the world, notice what is written in Romans 15:8: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to *confirm* the **PROMISES** made unto the fathers."

In bringing a *new message*—the **GOSPEL**—Jesus came to *confirm* the **PROMISES** made to the **FATHERS**. But **WHO** were the **FATHERS**?—and **WHAT** are the **PROMISES** made to them?—heaven—purgatory—? **YOUR SALVATION** depends on the answer! You read in Acts 3:13, in the inspired words of Peter: "The God of **ABRAHAM**, and of **ISAAC**, and of **JACOB**, the God of **OUR FATHERS**, hath glorified His Son, Jesus." The **FATHERS**, then, were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If you are **CHRIST'S**—if you are a **CHRISTIAN**—you are an heir to inherit—**NOT** what **MEN** might devise in their imaginations—you are an heir *according to the promise!* If you're an **HEIR**, you are going to *inherit* something. If you're an heir *according to the promise*—you are going to inherit whatever was **PROMISED**—and not something else.

That **PROMISE** to Abraham is *important!* Whatever it is—that is what **YOU** shall inherit—if you are saved! You find the account of that **PROMISE MADE** TO **ABRAHAM** in the Book of Genesis.

It begins in the 12th chapter of Genesis—verse 1: "Now the Eternal had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a *land* I will show thee."

Abraham Enters the Picture

First, God called Abram—as his name was at first—out of the land of **BABYLON** where he lived—surely symbolic of the spiritual **BABYLON** in which **WE** live, today—just as, today, God calls you and me out of **THIS** world—**THIS** *babylon!* Abraham didn't quibble or argue. The verse says: "So Abram **DEPARTED**." He went to a **CERTAIN LAND**, where God led him—the land we call Palestine today! Abraham **OBEYED** God. "So Abram **DEPARTED!**" it is written! That's why **HE** was made the **FATHER** of the precious **PROMISES** on which **YOUR** eternal salvation rests! He **OBEYED**—immediately he **DEPARTED!** Yes, just as **YOU** must *obey*, if you, *with* Abraham, are to inherit that **PROMISE!**

Men today have **NO CONCEPTION** of what is really **SAVED**. The inheritance that awaits **YOU**—if you surrender to God—if you **OBEY** as Abraham obeyed—if you rely, not on **YOUR** faith, but the very **FAITH OF CHRIST**—if you are really **BORN AGAIN**—I say that inheritance surpasses anything you have ever conceived **SO FAR**, that you haven't the slightest conception of **YOUR TRUE POTENTIAL DESTINY!**

As we read I Corinthians 2:9—"Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God prepared for those that love Him . . ." The inheritance which God has prepared for **YOU** cannot even be **CONCEIVED** by the natural mind of man—but God **DOES** reveal it to us, as you read in the 10th verse of this 2nd chapter of I Cor., "**BY HIS SPIRIT!**"

Now what *did* God promise **ABRAHAM**?

Genesis 12:6-7: "And Abram passed thru the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Eternal appeared unto Abram, and said, *Unto thy seed* will I give **THIS LAND**." So the promise was the inheritance of the **LAND OF PALESTINE**.

The PROMISED Land

Let's continue, Genesis 13:14-15: "And the Eternal said unto Abram, Lift up now

thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for ALL THE LAND WHICH THOU SEEST, to thee will I GIVE IT, and to thy seed F O R E V E R ! " The land where Abram was, is the land of Canaan, called PALESTINE today. That, then, is the PROMISED LAND—that's why it's called the PROMISED LAND!

But for how long?—FOREVER! The inheritance is to be ETERNAL inheritance, which of necessity involves and includes EVERLASTING LIFE!

If one inherits a piece of LAND, the deed must describe the exact BOUNDARIES of the property. Is such a description given, in THIS deed we may hope to inherit?

Genesis 15:18: "In the same day the Eternal made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given THIS LAND, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." From the NILE river in Egypt, to the EU-PHRATES in the Near-East!

We've all seen enough WAR-MAPS to know where that is, and I'm sure we all know it isn't up in heaven somewhere, but RIGHT HERE ON THIS EARTH. If ye be CHRIST'S, then are ye ABRAHAM'S seed and heirs ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE—and the PROMISE—the promise of ETERNAL INHERITANCE—is the land of PALESTINE, from the Nile clear to the Euphrates, HERE ON THIS EARTH! God help us to put our trust in the SURE WORD OF GOD, *not* in the fables of men!

Incidentally, let me add, OTHER Scriptures show that the TERRITORY of Christ's Kingdom is to expand and spread until ultimately it shall include the WHOLE EARTH.

Obedience Before Inheritance

In making this promise to Abram, God conditioned it on OBEDIENCE. Abraham DID obey! First, he left his native land, his friends and relatives, his old ways of life—he forsook ALL, and followed where God led. AGAIN God conditioned the promises on obedience. Abram was commanded to sacrifice his only son Isaac. And again he did not stop to reason it out, or make excuse, or rebel—he OBEYED! God didn't take the son—He merely wanted Abram's WILLINGNESS to obey, in FAITH.

But now notice, AFTER Abraham HAD obeyed—HAD been put to the test and found faithful—were there any further CONDITIONS to the promise?

Let's read Genesis 22:15-18: "And the angel of the Eternal called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for *because* thou HAST DONE this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine ONLY son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I

WILL multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED; *BECAUSE* THOU HAST OBEYED MY VOICE."

Now it was UNCONDITIONAL. Abraham already *had* performed HIS part of this COVENANT—this AGREEMENT. And so today WHOSOEVER WILL from EVERY nation may come and take of the waters of LIFE freely, because God has kept His promise, and the promised Seed, Christ, has come.

Yes, the PROMISE is now ABSOLUTELY SURE. Why? "BECAUSE," as we read further in Genesis 26:5, "Because ABRAHAM OBEYED my voice, and KEPT my charge, MY COMMANDMENTS, MY STATUTES, AND MY LAWS." Again let me say that SIN is the transgression of the LAW, the same fundamental eternal SPIRITUAL law that Adam transgressed when he SINNED, and the same laws and commandments Abraham obeyed and KEPT—long before the sacrifices and rituals of Moses—making possible all the blessings we have today, both material AND spiritual!

Now you remember that Isaac and Jacob also were included in "the FATHERS." We find now that these same PROMISES were made also to them.

Notice Genesis 26:1-3: "And the Eternal appeared unto ISAAC, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in *this* land and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give ALL THESE COUNTRIES, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed *all these countries*; AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED; *because* that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

And again the promise was made to JACOB, recorded in Genesis 35:9-12: "And God appeared unto JACOB . . . and said unto him, Thy name is JACOB: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but ISRAEL shall be thy name . . . I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation (today the United States) and a company of nations (today the British Commonwealth) shall be of thee, and KINGS shall come out of thy loins; and the LAND which I have given to Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

Even the Gentile-born, THRU CHRIST, becomes not only Abraham's seed, but a spiritually adopted ISRAELITE AS WELL.

The PROMISES were made to Abra-

ham, Isaac, and Jacob, and THEIR CHILDREN. Their children are ISRAELITES, not GENTILES. There is a mistaken idea, today, that Christianity is a GENTILE religion. But Jesus said plainly, "Salvation is of the Jews." Or, as the Apostle PAUL wrote: "To the Jew first—and also to the Gentile." The SCEPTRE promise, thru which Christ and salvation were promised, went to the House of Judah, whose people were called JEWS. The BIBLE reveals that the COVENANTS, and the PROMISES pertained only to ISRAEL. So we read in Romans 9:4: "Who were ISRAELITES; *to whom* pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God AND THE PROMISES."

Christians Are Heirs to the Promise

Then how are ALL nations to be blessed thru these promises? To the Gentile-born Galatians Paul said, "If YE be Christ's, then are YE Abraham's children, and heirs according to the promise." Now let me ask you, What HOPE has any GENTILE, without becoming by spiritual adoption thru Christ, an ISRAELITE? Absolutely NONE! To the Gentile-born Ephesians Paul wrote, as recorded in Ephesians 2:11-12:

"Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh,"—now doesn't that plainly say they are no longer considered Gentiles? Paul says "Ye being Gentiles in TIME PAST . . . that at THAT time, ye were WITHOUT Christ, being ALIENS from the Commonwealth of Israel, and STRANGERS from the COVENANTS OF PROMISE."

THIS doesn't sound like Christianity is a GENTILE religion. THIS doesn't sound like the NEW Covenant is a GENTILE covenant! *While* these Ephesians were Gentiles—*before* they became Israelites thru Christ—they were STRANGERS from the COVENANTS OF PROMISE, HAVING NO HOPE, and without GOD in the world!"

But notice: the 13th and 14th verses: "But now, IN CHRIST JESUS ye who sometimes were FAR OFF, are made nigh BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST." And now verse 19: "Now therefore ye are NO MORE strangers and *foreigners*, but FELLOW-CITIZENS with the saints, and of the household of GOD!" Oh, WHAT a glorious MATCHLESS privilege to be taken into the very HOUSEHOLD OF GOD—to be able to call the Eternal Creator our FATHER! For the UNconverted, Adam is the human father, and Satan the spiritual father. But, thru CHRIST, ABRAHAM becomes our fleshly father—and God becomes our spiritual Father.

For we read in Galatians 3:7: "Know ye therefore that they which are of FAITH, the same are the children of Abraham." That's why Abraham is called the "father of the faithful"—whether Jew or Gentile!

Again, in Romans 8:14: "All who are led by the Spirit of God are the SONS OF GOD." Yes, *begotten* sons, now—to become actual BORN sons at the time of the resurrection, when we shall INHERIT the KINGDOM OF GOD! The Kingdom of God is the FAMILY of God—the GOD FAMILY! It's a glorious FAMILY relationship! This glorified inheritance surpasses anything you have ever conceived!

NO Man Has Ascended to Heaven— Except Christ

Jesus Christ did not say WE should go up to heaven, to be with Him *there*. Instead, He said, "No MAN hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down FROM heaven—even the Son of man"—that is, HIMSELF! He went again to heaven, from where He had come. But He said, "Where I go you cannot come!" That's in YOUR BIBLE!

Also He said, "I go" (to heaven) and "I will come again"—yes, come again BACK TO EARTH—and when He comes—when He is again HERE—He will, as He said, "receive you unto myself—that WHERE I AM"—here on earth—"there ye may be also!"

And in Matt. 25, beginning verse 31, we read that WHEN Jesus will have returned to this earth, as KING of kings, RULER of all nations on earth, *then* He will say to the SAVED: "Come, ye blessed, INHERIT THE KINGDOM, prepared for you." The Kingdom of God is the very divine FAMILY of God. It will RULE ALL nations, here on EARTH! To enter into—to INHERIT—the divine Kingdom of God is a destiny of such terrible GLORY that your mind cannot possibly grasp it, now! And our inheritance, as divine members of the very GOD FAMILY, shall be THIS EARTH, for an EVERLASTING possession.

What's wrong with this earth? Absolutely nothing but SIN—rebellion against GOD and God's eternal SPIRITUAL LAWS that govern PEACE, and HAPPINESS, and JOY! Happiness and joy—a GLORIFIED condition such as YOU may inherit—is not a matter of geographical location! It is a SPIRITUAL CONDITION! There will be NO SIN in that happy WORLD TOMORROW! No liars—no murderers—no thieves or robbers. Think of it—there'll be NO SATAN, no locks on doors—no jails, no hospitals—no poor-houses! No strife, no war—no sickness or disease—no poverty, nor hunger, nor want!

When Do We Inherit the Promises?

NOW let me ask, WHEN shall we inherit these promises? HOW shall we inherit them? Has Abraham, himself, already gone to his reward—has Abraham already inherited the promises?

First, notice the inspired words of the first Christian martyr, Stephen, full of

faith and the Holy Spirit—Stephen who *paid with his life* for these inspired words of Scripture. You'll read them in Acts 7:2-5:

"And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into THE LAND which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and . . . removed him into THIS LAND, *wherein ye now dwell* (PALESTINE). And he gave him NONE INHERITANCE in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: . . ."

God gave Abraham *none inheritance* in that land—"yet He promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child."

Abraham NEVER RECEIVED the promised inheritance—the God's promise was made UNCONDITIONAL because Abraham *had obeyed* God! But let's go further. Notice, now, Hebrews 11:8-10, 13:

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should *after* receive for an INHERITANCE, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the LAND OF PROMISE, *as in a strange country*"—notice carefully—Abraham merely *sojourned* in the land—which he was AFTER to receive for an INHERITANCE—"dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is GOD . . . These all DIED in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, but having *seen* them afar off."

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the FATHERS to whom the promises were made, all DIED, in faith, NOT having received the promises! My friends, do you grasp what that inspired Scripture of God SAYS? In plain language it says they DIED, but did NOT receive their REWARD—the very FATHERS to whom the promises were made did *not* "go to their reward at death!" THUS SAITH THE LORD!

Now further the Scriptures tell us that Abraham IS DEAD. When the New Testament was written, many hundreds of years after his death, Abraham was still DEAD, as recorded in John 8:52, 53. There you read plain words: "Abraham IS DEAD." Abraham has not received the promised inheritance, *even to this day!*

All thru the New Testament you read that Christians who become his children thru Christ are not now, in this age, inheritors—they are now HEIRS. An HEIR is one who has not yet come into his INHERITANCE.

Now WHY has Abraham, even to this

day, as yet NOT INHERITED the promise? WHY? Listen! Since "eternal inheritance" of THE EARTH constitutes the BETTER PROMISES of the NEW Testament, and since the MESSAGE which Christ delivered in CONFIRMING these promises was the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, it follows that the LAND of THIS EARTH—the land of the PROMISE Jesus came to CONFIRM—is the TERRITORY occupied and governed by the KINGDOM OF GOD!

We Inherit Kingdom of God

But that Kingdom, Jesus said, is not of this world—THIS AGE! In His great prophecy of WORLD NEWS TODAY—of the world wars, and 20th century world upheaval NOW, Jesus said, Luke 21:31: "When ye see these things come to pass, *know ye* that the Kingdom of God is NIGH AT HAND." The Kingdom of God is to RULE THE WORLD. It is not yet established—but today it is NIGH AT HAND—and it's LATER THAN YOU THINK! In Luke 19 Jesus gave the parable of the "pounds," BECAUSE they thought the Kingdom of God should IMMEDIATELY APPEAR. He represented Himself as the young nobleman going to the far country—heaven—to receive the right to RULE the kingdom, showing it would be set up and take over the RULE over ALL NATIONS, at the second coming of Christ!

But there's still another reason—yes, another reason why WE can be only HEIRS at this present time. I Cor. 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that *flesh and blood* cannot INHERIT the Kingdom of God. No HUMAN can *inherit* the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is NOT A HUMAN KINGDOM—there are NO HUMANS IN IT—it is a DIVINE kingdom—the GOD Kingdom!

Jesus explained it to Nicodemus. John 3:3-8: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be BORN AGAIN, he cannot SEE the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus couldn't understand that. Not many, today, can understand it! Jesus continued that except a man be born of THE SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh," continued Jesus, "is flesh." Yes, WE were all born of the flesh—therefore Jesus said we ARE flesh—yes, flesh and blood—and flesh and blood CANNOT INHERIT—cannot ENTER INTO the Kingdom of God. "That which is born of the Spirit," said Jesus, "is Spirit." WHEN we are born of the SPIRIT, then we shall BE SPIRIT—so said Jesus. Did Jesus know what He was talking about—or do some of us think we know better, today?

Now to Paul's statement again in I Cor. 15:50-53:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh

and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption (flesh is corruptible, subject to aging and decay) inherit incorruption (spirit things and spirit beings are immortal, never changing, never aging, ALWAYS and eternally NEW). Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be *changed*—now notice CAREFULLY: "we shall all be CHANGED." The word CONVERTED means CHANGED—changed from one SUBSTANCE to another—from one COMPOSITION to another.

"In a moment," Paul continues, "in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trump shall SOUND, and the DEAD"—not the LIVING in heaven, but the DEAD—"shall be RAISED"—not COME DOWN from heaven, but "shall be RAISED incorruptible, and WE (the generation then LIVING) shall be CHANGED. For this corruptible must put on INCORRUPTION, and this MORTAL must PUT ON IMMORTALITY!"

Resurrection from the Dead

NOW we begin to see why Abraham, and his children thru Christ, have not, as YET, come into the promised reward!

But to go further. We cannot come into this ETERNAL inheritance until we have come into ETERNAL LIFE. And what is our ONLY HOPE of inheriting eternal life? The *Resurrection!* Perhaps this will prove a surprise. Let me read it to you from inspired Scripture:

I Cor. 15:12-18: "Now if Christ be preached that He ROSE from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and IF Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then (unless there is to be a RESURRECTION from the DEAD) they also which are asleep in Christ are PERISHED!" Strong Scripture, that!

The dead IN CHRIST are PERISHED—not alive enjoying the promised inheritance ALREADY somewhere, but PERISHED—utterly PERISHED—UNLESS there is to be a RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD! How DIFFERENT from the modern fables to which a deceived people has been turned today!

So, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are DEAD. And, unless there is to be a RESURRECTION—a RISING UP from the grave—they are PERISHED. Abraham knew of Christ, and Jesus said Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and Abraham saw it, and was glad. And speaking of Abraham and the resurrection, Jesus said, recorded in Matt. 22:31-32: "But as touching the RESURRECTION" (notice, Jesus is using this illustration to PROVE the RESURRECTION—He is speaking of the RESURRECTION from the DEAD)—"as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abra-

ham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

I've heard this text twisted around and perverted to try to prove that Abraham is not dead, has already gone to and come into his promised reward, and will NEVER be resurrected, just the diametrical OPPOSITE of what Jesus used it to prove. "AS TOUCHING THE RESURRECTION," the resurrection of the DEAD—Jesus said, God is the God of the living. Abraham *died*. But he will live thru a resurrection.

We Receive the Reward When Jesus Returns

WHEN shall Abraham and his children thru Christ come INTO the promised reward? WHEN shall be the Resurrection? For we read in I Cor. 15:50-53 that at that same time the LIVING Christians are to be CHANGED from mortality to IMMORTALITY. And Paul said it would be at THE LAST TRUMP—remember?

All right, let's turn now to I Thes. 4:16-17: "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the TRUMP OF GOD, and the dead IN CHRIST (not out of Christ) shall RISE, first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to MEET the Lord in the air: and so shall we EVER *be with* the Lord." And so the Resurrection shall occur at the SECOND COMING OF CHRIST—when HE COMES AS THE KING OF KINGS and the LORD of lords to REIGN and to RULE all nations of earth for the first time. When He comes to set up His KINGDOM, THEN, Abraham and his children in Christ who have died shall be RESURRECTED to IMMORTALITY, to INHERIT THE KINGDOM, a world-ruling GOVERNMENT headed and ruled by CHRIST, occupying the VERY LAND PROMISED TO ABRAHAM—the LAND OF PALESTINE, from the NILE to the EUPHRATES RIVERS—and THIS KINGDOM composed of IMMORTALS, which flesh and blood cannot enter, shall rule over all the OTHER nations of the earth—the OTHER nations made up of flesh and blood mortals!

Now this text does not say, as so many suppose, that Christ is coming part way from heaven to MEET THE SAINTS as the SAINTS are starting off for HEAVEN. No, Jesus said "If I go, I WILL COME AGAIN." . . . that's in the wonderful 14th chapter of John.

What a glorious PROMISE! Jesus promised He would COME AGAIN to earth. And further, WHEN He has returned to EARTH, that He would, as He said, "receive you unto myself"—why, of course, right here on this earth! The saints, both dead and alive, resurrected and changed to IMMORTALITY, shall rise to MEET HIM, as He is RETURNING TO THIS EARTH. They MEET in the CLOUDS,

and airplanes fly higher than that every day! And, in Zech. 14:4 we read that in THAT SAME DAY Christ's feet shall rest on the MOUNT OF OLIVES, in Palestine, the promised land—and those who MEET Him as He comes shall EVER be WITH HIM, where He is. Yes, that's different from the fables of this day, but that's the PLAIN TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD!

The Reward Is NOT Heaven

And Jesus said: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit THE EARTH." That's part of the Sermon on the Mount—and certainly every Christian must BELIEVE the sermon on the Mount! Then we must BELIEVE, if we are Christians, that what the saved inherit is THE EARTH—and not heaven! Jesus plainly said, "NO man has ascended up to heaven" (John 3:13).

David was a man after God's own heart. DAVID has the promise of being in the Kingdom of God, ruling over ISRAEL under Christ, when Christ shall rule ALL nations. But on that day of Pentecost when the New Testament Church *began*, the inspired PETER said: "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34).

The wisest man who ever lived was inspired to write, as part of the divine WORD OF GOD, "The righteous shall never be removed, but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth" (Prov. 10:30).

I think most of you have read those Scriptures. That's the "THUS SAITH THE LORD" on the question. There is absolutely NO Scripture in all the Holy Bible that promises HEAVEN as the reward the saved shall inherit. And yet, have not most people just sort of blinded their minds to these positive, plain STATEMENTS from God Almighty, and carelessly taken for granted, without question, the idea of going to heaven?

Notice WHEN the Kingdom shall be inherited—WHEN the HEIRS of the promises to Abraham shall come finally into their reward, and receive the actual INHERITANCE. It is recorded in Matthew 25:31-34:

"When the Son of man shall come in His GLORY, and all the holy angels with Him, THEN shall He sit upon the THRONE of His glory: and THEN shall the King say unto them on His right hand, COME, ye blessed of my Father, INHERIT the KINGDOM PREPARED for you from the foundation of the world." Yes, the KINGDOM of God is the PLACE PREPARED. Jesus said He went to PREPARE A PLACE for us. He also said He went to GET FOR HIMSELF A KINGDOM, AND TO RETURN. And WHEN He returns, as KING of kings, and that KINGDOM IS ESTABLISHED, we find it is the PLACE PREPARED, and THEN it is that the joyful call goes out, "COME! ye blessed of my Father, INHERIT the KINGDOM PREPARED for you."