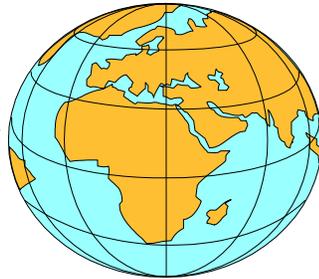


“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5)



The Lord's Prayer

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray he responded with what is now universally known and respected as “The Lord's Prayer.” Most “Christians” know this prayer by heart and have all recited it many times. It is often recited at public functions and the words are inspiring for practically any religious occasion.



When we commit this prayer to memory we run the risk of using it as a prayer without feeling or meaning. We say the words, but we often fail to appreciate exactly what it is we are praying for. We pray, **“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,”** but many still believe that the kingdom will be in heaven. We all pray for God's will to be done on earth, but many go about each day exercising their own will, which too often is in contradiction to the will of God.

Blessed are the Meek

Jesus taught that the meek would be blessed and that they would inherit the earth. Why do we look to the heavens for an inheritance? We teach our children that they need to be strong, (not meek) standing up for their rights, fighting even to death to preserve the honor of their country. We need to learn and practice the meekness that Jesus encouraged, this alone will lead us to the future blessing. We need to return to the instruction of the Bible, using God's Word as our only guide in life, the only definition of what our hope will be. This hope is beautifully expressed by the Psalmist:

“Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: ...Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. **But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.**” (Psa. 37:3-11)

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Things Concerning

The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

Volume 7, No. 4

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“No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man.”

(John 3:13 NIV)

The Hope of the Righteous?

Almost everyone has a hope for a future life. It is extremely common in most religions today to be told that your reward is in heaven and that you will go there after you die. Is this what the Bible actually teaches? The answer is NO. The Apostles and Prophets have always tried to correct the people who were inclined to believe such fables and superstitions instead of Bible Truth.

The Apostle Paul stood on Mars Hill in Athens and proclaimed the truth about the one God to those who ignorantly worshipped an “unknown god.” The doctrine of the trinity is today's equivalent mystery, it denies the one God.

Likewise, Jesus taught the people plainly that **“no one has ever gone into heaven,”** but this is not what is taught today in the churches.



“Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.”

The Bible teaches about a wonderful hope for the future of man. It tells us that when we die we are buried and turn again to the dust. Those who have been baptized into Christ will be resurrected when Jesus returns. If judged worthy through grace, they will live forever in peace and glory in the future Kingdom of God on this earth.

This is the future hope that the Bible promises to the righteous. There has never been any promise for a future life in heaven.

- “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”(Matt. 5:5)
- “The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” (Psalm 115:16)
- “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10)
- “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” (Dan 7:27)

“The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.”

(Psalm 115:16)

He Created it to be Inhabited

When God created the Heavens and the earth, He had a very specific plan and purpose in mind. The Prophet Isaiah was inspired to express this purpose in these words:

“For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.” (Isa. 45:18)

God created the earth to be inhabited (by men and women) and to be filled with His glory, as revealed in Numbers 14:21. *“But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.”*

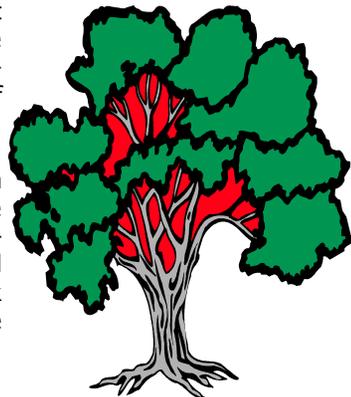
- THE HEAVENS WERE SET APART AS THE THRONE OF GOD. *“The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.” (Psalm 11:4)*
- GOD'S THOUGHTS AND HIS THRONE ARE HIGH ABOVE US AND ARE NOT INTENDED FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING OR DWELLING. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isa. 55:8-9)*
- THE HEAVENS ARE FOR GOD, THE EARTH IS FOR MEN. *“The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” (Psa.115:16)*

When we consider all of the testimonies from the Word of God, why would we ever come to the conclusion that our future home is in heaven? It may be that we look at the earth in its current state of corruption and pollution and we can not imagine it as a suitable place for peace and happiness.

We need to remember that it all started in a beautiful, fruitful garden, where man was blessed to dwell with the angels (Elohim). In the midst of this garden there was a **Tree of Life**, providing the opportunity for man, if obedient, to eat and live forever in this beautiful place on earth.

Sin and disobedience caused man to be cast out of the garden. The entire hope of the Bible message is in providing not only a way of salvation, but also a way of return to the Tree of Life in the garden of the Lord. (See Rev. 2:7)

That garden was on this earth, and when Christ returns, he will gradually restore the blessings of Eden. The entire earth will become an expansion of the Garden of Eden and there will be glory and peace for all who seek for their future reward on the earth, where God has promised it to them.



“For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool.” (Acts 2:34-35)

The Man after God's own Heart

David was not a perfect man, but he was of exceptional character in most of his ways. He is described as a man after God's own heart. (1 Sam. 13:14) David would certainly be worthy of God's grace and would have been in line for a reward when he died. During the days of the Apostle's some of the people, who were confused by false teaching and superstition, thought that David was already in heaven, enjoying his reward.

That this was not a true assumption was made very clear in the teachings of Peter in Acts 2. **“David is not ascended into the heavens”** and he further adds, (in verse 29) *“Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.”*

The Bible teaches us that David died, was buried and has turned again to dust, waiting for the resurrection. Peter quotes the Psalmist, who expresses David's hope.

“For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, (in the grave) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” (Acts 2: 25- 27)

This is a wonderful hope; it is far better than the false hope that we will fly away to heaven when we die. It is a substantial hope, based on true teachings of the Bible about death and the resurrection of the body. It is founded on sure promises that have been made in the Scriptures, promises that we can read about and hope to be a part of, by believing and being baptized into Christ.

Is there life after death? The Bible answer is YES, - but not for all and not right now. If we are in covenant and should die before the return of Christ, we will rest in the dust of the ground, waiting for the day of resurrection and judgment. This is not a difficult process; our sleep of death will seem no more than a second, even if many years pass. The glorious day of redemption will soon come for those who trust in the Bible truth about these life and death principles.

“But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.” (Isa. 26:19)

