

Studies in Christianity Private Worship #11

S#1.

Meditating on Heaven

S#2.

Text : **Rev. 21: 1-22:7**

A. While contemplating our relationship with Jesus, we looked at :

S#3.

1. The importance of meditating on Jesus and on God to build up our faith.
2. We dwelt on the certainty of His return and the mystery of when He will come.
3. We thought about what to do while we await His arrival.

B. This lesson focuses on why we are anxiously awaiting His arrival.

S#4.

1. For the Christian it will be the culmination of a life well spent.
2. That which we have centered our life around will become a reality, **to be with Him.**
3. We will receive what we have long hoped for.

Rom. 8: 23b – ... waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. **24** For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

S#5.

C. All mankind will see Jesus face to face, but only those He chose will welcome Him

1. **John 5: 25** – Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ... **28** Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, **29** and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

S#6.

2. Even those who rejected Jesus and did not know God will bow before Him.

Phil. 2:9 – For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

S#7.

3. Whether we are alive when Jesus comes or are raised on that last day, eventually we will all see Jesus face to face and make a change of dwelling places.
 - a. No matter what our circumstances were on earth, they will change dramatically.
 - b. We will live much longer in eternity than we did on this earth.
 - c. It is logical to spend time preparing for the place we will live the longest.

D. Many have lived here their whole lives so they don't know about preparing.

1. Those who have come here from out of state know how daunting the task.
2. When I was preparing to go to the mission field it took years of preparation.
 - a. We had to make a commitment based upon faith. (*Each item in our life.*)
 - b. All assets had to be liquidated.
 - c. We had to undergo training and also undergo language studies.
3. This is the same commitment Jesus made when He left Heaven.

I. The first consideration is, "Are we committed to going to Heaven?"**S#8.****A. The first thing one must do is to research the place and the requirements.**

1. **1 John 1: 9-10** ... We must acknowledge our sinfulness and need for forgiveness.
2. **Eph 2: 8-10** ... One must develop faith sufficient to trust Jesus to save him from sin.
3. **Mark 16: 16** ... One must then solemnize his commitment by being baptized.

B. One who is baptized must live true to his commitment

1. **Matt. 6: 33** ... The kingdom of God must be the first priority in your life.
2. The Christian must seek to live a righteous life to glorify God.

1 John 2: 28 – Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears,
we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame
 at His coming. **29** If you know that He is righteous, you know that
 everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

S#9.

3. As we prepared for the mission fields all decisions were made through that prism.

II. Where is Heaven ?**S#10.****A. The first trip I made to the Philippines I had to locate it on a map.**

1. I knew it was to the west of the Pacific Ocean.
2. I found it where the South China Sea meets the Philippine Sea.
3. It was a chain of islands that looked like dots in the sea.

B. People try looking for Heaven in the same way, it is up, but where.

1. In the 1800s those who invented the Mormon religion seriously considered this.
 They decided that Heaven is located on a planet which orbits around a star
 not far from ours named Kolob.

The following is from a Q&A page on one of the Mormon websites :

S#11.

Kolob is not of any specific significance within LDS church doctrine. The term Kolob is only briefly mentioned in one chapter in the book of Abraham to teach the hierarchy of celestial bodies (meaning planets) and their relation to one another. Kolob is identified as a star near the throne of God.

The first published reference to Kolob is in the Book of Abraham, first published in 1842 in Times and Seasons and now included within the Pearl of Great Price as part of the canon of Mormonism. The Book of Abraham 1:1–2:18 were dictated in 1835 and the remaining part in 1842

2. There is no information in the bible about the location of Heaven.

C. We know that Heaven is not located on a planet.

S#12.

1. The rotation of a planet brings about periods of darkness.
2. There is no night in Heaven.

Rev. 21: 23 – And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. **25** In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed;

D. We know that Heaven is a real tangible location that occupies space.

S#13.

1. **Acts 1: 9-11** ... Jesus ascended back into Heaven in a tangible body.
2. Our bodies will be changed to be like that of Jesus.
 - a. **I Cor. 15: 50ff** ... Our bodies will be made imperishable in the resurrection.
 - b. **Phil. 3: 20** – For our citizenship is in Heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; **21** who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

III. What will Heaven be like ?

S#14.

A. Heaven will be a glorious place because it is the throne room of the great King.

1. The glory of God in Heaven amazed Stephen when he saw it.
Acts 7:55 – But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into Heaven **S#15.**
 and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;
2. Heaven is a peaceful place without commotion.
Rev 4: 6 – and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, **S#16.**
 like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.
3. There is NO opposition party; all is at peace. (*accept God's reign*)

B. It is rich beyond description.

1. Heaven is described as a city built of Gold and precious stones.

Rev. 21: 18 – The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, **S#17.**
like clear glass. **19** The foundation stones of the city wall were
adorned with every kind of precious stone.

2. Not literally made of gold; abounding in wealth beyond compare.
3. Legend of bringing gold to Heaven ... *Why bring paying material ?*

C. It's a huge place that was built by God

1. **Heb. 11: 10** – fellow heirs of the same promise; **10** for he was looking for **S#18.**
the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

2. The size is very large.

a. **Rev. 21: 16** – The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great **S#19.**
as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen
hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal.

b. A mile = a stadion = 600 ft.

c. $1500 \times 600 = 900,000$ ft.

d. $900,000 / 5,280 \text{ ft.} = 170$ miles

D. It is a pleasant place to live.

1. In the ancient world a water source was one of the most important things.

Rev. 22: 1 – Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as **S#20.**
crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb,
2 in the middle of its street.

2. There will be abundant food all of the time.

Rev. 22: 2 – On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit,
yielding its fruit every month;

3. We will have productive work to accomplish.

Rev. 22: 3 – His bond-servants will serve Him; (cf - **7: 3-4**)

IV. What are the people like in Heaven ?**S#21.****A. Did you ever have a really nasty neighbor ? He won't be there.**

1. Only loving people will be admitted.
2. Everyone there will be related through the blood of Christ, but still get along.

B. There are various classes of people who won't be there.

1. There will be no need for first responders. (Police, firemen, EMTs)

2. There will be no need for doctors, hospitals, undertakers,

Rev. 21: 4 – God Himself will be among them, **4** and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

S#22.

3. There will be no need for lawyers, judges, guards, counselors, etc.

C. There will be NO people of low moral character there.

1. **Rev. 21: 8** – But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

S#23.

2. Only those who have been justified, purified, *redeemed by the blood*.

D. Everyone there will be brothers, sons of the same father.

V. What is the best thing about Heaven ?

S#24.

A. When something is perfect in all its parts, how does one pick the best part?

1. Being with Jesus is the best of Heaven.

John 14: 3 – I go to prepare a place for you. **3** If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

S#25.

2. Seeing God face to face will be the best part.

Rev. 22: 3 – There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; **4** they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

S#26.

B. The best part is that Heaven never ends.

1. We will have a glorified body like our brother, Jesus.

Phil. 3: 20 – For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; **21** who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

S#27.

2. We are going to live forever.

I Cor. 15: 50 – Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **51** Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, **52** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. **53** For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

S#28.

C. You will live on endlessly, forever and ever, where will you be ?

S#29.

Lesson Text :**Revelation 21:1 – 22:7**

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." 6 Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7 " He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8 " But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, " Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. 12 It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he

measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. 18 The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

22: 1 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2 in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4 they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5 And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

6 And he said to me, " These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.