

Hymns: 45 Sweet By and By 3 Amazing Grace (v. 5) Glorify Thy Name
Psalm 148

Today is Mother's Day. This is the first one when my Mom is no longer with us. I'm thankful for God's gift of a mother who prayed for me, **and** taught me to love and honor Him. She was a great blessing to me.

No doubt you too had a godly mother or grandmother. Most of you ladies also had children. They were God's gift to you as **you were and still are** to them. Your children can rejoice for the godly example that you have given them through the years.

The last time we were together I told you we would finish our series of messages on heaven. It's fitting to consider heaven on a day when we honor so many mothers who went before God's throne in prayer for their children. Let's get started.

THURSDAY, MAY 20, 1999, Alan Greenspan testified before the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

saying the following:

*And **gold is always accepted and is the ultimate means of payment** and is perceived to be an element of stability in the currency and **in the ultimate value** of the currency and that historically **has always been** the reason why governments hold gold. (Alan Greenspan, May 20, 1999)*

Gold is precious. In fact, **all of the gold mined in history** could fit into a cube just 68 feet on a side.

Today we're going to venture into heaven and look at a place **with** a street made of gold and much more – a place quite different from **the** world in which we live today.

Review

Let's again recap what we've **learned so far** about heaven. You may recall the word heaven, even in the Bible source languages of Hebrew and Greek, is non-specific and requires us to use the context of the word to determine its meaning.

Where is heaven?

1. Air / Atmosphere (where the birds fly)
2. Outer Space (where the planets and stars are)
3. Abode of God (third heaven)

Now, speaking of the third heaven or the place where God's throne is.

Who is there or will be there ?

- God

- Jesus Christ
- Departed Saints
- Angels
Seraphims
- Four beasts full of eyes with six wings
 1. Lion
 2. Calf
 3. Man
 4. Eagle
- Twenty four elders
- Thousands of ministers
- Millions
- A great multitude of martyrs

What is there?

- God's throne surrounded by a rainbow
- A sea of glass before the throne
- A temple (or palace where God is king)
- A fiery stream (coming out from before God)
- Books
- A door
- Fire
- Thunder and lightning
- White horses
- Armies
- Fine white linen
- Crowns
- Blood

What is not there?

- Hunger
- Thirst
- Sunburn / Heat

What is done there?

- Praising God
 1. Holy, holy, holy
 2. Thou art worthy
 3. Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour and power, unto the Lord our God
 4. Praise our God
 5. Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth
 6. King of Kings and Lord of Lords [sounds like the Hallelujah chorus]

- Ministering to God
- Judgment
- Rewards given

Apostle John's Story

The Apostle John gives us **the most extensive picture** of heaven in the Bible. Today, we want to look at John's eyewitness report of the new heaven, the new earth, and the new Jerusalem recorded in the last two chapters of the book of Revelation.

Revelation 21

*[1] And I saw a **new heaven** and a **new earth**: for the **first heaven** and the **first earth** were **passed away**; and there was **no more sea**.*

Just three words describe a vastly different world. Can you imagine an earth with no more sea? Presently two-thirds of the earth is covered by the sea. You've heard of "climate change." The climate of the new earth will change dramatically.

*[2] And I John saw the **holy city, new Jerusalem**, coming down **from God out of heaven**, prepared as a **bride adorned for her husband**.*

When He was on the earth, Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for us. This is that place.

One of the most beautiful and touching moments we can witness is watching with great anticipation a lovely bride coming down the aisle to meet her beloved husband to be. She has dreamed of this moment for years and prepared for it for months. Her hair, her make-up, her gown, her jewelry, her shoes, everything is perfect. It's no accident that the Bible uses this metaphor to describe the moment when He presents to us our new home of **indescribable beauty**.

*[3] And I heard a great voice out of **heaven** saying, **Behold**, the **tabernacle of God** is with men, and he will dwell with them, and **they shall be his people**, and **God himself shall** be with them, and **be their God**.*

After millennia of waiting, the fellowship that God had established at creation, that was broken at the fall, will be restored forever. God and His creation will live in perfect and blissful harmony.

*[4] And God shall **wipe away all tears** from their eyes; and there shall be **no more death**, neither **sorrow**, nor **crying**, neither shall there be any more **pain**: for the former things are passed away.*

These are some more things that won't be in heaven.

*[5] And **he that sat upon the throne** said, **Behold**, I make **all things new**.*

There's something refreshing and innocent about new things – new-born baby, a new day dawning, spring time, a fresh blanket of snow, and even a new house. God's new world will contain only good and perfect things,

[6] ... I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

[7] He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

We will want for nothing and

will see the Lord in all of His glory.

We will be joint heirs of all things and

be the sons of God. Wow!

*[9] And there came unto me one of the seven angels ... saying, Come hither, I will shew thee **the bride, the Lamb's wife.***

*[10] And he carried me away **in the spirit** to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, **descending out of heaven from God,***

Notice John was in the spirit. It may be that is the only way he could even see this magnificent place. Note we see the New Jerusalem, still descending out of heaven but not landing on earth.

*[11] Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto **a stone most precious**, even like a jasper stone, **clear as crystal;***

The word *jasper* is not a translation but a transliteration. Many believe it to refer to a diamond which is also **most precious** and **clear as crystal**. This city will **beam** with the **unmasked glory** of God. It will shine like a glistening diamond.

*[12] And **had a wall great and high**, and had **twelve gates**, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the **twelve tribes** of the children of Israel:*

*[13] On the **east three gates**; on the **north three gates**; on the **south three gates**; and on the **west three gates.***

Note the symmetry and order that God uses in his design.

*[14] And **the wall of the city had twelve foundations**, and in them the names of the **twelve apostles of the Lamb.***

How fitting to have the twelve apostles, who laid the foundation of the gospel, named in the foundation

of this city.

*[16] And the city lieth **foursquare**, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs*

That's 1500 miles or 70% the size of the moon.

The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

By the way, the Holy of Holies in the Jewish tabernacle was also a cube but much smaller of course -- just fifteen feet on a side.

[17] And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits [216 feet], according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

*[18] And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: **and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.***

Now that we have some dimensions, we next learn about the construction materials of this city. It's wall was diamond and the main structure (not just the street) was pure gold like clear glass. This is a superior type of gold to what we know, or we will view the current gold in a different way.

*[19] And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with **all manner of precious stones.***

Have any of you ever seen a display of jewels at a museum or gallery? In 1977, I traveled to London, England and had just one day to see the sights. I saw the changing of the horses, changing of the guard, Buckingham Palace (from the outside), Saint James Park, and Harrod's department store. I then hooked up with a touring couple and we shared the fee to have a local cab driver whisk us around town to see more sights. We breezed by the Parliament Building, Big Ben, Saint Paul's Cathedral, the Old Curiosity Shop, Trafalgar Square, and Piccadilly Circus.

But the sight I'll never forget was the located beneath the Tower Bridge. I stood in line and was ushered into a vault fitted with guards. The Crown Jewels were encased behind glass. They included crowns adorned with a **dazzling array** of colored cut stones -- sapphires, emeralds, rubies, and of course diamonds. But the most **spectacular sight** that out-shined **all else** was the single huge diamond in the scepter. This **egg-sized marvel exploded** with a **fiery rainbow** of color.

The Crown Jewels give us a **very limited** idea of what the New Jerusalem might look like. Revelation chapter 21 next lists the jewels used to describe the twelve foundations of this fantastic city.

The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

[20] *The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.*

	Name	Description	Likeness	Breastplate
1	Jasper	Clear and sparkling	Diamond	Yes
2	Sapphire	Blue		Yes
3	Chalcedony	Green	Agate	Yes
4	Emerald	Green		Yes
5	Sardonyx	Red		
6	Sardius	Fiery red		Yes
7	Chrysolite	Golden-yellow	Topaz-like	
8	Beryl	Sea green	Emerald-like	Yes
9	Topaz	Greenish-yellow		Yes
10	Chrysoprasus	Golden-green		
11	Jacinth	Violet like a hyacinth		
12	Amethyst	Purple		Yes

[21] *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl:*

We've heard of the pearly gates. Here they are. We normally think of a pearl as the size of a pea. The scale of these is way beyond any pearl found in this current world.

and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

The Bible describes a *single* street. That's an interesting concept to have a city with just one street. Like the rest of the city, the street also was constructed of this pure gold like transparent glass.

[22] *And I saw **no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.***

The temple was the place on earth where the Jews met their God. When Solomon dedicated the earthy temple, he said that God could not be contained there. In the New Jerusalem, there will be no need for a particular place called a temple. The Lord and the Lamb will fill the city and be the temple.

[23] *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the **glory of God** did lighten it, and the **Lamb is the light** thereof.*

The brilliant glory of the Father and Son will bathe the city in perfect light. There's something

wonderful about sun bathing. (And with all of the rain and clouds we've endured these past few weeks, we appreciate it even more.) How much greater will be the experience of basking in the light of the **Son of God** forever – with no risk of sunburn by the way.

[24] And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

The radiant glow from this city will flood the earth with light. Perhaps this is another clue that the New Jerusalem may stay above the earth and provide light to it.

*[25] And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be **no night there**.*

[26] And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

[27] And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

This is a completely safe place. Locks on doors will be a relic of the past as will be thieves in the night. There will be no night.

Revelation 22:1-5

*[1] And he shewed me **a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.***

In John chapter 4 Jesus referred to Himself as “living water.”

*[2] In the midst of the street of it, and **on either side of the river, was there the tree of life,***

We remember this tree from the Garden of Eden.

which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

*[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**:*

[4] And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

*[5] And there shall be **no night there**; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for **the Lord God giveth them light**: and **they shall reign for ever and ever**.*

The Bible does not embellish its descriptions. It presents no fanciful images. Instead, it leaves much unsaid about heaven. God gives us only fleeting glimpses. In many ways, heaven remains a mystery.

You may recall the commercial for the Mounds candy bar that claims it to be “indescribably delicious.” Perhaps that's part of the issue with heaven. Heaven is likely too good for words. The psalmist says:

*[11] ...in thy presence is **fulness of joy**; at thy right hand there are **pleasures for evermore**.*

(Psalm 16:11b)

That sounds pretty good to me, but could it be that heaven involves another dimension entirely? Given that it's made for spirit beings, that could very well be the case. That would certainly explain why it's so difficult to wrap our minds around this subject.

While a 68-foot cube of gold is a bit difficult to imagine, a 1500-mile cube constructed of transparent gold and massive jewels that's illuminated by the glory of God is **far beyond** our what we can imagine.

The Bible says that our God:

Ephesians 3

[20] ...is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, ...

We have a great God and a glorious destiny in eternity. We can look forward to seeing all of our loved ones there who knew the Lord including every godly mother whom we honor and remember today.

In Ephesians 4:1 the Bible exhorts us to walk in a manner worthy of this high calling to which we are called. As we consider our eternal destiny, we're motivated to do just that.

Benediction

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.