

10

Seven Wonders of Heaven

I. C. Mathis

BT
846
.M3

BT
846
.M3

Seven Wonders of Heaven

John E. Riley Library
Northwest Nazarene University
Nampa, Idaho

By
I. C. Mathis



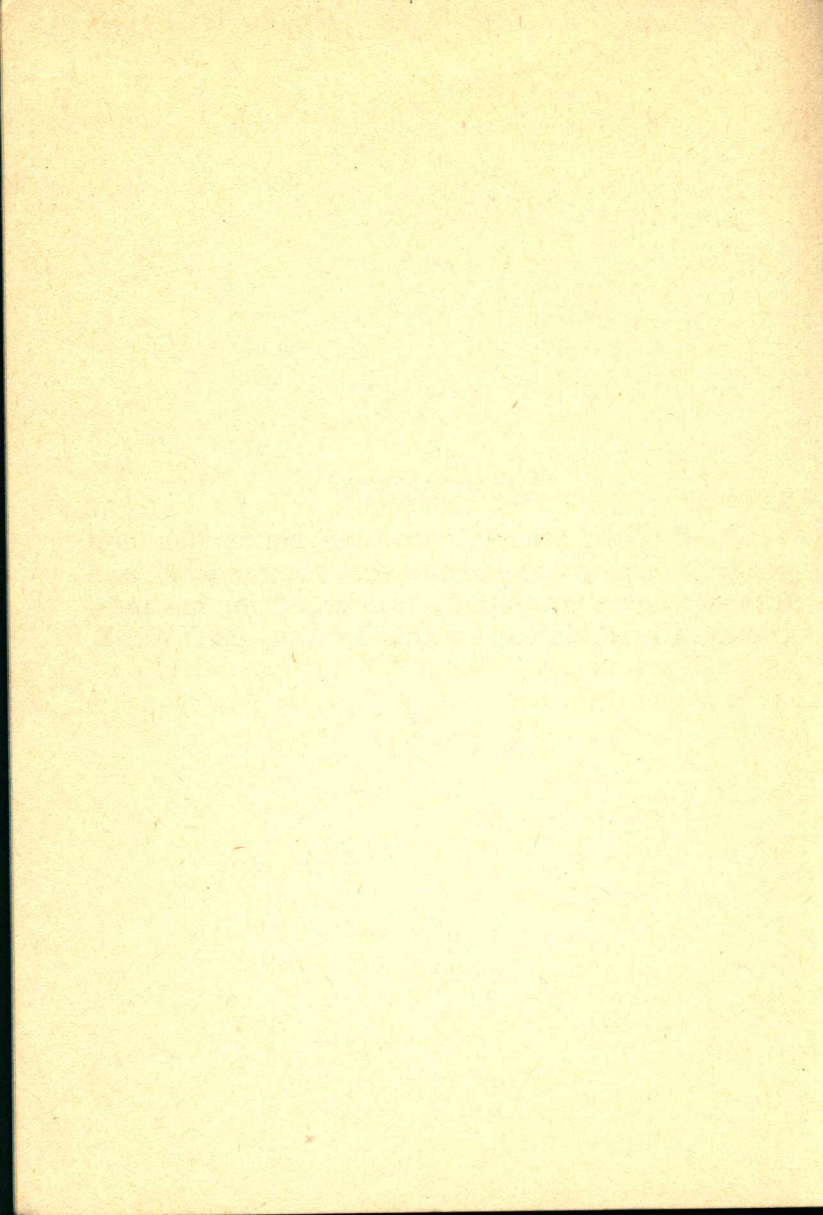
Fourth Edition, Eleventh Thousand

Printed in U.S.A.

BEACON HILL PRESS
2923 Troost Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

West Coast Church Supply

732 E. MAIN STREET
STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA



AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

The thoughts presented in this sermon, SEVEN WONDERS OF HEAVEN, have been gathered from many sources during my pastoral and evangelistic work. It is not with the thought of originality but with the desire to do good that they are presented in this little volume. God has seen fit to bless this message as I have given it on different occasions and my prayer is that in this form it shall bless and encourage many to seek that better country.

SCRIPTURE READING

“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. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 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. 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.” Rev. 21: 1-4.

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, 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. 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: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 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." Rev. 22:1-5.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. 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, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

Seven Wonders of Heaven

In the days of Alexander the Great, the Greeks originated the first group of Seven Wonders of the World. This group was composed of the following monuments remarkable for their splendor or magnitude: the Pyramids of Egypt, the Walls and Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, the Statue of Jupiter by Phidias, the Mausoleum of Artemisia at Helicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes and the Pharos of Alexandria. The Seven Wonders of the middle ages were: Coliseum of Rome, Catacombs of Alexandria, Great Wall of China, Stonehenge, Leaning Tower of Pisa, Porcelain Tower of Nankin and the Mosque of St. Sophia in Constantinople. The Seven Wonders of the modern world have been designated as: Wireless, Telephone, Aeroplane, Radio and Radium, Antiseptics and Antitoxins, Spectrum Analysis and X-rays. But now I want to direct your attention to the Seven Wonders of the Heavenly World.

As we turn to the Book of God and read the descriptive passages concerning heaven we are made to stand in wonder and amazement! Our prayer is that the Spirit of God will enlighten our eyes and enable us to behold, at least in part, some of the wonders of this heavenly world.

I. THE WONDER OF EXISTENCE

Never was there a description that approached in grandeur the words from the inspired pen of the Apostle John. "A city not made with hands nor hoary with the years of time. A city whose resources have never been appraised and whose inhabitants have never been numbered. A city that has love for its law, perfection for its standard and Jehovah for its God. A city that has gold for its streets, jasper for its walls and amethyst for its ceiling. A city that has Jesus for its King, angels for its guards and saints for its citizens. A city without griefs and graves, without sins and sorrows. A city with ever open gates and one eternal day." O wonderful, wonderful City of God!

The idea of heaven is universal with the race. There are no people however wild or savage, but who have looked forward to a life after death. The Indian has his happy hunting ground and other heathen have similar hopes in their creeds. If it is a mistaken tenet, then the entire race has been swept by a delusion and human instinct has failed us. Do you believe that human instinct has played us false? No! Every God-implanted instinct can be trusted. There is in every animal an instinct for a certain kind of food which springs from neither reason nor education but is God-implanted. Everything is provided and adapted to this instinct.

The wild geese journey northward in the springtime. In the northland they make their nests on the

margin of the lakes and rivers, lay their eggs, raise their young, who will sport on the sunlit waters in perfect contentment during the summer days. But as the autumn approaches, ere the trees put on their golden robes of imperial beauty and the grasses die in the fields or the chilly winds of winter blow, these geese that were raised in the north and never knew another home feel a strange desire, an instinctive longing to be away toward the southland. Obedient to that instinctive longing they spread their broad wings and soar away, high above fields their eyes have never seen, across lakes on whose waters they have never floated, and hundreds of miles away from the deserted nest in the north is the southland to answer to that instinct that urged them to make the flight. Can we believe that God will honor the instinct He has placed in the breast of the wild goose and not honor that which He has placed in man? That is unthinkable! He would not do it. He has not done it! That instinctive longing in the heart of humanity for a home in the sky will be met if we are true to Jesus Christ. Heaven is God's answer to the longing cry of the race.

Heaven is a real place. There are some who would tell us that heaven is only a state or a condition. While we admit that we can be in a state that is akin to heaven, yet we also know that it is the teaching of the Book of God that there is a city beyond the tomb "where saints immortal dwell." I am personally glad that one night thirteen years ago

at an altar of prayer I met Jesus Christ and He saved me from my sins and adopted me into the family of God. Now I can sing:

“Once heaven seemed a far off place,
Till Jesus showed His smiling face,
Now it’s begun within my soul,
’Twill last while endless ages roll.

“O hallelujah, yes ’tis heaven,
’Tis heaven to know my sins forgiven;
On land or sea, what matters where,
Where Jesus is, ’tis heaven there.”

But while we can be in a heavenly state in Christ Jesus here in this world, we also know that if language means anything at all, heaven is a real place. The Bible speaks of heaven as a city, a city of God, a dwelling place and the house of many mansions. God is a person and heaven is His dwelling place. The Bible speaks of His looking down from His habitation in heaven. Jesus told His sorrowing disciples, “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, there ye may be also.” Yes, thank God, heaven is a place! With the poet we can sing:

“O holy dwelling place of God!
O glorious city all divine!
Thy streets, by feet of seraphs trod,
Shall one glad day be trod by mine.”

II. THE WONDER OF ITS CHARACTER

Heaven has certain characteristics which place it in a class by itself.

1. Heaven is a place of incomparable beauty. I have driven down Orange Grove Avenue in Pasadena, California, and looked with wonder and admiration on the homes of the millionaires, their spacious grounds, sunken gardens, and wonderful mansions; but Pasadena has certain sections that are not so beautiful. Yet if the entire city were like Orange Grove Avenue it would not suffer comparison with the beautiful city of heaven.

I have seen beautiful scenes in nature for it was an æsthetic hand that fashioned this planet on which we live. I have seen the mountains rearing their snow-crowned heads through the clouds and smitten with the morning sun until they shone like burnished gold. I have seen vistas of rolling hills and verdant valleys, winding rivers and golden forests. I have seen the lake and ocean dancing and tossing and rolling in the pale yellow light of a midnight moon. I have seen the heavens on a clear winter night bejeweled with countless millions of stars. I have seen rugged mountain ranges, sweeping plains, babbling brooks and whispering waterfalls. But all the beauties of nature will not suffer comparison with the beauty of heaven as revealed in the Word of God.

I have read the story of how a distinguished artist was found in his studio with an open Bible before him, engaged in arranging squares of colored glass. "Look here," said he to a friend who entered, "I have made a singular discovery; these are the precious stones in the foundation of the New Jerusalem, and when placed in the order given in the Bible they form a perfect harmony of color. Were a convention of artists called to produce a perfect color-scheme, they could not improve upon this." Yes, heaven is a place of indescribable beauty.

God has not told us of the full beauty of heaven, because, doubtless, He knew that would not be best for us since we have to linger for a while in the flesh amid the scenes of earth. Perhaps if we could see all the beauty and glory of our heavenly home it would spoil us for the tasks of earth. Yet, in His mercy and love He gives us glimpses that feed our faith, inspire our hopes and fix our hearts on heavenly things.

2. Heaven is a place of purity and holiness. The Word says, "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." It is a city without sin, where purity and holiness reign supreme.

From the moment we open our eyes to the light until we close them in death, we are in the midst of sin; its dire consequences are all around us. Everything we see or touch is tainted with sin. Wars and commotions, earthquakes and famines, with all the

physical, mental, and moral distresses seen, heard and experienced on earth, are the fruits of sin.

Sin is at the bottom of all heartaches, troubles and sorrows. Nothing has ever ploughed such furrows, or cut such swaths or wrought such havoc as sin. It has left its slimy trail across the years. It is the sorrow of heaven, the ruination of earth and the horror of hell. It has wrecked every home that has ever been wrecked. It has built every jail, work-house and reformatory in the world. Every bitter tear, sigh and groan has been caused by its ravage and ruin. It has blasted the world's hopes, degraded its desires, fired its passions, polluted its influence, stained its character, shattered its intellect, outraged its morality, seared its conscience and seeks to damn eternally every soul of Adam's race.

But the blessed Book of God points the way to a land where sin will never dwell. Glory be to our God! Once we pass through the pearly portals of heaven we shall have done with the effects and environment of sin.

The apostle John in the apocalyptic vision saw the great throngs marching by the refulgent throne of God. They had come from all nations, kindred, peoples and tongues; they were clothed with the snow-white robes of spotless purity. Heaven is a home of purity and holiness. O sinless clime, O blessed summerland; how delightfully different from earth! Who can describe what it will mean to live eternally in such a realm? Nothing out of harmony

with holiness. Every inhabitant pure, every word, thought and act pure. Such mottoes as "Holiness unto the Lord" are often ridiculed in this country, but in heaven it will be as natural as the evening zephyrs in the springtime.

3. No night in heaven. "There shall be no night there." Night is the emblem of dread, ignorance, sadness and sorrow. It is the time when beasts of prey stalk forth, and sinful creatures come from their hiding places and go forth on missions of vice and wrong. O those gloomy, dismal, fearful nights! Nights when the storm king is raging, lightnings flashing, thunders rolling, and the darkness is impenetrable. Nights of mental sorrow and physical suffering. Nights of loneliness, fear and dread. But thank the Lord,

"No night shall be in heaven, but endless noon;
No fast declining sun, no waning moon;
But there the Lamb shall yield perpetual light
'Mid pastures green and waters ever bright."

See that ship in mid-ocean with the night as dark as darkness itself. The storm is raging; the vessel is wrecked and drifting. Hundreds of men, women and children are clinging to each other, with nothing before them but a grave in the angry sea. See that mother at the midnight hour bending over the cradle, watching the last moments of her dying babe. Such night scenes upon earth are continually repeating themselves, and will continue until the consummation of all earthly things. Think of the

possibility, yea, the hope of living in a land where there is no night.

“There is no night in heaven, no night there,
Of weary hours, of ceaseless, brooding care;
No fearful waste, no ashes of despair,
No night there.”

4. No sorrow. The world is filled with sighs, groans and heartaches. But there is one place where sorrow will never cast its shadow. Heaven is a place entirely free from sorrow. In this world “man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” Even Jesus while upon earth was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” But in heaven “there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, for the former things are passed away.” Sorrow is written in almost every life. We should be kind and patient with people in this world. How careful we should be of our criticisms of those about us, for we may know but little of the storms of sorrow that sweep the coast of their souls. Thank God, in heaven sorrow will be passed forever. The Christian can sing with perfect faith and confidence:

“In heaven above where all is love,
There’ll be no sorrow there.”

5. No death in heaven. This world is the subdued and vested domain of death. The history of the past is largely a record of the triumph of this king of terrors. In all lands and generations the departed

outnumber the living, and all who now live will soon go to increase the already countless population of the tomb. There is no pathway of life where the destroyer may not be met at any moment. There is no home from which the grim shadow of death is shut out. "In the midst of life we are in death." Life is a "vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." None can escape the cruel monster death. The bloom of youth, the strength of manhood, the glory of age are withered in his icy breath as the late flowers wither in the frosts of autumn. All this awful history of the ravages of death helps us to appreciate the glorious promise divine, that in heaven there shall be no more death.

"No graves on the hillsides of glory;
Up there we shall never more die."

6. Heaven is eternal in its duration. Heaven with all of its beauty and splendor, its character and grandeur, is to remain forever unchanged. How this cheers our hearts and encourages us to press on in the battle against sin! There is a realm unspoiled by the devil. He has attacked all good and holy things. He transformed the blossoming Eden into a noxious wilderness. He robbed man of his Edenic innocence and put enmity between him and his God. With this victory to encourage him he has wrought havoc for these centuries. He even had the daring and audacity to engage the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" in battle, but here he met his Waterloo

and suffered ignominious defeat. The devil will never get inside the glorious city of God; he was cast out once and he will never get back.

The great cities of the earth do not abide. The so-called "eternal city" of the past is now trodden beneath the feet of the beggars of modern Rome. Heaven is the only continuing, unchanging, eternal city.

A few years ago I went back to the hills of southern Missouri, the land of my birth. With my wife I drove to the old home. What devastation Father Time had wrought! The old well had caved in, the old barn was without a roof, the log house that was the first home of my parents and the place of my birth was tumbled down. My Father's house of this world was in ruins beyond repair; the house in heaven will abide forever. Heaven is beyond the corroding influence of time and above the reach of the devil's destructive hand.

III. HEAVEN IS WONDERFUL IN ITS INHABITANTS

With wonder and amazement we contemplate the inhabitants of heaven. First, think of the angelic throngs, those holy, shining, servants of God. Their countenances are radiant with celestial glory. They rejoiced before the morning stars sang together, and worshiped God before the countless constellations were reared in space. They are familiar with

many things in which we are greatly interested. We shall make their acquaintances.

We shall visit with the angel who stood in Abraham's tent. Then we shall look upon the face of one who was a mighty warrior and slew one hundred and eighty thousand Assyrians in one night. We shall hear music from the lips of those who made the hills and plains reverberate with their glad hallelujahs as they sang the redemption song to that group of trembling shepherds on the Judean hills. Heaven is the dwelling place of countless numbers of these shining ones.

They are not the only inhabitants of heaven. There are saints and prophets, patriarchs and apostles who have heralded the burning messages of God. There is Moses who led the hosts of Israel from Egypt and across the Red Sea toward a land to which God had called them. There is one by the name of Enoch, who walked with God without a break for three hundred years. Then there is Elijah, that shaggy son of the hills who held the reins of the storm, and wore the keys of the clouds at his girdle. There is Daniel who laughed at roaring lions and went true to his God. There are the three Hebrew children who defied the fiery furnace, and kept a perpendicular character. There is Job who steadfastly pushed his way through sorrows, afflictions and sufferings, and thus became a world example of the sustaining grace of God. There is Isaiah the fiery prophet who was sawn asunder. There is John

the Baptist, the leather-girdled, bronze-browed, swift-footed forerunner of Jesus Christ, whose head was fed to the hungry dogs because he was true to God and to truth. There are the glorious apostles of our Lord Jesus.

Then there is another crowd which inhabits the realms of celestial bliss that will make heaven attractive for each one of us. We refer to that great host of martyrs. They have defied fire and blood, wicked men and malignant devils. They have heard the snarl and growl of the wild beast, and have prayed and rejoiced as the burned flesh was falling from their bones. Someone has estimated that there have been more than seventy-five million people put to death for Jesus' sake.

They were burned, starved, buried alive, smothered, drowned, rent limb from limb by instruments of cruelty, torn into shreds by wild beasts, and thrown into dungeons with hissing, poisonous serpents; but now they are basking in the sunlight of His presence, crowned with eternal life and immortal glory. I want to see them and by the grace of God I expect to do so! Amen.

Great as heaven will be itself, with its jeweled walls, its streets of gold, its eternal sun-kissed hills, its deathless atmosphere and the ravishing song of angels, this will not compare with the joy of catching one glimpse of Jesus. The Christ who met my heart thirteen years ago and saved me from my sins and washed me in His own precious blood is the one in-

habitant of heaven who draws my heart like the mighty magnet draws the steel. And our heart warms and pulsates with praise as we join the poet and sing:

“Face to face shall I behold Him,
Far beyond the starry sky,
Face to face in all His glory,
I shall see Him by and by.

“Only faintly now I see Him
With a darkening veil between,
But a blessed day is coming
When His glory shall be seen.

“What rejoicing in His presence
When are banished grief and pain,
And the crooked ways are straightened
And the dark things are made plain.”

IV. THE FOURTH WONDER OF HEAVEN IS THAT IT IS INTERESTED IN A SIN-CURSED WORLD

With Job we ask, “Lord, what is man that thou shouldest magnify him? And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?” How came we to learn of heaven? It is but a few centuries ago that man ever dreamed of a western hemisphere, and at this time there are exploring parties penetrating the farthestmost and hitherto undiscovered lands and resources of the earth. If man has been six thou-

sand years in becoming acquainted with the little planet over which he was given mastery, does it not seem strange that so long ago he learned about heaven? A Columbus may brave an unknown sea and find America, but who among the sons of men could have risen to the spirit world and found heaven?

Our knowledge of heaven came not from man's discovery but from God's revelation. We were in darkness of sin, but heaven's searchlight found us. God pinned back the curtains nineteen centuries ago, and the star of Bethlehem sent forth a flood of light like sunbeams through rifted clouds, and now we can sing with assurance, "The way of the cross leads home." We read that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." O how marvelous is the love of God! If you could extinguish the love of God tonight the vultures of despair would build their nests in the precincts of every home. The star of Bethlehem would be eclipsed by a cloud of sorrow and this world would pass into impenetrable gloom. But His love can never be extinguished and will never die. When the sun has burned itself into a cinder and wanders off through limitless space, lost to our world, God's love will still be as real and wonderful and undying as it is today. When the stars have slipped from their silvery sockets and twinkle no more for the admiring traveler in the darkness, His

love will still be beautiful in its permanency. When time is dead and smoldering in its grave, when the rocks have turned gray with old age, the love of God will still know no end.

Not only did a loving God reveal heaven to us, and did Jesus show His love by His willingness to come and die for us, but even the great angelic host is interested in this sin-cursed world. The record is that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

My friend, however discouraged you may be this evening, do not let the devil make you believe that there is no one who is interested in you. All heaven is interested in you. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, right now are solicitous about your welfare. Yes, the fourth great wonder of heaven is that it is interested in a sin-cursed world. My prayer is that many will start the joy-bells of heaven ringing by starting home tonight.

V. THE FIFTH WONDER OF HEAVEN IS THAT IT IS OPEN TO FOREIGN IMMIGRATION

It would be of little interest to hear of heaven with its golden streets, its deathless atmosphere, its glad reunions and eternal duration, if it were not possible to gain admission there. I am glad that the great heart of God is not only concerned in informing us of heaven, but also promises us that we can become citizens of that celestial clime. Jesus came

from heaven to this sin-cursed world as a foreign immigrant, or if that seems too secular I will say He came as a foreign missionary. He came not only to tell us of heaven, but also to invite us to become citizens of that better country. The Bible is His Inspired Circular. It is printed in every language among men. It tells us how to become citizens of this wonderful land.

Yes, the gates of heaven stand ajar that whosoever will may enter and become citizens of this celestial land. I have heard people tell of making a run and staking out a claim when the "Strip" was opened up in Oklahoma years ago. They raced with all their might to get ahead of someone else that they might stake out a home for themselves. There was not enough to supply everyone and some were disappointed. I am so glad that in this better country there is room for all and every one of you can go to that heavenly clime. Paul said, "Our citizenship is in heaven."

O how my heart burns with gladness and pulsates with joy at the anticipation of making heaven my home. I am glad it is open to foreign immigration. Job upon one occasion voiced his desire for this better country by crying out "Where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest." Job was standing where thousands have since stood, and there broke from his lips this cry which has voiced the hopes and longings of the human heart from that dim hour down until the present time. This

longing has sung and sobbed and moaned and cried and sighed itself down the centuries. It has broken from the lips of toilers whose task was too hard for them. It has uttered itself in tears of sorrow and in sobs of anguish and despair. It has looked up from the faded face of age and sometimes it has written itself across the ruddy countenance of youth. This is the age-long, race-wide cry of humanity. It is not a cry that weary lips and anguished hearts need utter in vain; thank God for the assurance that we all may become citizens of that fair land. I am glad that this glorious hope is mine. My heart is thrilled with rapture as I read the descriptions of that heavenly country and catch glimpses by faith of the land of my nativity. No brush can paint the picture of this fair land. No tongue can tell its story. No voice can sing its glory. But out there it is; I can see it by faith. It is there shining and shimmering in the golden light of God's presence.

VI. THE SIXTH WONDER OF HEAVEN IS THAT THE CONDITIONS OF CITIZENSHIP ARE SUCH AS THEY ARE

If we were to reckon after the order of this world, we would think that a heaven such as the Bible describes would be only for aristocrats and those of royal birth, but the proclamation from heaven is "Whosoever will may come." We stand in wonder at the teaching of Jesus when He com-

manded in the parable, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both good and bad; and the wedding was furnished with guests."

Thank God there is no restriction on any race or nationality of people to keep them out of heaven if they will accept the plan of God. Heaven is open for the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the intelligent and the ignorant. I am glad that the doors of heaven swing open for the railway magnate who rides in his palace car, and for the hobo that rides the rods. The message has gone out and the people from every clime and nation under the shining sun can go to heaven.

But let us not think there are no conditions to be complied with before we may become citizens of heaven. The United States has appeared as a garden of herbs to the land-hungry peoples of the Orient. They have come to us as doves flocking to their windows. Some we have rejected, others we have reluctantly permitted to exist among us. At best they come as strangers embarrassed by our language and perplexed by our laws, and suffer the tedious years of naturalization before becoming citizens. What are the conditions of citizenship in heaven? There are two conditions to be met. First, according to the Book of God, we must be born again. We must be born into the family of God. We

will not enter heaven as naturalized foreigners but as home-born citizens. Then we must have as a fitness for heaven a holy heart. These are the conditions to be met in order for one to become a citizen of heaven.

We have a holy Bible, written by holy men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and it points out a holy way to a holy heaven, where we are to meet a holy God and dwell in His presence forevermore. Hence we see the importance of the scripture "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Holiness is the theme of the Book of God. Someone has said relative to the Bible teaching holiness, "It breathes in the prophecy, thunders in the law, murmurs in the narrative, whispers in the promises, supplicates in the prayers, resounds in the songs, sparkles in the poetry, shines in the types, glows in the imagery and burns in the spirit of the whole scheme, from its alpha to its omega—its beginning to its end."

"We must be holy in thought, holy in word, holy in act, holy in public life, holy in private life, holy in secret life, holy from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, and to the tips of our middle fingers! Without it God says that no man, high or low, rich or poor, educated or illiterate, shall enter heaven. Renown, beauty, comeliness, learning, eminence, finery and glitter have great value on earth, but will not help one through heaven's pearly portals. The distinguishing mark, the only thing that

will give a passport through is 'HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD.'

"If we would see the angels, we must be holy! If we would see the old patriarchs and prophets, we must be holy! If we would see the New Testament warriors, we must be holy! If we would be happily and forever united with our departed loved ones, we must be holy! If we would see the King in all His marvelous, matchless beauty, we must be holy! Yea, verily, across heaven's gleaming, glittering portals stretches the legend, WITHOUT HOLINESS NO MAN CAN ENTER HERE!"

VII. THE SEVENTH WONDER OF HEAVEN IS THAT MORE DO NOT PREPARE TO BECOME CITIZENS OF THIS ABIDING HOME

When we think of the eternal endurance, the supernal beauties of heaven, the quality and happiness of its inhabitants, the solicitude which is exercised to interest us in it, and the gracious terms upon which we may become its citizens, though the gate be strait and the way narrow which leads there-to, it seems a wonder that "few there be that find it."

God is ever providing the best for humanity. When we turn our vision back to Eden we see the wonderful provision of God for His people. There was nothing harmful in Eden, or on the earth as God created it. Everything He created He pronounced "very good." In Eden the first lovers of all time

wandered with linked hands by purling, pellucid streams, plucking thornless roses, breathing the aroma of unfading flowers, dreaming day dreams beneath unclouded skies, sleeping beneath the shimmering stars, guarded by lions and leopards without passions and tigers without fury—wooing each other 'neath o'erarching bowers of eternal green, while bird and beast, bending bough and breathing wind waited to hear the first music of human speech, thrilling with the new story of human love. Man's sin changed all this and man ever since has been a wanderer. Abraham confessed in his far-off day that he was a "stranger and a pilgrim" and that he was looking "for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God."

I do not own a home, but there are times when I feel deeply the longing for my own home. How often have I looked over plans or taken pencil and paper and made a sketch of the home I would like to have. But I shall be homeless here, for my calling and my poverty have put the veto on my pictured hopes. Yet as I travel this nation telling the multitudes about a Christ who came to redeem them I am blessed and encouraged by the fact that I have a home on the evergreen shores of eternal bliss.

O homeless wanderer of the world, seeking peace and joy and habitation here, there is no abiding home but in God's house. Jesus Christ has gone to prepare a place for you. Will you not come and ac-

cept your inheritance through the shed blood of Jesus Christ?

At Tunbridge, England, there stands a monument erected to the memory of some gypsies who lost their lives in a disastrous accident. They were picking hops in a field on the banks of the Medway, and after finishing their work were being conveyed across the river to a field on the opposite shore. The water was in flood and was flowing across the bridge. As they were passing through the water someone cried out, frightening the horses which became unmanageable and plunged into the side of the decaying bridge, throwing all into the stream. A young man had seized one of the horses and was drifting downstream, when his eye caught the struggling form of the dearest one in all the world to him—his mother. He made for her, determined if possible to bring her to shore in safety, but she seized upon him in such a way as to make it impossible for him to save her. He all but gave his life in his determined effort to rescue her, but at last she went down to rise no more. Thirty-nine bodies were taken from the river bed and from among the crowd that gathered at the funeral came this young man, kneeling in grief at his mother's side, crying, "O Mother, Mother, I tried to save you; I did all a son could do to save his mother, but you would not let me."

Friends, if you will not be reconciled to God and seek to gain heaven, you will hear Jesus say at the

last day, "I died on the cross to save you, I did all that I as God could do to save you, but you would not let me, and now you are hopelessly and forever lost." Do not let God hang a "For rent" sign in the window of the mansion He has prepared for you, but accept His salvation and be saved just now.