



HEAVEN VERSUS PARADISE

There is much confusion concerning the abode of those that have passed from this realm in death. Some say they are in heaven, others insist they are in paradise. Which is truth? Is Paradise and Heaven the same place? Some even say Paradise is somewhere in between! As always, let us search the scriptures for a better understanding. To begin with, where did God create man to live according to scripture?

Genesis 2:15 tells us:

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

So God put Adam, this man He created immortal, in the garden. Even though he was created an eternal being, do we see anywhere that God gave Adam any promise or hope of living in heaven? In fact, even after Adam and Eve fell and were no longer immortal, destined to die, no promises of heaven were made. David evidently perfectly understood the destiny of man as he sang Psalm 115:16.

Psalm 115:16

16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's; but the earth He has **given to the children of men.**

Angels on the other hand are completely different creatures. They were created as heavenly beings and heaven is their home. In fact, when they left their domain or home in heaven to take the daughters of man as wives, according to Genesis 6:4, God was very angry with them for coming here to dwell, and with man as well for submitting to them as we see in Genesis 6:7.

First let us examine **Genesis 6:4**

4 There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the **sons of God** (angels) came in to **the daughters of men** and **they bore children to them.** Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

The cross between angels and man produced beings that were not of the original creation and certainly not of God!

Genesis 6:7

7 So the LORD said, “**I will destroy man** whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for **I am sorry that I have made them.**”

And God did just that through the flood. Only Noah, his family, and a remnant of the animal kingdom were spared. As for the participating angels, Jude explains they are held in chains awaiting judgment day.

Jude 1:6

6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

So the scriptures show us, angels are heavenly beings, while man is a part of the earthly creation. So, ask yourself then, if God was angry with the angels for leaving their proper domain, why then would He bring man, who was given the earth, to the heavens? Was this thinking perhaps instigated by Satan who led the original revolt of the angels, causing them to leave their proper domain for earth? Is he now craftily convincing man to give up their home on earth for heaven? Could this perversion be a part of the knowledge from the tree of good and evil? If so we sure do not want to be fed rotten fruit, Satan's lies!

HEAVEN IS NOT PARADISE

To prove this statement, let us take a closer look at the word “paradise” in the Greek dictionary. It is number 3857 meaning [a park, especially Eden \(place of future happiness\), paradise](#). It tells us to compare 6508 in the Hebrew dictionary which means [park](#) as well, but also includes [forest](#) and [orchard](#). These definitions are in no way a description of heaven.

THEN WHERE ARE OUR LOVED ONES THAT HAVE DIED?

As always the Lord is our example and scripture is our guide. When Jesus was on the cross with the two criminals, one of them said, [“Lord when You come into Your Kingdom, remember me.”](#) Jesus answered him in [Luke 23:43](#), [“Assuredly I say to you today, you will be **with Me in Paradise.**”](#) Again, no mention of heaven is made.

But what about the scriptures in II Corinthians 12:2-4? Do they not prove paradise is the same as heaven? Let us examine these scriptures.

II Corinthians 12:2-4

2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was [caught up to the third heaven](#).

3 [And](#) I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not

know, God knows—

4 how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Let me first remind you that angels, all through the ages, have been sent to earth with messages for man. They were not to live here however, they were just on a mission. Man likewise has been taken to the heavenlies to receive words from God for man, but were not invited to stay there. They too were on a mission as in the examples of Enoch and Paul for instance. In looking at II Corinthians 12:2-4, we see in verse two he knew a man caught up into the third heaven “and” in verses three and four we see he knew a man caught into Paradise. Somehow people miss the “and”, or the fact that Paul was relating two different instances. Paul was not confused, the scriptures are not contradictory or confusing either. We have been reading them wrong.

To even better understand the true meaning of these scriptures I looked in the Greek dictionary at the word caught. It is number 726 meaning to seize, catch (away or up), pluck, take by force. So either “caught up” or “caught away” could be used correctly. So Paul could have been caught “up” to heaven and caught “away” to Paradise. Using the correct definition brings the three scriptures that refer to Paradise to alignment and perfect harmony with one another.

IN CLOSING

Next week's blast from the trumpet is entitled “Full Circle Back to the Garden”, which includes further information on this subject. Please come back and visit us.

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