

SO YOU'RE DEAD... NOW WHAT?

A Place Called Heaven

John 14:1-6 - "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In 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. ³And 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. ⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know." ⁵Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Love it or hate it, Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven" is one of the most popular rock songs of all time. The track appeared on the band's famous untitled album released in 1971, often referred to as *Led Zeppelin IV* (this is also the album where the Led Zeppelin symbols originated).

Surprisingly, "Stairway to Heaven" was never a hit on the charts, as it was never released as a single. Still, the song became a mainstay on rock radio and still reaches many, many people today. You'd be hard-pressed to find somebody who hasn't heard this song, and everybody has their opinions on it as well as its meaning.

Penned by Robert Plant, the lyrics to "Stairway to Heaven" that begins as a critique on an overly materialistic society, suggesting that spending your entire life collecting material possessions is a fruitless endeavor, as it won't get you to heaven, and you can't use any of it when you get there, anyway.

*There's a lady who's sure all that glitters is gold
And she's buying a stairway to heaven
When she gets there she knows, if the stores are all closed
With a word she can get what she came for
Ooh, ooh, and she's buying a stairway to heaven*

"Stairway to Heaven" can be seen as an allegory for one's journey through life, and the search for meaning and understanding through it all.

Partially, Led Zeppelin was right – the Bible speaks directly to this...

Mark 8:36 - ³⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

- Think about all of the wealth in the earth
- Global assets are worth \$440 Trillion.
- The mineral wealth of planet earth is incalculable...

- The estimated value of natural resources in the U. S. is \$45 trillion, almost 90% of which are timber and coal.
- Russia's natural resources reserves are worth \$75 trillion by Statista's estimate.
- Saudi Arabia is a small country in the Middle East and is slightly larger than Mexico. Saudi Arabia has \$34.4 trillion worth of natural resources—notably oil.

This is the tip of the iceberg... but Jesus said a soul is of much greater value!

Matthew 13:44 - ⁴⁴“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

- Jesus gave His life on the cross to purchase a field with incalculable treasure in it – YOU. Paul said, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels...”
- For believers we have been promised a bright, beautiful future in a place called heaven.
- There may have been a time that you did not exist, but there will never be a time that you will cease to exist!
- Eternity is waiting on us all...

...let's look with awe at the grandeur of heaven this morning...

IS HEAVEN A MODERN MYTH?

- Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism are the 5 major religions in the earth. All of them believe in a God (3 are monotheistic), in an afterlife, and in a place called heaven or paradise.
- In Genesis 11 – tower of Babel – men lived from Adam till the flood. They all knew there was a God, a heaven, and an underworld.
 - When all the languages were divided the people groups of the earth still had a basic understanding of these concepts.

WHERE IS HEAVEN LOCATED?

- There are 107 billion galaxies in our known universe and over 2 trillion galaxies beyond.
- All of them very unique in design and completely unexplored.
 - The Eye of God (Put up pic)
 - The Crown of thorns (put up pic)
 - The Hand of God (put up pic)
- Job 26:7 - He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.
 - The book of job is the oldest book in the Bible written approximately 3500 years ago, yet it states that the earth was hung on nothing.
 - It says that he **stretches the north over the empty place**. NASA has confirmed that in the northern part of the universe there is a vast empty space.

- At the end of the Big Dipper (put up pic) is something called the north star - it is called this because it is the star that gives direction. When ships were lost at sea the only way to regain their direction was to be able to locate the north star.
- I believe that God put that star there for you and I come so that when we are lost, we will have to look up in his direction!

WHAT IS HEAVEN GOING TO LOOK LIKE?

- I believe it's a galaxy – possibly even a planet. It is described as 4 square – meaning it can be measured and has shape.
- Heaven is a lot like the earth. It has trees, flowers, rivers, animals, etc.
- The Bible describes the floor and the atmosphere of God's throne room as a crystal (Revelation 4)
 - If you know anything about crystal - when light hits it, it will look like a rainbow of colors come out of it. When John saw the throne of heaven with God dwells, he said behind it was this beautiful rainbow.
 - He didn't see a full circle rainbow he always saw part do you know why we get the other part you have you never see a full rainbow on the earth.
 - His throne looked like Sapphire:
 - Why sapphire is important: in the book of Exodus when God came down on that side it says that the men saw him walking on the mountain on the pavement of sapphire. (Exodus 24:10)
 - According to Ezekiel his throne looks like fire, at times it turns white representing righteousness.
 - 12 foundation made of precious stones and twelve gates made of one solid pearl.
 - Jesus Christ according to the apostle Paul is the high priest of heaven who is on the right side of God
 - There are books of all kinds - these books have records. Though it sounds impossible the scripture says that there's a **book of remembrance** where all the works that you did are recorded. (Romans 8:34 / Malachai 3:16-18)
 - There's a book called **lamb's book of life** - the Old Testament calls **the book of the living**.
- *... "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" 1 Corinthians 2:9*

THE BIGGEST LIE ABOUT HEAVEN

MOST PEOPLE ARE GOING TO HEAVEN. - Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. Matthew 7:13-14

A FINAL GLIMPSE INTO HEAVEN - *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." - Revelation 21:1-4*

HEAVENLY CONCLUSIONS:

GOD WILL ESTABLISH A NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH.

- *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away... Revelation 21:1*
- *Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. Isaiah 65:17*
- *But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13*

GOD WILL DO AWAY WITH DEATH, MOURNING AND PAIN.

- *He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Revelation 21:4-5*

GOD WILL DWELL WITH US.

- *Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. Revelation 21:3*
- *No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They will see his face... Revelation 22:3*

..."No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" 1 Corinthians 2:9