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Believer's Home Sweet Home

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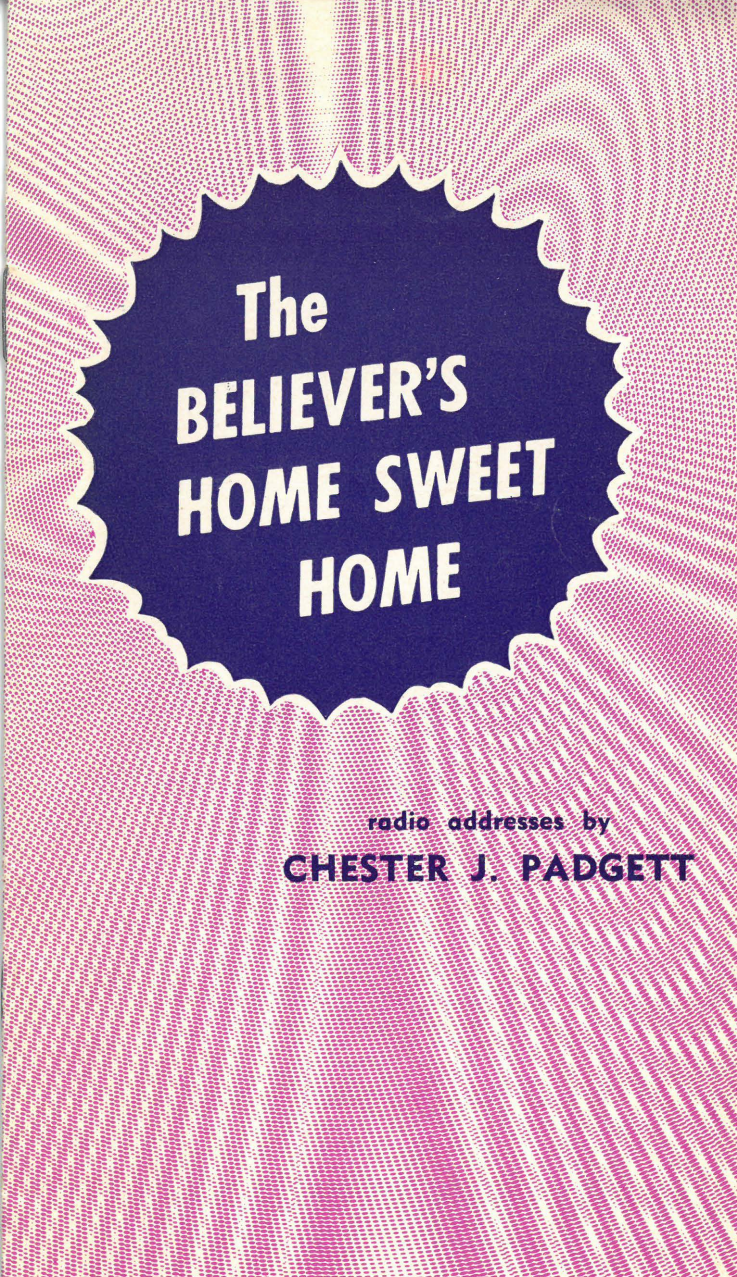


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**The
BELIEVER'S
HOME SWEET
HOME**

radio addresses by
CHESTER J. PADGETT

as delivered over
THE BIBLE INSTITUTE HOUR

THE BELIEVER'S
HOME SWEET HOME

THE CHURCH PRESS

Radio Addresses

by

Chester J. Padgett

for

THE BIBLE INSTITUTE HOUR

Los Angeles 17, California

THE BELIEVER'S HOME SWEET HOME

The theme of Heaven is music to the believer's ears. He loves to think about that land "beyond the river" which constitutes his "home sweet home." And the theme of Heaven is a very practical one, too. Surely the fact of Heaven helps the child of God to hold lightly the things of this world and to put his emphasis on the things of eternity.

Now, in dealing with this subject of Heaven, we shall follow a number of lines of thought including:

The Fact of Heaven
The Location of Heaven
The Description of Heaven
The Inhabitants of Heaven
The Activities of Heaven
The Way to Heaven

I

THE FACT OF HEAVEN

There is, deep in the consciousness of every man, an awareness of the fact of life after death. To some this is an idea that brings uneasiness; to others the thought of Heaven brings comfort and joy.

Thomas Paine is a good example of a man who boasted about his skepticism and disbelief in the truths of the Bible. But just before he died he said, "I would give worlds if I had them, that the *Age of*

Reason had never been published! O God, what have I done to suffer so much? But then, there is no God! But if there should be, what will become of me hereafter? Stay with me, for God's sake! Send even a child to stay with me, for it is Hell to be alone. If ever the Devil had an agent, I have been that one!"

But the child of God does not fear death because he knows that to close his eyes on earth is to open them in Heaven. The believer can sing with the hymn writer:

*"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.
Let cares like a wild deluge come
And storms of sorrow fall,
I know I'll safely reach my home,
My God, my Heaven, my all."*

Why does the Christian believe in life after death—in Heaven and in Hell? First of all, because the Bible teaches these truths! In the Bible we have the record of God's truth. In the Bible God gives man all the information he needs about the most important issues of life and death. Our blessed Lord Jesus came from Heaven. He spoke with authority on the subject. And He taught much about Heaven and Hell. (Matt. 5:19-20; Matt. 10:32-33; John 6:32-33, 48-51; John 14:1-6; Acts 1:11).

II

THE LOCATION OF HEAVEN

If Heaven is a *place*—and Jesus said it is (John 14:1-3)—then that place must be located somewhere in the universe. I am not sure that the Bible tells us exactly where Heaven is, but it is reasonable to suppose that it is located at the center of the universe. DeWitt Talmadge had this in mind when he wrote: "There is a great world, swung somewhere, vast beyond imagination . . . it is the headquarters of the universe, and the metropolis of immensity, and has a population in numbers vast beyond all statistics, and appointments of splendor beyond the capacity of canvas, or poem, or angel to describe."

Yes, it makes sense to suppose that this marvellous planet called Heaven, with its magnificent capital city, the New Jerusalem, sparkling like a trillion diamonds in God's sky, is located at the very heart of the universe, and that, from that capital city the great God conducts the affairs of the creation.

III

THE DESCRIPTION OF HEAVEN

The Bible gives many suggestions about the way Heaven looks and the glory of the believer's "Home Sweet Home." Especially does the Bible focus attention on

that beautiful capital city of the universe.
the New Jerusalem.

Magnitude

We cannot enter into a detailed exposition of Rev. 21-22 within the scope of this little booklet. But let the student examine this Scripture carefully. I am sure he will experience a feeling of awe and wonder at the splendor of Heaven. In Rev. 21:16, John tells us that the capital city is 1500 miles long, 1500 miles wide, and 1500 miles high! This one city alone is large enough to contain all the people of God of all the ages.

But God does nothing on a small scale. He is the Architect of immensity. He has created numberless worlds, all of them the habitation of the innumerable intelligent creatures He has brought into existence (John 14:1-3).

In his little book on Heaven, Dr. Louis T. Talbot writes: "Let us suppose that one could take an auger and bore a hole in the sun. If he could do this, he could pour 1,200,000 earths like ours into this cavity and still have room for 4,300,000 moons to be lodged around those earths! But even the sun is small, comparatively, because some fixed stars such as Alpha Centauri are five times larger than our sun. We are told that the 'Milky Way' is composed of untold millions of suns, some of them so far away that the light traveling from them to the earth at 186,000 miles a second

requires almost 100,000 years to arrive here."

Did God create this vastness without purpose, without any thought of the enjoyment of man, without any other use than just to wheel aimlessly through space? We think not. How plausible it appears that the "many abiding places" spoken of by our Lord should include the countless planets of space!

Splendor and Glory

Heaven is a place of unspeakable splendor and glory! Again, read Rev. 21-22. In John 17:24, the Saviour prays thus: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me."

The Apostle Paul, in contrasting the transient troubles of this life with the eternal splendors of Heaven exclaims, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," (Rom. 8:18).

Holiness, Peace and Joy

Heaven is a place of holiness and happiness, and there joy flows like a river. The Bible tells us that there will be no sin in Heaven (II Peter 3:13). There will be no sea in Heaven (Rev. 21:1). The Bible indicates that the sea stands as a type of sin, and the wicked restlessness of the human heart (Isa. 57:20-21).

There will be no crying, no tears, no sorrow in Heaven (Rev. 21:4). There will be no death there—no funeral processions, no cemeteries, no separation (v. 4). There will be no pain in Heaven (v. 4).

God says there will be no Temple in Heaven (Rev. 21:22). Why no Temple? Because the Temple stands as the symbol of the presence of God; in Heaven the people of God are *with* Him where He is. There will be no material source of light in Heaven, as the sun and moon (Rev. 21:23). There will be need of these because the glory of God will lighten the Universe. Because of sin man cannot endure the glory of God's holiness. Let this light flash across the world and men would be consumed in an instant. But in Heaven, with resurrection bodies and holy souls, the glory of God will shine forth in all His splendor.

The Sweetest Fellowship

Certainly Heaven is a place of the most wonderful fellowship. The fellowship of the saints on earth is wonderful, too, but cannot compare with that above. Down here there is envy, jealousy, fighting, gossip, even among the people of God. But up there—only love!

IV

THE INHABITANTS OF HEAVEN

Home is the dwelling place of the blessed Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Father sits upon the throne of the universe working out His sovereign purpose for the entire creation. Study Rev. 4 and note the *power of His throne* (vv. 1-3), and the *majesty of His throne* (v. 5). Examine Heb. 4:14-16, and observe that the throne of God is *a throne of grace!*

Heaven is inhabited by the holy angels. These angels are organized and serve God as the administrators of His vast universe. They also serve the people of God, and delight to minister to those who are the heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14).

Heaven is inhabited by the saints of God. It is the view of many that the Old Testament saints were not allowed to enter Heaven until after the redemptive work of Christ on Calvary. When He arose from the dead He took these saints to Heaven with Him (Eph. 4:7-10).

Since the resurrection and ascension of Christ all who die in this dispensation, trusting the Saviour, go immediately at death into the presence of God (II Cor. 5:8-9; Phil. 1:21-23).

V

THE ACTIVITIES OF HEAVEN

Heaven is no place of idleness! There will be no "sameness, lameness and tameness" in Heaven; there will be no boredom, no monotony there. Heaven is now and always will be a place of ceaseless activity in the worship and praise and service of God.

The Bible indicates that Heaven is a place of *great joy and singing* (Rev. 5). There are *constant reunions* going on in Heaven, and with the death of every saint comes a glad welcome in the regions of the blest. Heaven is a place of *lasting friendships*. What joy to make acquaintances in the knowledge that there will always be love and peace and genuine interest, and—no separations!

I may be wrong here, but I think there will be *classes of instruction* in Heaven. Finite man will always be a learner. There never will come a time when finiteness can attain to omniscience. This means that the pursuit of truth will continue throughout eternity for the people of God. There will be studies in theology, studies in science, and studies in all the vast areas of knowledge.

There will be *tours of inspection* in Heaven. The Saviour prayed that His people might be with Him in Heaven that they might behold His glory. The glory of Christ is His creation, and it will take eternity to tour the vastness of space.

At the present time there are *communication centers in Heaven*. Heaven has a complete coverage of all the latest news about earth and all the other inhabited planets of the universe. The Lord Jesus said that there was joy in Heaven over one sinner that repented (Luke 15). How do the saints and angels up there know what is going on down here? The angels provide a constant communication between

the spheres, and the news is broadcast over Heaven. Why should we think the saints of God are more ignorant in Heaven than they are here on earth?

Another activity in Heaven at the present time is *preparation for the Rapture*. One of these days the population of Heaven is going to be swelled by the Translation of the Church (I Thess. 4:13ff). Surely arrangements are now being made to care for this vast population increase.

During the Tribulation

During the seven-year period of the great Tribulation on Earth certain activities will be taking place in Heaven. One of these is *the Judgment Seat of Christ* (I Cor. 3:11-15; II Cor. 5:10). Every saint is going to have a personal conference with the Son of God and will be rewarded or disqualified according to his service on earth.

Certainly, during this seven-year period in Heaven there will be many adjustments made between the saints—old grievances taken care of, apologies made, forgiveness sought, etc. During this time undoubtedly there will be the assignment of duties for the Millennium and classes of instruction with regard to the government of the earth during the Kingdom age.

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

While the tragic and horrible “supper of the great God” is going on below on

the earth, the marriage supper of the Lamb will be conducted in Heaven (Rev. 19:1-20). At this time all the saints of all the ages will be formally united to Christ as the Bridegroom and then will come the "honeymoon" to earth, where the newly-wedded couple (Christ and His Bride) will "set up housekeeping" for a thousand years.

VI

HOW TO MAKE HEAVEN SURE

In that matchless passage on Heaven in John 14, the Lord Jesus was asked a pointed question by His disciples—"We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?" (v. 5). Our Lord said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." (v. 6).

Jesus is the way to Heaven, and *there is no other way!* (Acts 4:12). To change the figure, He is the Door to Heaven (John 10:9). Any one who will enter that Door will be saved. This Door is wide enough to admit the greatest sinner; it is apparent enough to call attention to every wayfarer; it is available wherever the Gospel is preached.

Dear friend, have *you* received this Saviour? Do you, by faith, have an interest in the believer's Home, Sweet Home? Are you, even now, on the way to that blest land?

*"There's a land beyond the river,
That we call the sweet forever,
And we only reach that shore by faith's
decree;
One by one we'll gain the portals,
There to dwell with the immortals,
When they ring the golden bells for
you and me.*

*"Don't you hear the bells now ringing?
Don't you hear the angels singing?
'Tis the glory hallelujah Jubilee.
In that far off sweet forever,
Just beyond the shining river,
When they ring the bells for you and
me."*

