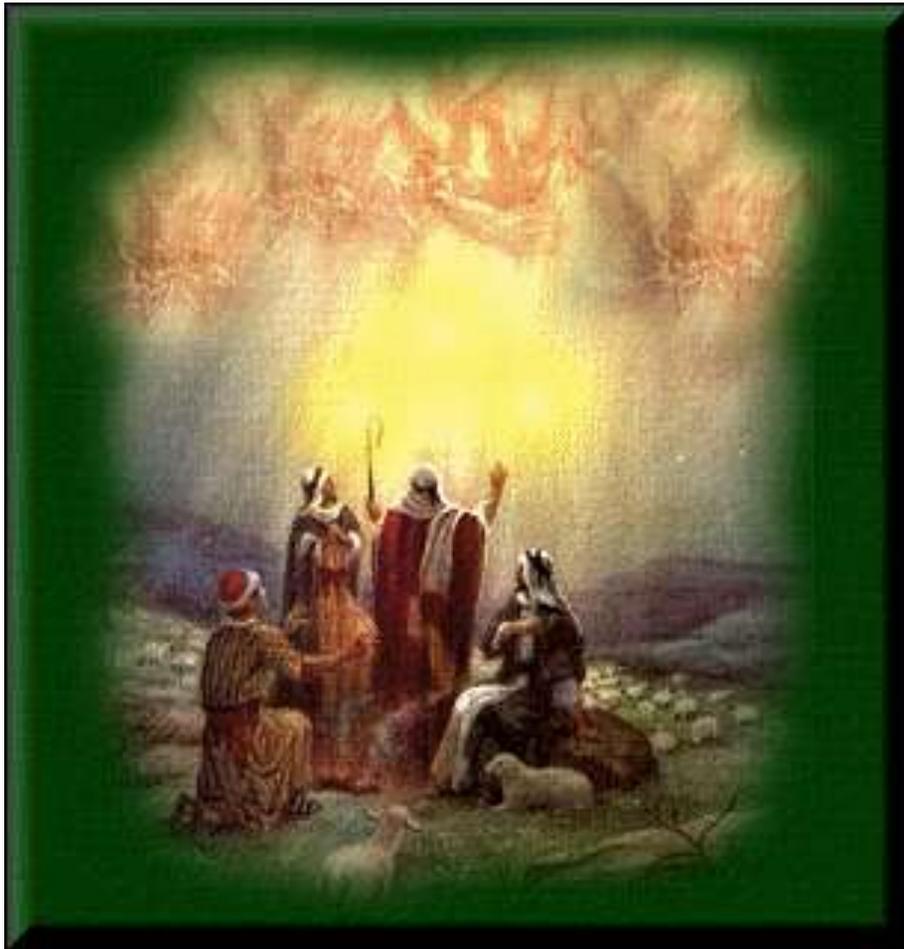


# GOOD NEWS FROM HEAVEN



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Heaven is spectacular place but we cannot grasp the full reality of it through our human experience. Even though we can never know the majestic nature of Heaven while on this earth, we do get glimpses of it in passages throughout the Bible. These foretastes of glory divine are quite limited as they try to depict Heaven in pictures we can understand. During this Advent series we want to get a taste of what Heaven is like and how Jesus brought Heaven to earth.

### **THE PLACE: THE GOOD NEWS—THERE IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE CALLED HEAVEN**

#### *Like a Bride Adorned for a Wedding*

The New Jerusalem is a microcosm of Heaven since it came down from there. John described the New Jerusalem a “bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:2). The word “adorned” comes from the Greek word *kosmeo* which we get the English word cosmetic. The New Jerusalem is decked with the elegance of a bride on her wedding day. What a sight to behold! Heaven is a place of indescribable beauty.

#### *It Is Called Paradise.*

**The word “paradise” is a Persian term which means “a wooded park.” It is used three times in the Old Testament. It is used to describe a magnificent forest (Neh. 2:8) and a beautiful garden (Eccl 2:5; Song of Sol. 4:12-13).**

The word “paradise” is also used three times in the New Testament and each time it referred to a utopia for deceased saints. Jesus said to the thief that was crucified with Him on the cross, “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Lk. 23:43). The Apostle Paul was caught up into the third heaven which he identified as paradise (2 Cor. 12:2-4). **In Revelation 2:7 John talked about a tree in the “paradise of God” (Heaven).**

### **THE PROBLEM: THE BAD NEWS ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS—SINNERS CANNOT GET INTO HEAVEN**

Heaven is a place where the presence of God is fully manifested (Rev. 4:1-11). The Bible is very clear that unregenerate human beings cannot go to into the presence of God, “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God” (Isa. 59:2). Furthermore, the Apostle Paul wrote that sinners cannot get into the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10). John the Revelator, identifies a list of reprobates who will be outside of the gates of Heaven (Rev. 22:15). It is clear—sinners cannot get into Heaven.

### **THE PURIFICATION:**

**THE GOOD NEWS—CHRIST CAME TO CLEANSE SINNERS AND MAKE A WAY FOR THEM TO GO TO HEAVEN**

The Good News is that sinners have been cleansed through the blood of Christ and can now enter the gates of Heaven. Earlier we read about a group of sinners who were unable to enter the kingdom of Heaven, but now some of those same individuals can enter because they were washed, sanctified and justified “in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 6:11).

### **THE PROMISE:**

**THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT JESUS IS COMING BACK TO GET HIS FOLLOWERS**

In John 14:1-3 we read, “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.”

This passage is a concept that many Jewish people would readily understand. It is based on the ancient custom where a man would propose to a woman and go back to his father's house to build a room for his bride and future family. When the room was completed he would come and get his bride. The primary focus was not on the father's house or the additional room but the fact that they would all be able to live together as a one family.