

VISIONS OF HEAVEN AND HELL BY JOHN BUNYAN

John Bunyan's Visions of Heaven and Hell

Elijah Explains, Chapter 3 - Part 1

June 7th, 2020

As we've already studied the 2nd half of this book on Bunyan's visit to hell, we're now going to study John's visit to heaven, so please read page 6, the first 5 paragraphs of the PDF above of John Bunyan's, "Visions of Heaven and Hell" with the title; **Chapter 3 – Elijah Explains.**

In order to have some understanding of heaven, we have to try not to comprehend it as a natural man, but rather as a spiritual man, using God's wisdom and instruction that comes from the person of the Holy Spirit who Jesus gave us to understand His words about heaven in the Bible.

It says in **Acts 2:16-18**; *"16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.'"*

John Bunyan as a young man, saw these visions; one of heaven and one of hell. One of the greatest hindrances today or possibly one of the main reasons that you're not receiving supernatural visions of heaven, hell or anything else supernatural; is because you've shut out the Holy Spirit. Yes, you've been born again, but you've rejected the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The reason for saying this is because that's what you need to understand heaven and God's word, as it's the Holy Spirit who is your teacher. So the less of the Holy Spirit you have in your life, the less understanding you'll have, the less visions you'll have from God. Both the rejection of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and rejecting Him to move as He chooses, diminishes the Christians ability to experience these supernatural manifestations.

Jesus says in **John 14:26**; *"26 But the [a]Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."*

After Jesus ascended to heaven, He said He'd send the Holy Spirit to be your Teacher and Helper. When you're born again and receive Jesus to be Lord of your life, the Holy Spirit comes in and you're born of His Spirit. He also promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to be baptized and filled by Him.

In **John 14:1-6**, Jesus also says; *"14 'Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many [a]mansions; if it were not so, [b]I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And 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. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know.' 5 Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?' 6 Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'"*

The only way to heaven is through Jesus, there is no other way. All other non-Christian religions lead to hell, and the devil is the one behind the curtain pulling the strings and masquerading in them in order that he may receive the worship of God's creation, as God. After all, was that not the reason why he was cast out of heaven in the first place, because he wanted to be greater than God? That's why the devil uses Jesus' name in vain as a curse and not other non Christian religious leaders' names.

Unless you are born again you can't enter the Kingdom of Heaven, never mind understand what the Bible teaches about heaven. How can you understand without the Holy Spirit?

Those that are born again, their citizenship is in heaven and Jesus speaks about this new birth with a religious Pharisee named Nicodemus in **John 3:3-8**; *"3 Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born [a]again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' 4 Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?' 5 Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"*

Nicodemus was no different than anyone today, operating in natural rational and reason. Jesus was very clear when He said you have to be born of the water of the womb of your mother or born in flesh and blood as a human being, and then born of the Spirit of God.

To reiterate again, the more you grieve the Holy Spirit, the less you'll understand the things of the Spirit, the Bible, and the supernatural visions and dreams. The Holy Spirit's wisdom, power and knowledge is not earthly reason or rational. He operates supernaturally.

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The Apostle Paul says in **Philippians 3:20-21**; “20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”

Until that day, we can have a glimpse of heaven on earth that is revealed to us in the Bible by the Holy Spirit. Unless God takes you in an out of body experience to heaven, like he did with John Bunyan, He’s already given you the Bible to understand and get a glimpse of heaven, preparing you for when you go there.

Bunyan says; “*Compared to this glory, the light of the sun is but darkness, and the fire of the most sparkling jewels are but dead coals. Therefore it is called The Throne of the Glory of God, where the radiance of the divine Majesty is revealed in the most illustrious manner. God was too bright for me to look upon as He was exalted on the high throne of His glory, while multitudes of angels and saints sang forth eternal hallelujahs and praises to Him. Well may He be called the God of Glory, for by His presence He makes heaven what it is. Rivers of pleasure continually spring forth from the divine Presence, and radiate cheerfulness, joy, and splendor to all the blessed inhabitants of heaven, the seat of His eternal empire.*”

The earthly and heavenly dimensions are starkly different, even though we may be mesmerized by God’s beauty and creation here on earth, heaven exceeds and surpasses it.

In reading this, one could think that it is a super long church service, right. Looking at it in the natural mind, you think that they’re worshipping for a very loooooong time. You might even think that it would get dull or boring. You might think this way because even in the best church service, eventually the worship stops and you move on, because with your natural mind, we tend to grieve the Holy Spirit. Plus, we’re still in a fallen world and in the flesh, but in heaven, we’re in glorified bodies where there are eternal and unceasing praises to God. That’s why we need the Holy Spirit to see into the supernatural realm to be able to comprehend this because you sure can’t looking at it naturally.

If you’d get into the supernatural realm with the Holy Spirit, your church services may extend out for a longer time and maybe some of the programs may get dropped when you let Him take over your services. It will be a supernatural time and not a natural time being very calculated.

We can see a glimpse of heaven in **Revelation 21:1-7**; “21 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, [a]John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said [b]to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” 6 And He said to me, “It[c] is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 He who overcomes [d]shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”

The Conductor Angel says: “*No, no,*” said my conductor, *“death cannot enter this blessed place, nor sin nor sorrow can abide. It is the glory of this happy place to be forever freed from all that is evil; and without that freedom, our blessedness even here would be imperfect. Come along with me and I will bring you to one who is in the body, as you are. Talk with him for a while before I take you back again.”* “O rather,” I eagerly said, *“let me stay here. There is no need of building tabernacles, for the heavenly mansions are already prepared.”* My shining messenger replied to this, *“Here in a while you shall forever be, but the divine will must first be obeyed.”*

I believe God wants to give you a vision today but you must submit to the Holy Spirit and not grieve Him. Again, **Revelation 21:4** says; “*And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.*”

It’s almost incomprehensible isn’t it in the natural, but that’s why we need the Holy Spirit to believe there is such a place as heaven where it seems so surreal. In the times we’re living in and with social media, all we hear about is death, sorrow, crying, pain, sickness, disease, plagues, famines, earthquakes etc. But in heaven it will be all wiped away! Incomprehensible in the natural – comprehensible in the Holy Spirit.

Jesus gives these encouraging words in **John 14:1-4**; “14 “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father’s house are many [a]mansions; if it were not so, [b]I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And 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. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

There is a mansion that is made for you to live in in heaven that is prepared for you by Jesus. If you have the Holy Spirit, you’ll be able to comprehend this, but if not, you’re still looking with natural earthly eyes. To you it may just be, ‘the big guy in the sky’ mindset, there is no understanding at all. But with the Holy Spirit and the

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baptism in the Holy Spirit you'll have more understanding. You may even have a vision of your mansion in heaven! Anything is possible if God wants to reveal it to you.

Another glimpse of heaven can be found in **Revelation 21:9-21** where it talks about The New Jerusalem; *“9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came [a]to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the [b]bride, the Lamb’s wife.” 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the [c]great city, the [d]holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. 12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the [e]names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand [f]furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. 17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. 18 The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.”*

When you consider the treasures alone that are found in heaven, it's understandable why Jesus says in **Matthew 6:19-21**; *“19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Another good indicator of how full you are of the Holy Spirit is by evaluating where your treasures are. Are you really heavenly minded? Or are you earth bound? Do you worship the creation more than the Creator?

You don't have to have a vision of heaven to get a glimpse of it, because God has given us clear understanding by the Holy Spirit in His Bible through His Apostles and Prophets. A personal vision would be nice, but we already have the Bible to give us a glimpse.

I can sure understand why the devil has so many Christians against the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it's simply because without the baptism of the Holy Spirit there is limited understanding of the scriptures about heaven, and for the most part they operate in the natural rational and reason of God's word rather than the supernatural understanding taught by the Holy Spirit.

A good example of this is found in **1 Corinthians 2:9-16** where it says; *“9 But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

I've heard this scripture many times taken out of context and misquoted by those who say that this is a scripture reference that proves that no matter what, you can't comprehend or envision what heaven is like. If you stop at this verse only, you'll think you'll never comprehend heaven no matter how much you read about it. If you do that, you're in the natural and ruling out the supernatural by operating in natural reason and rational. Where it says; *“Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*, then they conclude that whatever enters into your heart or mind is just a vain imagination about heaven. They might accept what the Apostle John or other prophets wrote about heaven as true, but as for you and me, now, you can't experience anything supernatural as it doesn't happen any more. That might include a vision of heaven, an angel appearing to you, an out of body experience etc.

But, let's continue to read **verses 10 -16** which refutes this thought;

*“10 **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.** For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the [a]Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” **But we have the mind of Christ.**”*

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This shows clearly that when you have the Holy Spirit, He gives you understanding, He gives you visions, He gives supernatural spiritual wisdom. So this is a very good example of taking God's word out of context because they reject the power and baptism of the Holy Spirit.

It's God's will to reveal to us understanding of His word by the Holy Spirit who teaches us, and that's why it's so important to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit, for it's only then that you can truly understand what the Bible says about heaven. That's why this vision that John Bunyan had was so important as God met him where he was at in a very difficult time of his life where he was about to commit suicide, being lied to by the devil that God didn't exist. John's whole life changed because of one vision of heaven and hell.

Jesus said in **John 14:26**; *"26 But the [a]Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."*

And in **John 16:13**, Jesus says; *"13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."*

As I said at the beginning, in order to have some understanding of heaven, we have to try not to comprehend it as a natural man, but rather as a spiritual man, using God's wisdom and instruction that comes from the person of the Holy Spirit who Jesus gave us to understand His words about heaven in the Bible.