



WHAT GOD'S WORD
SAYS ABOUT HEAVEN

Faith Covenant Church

WHAT GOD'S WORD SAYS ABOUT HEAVEN

However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived" the things God has prepared for those who love him *1 Corinthians 2:9

LESSON PLAN

Lesson	Subject	Verses	Date
1	Heaven Introduction, What is Heaven	Various	
2	What God does from Heaven	Various	
3	Our relationship to Heaven	Various	
4	Aspects of present Heaven	Various	
5	What New Heaven will be like	Various	
6	Heaven's opposite, Hell	Various	

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HEAVEN INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew word for "heavens" is *shamayim*, it is in a plural form, meaning "heights," "elevations." It is found in the first verse of the Bible (Genesis 1:1; 2:1). The Bible teaches in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, he did not make another heaven after this time. The phrase "heavens and earth" are used to indicate the whole universe (Genesis 1:1; Jeremiah 23:24; Acts 17:24).

According to the Jewish tradition from the Bible there were three heavens. All are attributed to God as the creator. Psalm 102:25 "Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands."

There are several other words used in the Hebrew, the word *marom* is also used (Psalms 68:18; 93:4; 102:19, etc.) as equivalent to *shamayim*. Hebrew *galgal*, literally a "wheel," is rendered "heaven" in Psalms 77:18 ("whirlwind"). Hebrew *shahak*, is translated "sky" (Deuteronomy 33:26; Job 37:18; Psalms 18:11), plural "clouds" (Job 35:5; 36:28; Psalms 68:34, "heavens"), referring to the firmament.

The Bible speaks of three heavens not 7 and these are not dimensions. The first being our immediate atmosphere, the second is outer space as far as it stretches, and the third is the place where God himself dwells. What Jesus called the "Father's house."

First heaven - The firmament, Earth's Atmosphere -which is the immediate sky, where the "birds" (Genesis 2:19; 7:3, 23; Psalms 8:8.), "the eagles in the sky" (Lamentations 4:19), it is our atmosphere that surrounds the earth.

Genesis 1:14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to divide the day from the night." The first heaven consists of the clouds and the atmosphere, the heavens above us, until we come to the stars.

Psalm 78:23 "Yet He had commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of heaven, had rained down manna on them to eat, and given them of the bread of heaven."

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The expression "doors of heaven" or "windows of heaven" involved the firmament, our atmosphere. Descriptions used of this heaven is from where God would provide food or rain. Genesis 7:11-12: "on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights..." Genesis 8:2: "The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained" Malachi 3:10 Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it." In reference to an abundant harvest of crops."

Deuteronomy 11:17 "Then the LORD's anger will burn against you, and he will shut the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce..." Deuteronomy 28:12: "The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands."

Second Heaven - Outer Space, the starry heavens (Deuteronomy 17:3; Jeremiah 8:2; Matthew 24:29).

The second heaven is the starry heavens, where our atmosphere ends. It is the heavens in which the sun, moon, and stars are fixed in orbit. The stars are seemingly endless and the distance between all of them is staggering no wonder the Bible states Psalm 19:1 "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." In ancient times people were in awe of the starry expanse, today we know how immense this really is.

The firmament, or expanse, *raqiya`* "In which the sun, moon, stars, and constellations are fixed." Genesis 1:17: And God placed them in the Firmament of heaven. Isaiah 40:22: "He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in."(Psalm 19:4, 6) - "In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun... It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other;..." (Jeremiah 8:2) - They will be exposed to the sun and the moon and all the stars of the heavens which they have loved and served..."

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Third Heaven - This is where God and the holy angels (and creatures) and spirits of just men dwell. It is called "The heaven of heavens," (Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 115:16; 148:4). (1Kings 8:27) - "The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you." (Psalm 2:4) The One enthroned in heaven laughs; The LORD scoffs at them."

The third heaven is beyond the space and stars. Where no man has seen by telescope. This heaven is the dwelling-place of God, to which Paul was taken, and whose wonders he was permitted to behold-this region where God dwells.

It is specifically named "the third heaven" by Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:2. Paul mentions being caught up to paradise in 2 Corinthians 12:4, the word "paradise" describes a different facet of "the third heaven."

"2 Corinthians 12:4 The word "paradise" *paradeisos* occurs but three times in the New Testament; Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:4; Revelation 2:7. It occurs often in the Septuagint, as the translation of the word "garden"; Genesis 2:8-10,15-16; 3:1-3,8,16,23-24; 13:10; Numbers 24:6; Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 28:13; 31:8-9; Joel 2:3. And also Isaiah 1:30; Jeremiah 29:5; and of the word *pardeec* in Nehemiah 2:8; Ecclesiastes 2:5; Song of Solomon 2:13".

Hebrews 4:14 "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, (Jesus ascended to the place he was before he became man) Hebrews 7:26 "For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens" meaning he is more important than the dwelling place of God and angels. Hebrews 8:1 as our high Priest, He "is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

The word "heavens" is also used for visions or a spiritual event. Stephen said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" (Acts 7:56) Mark 1:10 When Jesus was baptized "He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove."

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The term heaven is used in a metaphor Isaiah 14:13, 14; "doors of heaven" (Psalms 78:23); heaven "shut" (1 Kings 8:35); "opened" (Ezekiel 1:1). (The "kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 25:1; James 2:5). The "eternal kingdom" (2 Peter 1:11). The "eternal inheritance" (1 Peter 1:4; Hebrews 9:15). The "better country" (Hebrews 11:14, 16).

Heaven is the abode of the righteous who are in possession of "everlasting life," "an eternal glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17), where they are delivered from all sufferings forever, a deliverance from all evils (2 Corinthians 5:1, 2). Christ calls it his "Father's house" (John 14:2), also "paradise" (Luke 23:43).

2 Corinthians 12:4; Revelation 2:7). It is the location of "The heavenly Jerusalem" before it comes to earth (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 3:12).

In the light of Heaven, everything we do and everything we experience takes on two new meanings. On the one hand, everything becomes infinitely more important, more serious, more weighted with glory than before. If we are practicing only for a casual pastime, our practice is not terribly important, but if we are practicing for the world championship, it is. On the other hand, Heaven makes everything earthly seem light and trivial by comparison. Saint Theresa says that the most horrible, suffering-filled life on Earth, looked at from Heaven, will seem no more than a night in an inconvenient hotel. Saints and martyrs know the value of this life and this world; they love it because God loves it. But they lightly give it all up for Heaven. Heavenly light gives us not only "an eternal glory," but at the same time a lightsome spirit. Heaven is the inheritance of all believers where there is "fullness of joy," everlasting blessedness. The "place, of our inheritance where Jesus went ahead to "prepare" for us (John 14:2) that we may be with him, where he is. Oh the wonder of heaven! What confident anticipation supports our hope.

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LESSON 1-WHAT IS HEAVEN

God's Dwelling Place

Read 1 Kings 8:30, 42-43; Ecclesiastes 5:2; Psalm 33:13; Matthew 6:9; Romans 1:18

1. What does God do as He dwells in Heaven?

Hears His people's prayer, looks down & sees all mankind, reveals His wrath against the wicked.

2. What do you learn about reverence for God from these verses?

God's name is great, and He is to be feared (Revered). God is in Heaven, we are His creation (Ecc), He looks down on His creation from above. His name should be hallowed (made holy)

3. What do you need to change to be more reverent towards God in His dwelling place?

Personal. For me more praise, less petition in prayer. Spend more time with Him in study & quiet time alone.

Lesson: _____

(God's dwelling place is higher than ours, so He needs to be honored)

God's Sanctuary

Read Psalm 68:32-35; Psalm 102:19; Hebrews 8:2; Revelation 15:5

4. What happens in God's heavenly sanctuary?

God is praised & worshiped (Psalm 68). God views His creation, Earth (Psalm 102). God is served (Hebrews). God's judgement is administered (Rev)

5. How does our Earthly sanctuary reflect Heaven's sanctuary?

God is praised & worshiped, people look to God from here. However God's sanctuary is sin free. No more need for sacrifices.

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LESSON 1-WHAT IS HEAVEN

6. What can you do to take care of God's inner sanctuary in you, your heart? (See Romans 12:1-2)

Personal. For me spend more time in study and reflection, not just reading & answering, but growing nearer to God in my heart, not checking boxes. And lose weight. Live my life as a living sacrifice to God.

Lesson: _____

(Soon there will be no need for a Temple or Sanctuary, God will be it! Rev. 21:22)

Where God's Throne Is

Read 1 Kings 22:19; Psalm 2:4; Psalm 103:19; Isaiah 63:15; Revelation 4:1-6

7. What do you learn about God's throne from these verses?

Multitudes of Heaven surround it (1 Kings); Where God rules from (Psalm 103); It is lofty, in Heaven (Isaiah); God sits on it, with 24 elders on throne around it, lightning & thunder come from it, 7 lamps (spirits) and a glassy sea in front of it (Revelation)

8. What is Jesus doing from His throne? What will Jesus do from His throne? (See Psalm 89:4, Romans 8:34; Matthew 25: 31-32; 26:63-64; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20)

Jesus has been established forever as King, sitting at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for believers. Jesus will rule gloriously, and sort Sheep from goats at His return to Earth, He will have a thousand year reign with His saints on Earth, He will give each believer what is due them at His judgement seat.

Lesson: _____

(Jesus is interceding now, and will rule at the right hand of The Father forever!)

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LESSON 1-WHAT IS HEAVEN

Where Christ Ascended

Read Acts 1:1-11; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-51; Hebrews 9:24

9. What is the significance of Jesus' ascension? (See Ephesians 1:20-23; Hebrews 4:14-16)

It is the end of His Earthly ministry, He is now exalted in Heavenly glory, and the period of His human limitation was at an end. He is now the great High Priest & mediator of the new Covenant.

10. What stands out to you about Jesus' ascension to Heaven?

Personal. For me, He will return the exact same way (Acts); He sits at the right hand of God (Mark); Jesus blessed His apostles, that they would receive the Holy Spirit, as He ascended (Luke); He now appears for us in God's presence, in His Godly sanctuary. (Hebrews)

11. What does Jesus' ascension mean to you personally? (See Ephesians 4:7-16; John 14:2-3)

Personal. His resurrection, prior to ascension, assures me of my resurrection too. Jesus has gifted me with the gifts, and Holy Spirit I need to build up His body, for now as He prepares a place for me in Heaven.

Lesson: _____
(Jesus is returning the same way He went into Heaven, in the interim prepare for it)

Challenge: Allow the Lamb on the throne to be your Shepherd, He will lead you to springs of living water!

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LESSON 2-WHAT GOD DOES FROM HEAVEN

Last week we were introduced to the 3 Heavens, and learned that Heaven is God's dwelling place, and His sanctuary, where God's throne is, and where Jesus ascended to at the end of His Earthly ministry. Today we begin to look at what God *does* from Heaven, by looking at His talking to, and listening to His people, God also reigns from Heaven, and blesses His people.

Talks And Listens To People

Read Genesis 17:1-22; Exodus 20:1-25; Matthew 3:16-17, 17:1-8; John 12:27-30; Nehemiah 9:27-28; Psalm 66:16-20; 1 John 5:14-15

1. What stands out to you from the times God spoke audibly to people?

It is always for our benefit. Made covenant w/ Abraham (Genesis); 10 commandments (Exodus); Listen to Jesus, at Transfiguration (Matthew); Glorify God's name at time of judgement (John)

2. What stands out to you from the times God listens or hears His people?

God listens out of His great compassion (Nehemiah); God listens to those who don't cherish sin in their hearts (Psalm); God hears when we ask according to His will (1 John)

3. What are you doing to actively listen for God's voice? (See 1 Kings 19:11-13; Isaiah 55:3; Romans 10:17)

Personal. Listen for God's still small voice in a world of turmoil (1Kings); Have my ears open, as I come before God in prayer (Isaiah); Listen to messages about Jesus at church, and seek word about Jesus thru bible study, and reading. (Romans)

4. What could you do to speak with more reverence and fear before God? (See Proverbs 1:7; Ephesians 5:17-20; Hebrews 4:15-16, 5:7)

Personal. Seek wisdom & knowledge (Proverbs); Seek understanding of God's will (Ephesians); Approach God's throne with grace & confidence, Jesus is my Great High Priest (Hebrews 4); Pray w/ reverent submission with fervent cries, and tears, just as Jesus did. (Hebrews 5)

Lesson: _____

(God is talking, listen to Him! God is listening, talk to Him!)

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LESSON 2-WHAT GOD DOES FROM HEAVEN

God Reigns

Read Psalm 47:8, 93:1, 99:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:17, 6:16; Revelation 5:13, 11:15

5. What does it mean to say God reigns?

God sits on His throne, as sovereign king over all the universe He created.

6. How are you comforted knowing that God reigns in the world?

God is on high, the entire universe falls under His domain. As His faithful servant, I know I serve the Just King

7. With all of the bad in the world, how do you know God still reigns? How do you relate that to those hurting in this world? (See Psalm 51:4; Malachi 2:17; 1 Peter 1:3-7)

Because His word tells me, and I see that God is still working in the world too. The hurt and bad in this world is from the sin that runs rampant, God is a just judge, and He will judge the wicked soon, in the meantime, our faith is tested by evil. This time of evil will come to an end, because God is on the throne.

8. What idols do you allow to reign in your life? What can you do to put God back in His rightful place?

Personal. For me, money, when I recognize money is taking over my life, I stop, go to God in prayer, and repent of my sin, and put God on His throne in my life, worshiping Him only.

Lesson: _____

(God still reigns, Hallelujah!)

God Blesses

Read Numbers 6:22-27; Deuteronomy 26:15; Psalm 67:6-7; Malachi 3:6-12; Luke 6:38; John 6:51; 2 Corinthians 9:8-9; James 1:17

9. From these verses, who & why does God bless from Heaven?

His people (Numbers, Deuteronomy); So others will fear Him (Psalm) & call His people blessed (Malachi); For obedience (Luke); Those who eat Jesus Bread, for eternal life (John); To give all we need (2 Corinthians)

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LESSON 2-WHAT GOD DOES FROM HEAVEN

10. Do God's blessings from Heaven always mean a trouble-free life? Explain your answer, using any scripture verses you know.

No. Our sin nature attracts trouble (Job 5:7); Times of trouble reveal our strength in God (Proverbs 24:10); Jesus tells us each day has it's own problems (Matt 6:34); They achieve us eternal glory (2 Cor. 4:17); Jesus tells us of troubles (John 16:33)

11. What must people do to receive God's blessings from Heaven?

Wear God's name (Numbers); Stand on God's promises (Deuteronomy); Keep His precepts (Malachi, Luke); Believe in Jesus, take Him inside of you (John); Give of your abundance, first fruits, not overage (2 Cor.)

12. What are you doing to seek God's blessings from Heaven in your life?

Personal. For me, study His word to know what His blessings are, and how to get them. Using the gifts God has given me, and remaining obedient to His calling in using those gifts.

Lesson: _____

(God blesses and keeps those who love Him, from His throne on High)

Challenge: This week reflect the blessings, and goodness given you by The King on High, Lord God Almighty!

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LESSON 3-OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HEAVEN

Last week we discussed what God does from Heaven, He talks and listens to people, He Reigns, and blesses His people. Today we will talk about our relationship to Heaven, in how we can enter, in having faith in Jesus alone, and be born again, and also the only place where eternal treasures are secured.

Have Faith In Jesus Alone

Read Isaiah 53:10-12; John 3:16-18, 14:5-7; Acts 4:10-12; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 3:20-21; Hebrews 7:24-27; Revelation 22:12-16

1. Approximately 750 years before Jesus came and died on the cross, Isaiah wrote "*made intercession for the transgressors.*" What does that tell you about God, and the reliability of His word, the Bible?

God is Awesome, all-powerful (omnipotent), all-knowing (omniscient), and His plan will never fail, we are saved thru faith in Jesus. The Bible is completely 100% accurate.

2. Many people in the world today question that Jesus is the only way to Heaven, How would you respond to them? (See Luke 19:10; John 14:1-6; Romans 3:23; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Hebrews 10:1-18)

Jesus atoned for the sin of those who believe in Him, as a lasting sacrifice, and just being good is not enough, because no one is good enough, to uphold the law, as Jesus did, so He paid our way once for all! Only God is good & sinless!

3. What does *faith* in Jesus mean? How might someone know if they have true, life-saving, faith in Jesus? Use any scripture you know to answer.

Hebrews 11:1- Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. **John 14:26-** But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. **1 Corinthians 12:3-5-** Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. **James 2:18-** But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

4. What are you doing to seek God, and grow nearer to Jesus in faith? What could you do better, or more of?

Personal. For me, read, and study God's word. Fellowship in small group, studying God's word. Share in discipleship class, and BSF. Worship at church, and spend time in prayer. Could be better at applying what I learn, not checking boxes, and more quite time with God.

Lesson: _____

(Only by faith in Jesus can anyone enter Heaven, there is no other way!)

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LESSON 3-OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HEAVEN

Must Be Born Again

Read John 1:12-13, 3:1-8; Colossians 2:11-14; 1 Peter 1:3-4, 22-25; Titus 3:5

5. How is someone born again?

Be renewed, and born again of God (John 1), not of natural descent, but born of the Spirit of God (John 3), raised with Jesus, as a child of God (Colossians), through the living enduring word of God, made imperishable (1 Peter), in spirit (Titus)

6. Why would it be necessary to be born again to enter Heaven? Use any scripture you know to answer.

Must be born of Spirit, not flesh. See **1 Corinthians 15:50-56**. I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God...

7. Many point to John 3:5 to say baptism is necessary to be born again. Do you feel this is true? Explain, using any scripture you know.

No. **Ephesians 2:8-9** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. The thief on the cross not baptized- **Luke 23:43**-Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." John 3:5 possibly means "Born of water" understood as natural birth at the time, or I like born of water meaning spiritual cleansing, like in **Hebrews 10:22**.

8. Knowing that as we share our testimonies, we bare testimony to Jesus, won't you share your re-birth experience?

Personal. For me, coincidentally, in a hospital, St. Ann's, just told of my heart disease, having no control, and not knowing what to do, I talked to God gave my life to Jesus, and learning the new heart I needed was one for Jesus! I felt God's embrace that night.

Lesson:

(Being born again is not a natural birth, it is supernatural!)

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LESSON 3-OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HEAVEN

Where We Lay Up Treasures

Read Malachi 3:10; Matthew 6:19-21, 19:16-22; Luke 12:33-34; Colossians 3:23-24; Hebrews 11:25-26; James 2:5

9. What treasures are amassed on Earth? What treasures are amassed in Heaven?
(See Psalm 103:3-5 & James 1:12)

On Earth= Wealth/ Withholding tithes (Malachi, Matthew(s)), Food & clothes (Colossians), Fleeting pleasures of sin & national treasures (Hebrews), Richness in eyes of world (James). In Heaven= Blessings (Malachi), some sort of treasure/ reward, that never disappears & eternal life (Matthews, Luke & Hebrews), an inheritance from Jesus (Colossians), God's kingdom (James 2), Love & compassion (Psalm), the crown of life (James 1)

10. What happens to the treasure that are amassed on Earth? What happens to the treasures that are amassed in Heaven? (See Ecclesiastes 2:21; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

Treasures on Earth= moths & vermin destroy, thieves break in & Steal (Matthew 6, Luke), Leave it to someone else when they die, a great misfortune. (Ecclesiastes). Treasures in Heaven= Unstorable blessings (Malachi), no destruction, and no thieves (Matthew 6), Eternal lasting life (Matthew 19), they never fail, no thieves, no moths (Luke), eternal reward (Colossians & Hebrews), Eternal Kingdom (James)

11. How do we lay up treasures on Earth? How do we lay up treasures in Heaven?
(See 1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

Earth= Withhold tithes (Malachi), hoard wealth, and not give to poor (Matthew 19), Heart set on worldly gains (Luke) no sincerity or integrity (Colossians), indulge in pleasures of sins (Hebrews), Richness in the world's ways (James). Heaven= Humility (James), endure disgrace for Jesus (Hebrews), work diligently as if for God (Colossians), Give to the poor, focus my heart on Jesus (Luke, Matthews), give tithes (Malachi)

12. What treasures are you laying up on Earth? What treasures are you laying up in Heaven?

Personal. For me: Earth= my family; Heaven=obedience?

Lesson: _____

(The trinkets of this world are worthless when compared to treasure in Heaven)

Challenge: Live life like someone who has a living hope, because you do!

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LESSON 4-ASPECTS OF PRESENT HEAVEN

Last week we studied man's relationship to Heaven, in the ways people enter into Heaven, like, they must have faith in only Jesus, and be born again, and Heaven is the place where we lay up treasures. This morning we will discuss the aspects of present Heaven, such as Jesus is at God's right hand, war is currently happening, and as unpleasant as it may be, ultimately God's wrath will be sent from there.

Jesus Is At God's Right Hand

Read Psalm 110:1-7; Luke 22:67-71; Acts 7:55-56; Ephesians 1:18-23; 1 Peter 3:21-22

1. What is the significance of Jesus at God's right hand in each of these verses?

Exodus 15:6: He is majestic in Power

Exodus 15:12: The right hand of God is all powerful

Psalm 17:7: God saves by His right hand

Psalm 20:6: God's victory is in His right hand

Psalm 89:13: Jesus is superior to all others

Psalm 138:7: God saves by His right hand

Isaiah 48:13: God created everything by His right hand, Jesus

2. What work does Jesus do from God's right hand?

Rule in the midst of His enemies (Psalm) He is the head over His church, with all things under His feet, in His authority (Ephesians), has power & authorities in submission to Him (1 Peter)

3. What does knowing that Jesus is at God's right hand mean for believers?

We have a great high priest in the order of Melchizedek (Psalm), we have a great Hope, and great strength in Jesus (Ephesians), He has power and authority from there, with angels submitting to Him (1 Peter)

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LESSON 4-ASPECTS OF PRESENT HEAVEN

4. What are you doing in submission to our Lord at God's right hand? What could you better do in submission?

Personal. For Me, I am good at submitting to God's will in my gift of the Spirit, leadership, and teaching, but I could do better at putting all I learn in to action.

Lesson: _____

(Jesus is God's mighty one at His right hand, awaiting the day of His return!)

War Occurs There

Read Job 1:6-12; Daniel 10:10-14 Ephesians 6:10-13; Revelation 12:7-12

5. What are the parts of the "full armor of God", and what does each represent? Which piece interests you the most? Why? (See Ephesians 6:14-17)

Belt of truth around waist (refers to the truths of Scripture as opposed to the lies of Satan & truth serves as a belt, holding together the full armor of God, is our personal commitment to truth); Breastplate of righteousness (covers the heart and shields it and the other vital organs, It is Christ's righteousness—not our own righteousness—that covers and protects us); Shoes of the gospel (Satan will try to place obstacles in our path, but in Jesus' strength we can walk forward, following our Lord, obeying Him, and advancing the gospel); Shield of faith (When Satan attacks with doubts, the shield of faith turns aside the blow. When temptations come, faith keeps us steadfast in following Jesus. We are able to withstand all the devil's fiery darts, because we know whom we have believed); Helmet of salvation (When we are certain that we are in Christ with our sins forgiven, we will have a peace that nothing can disturb); Sword of the Spirit —*interests me most (the only weapon of offense, God's Word—the Bible—is described as "living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12), The sword of God's Word both protects us and destroys our enemy—the devil and his temptations, this is why it is so important that we study the Bible and become familiar with its truths and its power.

6. When was the war in 3rd Heaven decided? What happened afterward? (See Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12; Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Peter 5:8)

When Satan and all his angels who followed him were hurled from Heaven. Satan now rules the Earth, kingdom of the air, prowling around looking for someone to devour.

7. Do you think Satan is right, about what he said to God in Job 1:9-11, can one still love God when all outward signs of God's care and protection have gone away? Do we (you) follow God for what is in it for us (you), or do we (you) truly love God? Explain your answer.

No Satan is wrong, Yes we can love God with nothing, Mother Teresa, among others have done so. Personal. For me I believe I love God truly, since I have less "things" now, but am at more peace, and am different, than I was before, because God loved me, so I can now love too. (1 John 4:19)

WHAT GOD'S WORD SAYS ABOUT HEAVEN

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LESSON 4-ASPECTS OF PRESENT HEAVEN

8. How does knowing the war in Heaven is over, but the battles on Earth continue today for souls, and Satan is plotting against you, affect your faith? How will it affect your witness to others?

Personal. For me, all of my faith has to be in Jesus, as He intercedes for me in Heaven, against Satan's lies. It motivates my witness, I want those around me to know the cure for all that ails us on Earth, and for an eternity, Jesus!

Lesson: _____

(War in Heaven is under God's control, He has already won!)

God's Wrath Comes From Heaven

Read Genesis 6:1-13, 7:11-24; Deuteronomy 9:7-21; Ezekiel 25:17; Romans 1:18-20, 2:5, 8-9, 5:9; John 3:35-36; Revelation 19:11-16

9. How does someone arouse God's wrath? (See also Luke 12:9-10)

Wickedness (Genesis), Worship idols (Deuteronomy), rejecting Jesus (John), Suppress the truth by wickedness (Romans), Blaspheme the Holy Spirit (Luke); Neglect your neighbor, and the needy (Luke 16:20-25, or Matthew 22:38-40)

10. How does someone avoid God's wrath? Use any scripture you know

Be credited as righteous by God (Romans 4:20-25); trust only in Jesus (John 14:6); Be obedient to God (Ephesians 5:6); Praise and worship God only (Isaiah 8:9)

11. What is the difference between Godly testing, and God's wrath? (See also Hebrews 12:4-6; 1 Peter 4:12-19)

Testing is meant to draw believers nearer to God, thru trusting Him in the test (1 Peter) God's wrath is far worse, it is filled with torment, destruction (Genesis, Deuteronomy) and death (Genesis, John, Revelation), against sin, and His vengeance on the sinful (Ezekiel).

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12. Why does God, who is love, have to reveal His wrath? How are you preparing to escape God's wrath? (See also 1 Corinthians 3:7-21)

To eradicate the sin that is in all the earth now, of those not under the righteousness of Jesus, to create the New Heaven & the New Earth for eternity. Build my foundation on Jesus, and not be wise in the things of Earth, but only of what God teaches me, thru bible studies, and in time with Him in prayer, and at worship.

Lesson: _____
(Though perceived negative, God's wrath has always been against those who are against Him)

Challenge: Praise God, His love endures forever!!

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LESSON 5- WHAT HEAVEN WILL BE LIKE

Last week we talked about the aspects of present Heaven like, Jesus is at God's right hand, war has occurred there, and continues on Earth today, and God's wrath will come from there. Now, we will delve in to more pleasant discussions of what new Heaven is going to be like. It will be free from sin, death, and sorrow, it is eternal, and indescribably beautiful.

Free From Sin, Death, & Sorrow

Read Psalm 30:3-5; Isaiah 25:7-9; 35:3-10; John 11:24-26; 1 Peter 1:1-9; Revelation 21:4, 27

1. Some may argue that Satan sinned in Heaven, and Adam, and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, both formerly sinless states created by God, so how can we know that Heaven, and will be sinless? What do you say to this? Use any scripture to explain your answer.

Scripture emphasizes that Christ died once to deal with sin and will never again need to die (**Hebrews 9:26-28; 10:10; 1 Peter 3:18**). We'll have the very righteousness of God (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). We won't sin in Heaven for the same reason God doesn't: He cannot sin. Our eternal inability to sin has been purchased by Christ's blood. Christ promises on the New Earth, "There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (**Revelation 21:4**). Since "the wages of sin is death" (**Romans 6:23**), the promise of no more death is a promise of no more sin.

2. What do you imagine life in Heaven will be like, with no sin, death or sorrow? Use any scripture to answer.

There will be work, God is a creator, and He works. (John 5:17) In his defense Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.", instruments of work are implied: "They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks" (Micah 4:3), If there is work, it will not seem like it, as the quality of workers and the workplace will be fully restored. No corrupt leaders, workaholism, unemployment, sexual harassment, racial discrimination, greed, exploitation of workers, etc., that exist in a fallen world. "The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, the Lord will be your everlasting light...(Isaiah 60:19-21). We will probably eat and drink too, since the NT indicates in the book of Revelation that we all drink and eat of fruit.

3. How can you be sure that there is no death in Heaven? Use any scripture.

1 Corinthians 15:26 says "The last enemy to be destroyed is death." **Revelation 21:4** says '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.'" **1 Peter 1:3-5 Praise to God for a Living Hope** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through *the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade*. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. **Philippians 1:21** says For to me, to live is Christ and *to die is gain*.

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LESSON 5- WHAT HEAVEN WILL BE LIKE

4. What is our rejoicing based on? When do we/ you tend to rejoice more than other times?

We have a living Hope in Jesus, who is alive! (1 Peter) Personal. For me I rejoice more at church, or when things are going good, but not so much when I am alone, or things are not going so well.

Lesson:

(The things of this world are fleeting, but Jesus is preparing eternity for believers)

Righteous New Heaven

Read Psalm 71:19-21; Matthew 6:31-34; Romans 3:9-26; Ephesians 4:22-24; Galatians 2:20-21; 2 Peter 3:13; 1 John 1:9

5. What is the definition of Righteousness? How can anyone hope to be righteous? Use any scripture to answer.

Being made right in God's eyes, by faith, in response to His grace. **Romans 4:3, 5, 9-11, 13, 21-25**= Abram faith credited to him as righteousness by God. **1 John 1:9**= If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. **Psalm 32:1-2**= David made righteous when transgressions forgiven by God. **Ecclesiastes 7:20**=Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins

6. When does eternity begin for believers? When are believers made righteous? How do you know?

Isaiah 61:10a tells us "I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness," So eternity begins at rebirth, and **Philippians 3:9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

7. How are believers to seek after God's Kingdom, and His righteousness?

Matthew 6:34= Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. **Psalm 55:22**= Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken. **Philippians 4:6**= Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **Hebrews 11:6**=And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. **2 Chronicles 15:12**=They entered into a covenant to seek the Lord, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and soul.

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LESSON 5- WHAT HEAVEN WILL BE LIKE

8. How are you living out your eternity in righteousness, right now? (See Hebrews 11:1-40)

Personal. For me, not well, as I write this I am literally worrying about tomorrow, Praise God for His word, which reminds & sustains me! With assurance of what I do not see

Lesson: _____

(Righteousness can only be obtained through faith in Christ & will be fulfilled in Glory in Heaven)

Beautiful New Heaven

Read Psalm 27:1; John 12:35-37; Revelation 21:15-27

9. How does the Bible describe the light of God? (Use any scripture)

Genesis 1:4-God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. **Psalm 50:2**-From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth.; **Psalm 76:4**-You are radiant with light, more majestic than mountains rich with game. **Isaiah 51:4** "Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: Instruction will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations; **Psalm 105:39**-He spread out a cloud as a covering, and a fire to give light at night; **Habakkuk 3:4**-His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. **Matthew 17:2**-There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. **1 Peter 2:9**-But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

10. When have you experienced earthly darkness?

Personal. For me, in Phoenix, literally, parked under a street light, intoxicated, going to son's baseball game, after getting a tattoo, didn't really think of this until after I became Jesus', but it was dark there under that light.

11. What does the gold of Heaven recall? What do the precious stones of the foundation recall? What lesson do you get from these recollections?

Gold (& cubic shape) recalls the main material of the temple (1 Kings 5-7). The precious stones recall the stones of the High priest breastplate (Exodus 28). Lesson-Everything God does on Earth has meaning, and believers will be priests in God's Holy temple, New Jerusalem, or the use of precious stones & transparent gold, conveys the indescribable beauty & perfection of God Himself, and The description of riches is to convey the point that God's presence has infinitely more value than anything this world has to offer.

12. What are you looking forward to in Heaven?

Personal. For me, to be in the beautiful, indescribable, all loving presence of God.

Lesson: _____

(Our minds can't begin to conjure up just how brilliant & beautiful Heaven is)

Challenge: Enjoy life as a child of God, despite all the trials, Heaven awaits!!!

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LESSON 6-HELL

Over the past five weeks we learned what God's word says about Heaven, However, we cannot end our study without first understanding Heaven's opposite, Hell, in Hebrew Sheol (grave), or Greek Hades, which, as a subject, is mentioned more times in the Bible than Heaven. This morning we will find that Hell is real, and is a place of punishment, and there are hints of Hell in the Old Testament, and the New Testament gives us some frightening descriptions as well. May the reality of what we learn today, stir in us an urgency to share the gospel with everyone!

A Place of Punishment

Read 2 Peter 2:1-21; Revelation 14:9-11; Matthew 10:11-15; Revelation 21:8

1. Who do these verses say will endure eternal punishment in Hell?

Fallen angels, beast and his false prophets and those who follow him, and wicked humans who reject Jesus.

2. What aspects makes Hell a place of punishment? Use any verses you may know.

Separation from God for eternity (Matthew 25:46); Torment Revelation 20:10); Everlasting fire (Isaiah 33:14); Darkness (2 Peter 2:4) Terror (Jeremiah 48:43); Can see Heaven (Luke 16:19-31)

3. How can a God of love, send people to such a place as Hell to be punished forever? (See 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, Luke 19:10, John 3:17-21, 2 Peter 3:9)

God is Love, He does not want anyone to go to Hell, so He is patient with us (2 Peter), He gives all the opportunity to know Jesus' gospel (1 Thessalonians), and man's decisions send them to Hell (John)

4. What is the believer's call to help people avoid eternal punishment? What are you doing to help those you know & love?

The great commission (Matthew 28:18-20); Personal. For me living out God's will in my life, that others can see the change in me, and prayer, that God would draw them to Jesus.

Lesson: _____

(Those who accept Jesus' gospel go into eternal joy, those who don't eternal punishment)

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LESSON 6-HELL

Hints of Hell in the Old Testament

Read Deuteronomy 32:22; Psalm 49:10-15; Job 24:21-24; Isaiah 14:15, 66:24; Daniel 12:2

5. Was Hell a part of what God intended from the beginning of His creation? How do you know? Use any scripture you know to support your answer.

God called His creation Good in the beginning (Genesis 1:31), Hell was prepared later for Satan and his angels (Matthew 25:41)

6. How do these Old Testament verses hint at Hell?

The realm of the dead below (Deuteronomy), Decay in the grave (Sheol) (Psalm 49), They are brought low (Job), realm of dead/pit (Isaiah 14), unquenched fires (Isaiah 66), lie in shame, everlasting contempt (Daniel)

7. What is revealed about God from the hints of Hell in the Old Testament?

He is unchanging, His wrath will be revealed one day. He is all powerful, and His timing is perfect, He is eternal. He is the same today as He was in the OT.

8. What does God's wrath, from the Old Testament, reveal to you about those destined for hell? How does this motivate you to tell others about Jesus? (See Ezekiel 20:33-38)

God will execute judgement face to face, purging the rebels, and those who revolt against Him. Personal. I can't imagine anyone facing God's wrath face to face, look to Jesus as the example on the cross, except God turned away from Him.

Lesson: _____

(Hell was not a part of God's plan in the beginning, but it is the end now)

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LESSON 6-HELL

Descriptions of Hell in the New Testament

Read Matthew 8:12, 10:28, 18:8; Luke 16:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; Jude 6, 7, 13; Revelation 20:15, 21:8

9. How does the New Testament describe Hell?

As a dark dread full place, full of weeping & Gnashing teeth (Matthew 8), where the body & soul are destroyed (Matthew 10), with eternal fire (Matthew 18), full of torment (Luke), separated from God in everlasting destruction (2 Thessalonians), with chains, fire, & everlasting darkness (Jude), a lake of fire & 2nd death (Rev)

10. How do these descriptions move you to confess & repent of your sins, and draw near to God?

Personal. For me, God has worked on my heart, and in His grace bought me into His presence, and now that I have tasted his love, I don't want to evr be out of His presence, so when I recognize my sin, I immediately confess & repent.

11. How do these verses give you a picture of how serious God takes sin? (See Ezekiel 33:11)

God does not wish for anyone to die & go to Hell, but it is a decision each person must make. Personal. For me, with these kinds of punishments for sin without forgiveness in Jesus, tells me God takes sin as a matter of life and death, very seriously!

12. Do you know someone who needs to know that Hell is real, and indescribably miserable? What are you going to do about it?

Personal. For me, yes, unfortunately, I probably, will continue to not say anything, despite the fact I know I need/have, been called to.

Lesson:

(Hell is real, eternal, and with indescribable darkness & misery, apart from God)

Challenge: How will you express to others that all the powers of Hell will never conquer the church that Jesus Christ has established?