

God's Heaven Literally Brought Down to Earth by God's Son

by Ian Paisley

The sermon explains that heaven is a place of perfection, reflection of Christ's glory, and absence of fear, and that the cross is the power that saved us from hell and will keep us sinless in heaven for all eternity.

Duration: 31:04

Scripture: Matthew 17:1-6, Luke 9:28-36

Topics: "Heavenly Hope", "Salvation Through Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the significance of the number nine in the Bible, representing completeness. He explains that heaven is the ultimate completeness, and likens it to a building with length, breadth, and height. The preacher then turns to the passage in Luke's Gospel where Jesus is transfigured on the mountain, highlighting the selection of Peter, James, and John to witness this event. He encourages the audience to rejoice in the hope of heaven and urges those who have not yet started their journey to seek salvation through the cross.

Transcript

Quickly up the Bible in front of you, in the pure, the authorised version in the English language, of the Holy Word of God. We're turning to Luke's Gospel, Chapter 9, the ninth chapter of Luke's Gospel. And we're commencing our reading at verse twenty-eight, and concluding our reading at the verse thirty-six.

The ninth chapter of Luke's Gospel, and verse twenty-eight. And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.

And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep, and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias, not knowing what he said.

While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him. And when the voice was passed, Jesus was found alone.

And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen. And God will bless his holy work, and seal it to our hearts with his divine stamp of approval. Turn with me in your Bible today to the portion of scripture which we read together from the ninth chapter of Luke.

I was greatly struck the other day in my own personal Bible reading, that in the Gospels, through the revelation of the life story of Christ that is told in the Gospels, every great Christian doctrine, and every great Christian truth is one way or another set down in simple form in Christ's own life. Now a lot of people have questions about heaven. I have many people who talk to me and ask me questions about heaven.

But in the record of the transfiguration of Christ, you have every question about heaven. Because the transfiguration of Christ is heaven in microcosm, as we shall see. The Bible is truly an inexhaustible book.

It has no challenger. It has no peer. It has no rival.

In its own place it is amongst all books the King of kings and Lord of lords. There is none like it. Every great doctrine, every great happening, and every great proof of the Bible, as I have said, is found simply pictured, typified, and expounded in some incident in the life of the Redeemer.

In this mysterious and miraculous transfiguration, the Son of God brings God's heaven, literally, down to God's earth. We learn here nine great truths about heaven, and nine is a very important number in the Bible. It is the number of completeness.

If you want to know the completeness of this building, you need three numbers. You need its length, and its breadth, and its height. And then if you multiply them, you get the cubic capacity of the building, the completeness of the building.

The only true and living God is three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. But three multiplied by three is nine. And nine is completeness multiplied by three.

And that's what heaven is. Heaven is completeness. Complete joy multiplied.

That's why the Bible says, I have not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, but God has prepared for those that love him. Look with me at this portion of Scripture in the ninth chapter of Luke, and you will find here, first of all, the elevation of heaven. Heaven is God's mountain.

If you go to the book of Revelation, he took John to the great mountain and showed him heaven. It is the great mountain city of God. He carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

How does the Holy Spirit describe the setting of the scene of the transfiguration? Matthew 17, 1, he bringeth them up into a high mountain apart. Mark 9, 2, he leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves. And in Luke 9, he went up into a mountain to pray.

Note the elevation. It is strange, but it is true. No one knows where the mount of transfiguration was.

The name of the mount is not mentioned. Other mountains are mentioned in regard to our Lord's stay upon this earth, but this mountain is not mentioned. In fact, when Peter refers to it in his own epistle, he calls it the holy mount.

When I visited the holy land, there was a man there, and I was at the mount Tebar. And he said, you know, this is the mount that the Lord Jesus Christ was transfigured on. He was talking nonsense, because that is not in the Bible.

That is only tradition. It is interesting to note that I have not seen, hear, have not heard, neither have I entered into the heart of man, but God has prepared for those who love Him. And no one can go to a place in Jerusalem or in the holy lands today and say, this is the mount of transfiguration.

It was only three men who were shown where that mountain was, and that was John and James and Peter. Heaven's elevation. Thank God one day the elevated city of God is going to come down from heaven.

And for the first time since the fall, heaven and the city of God is a peculiar city, because its length and its breadth is the same as its height. How high is the city of God? It is as high as it is long, and it is as high as its expanse on earth, its width is concerned. So it puzzles me.

It is bound to puzzle me. You know, it will take you all eternity, which never ends, to discover the fullness of heaven. When you get to heaven, there will be something new you will be finding out about heaven every day, because the Bible says he leads his dear children along.

From fountain to fountain we then shall be led. Notice, secondly, heaven and its selection. On the seventh day, after six days, the seventh day, Matthew 17, one, Peter, James and John and his brother went into this mountain.

But Luke changes the number of days, and Luke tells us about eight days it came to, about eight days after these sayings. So Luke measures from a different point, a different point of measurement. He talks about after the Lord saying something, then there was the eight days.

The seventh day is the Sabbath day. God's everlasting Sabbath, that's what heaven is, because I read in the book of Hebrews it's called the saints' everlasting rest. But how do we get to the everlasting rest? We get to the everlasting rest through the resurrection.

On the eighth day is the resurrection, so we are going to go by resurrection. And those who abide until the Lord's coming, they are going to have the resurrection changed. They may not go into the grave, but their bodies are going to have the resurrection changed.

And we who are dead shall rise and be with him forever. The resurrection of Christ is the only basis of the entrance of Adam's fallen race into heaven. And there is perfect rest in heaven.

It's an old hymn written by a great preacher. I was reading it this past few days, and it goes like this. There's a land far away amid the stars, we are told, where they know not the sorrows of time.

For the pure waters wander through valleys of gold, and life is a treasure. It is the land of our God. It is the home of the soul, where ages of splendor eternally roll, where the war-weary traveler reaches the goal on the evergreen mountain.

Our gaze cannot soar to that heavenly land, but our visions have told of its bliss, and our souls by the breeze from its gardens are found when we faint in the deserts of this land. And we sometimes have longed for its holy repose, when our spirits are torn with temptation and woes, and we're drunk from the tide of the river that flows from the evergreen mountains of life. Oh, the stars never tread the blue heaven, but we think where the ransom hath trod, and the day never smiles from its palace of light, but we feel the bright smile of our God.

We are traveling homeward through changes and gloom, to a kingdom where pleasures unchangingly bloom, and our guide is the glory that shines through the tomb from the evergreen mountains of life. Resurrection morn is on the eighth day. Yes.

But look again at this record, and you'll find heaven's perfection. Something happened to our Lord, an amazing happening. He was transfigured before them.

Matthew 17.2. Mark 9.3 says, His raiment became shiny, exceedingly white as snow, so as no fuller on earth could whiten it. His raiment was white and blistering. This must have been a tremendous change in the person of our Lord.

That day as the apostles looked at Him, they saw a different Jesus. They saw someone who was changed. A change came over the divine person of the Son of God.

And what does it say in that record we read? They saw His glory. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory. But we only behold it in a glass darkly.

But there's coming a day when it'll be a face to face experience of the glory of the Lord. And because of that, the Christians will be conformed to the image of the Son of God. And you will be changed forever in your person.

Oh, we'll still have this body, this vile body resurrected that will still be the same body that we lived in on earth. But thank God there's going to be change. It's going to be made like His glorious body.

Oh, what heaven must be like where Christ is seen in all the glory of Emmanuel's life. But look with me again, and you will notice we find forthly heaven's reflection. Heaven is the reflection of our Lord Jesus.

Where Jesus is, tis heaven there. I was reading recently one of Spurgeon's sermons, and he was telling of an old preacher who lay dying. And a lot of preachers gathered around the bed, and they thought the old man was unconscious.

So they started to argue about heaven. And one said, oh, won't it be great to stand under the jasper walls of heaven? What is jasper anyway? And they had a whole argument about that. Then another man, he said, now, no, I want to see those great chunks of gold.

He must have come from Palomino, that fella. And I want to see those great chunks of gold in heaven. And so they went on, and the preacher was stirred in the bed.

He said, I don't want to see jasper walls. I don't want to see the great pieces of gold in the streets. I don't want to see even the river of life.

I want to see my Jesus. Why? For Jesus is. Christ was reflected.

It says in Mark 16, 12, after that, his resurrection, he appeared in another form unto two of them. As they walked in the country, they want to see the final form, the glory of his everlasting personage in the glory of Emmanuel's land. The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear bridegroom's face.

I will not gaze on glory, but on the King of Grace. Not at the crown he gifted, but on the pierced hand. The Lamb is all the glory in Emmanuel's land.

Christ's face was shining as the sun. His raiment was as the light. We are told in the book of the Revelation that in God's city the Lamb is the light thereof.

This whiteness and brightness could not be manicured by man. It was white like snow. In fact, it was recorded that no fuller's earth could produce on earth a whiteness like it.

Look again, and you will find the congregation in heaven. People say to me, will we know one another in heaven? Do you think you will be more ignorant in heaven than you are now? Surely you will be much whiter when you get to heaven. And if I know people now, I know them in heaven.

But I am going to tell you something. When you get to heaven, you will know everyone. And you will know all about their life story.

There are no secrets hidden from the people of God in heaven. Everybody knows everyone else. You say, how do you know that? Well, I know that Peter never met Moses.

And Peter never met Elias. But he recognized them. He knew who they were on the Mount of Transfiguration.

And he mentioned them. He said, let us build three houses here. And let us build one for Moses and one for Elias.

In the same miraculous manner, you will know your Savior when you get to heaven. You have never seen Him with the eye, the natural eye. But praise God, you will know Him when you get to heaven.

When we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be. When we all see Jesus, we will sing and shout. Look again, the revelation of heaven.

Heaven will be a place of revealed wonders. Revelation 7, 17, He will lead them to living fountains of waters. Notice Moses and Elias appeared with Christ in glory.

The Savior was attended by two angels when He made His pre-incarnation appearance to Abram way back at Hebron. Two angels guarded this tomb after He had risen. Two angelic messengers revealed themselves after He had gone back to heaven.

But here we have the emphasis on two men. The angels do not get sharing this blessing. This is for men who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

Every part of this literal bringing of God's heaven down to earth is exceedingly important and equally striking. Moses and Elias represent the law and the prophets and they appeared in glory because Christ fulfilled all the law and Christ fulfilled everything that the prophets foretold He would do. Luke 7, these men had a conversation when they met.

What did they talk about? They talked about the decease He would accomplish at Jerusalem. They talked about the cross. And you and I will talk about the cross throughout the countless ages of eternity.

And the song of heaven is about the cross. And the speech of the saints is about the cross. And the whole heavenly furniture is about the cross.

The same as in the tabernacle. And there at the mercy seat will be the sprinkled blood of the Lamb. And we will never get away from the cross.

For the cross was the power that saved us from hell. It is the power that will keep us sinless in heaven for all eternity. And the blood shall never lose its power.

There is power in the blood of the Lamb. They talked about His decease. And actually the literal word in the Greek text there is His exodus.

Because Moses had an experience of the exodus. And Elijah had an experience of the exodus because he was cut up to heaven and the world went. I heard a preacher preaching once how Elijah went to heaven on the chariot of fire.

He never did. The Lord took him to heaven and the world went. The chariot of God's fire stays on earth with the people of God.

And saves, guards the people of God. It never leaves. It is a type of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God shall abide with you forever. You are going to learn more things about the cross than you ever knew when you get to heaven. Oh the wonder of it.

Oh the glory. God forbid that I should glory. See Him on the cross of our Lord Jesus.

Yes, the declaration of heaven. But there is something more. There is something that is not in heaven.

There was something eradicated from the hearts of the three disciples. Do you know what it was? Fear. Jesus touched them and said arise and be not afraid.

There is no fear in heaven. There can't be any fear in heaven because perfect love casts out all fear. And heaven is perfect love.

So there is no fear there. So you need not worry. People often say to me, what will happen when you die? Will you worry? No, you will not worry.

Because when you die, you will get dying grace. I don't need dying grace this morning. I need preaching grace.

You don't need dying grace. You have got to live for a while longer. You need living grace.

But when you come to die, you will get dying grace. And you will enter heaven forever singing washed in the blood of the Lamb. C.T. Stubb the great missionary said he read about there being silence in heaven for half an hour.

We will see when I get to heaven there will be a riot for eternity. Think of it C.T. Stubb the poor sinner washed in the blood of the Lamb going through the gates of God's city. What a day of rejoicing that is

going to be.

Aren't you glad you are heaven bound today? Aren't you glad you are on the road? Aren't you glad that heaven is your home? Oh may God give us more of heaven in our hearts and make us joyful Christians as we walk the pathway to heaven. And if you have never started my brother, my sister, you can start this morning. Go to the cross, kneel down there and ask God to have mercy on your soul.

And he will save you and you will start for heaven and start singing the happiness of a soul that is washed in the blood of the Lamb. Let us turn in our hymn book.

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