

# The Future Life - a Sermon - 'The Home of the Soul'

by W.B. Dunkum

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*The sermon emphasizes the reality of heaven as a place of eternal rest, joy, and bliss, where we will be with God and experience perfect purity and holiness.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 23:4, John 14:2, 1 Corinthians 2:9, 2 Corinthians 5:1, Revelation 21:4

**Topics:** "Eternal Life", "Heavenly Home"

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## Description

W.B. Dunkum preaches about the longing for our heavenly home, encouraging weary pilgrims to lift up their heads and fix their eyes on the homeland of the soul. He emphasizes the importance of contemplating the afterlife, as it occupies the thoughts of all men, and urges believers to prepare for their eternal home by seeking knowledge and understanding of heaven through the Bible. Dunkum reminds the congregation that heaven is a real place, a place of progression and degrees, where the redeemed will experience eternal joy, fellowship with saints and angels, and the presence of God.

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## Transcript

Lift up your heads, ye weary Pilgrims of earth, and behold the homeland of the soul which is almost in sight. The upturned eye, the expression of the face, the rapidity of your pace proves logically that you are seeking a country. Then forward, Brother Pilgrim, till we commune together in that happy home, and refresh ourselves with realities in a home not made with hands, yes, that heavenly land toward which our yearning hearts are aspiring.

To my mind there is no subject upon which the mind should dwell more frequently, more joyfully and more deeply than that state of existence which lies beyond the grave. Whether acknowledged or not this subject does occupy the thoughts of men. Hope of something better, dread of something worse, is constantly before men. In the busiest hours, in the gayest circles, the fact of our future existence bears heavily upon the spirit. In the midst of the turmoil of life, surrounded by infallible evidences of immortality and going fast and consciously toward an eternal state, man often looks with trembling anxiety beyond this life. The man is in exile on a foreign, shore, but when he leaves the shore of captivity and sails towards home, it becomes more real and he has a greater longing to get there and see for himself, and enjoy the blessings and hospitality of a home life. We are exiles on our way home. Already we are being driven far and fast upon the sea of life. Would it not be wise for us to look anxiously towards a landing place on the eternal

shore?

With the Bible to direct our thoughts, and the Christian hope to inspire our hearts, and with this hope in us we can live in this world and keep in constant view the home of the soul.

This subject does occupy the attention of men. They may not bend over and look into the mysteries of salvation. But they are not satisfied with vague knowledge, they desire to look into it. We should not satisfy ourselves with general knowledge that there is a heaven, but we should make ample preparation to go there ourselves. When we desire to go to a new country to some unknown how much we know about heaven, even though our sources of information seem at first exceedingly scarce. Let us catch every ray of light concerning the future world, in order for us to be intelligent and as comfortable as possible as we journey towards it. Doubtless some friend of earth to whom you were united by the ties of nature has gone on before. Perhaps you visit that sacred spot where their bodies sleep, but you do not attempt to call them back, because they are better off than we. While tears may flow like rain, but with the poet we say--

"Yet again we hope to meet them, When the day of life is passed, Then in heaven with joy to greet them, Where no farewell tears are shed."

Come, thou consistent child of hope, and wipe your tears, and we will read about heaven. "He is not here." "Let the dead bury their dead." Why linger ye about the grave of buried hope? Yonder just ahead is a land where hopes never die. Look up, your reward is before you; the blessed thought of the eternal home will heal all wounds received by the way. Arise and depart in the strength of the Lord, for this is not your rest.

The young may depart, but the old must. Aged Pilgrim, you may expect to soon be there. You have already gone down the hillside of life toward the valley of the Shadow of death. Beloved, lift up your eyes and look! Before you is a land fairer than day. Your eyes are dim to the beauties of earth, your ears are deaf to its exquisite music. Your feet have become weary and tired because of the thorny and rugged way. But behold a better land lies just before you. To read of it is better than pastime while the chariots of Israel tarry. It inspires and comforts as we journey thus by the way. Heaven, Oh! heaven, beautiful heaven. Our Father's house, the home of angels and of all the departed saints who have fallen asleep in Jesus! We shall see apostles, prophets and martyrs and best of all our Savior. There the redeemed will be crowned with starry crowns, eat fruit from the tree of life and drink from the crystal fountain around the throne of God. It will be heaven. The home of all hope, the end of life's weary pilgrimage. Here we dismiss our burdens and forget our sorrows. It is here the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

All Bible readers have born in them intuitively that heaven is somewhere in God's universe. This impression is piously and pleasantly cherished by the learned men of all ages. Neither does the Bible leave us in the dark as to heaven being a locality. "I go to prepare a place for you." Where He is, there we shall be also. We shall be together in the same locality and behold His glory and see Him face to face. Surely we can't but think about a home beyond this life. It is a land of hopes, it is where our treasures are, and to that land we are bound, not only by the powers of faith; but by human ties, yes, because of the dead who died in the Lord. We look that way to a home, a heavenly home, an eternal home, a real habitation, where we shall know one another and be with one another upon terms of intimate friendship. Here upon earth we have a foretaste of celestial joy. We see through the eye of faith the bright landscape of immortal realms. We are cheered in the midst of these low grounds of sin and sorrow, by the dawn of an

eternal morning and we have a desire to depart which is far better. Yet all the days of our appointed time will we wait until our time comes. But we look forward to our home beyond the misty sea, a place unvisited by mortals. Our fancy sees quiet valleys, crystal streams, sparkling fountains and unclouded skies, where the air is filled with odor of unearthly sweetness. It is the home of the weary; it makes life more easy and death more comfortable. The homeland of the soul. Surely this is like heaven to me.

Modern discoveries show that various ideas as to the location of the soul prevails among the inhabitants of earth. Indians have believed that beyond the most distant mountain is a wide river, beyond the river a great country, on the other side of that country a world of water, in those waters are thousands of islands, containing trees and streams of water, and thousands of buffaloes and ten thousands of deer gaze on those hills and in those valleys, and when they die they are persuaded that some great spirit will conduct them to those islands of worlds, the happy hunting ground. Their knowledge being limited of the world in which they live would very naturally suffer their speculation to give them a wrong interpretation of the unknown regions. Being somewhat acquainted with tradition, their attention is immediately directed to heavenly worlds which are still floating like islands in the blue sea of space. It is there they erect their castles of hope, where we question the reality of their existence; and if you follow the Indian on you will doubtless return with new experiences and better contented to remain at home than before. You may for a while walk the difficult paths of speculation but afterward you will be more contented in the divinely illuminated path of revelation.

Who can paint the glorious realities of the world beyond the confines of time? Yet you maybe absolutely sure that it will far exceed anything which the human mind has ever conceived. With love made perfect it is marvelous to live with that experience in view. A little child can love God with all the powers of its limited mind, might and strength; so can the aged with many years of experience and of intelligence and spiritual development. They can perfectly love God and Scriptural holiness in proportion to their capacity. But no doubt the most advanced of all saints that ever walked the earth have at the close of life merely entered upon their eternal career. Always advancing, always growing, always climbing new mountain peaks of new vision, they will be going from strength to strength and from glory to glory while the eternal ages of eternity shall roll. Blessed are the souls that shall overcome in all the conflicts of life by the blood of the Lamb and by the words of their testimony, for their inheritance is in the city of our God. The possibilities of the great hereafter, the blissful existence in the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the fellowship of the dead who died in the Lord, the companionship of angels, and the expectation of seeing Jesus face to face, ought to inspire every honest soul to seek the experience of entire sanctification, which alone fits us for heaven, that we may make sure of all that is offered us in time and eternity through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

Heaven is a place, a real place, a place occupied by God's holy intelligencies, whether principalities or powers, angels or men. The Jews had three heavens. First the region of the air where the birds fly and the clouds move. Second the region of the star spangled concave above us. Third the realms invisible beyond first and second where the Savior dwells. "For where Jesus is 'tis heaven there." It is the abode of the Shekinah of God's presence. Yet it is to be our abode. A place already prepared. "We know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Though the earth may burn beneath our feet, yet we will not sink into perdition, because we have a foundation upon which to stand, and we will not be left without a home in which to live, for He hath prepared for us a habitation, far superior to these frail dwellings of earth; free from the defilements of sin, decorated with the beauty of holiness, wherein dwelleth righteousness. You ask the

question, "Where are the dead?" The poet answers,

"Far from the world of toil and strife, They are present with the Lord."

Some of the most pious and leading denominations teach that the saints pass immediately at death into heaven. We consider it true as taught by the Word of God. And it seems the weight of argument is on this side. It is not the faith of a few but the testimony of the church, that the righteous at death enter that place which is called heaven, where the glorified saints are, the home of angels, to behold the Savior and be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is and shall forever be with the Lord.

We are inclined to look at heaven as a stereotyped condition without attaching to it the idea of degrees and progression. When we maintain that the saint passes immediately at death into heaven, we do not mean that they enter there upon their final condition, in the highest state of perfection, because their actions follow them and will continue their influence until the end comes. But they have entered the place of their final abode. Say, for instance, a child is born into the world; it is in the world, but it is limited in its observation, actions, ideas, capacities and enjoyment, and no doubt each faculty occupies its place symmetrically and in a uniform condition. Analogous to this may be our primary stage of our future celestial history. The child is in the world during its infantile years. But how different is it and how different is the world to it when its faculties are properly developed. So in heaven. The child before self-consciousness appeared, enjoyed an indistinct and floating life, yet very happy, so may it be with our future experience before the resurrection of the body. Wherever we are it will be a preparatory state to prepare us to enjoy heaven itself or more of it as long as the ages of eternity shall roll.

When we pass through dangers both seen and unseen we seldom realize how we are protected by the angels of God. Yet it has been said that when the Jewish economy passed, the ministry of angels came to a close. And that we have a better ministry which is the leading and comforting influence of the Holy Spirit, and that consequently we have no need of angelic service. Another says, "Angels are always abroad in the earth, binding the tares in bundles to burn, and gathering home into eternal barns God's faithful sheaves." The Bible says, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them." What a blessed truth is this! I would to God that we could realize by faith as we pass through this wilderness below that the angel of the Lord will throw His encampment around us. Again, "He shall give his angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways." You may be led in many ways but angels which excel in strength will have charge over you. There is a way of temptation, there is a way of affliction, there is a way of duty and toil, and many ways to make up the Christian's pathway of life. For God leads him as He did saints of old through howling wilderness and sandy deserts, but all the way we are kept by the angel who has charge over us. Josephus says that angels conduct the souls of the dying from the gates of death on to their final abode. When they pass the gates of death there are two ways: one to the right and the other to the left. The unjust are dragged by force to the left for their just punishment. The just are guided to the right and led with hymns sung by angels into the region of light, to the place where the just have dwelt from the foundation of the world.

If heaven is a place distinct from earth as we think it is, then departed spirits will need a guide to conduct them thither. Do we not have angels with us in this untiring way? If so, why should they not go with us all the way? No wonder saints in the dying hour see angels hovering around. Many a saint greets this hour with smiles and an eternal welcome. These spirits are unseen by those who stand around and weep, but seen by those whose spiritual vision becomes bright in proportion as it becomes dim to earth. Christians in the dying hour have raised their hands with unearthly energy saying with joyful triumph, "They have

come." Yes, "They have come." It is the "chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof." They are here to convey the spirit to the God who gave it. Farewell, earth, earthly things and earthly friends! "We are bound for the promised land. "Yes, we are seeking a city which hath foundations, whose builder and ruler is God.

This has been the voice of the church for past centuries. It comes to us through the quiet medium of bygone ages, not the impulse of hurry, but in quietness and calmness. It is the testimony of the church and the testimony of Christian consciousness. This has been her experience through the deep floods and fierce flames of her trials and triumphs. The martyr at the stake, the missionary in exile for Christ's sake, the persecuted, the banished, yes, they all have died in the faith once delivered to the saints, with complete victory and implicit faith in a blissful immortality.

And in that glorious land we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun shine on us any more, for the Lord God is in our midst, He shall feed us and lead us into fountains of living waters and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. "In His presence is fullness of joy, at His right hand are pleasures forever more." There we will continue in perfect purity and unending bliss throughout an endless eternity. In that bright city the streets are gold, the gates are pearl, the walls are jasper. Heaven, our eternal home! No night, no pain, no sorrow, nor crying and the inhabitants shall die no more. The Lord will dwell with us, we will be his people and He will be our God. We shall dwell in this eternal home, share His inheritance, behold His glory and be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness. We shall receive a crown of righteousness, a crown of life, yes, a crown of glory which fadeth not away. It will be grand and glorious, when the redeemed of every kindred, tongue, people and nation shall join in the song of praise to Christ, because He was slain and hath redeemed us to God by His blood. We, with the thousands, yes, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, shall sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing." Their voices of praises to God will be like the voice of many waters and mighty thundering saying, "Hallelujah, our God be praised! .... Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

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