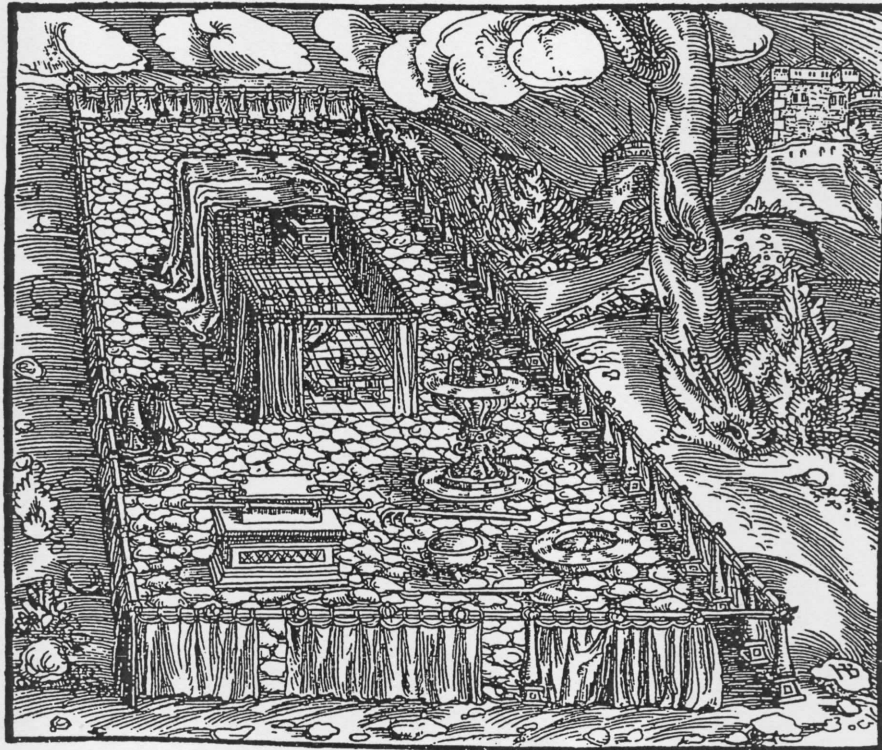


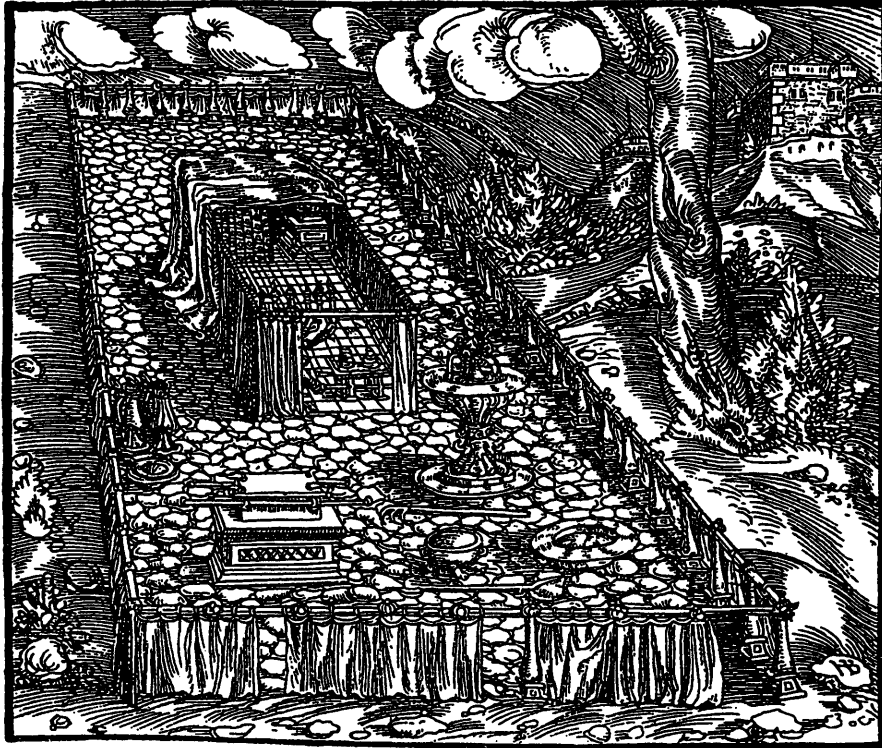
THE OBJECTS IN HEAVEN  
OR  
ARE THERE MATERIAL OBJECTS OR STRUCTURES IN HEAVEN?



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**THE OBJECTS IN HEAVEN**  
OR  
ARE THERE MATERIAL OBJECTS OR STRUCTURES IN HEAVEN?



# THE IMPORTANCE OF A STUDY OF THE SUBJECT OF HEAVEN

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



## 1. Because it is ignored by the Reformers.

The Reformers were more focused on showing the true way to heaven than on being concerned about the nature of heaven.

## 2. Because it is deemphasized in Systematic Theologies.

Most systematic theologies give infinitely more space to hell than to heaven. Noted Presbyterian theologian, William G. Shedd (1835-1894), in his *Dogmatic Theology*, assigns two pages to heaven and 87 pages to eternal punishment.

## 3. Because it is denied by Modern Science.

Modern science has made every effort to do away with the idea of a personal God and thus has no use for heaven or hell.

## 4. Because it is distorted by major denominations.

Most major denominations have slipped into liberalism. Their concept of heaven, as illustrated by men like Robert Schuller, involves a benevolent Father who would not turn anyone away from heaven's gate.

## 5. Because it is twisted by the cults and -isms.

The cults blithely ignore the biblical revelation on heaven and adhere to their founders' perverted view, e.g. Mormonism has believers as gods populate the stars and planets, and multiplied by the millions, for all eternity, totally ignoring the reference to our eternal home in the New Jerusalem on the New Earth, nowhere else.

## 6. Because it is commercialized by supposed visitors to heaven.

Over 100 books and videos relate accounts of individuals who travel to heaven and back. Their accounts contradict each other as well as the information given in the Bible. Some books in this genre are definitely fictional. Alex Malarkey, who co-wrote with his father in 2010 *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*, retracted his story in 2015 with the words, "I did not die. I did not go to heaven."

**7. Because it constitutes the ultimate Christian hope.**

The prospective glories of heaven should be continually and consciously part of the believer's life. The hope of heaven should motivate the believer in his thoughts and actions.

**8. Because it is anticipated by senior saints.**

The farther along life's journey the believer travels, the more his mind concentrates on the time when he is summoned by the Lord to his heavenly home.

**9. Because it is contemplated by grieving Christians.**

Those who have lost loved ones who died in the Lord see their grief greatly assuaged as they contemplate the ecstasy of their departed loved one and the blessed and confident hope of a joyful reunion, perhaps very soon, through death or the rapture. Maranatha!

**10. Because it is misrepresented by evangelical groups.**

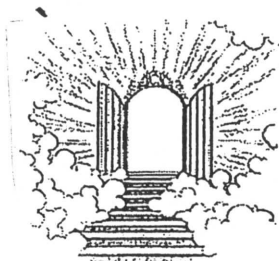
Very few evangelicals make the distinction between the believer's residence in heaven, between death and the resurrection, and the eternal residence in the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven to the new earth (Rev. 21:1-3). Others conflate the conditions predicted for the Millennium with those of the eternal state (e.g. Isa. 11 & 65).

**11. Because it is missing in most Christian conversations.**

Heaven, our future abode, should be part of the believer's daily contemplation and conversation. And yet, can you recollect when you last conversed with someone about heaven? The more the believer knows about heaven, the greater will be his contemplation of that wonderful place.

**12. Because it allows us to live in the calm of eternity now.**

The hope of heaven enables the saint to transcend the troubles of this evil world. The volume, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, (1650), by the Puritan theologian Richard Baxter stresses the beneficent contemplation of heaven now. This volume is considered to be the best on the subject of heaven (and can be downloaded for free).



# THE OBJECTS IN HEAVEN

## OR

### ARE THERE MATERIAL OBJECTS OR STRUCTURES IN HEAVEN?

#### 1A. THE STRUCTURES IN HEAVEN

Although not everyone subscribes to the idea that there are physical structures in Heaven, it is an unavoidable conclusion from the biblical data, that there are physical objects in Heaven. One man, over 170 years ago, correctly summarized the situation. An extensive quotation seems to be in order:

It is plainly declared in scripture that heaven is a locality. It is called a place. "I go to prepare a PLACE for you." The Savior says further, that when this place is prepared he will come again and receive us to himself, that where he is we may be also. Here's a reference to place; WHERE he is we shall be together in the same locality, and that to behold his glory and to see him face to face.

It could not be a suitable abode for the saints, if it were not a local, material heaven. The saints will have bodies. Spirits may, for aught we know, exist differently; but the saints, having bodies, must have material dwelling-places, because they are material. Can the abode of these bodies be less tangible than the bodies themselves? Certainly not. They cannot be suspended in air, or float in space eternally! Though the bodies of the saints will be in some respects, no doubt, greatly changed—for we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trump—and they will be spiritualized in a way now unknown to us, but they will be bodies still. "There is a spiritual body." Job felt confident that he should in his flesh see God. A human being consists of soul and body, the one material and the other immaterial, these two united make the man, and they must therefore be united again in the future world, if the man is to retain his nature. Hence we read, that they that are in their graves shall come forth, and that our vile bodies, as well as our souls, shall come under the transforming power of Christ's resurrection-life, and be fashioned like unto his glorious body . . . Whatever will be the refinement of this immortal man,—but raised in honor, in power, in incorruption, in spirituality, yet it is a body, and must therefore have a local platform, a physical substrata, for its future habitation (*Heaven; or, An Earnest and Scriptural Inquiry into the Abode of the Sainted Dead*, Philadelphia, 1849, 34-35, [emphasis in the original]).

It is sound interpretation to conclude that there are physical beings and physical structures in Heaven.

#### 1b. The tabernacle:

There are repeated references to the fact that when Moses was told to construct the tabernacle in the wilderness, he was shown a pattern or a proto-type in Heaven (Ex 25:9; 26:30; 27:8; Heb. 8:5).

Ex. 25:9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

God told Moses to build the tabernacle “according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount” (Heb. 8:5).

What is certain that what Moses saw was a tangible and material pattern. Moses did not fashion the candlestick after the luminous presence of Christ in Heaven, Who is the light of the world. This is what the candlestick in the tabernacle typified. What Moses saw in Heaven was the drawing of a candlestick or an actual full-scale model.

Sadly, John MacArthur spiritualizes that heavenly tabernacle:

This does not mean that there are actual buildings in heaven which were copied in the tabernacle, but rather that the heavenly realities were adequately symbolized and represented in the earthly tabernacle model (*The MacArthur Study Bible*, note on Hebrews 8:5).

2b. The thrones:

Heaven contains at least two thrones. God the Father is seated on His throne and on His right hand is seated our Savior, interceding for us. Christ is in His physical resurrection body but presumably He is seated, not in mid-air, but on a physical throne.

In Hebrews 8:1, 2 we find a clear reference to that throne. Soon after the Rapture, we catch a glimpse of 24 elders seated on the thrones in Heaven:

**Rev. 4:4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.**

While these individuals are not specifically identified, the 24 elders most likely represent the Church Age saints who are reigning with Christ (Rev. 2:21-22; 5:10, 24; Mat. 19:28; Luke 22:30). They are in their intermediate bodies, seated on literal thrones, as are the Father and the Son (Rev. 3:21).

3b. The temple:

The word “temple” is used repeatedly of God’s abode in the heavens. David writes the following after his victory over the Philistines:

**2 Sam. 22:7 In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.**

John writes in Revelation 11:19 of a spectacular vision of the temple in Heaven:

**Rev. 11:19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.**

While it is possible to spiritualize the temple vision in Heaven, nonetheless in the vision there are pictured physical individuals, possessing physical bodies and seated on physical thrones, it is best to suggest that some kind of physical glorious temple-like structure exists in Heaven.

4b. The heavenly Jerusalem:

The saints' eternal home is being prepared by the Savior in Heaven. Apparently, when the fashioning of the city is completed, the Lord will summon the Bride to her heavenly home.

After the Millennial Kingdom, the city descends out of Heaven to the New Earth (Rev. 21:1-3). John describes the heavenly Jerusalem as a city of enormous dimensions. He describes the foundations, walls, gates, streets, a river and trees. Much of the city might well already exist in Heaven. Each gate of the city is fashioned of a beautiful pearl:

Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

If these details of the city are spiritualized, what, one may ask, is a spiritual pearl?

## 2A. THE SCENERY OF HEAVEN

For additional details of our eternal home, we may scrutinize the text with keen observation.

It is well-known that there are three major steps in Bible study:

- Observation: what is here?
- Interpretation: what does it mean?
- Application: what does it mean to me?

One can observe that most Bible studies or expository messages are very strong on application, weak on interpretation and even weaker on observation. It might be helpful in our study of Heaven to observe, with Rudyard Kipling's *Six Honest Serving Men*, what important details the biblical text of Revelation 7-8 yields.

### Editorial: "Six Honest Serving Men"

August 18, 2019

By  
RICHARD CRAVY  
in EDITORIAL



One of the most significant lessons I have learned about interpreting and teaching the Bible is captured in a small poem written by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). This is not to say that Kipling was specifically writing about the Scriptures at all. Rather, he had begun his career as a journalist, and continued to intermittently work that craft even though he became famous for his books, short stories and poetry.

Since God chose to reveal Himself and His will to us through the seemingly ordinary means of human language and writing, it makes sense that we can understand that revelation using the same principles with which we seek to discern other communications in human language.

# I Keep Six Honest Serving Men

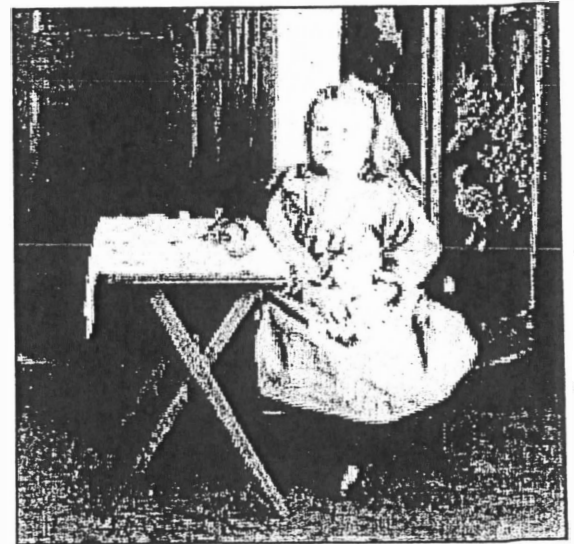
I KEEP six honest serving-men  
 (They taught me all I knew);  
 Their names are What and Why and When  
 And How and Where and Who.  
 I send them over land and sea,  
 I send them east and west;  
 But after they have worked for me,  
 I give them all a rest.

I let them rest from nine till five,  
 For I am busy then,  
 As well as breakfast, lunch, and tea,  
 For they are hungry men.  
 But different folk have different views;  
 I know a person small—  
 She keeps ten million serving-men,  
 Who get no rest at all!

She sends'em abroad on her own affairs,  
 From the second she opens her eyes—  
 One million Hows, two million Wheres,  
 And seven million Whys!

*Rudyard Kipling*

Source: Rudyard Kipling, *Just So Stories* a(1902)



A good description of the tools of a journalist which Kipling was when he began writing.

Written as part of the Just So Stories.

The person small is a reference to his daughter Josephine and her inquisitiveness.

## A Short Comment

*I Keep Six Honest Serving Men* talks about curiosity, and the willingness to continuously learn. The *Six Honest Serving Men* are the questions What, Why, When, How, Where and Who that are constantly asked to ensure understanding. These questions are sent in all directions, touching every topic. But then they are put to rest, and apparently not used at work: *I Let them rest from nine till five / For I am busy then*. Work, apparently, does not demand curiosity, rather busyness.

However, there is someone who has many more of these serving-men, a small child that asks “millions” of questions, never being allowed any rest. The sense of wonder of a child, and her curiosity, can be seen here *from the second she opens her eyes*.

Rev. 7:9-17 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and PALMS IN THEIR HANDS;

<sup>10</sup> And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

<sup>11</sup> And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

<sup>12</sup> Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>13</sup> And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

<sup>14</sup> And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup> Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

<sup>16</sup> They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

<sup>17</sup> For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne SHALL FEED [SHEPHERD] THEM, and shall LEAD THEM UNTO LIVING FOUNTAINS OF WATERS: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

1b. Who?

A great multitude of saved individuals stand before the throne in Heaven. With them are the angels and the 24 elders.

2b. Where?

The multitude stands before the throne of the Father and the throne of Christ in Heaven.

3b. When?

The vision relates to the situation part-way through the Great Tribulation.

4b. How?

During the tribulation period, people from every national and geographical group will be saved. Most likely the scene in Heaven shows the worldwide martyred multitude. Most likely they were saved through the ministry of the 144,000.

5b. Why?

The redeemed worship God and serve Him day and night.

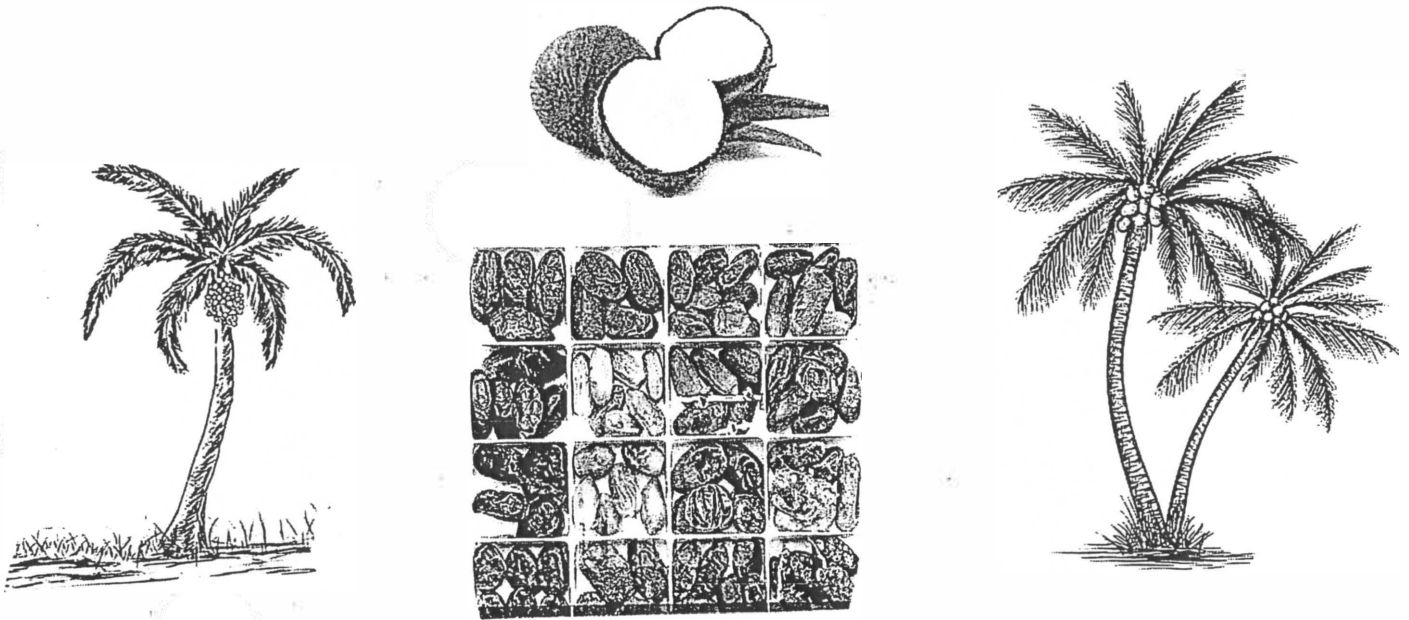
6b. What?

1c. We have here a host of glorified saints carrying palm branches.  
--Either the dead brought them with them to Heaven  
--or—the branches were created in Heaven  
--or—there are palm trees in Heaven from which the branches were taken.

The latter explanation seems to be the best.

2c. Palm trees:

If there are palm trees, they most likely resemble palm trees on earth.



--There are over 100 varieties of coconut palm trees

--There are over 200 different date palm trees.

3c. Food

The saints will be able to eat in their intermediate and resurrected bodies:

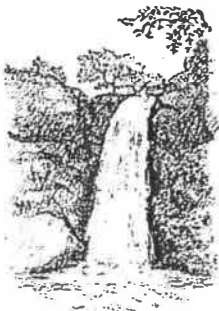
**Rev. 17:17** For the Lamb . . . shall feed them. What a glorious prospect! What might that food be? Since there appears to be actual palm trees in Heaven—both coconut palms as well as date palms—the saints might well enjoy the luscious fruits. If the variety of the trees approximates that of the trees on earth, we may enjoy the fruit from some 100 different coconut trees and over 200 different date palm trees.

4c.

Drink

**Rev. 17:17** [He] shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.

It may be asked whether these are real fountains. Indeed they are! The same word for fountain is used for earthly fountains which are polluted by a star called Wormwood (Rev. 8:11). If those fountains on earth are actual water fountains, so are the ones in Heaven. The juxtaposition of the fountains is remarkable: the saints in Heaven are refreshed by the fountains. The sinners on earth are repulsed by the fountains. While we imagine Heaven to be a





sterilized, holy place with streets of gold and pearly gates, we ignore the details of Scripture.

Thus close observation permits us to conclude that there are palm trees in Heaven, with a great variety of fruit. Situated in the New Jerusalem, and perhaps already existing separately, is the tree of life with a different fruit each month (Rev. 22:1-5), undoubtedly numerous in number, to refresh the multitude of glorified saints.

There is an oblique reference to drink in Paradise. In the account of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the latter is seen reclining in Abraham's Bosom (Lk. 16:22-23). Lazarus, a recent arrival in Paradise, is seen reclining at a banqueting table in the immediate proximity of Abraham where he is afforded a place of honor and dignity.

The rich man observes the banqueting scene and requests some water (Lk. 16:24), obviously one of the beverages at the festive meal.



In fact, Heaven is designated as Paradise. The word, derived from the Persian language, means "a beautiful garden, watered, with lush and varied foliage." Putting all these details together, we may conclude that Heaven is a lush garden, offering spiritual and physical delight to the saints.

Harbaugh shows the similarities between the earthly and heavenly paradise:

If such was Eden, created by God Himself as a fit abode for holy beings, and adapted by His own hands to their purest and highest joys, why should we consider it gross to think of similar scenery in Heaven? Similar—yes, for Paradise on earth is a type of Paradise above; and it must needs be that the pattern of heavenly things on earth, should have some similarity to their substance in Heaven (*Heaven*, 41).

Several authors on books about Heaven suggest that in Paradise we will enjoy the company of animals, especially our pets, whom we loved dearly on this earth. These individuals, like Randy Alcorn and Paul Enns, err in their interpretation of certain passages like Isaiah 11 and 65. The harmony among ferocious animals led by a little child is predicted for the millennial earth, when the curse will be lifted from creation.

While it is true that the Lord and His saints will descend to earth on horseback at the Second Advent, concluding the tribulation (Rev. 19:11, 14), there is nothing to suggest that we will mount these horses already in the Third Heaven.

It seems that Heaven is a lot more beautiful than we can imagine, with natural and supernatural wonders awaiting our arrival. Are you sure of Heaven as your future home?





**Heaven as envisioned by European artists and poets**  
(illustration in a book of poetry by Heinrich Heine)

Tuesday, September 2, 1997

**Subject:** Do animals go to heaven?

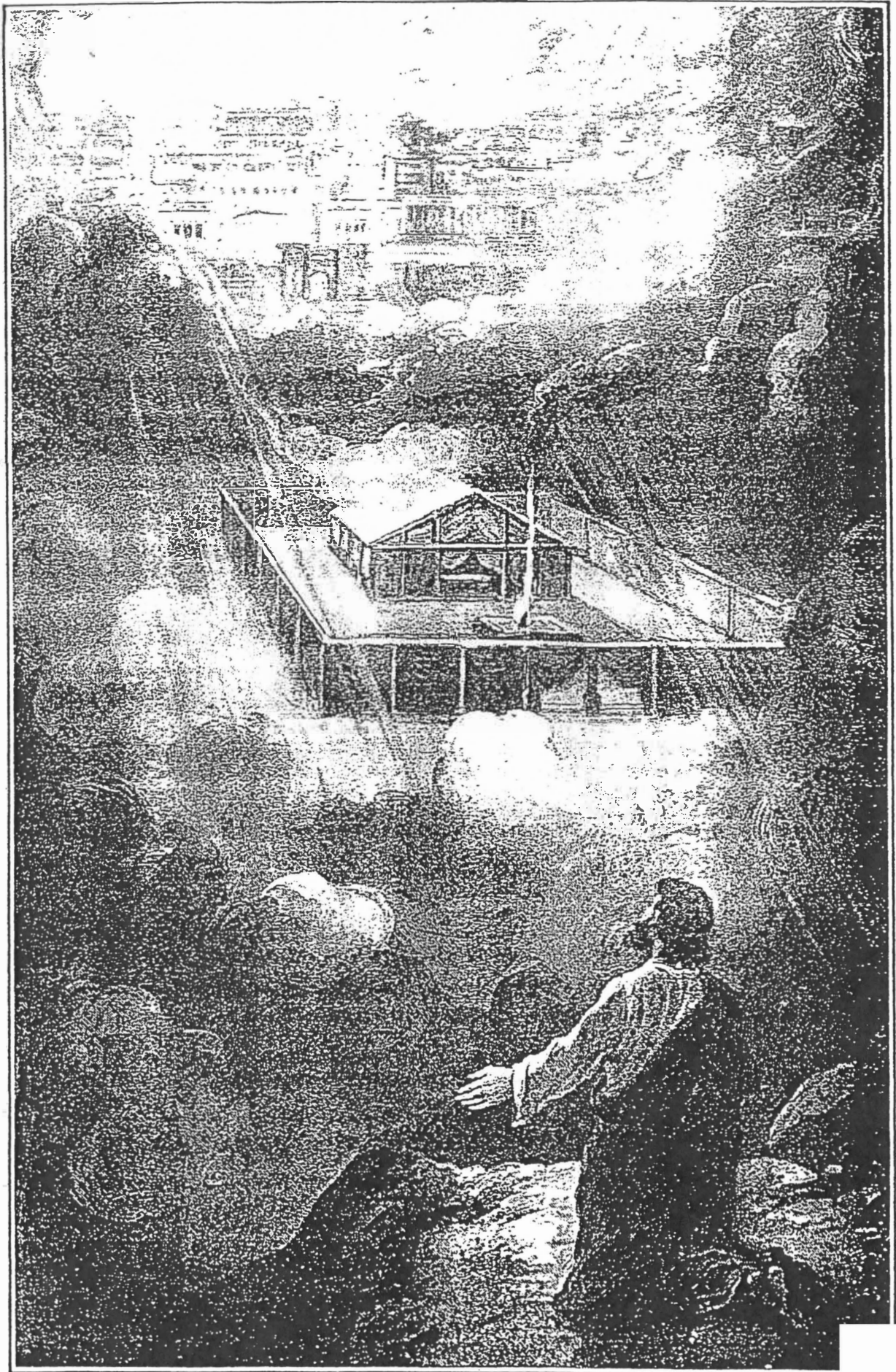
**Dear Dr. Ryrie:** I am a high school Young Life leader. A girl who is an animal rights advocate has asked me these questions: "Do animals go to heaven since they cannot choose salvations?" and "God created all things with equal love, including animals, so why have I always been told that people are more important to God than animals?" I was speechless so I just told her that I would get back to her on that. So I'm asking you what the answers are to these questions. – Christine C.

**Dear Christine:** To my knowledge, there is no record of animals being in heaven, past, present or future. God created animals as part of the original creation which He pronounced as good. They do serve purposes in nature even in the fallen state of this world. For one thing, God gave animals and fish for people to eat after the flood of Noah's time (Gen. 9:2-3). But people are more important to God, for Christ died for human beings, not animals. Animals disobey and need to be punished sometimes, so I presume there is no atonement for their sins as there is for ours. We also know that heaven is a perfect place, with or without animals.

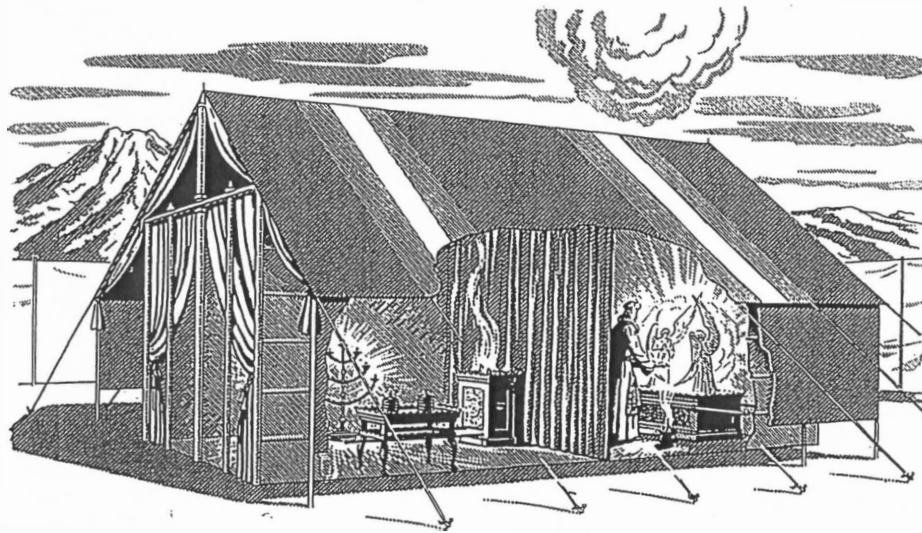
### **Do our pets go to heaven?**

The Bible does not give any explicit teaching on whether pets/animals have "souls" or whether pets/animals will be in heaven. However, we can use general biblical principles to develop some clarity on the subject. The Bible states that both man (Genesis 2:7) and animals (Genesis 1:30; 6:17; 7:15, 22) have the "breath of life"; that is, both man and animals are living beings. The primary difference between human beings and animals is that humanity is made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27), while animals are not. Being made in the image and likeness of God means that human beings are like God, capable of spirituality, with mind, emotion, and will, and they have a part of their being that continues after death. If pets/animals do have a "soul" or immaterial aspect, it must therefore be of a different and lesser "quality." This difference possibly means that pet/animal "souls" do not continue in existence after death.

Another factor to consider regarding whether pets will be in heaven is that animals are a part of God's creative process in Genesis. God created the animals and said they were good (Genesis 1:25). Therefore, there is no reason why there could not be pets/animals on the new earth (Revelation 21:1). There will most definitely be animals during the millennial kingdom (Isaiah 11:6; 65:25). It is impossible to say definitively whether some of these animals might be the pets we had while here on earth. We do know that God is just and that when we get to heaven we will find ourselves in complete agreement with His decision on this issue, whatever it may be.



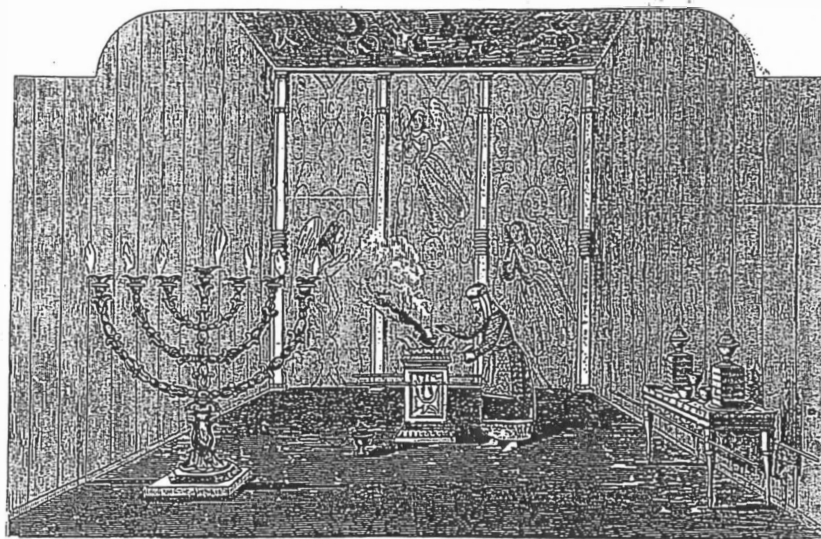
THE LORD SHOWS MOSES THE PATTERN OF THE SANCTUARY IN HEAVEN



This cutaway drawing of the earthly sanctuary shows the location and furnishings of the two apartments, the holy place and the most holy place, and the inner veil that separates them.



THE HIGH PRIEST IN FULL DRESS.



THE HOLY PLACE.