

Heaven: Wonderful City of God

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Introduction

1. The song we sang just a moment ago is one which seeks to express the glory and grandeur of the wonderful city of God prepared for the faithful. [#381 in *Sacred Selections for the Church*. The text was written, and the tune was composed both by James W. Ferrill (1879-1975).]
2. The song reminds us of what will be in heaven that we should desire.

Discussion

I. Stanza 1 emphasizes that City is our home and that Jesus will be there

"There's a wonderful place we call home, 'Tis a city of glory divine; It is built in the garden of rest, And that // beautiful home shall be mine. O that wonderful Eden so blest, Where Jesus the Master has gone To prepare us a glorious home. There He bids us a welcome to come."

A. This world is NOT our home

1. **Heb. 13:14** - "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come"
2. **Heb. 11:13-16a** - "strangers and pilgrims on the earth"
3. **1 Pt. 1:17** - "throughout the time of your stay here in fear" [sojourning - KJV = dwelling as resident aliens]
4. **1 Pt. 2:11** - "as sojourners and pilgrims"
5. The idea? - We SHOULD seem 'out of place' here
 - a. **John 15:18-21** - the world will hate us b/c we are not of the world
 - b. **John 17:9-19** - they are not of the world... not that you would take them out..
 - c. Our citizenship is in heaven (**Phil. 3:20**)

B. There is a city prepared for us

1. **Heb. 11:16** - "He has prepared a city for them"
2. 'Garden of rest', 'wonderful Eden so blest'
 - a. **Gen. 2:8-10 // Rev. 22:1-5**
 - b. **Heb. 4:1, 9-11** - "There remains a place of rest for the people of God..."

C. Jesus has gone to prepare our home there (**John 14:1-3**)

- Ultimately, the glory of heaven is in the presence of God; the reward of heaven is in abiding in that presence. That is what makes heaven so special!

II. Stanza 2 emphasizes that eternal day will be there

"O how sweet it will be there to dwell With the Savior and Father of all, In a palace of diamond and gold, Where no evil to us can befall; There no sorrow that home shall invade, And our loved ones no more there shall die- One celestial, unbroken, sweet day, While eternity's ages roll by."

- A. Not only will Jesus the Savior be there, but also God the Father to whom we will bow like the 24 elders - **Rev. 4:9-11**
- B. 'where no evil to us can befall', 'no sorrow' - It will be a place free from evil, sorrow, and death - **Rev. 21:1-4**
- C. 'One celestial, unbroken, sweet day' - there we shall receive *eternal life* and rest in His presence forever! (**Rom. 6:22-23; 1 Thess. 4:16-17**)

III. Stanza 3 emphasizes that the redeemed of all ages will be there and no need for light because God is the light

"When the jewels of Jesus are brought There to shine in that land of sweet song, What a beautiful, beautiful thought That I shall be there in that throng; Sweetest peace to my soul it will be To behold such a glorious sight, Where the sun and the moon neither shine, But the glory of God is the light."

- A. 'the jewels of Jesus' = those who fear the Lord, Christians (**Mal. 3:16-18**)
- B. 'that I shall be there in that throng' – **1 Thess. 4:16-17**
- C. 'Where the sun/moon neither shine, but the glory of God is the light' – **Rev. 21:22-25**

Conclusion

1. **The Chorus echoes the wonder and beauty of Heaven and the faith we can have of a home there**

*"O wonderful city of God, Just across in that beautiful clime,
Where the angels' sweet echo of song In musical cadencies chime; O wonderful city of God, By
faith in the distance I see There's a mansion prepared over there, Yes, a place in that city for
me."*

2. Hope laid up for the **saints** in heaven – **Col. 1:1-6**
3. Heaven is a final abode for the Righteous
 - a. "a new heaven and new earth in which righteousness dwells" – **2 Peter 3:13**
 - b. We have all sinned and deserve condemnation, but Christ died as a sacrifice for our sins. Obedience to the gospel reconciles man to God and gives him the hope of heaven.
 - c. **Romans 8:16-17** – "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and **if** children, then heirs-heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, **if** indeed we suffer with Him, that we may be glorified together"
 - d. Note the word **IF**. If we are children, then we are heirs. If we suffer with Him, we will be glorified together. Entrance into heaven is **conditional** – based on our adoption as children and our birth in baptism. Hell if the final abode of those who have no relationship with God.
4. Indeed, what a wonderful city of God! Blessed are those who do his commandments (**Rev. 22:12-15**)
5. That great invitation continues today 'Whosoever desires, let him take of the waters of life freely' (**Rev. 22:16-17**)
6. Do you have a place in that city?