

What is Heaven?



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- When does eternal life begin?
- Beauty of Heaven
- Characteristics of Heaven
- Life in Heaven

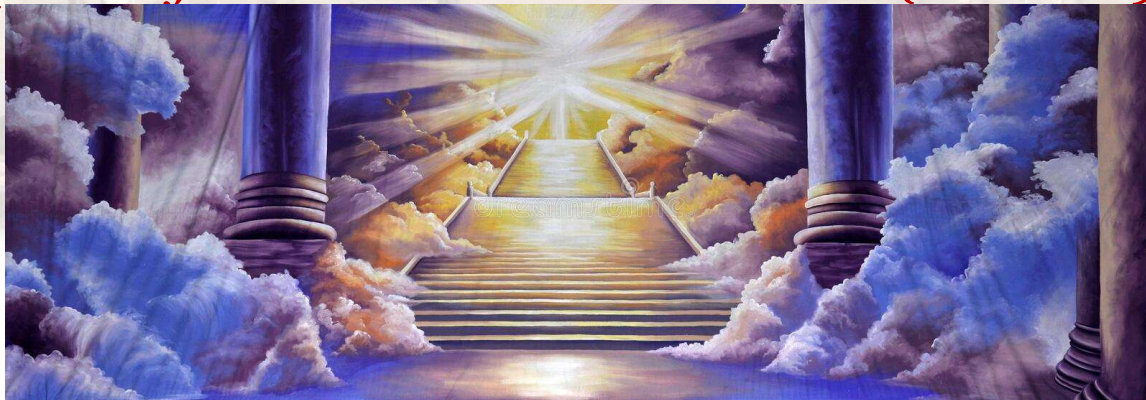
When does eternal life begin?

- † *“We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen!”*
- † *“Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven”*
- † Life on earth: preparation for life in Heaven
 - ✦ *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Matt 3:2)*
 - ✦ Why did God keep the Israelites 40 years in the wilderness before entering Canaan?
 - *They left Egypt with an old nature, full of weaknesses*
 - *They needed to be purified and renewed through different stages:*
 - *Idolatry (golden calf), disobedience (Achan), rebellion (Korah), complaining, ...*
 - *Each time, God taught them a lesson to renew their nature*
 - ✦ We cannot enter Heaven with the corrupt nature
 - *Story: Saint Francis of Assisi and the two thieves*

Beauty of Heaven

† Inexpressible beauty:

- ✠ *“2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven... how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” (2Cor 12)*
- ✠ *“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1Cor 2:9)*



Beauty of Heaven

† Only St. John was able to give us a glimpse of Heaven (Rev 21):



⌘ *“10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God”*

Beauty of Heaven

† *“...having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone” (Rev 21:11)*

✦ The City is glorious because of the glory of He who dwells in it

✦ Its light is from His Light

✦ *“...and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity.” (Exo 24:10)*

✦ *“And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.” (Rev 4:3)*

† *“...and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.” (Rev 21:18)*

✦ St. John is using objects he is familiar with to describe “inexpressible words”

✦ Gold is the most precious object he knows, but obviously the city is more than that because he used many different descriptions

The City: External View

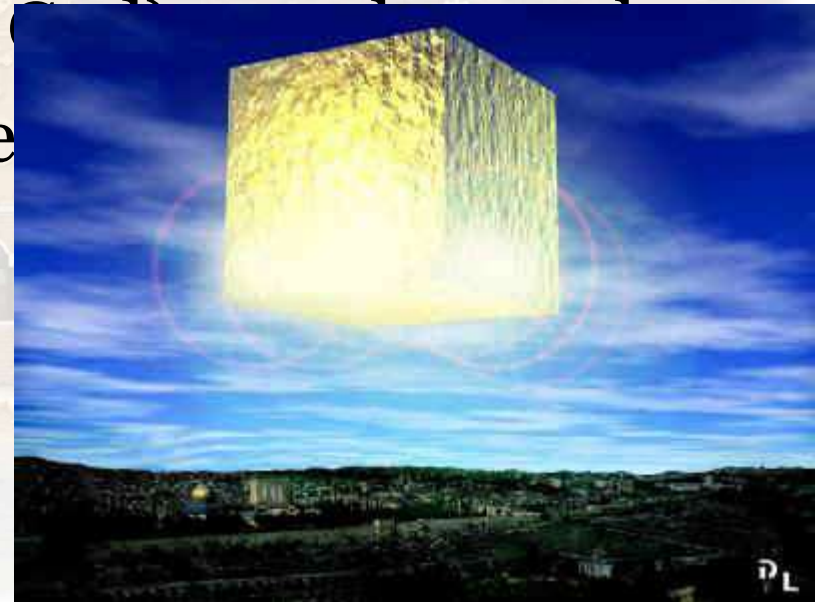
† *“The city is laid out as a square...twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.” (Rev 21:16)*

† It is a cube: symbolizes perfection

⊕ Holy of Holies (throne of God)

⊕ Its dwellers must be perfect

⊕ *“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (Matt 5:48)*



The City: External View

† *“Also she had a great and high wall.” (Rev 21:12)*

⌘ A fortified city, nothing evil can enter

⌘ *“But there shall by no means enter it any-thing that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” (Rev 21:27)*

† *“The construction of its wall was of jasper.” (Rev 21:18)*

⌘ Jasper (diamond): very strong mineral

- *God protects the City by His Power*



Twelve Gates

† “13 Three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.”

⌘ cf Ezk 48:31-34

⌘ God's mercies:

- *The road is narrow (Matt 7);
† the gates are wide and many*
- *Gates in all directions – all are welcome*
- *Angel on each gate – angels serve*

⌘ The acceptance of all believers from all races and directions, into the city where they are protected and served



Twelves

† “12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel

14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones”

† Old Testament church (written), New Testament church (the foundation)

✦ Heavenly church: started in OT, but the foundation is the Apostles, the cornerstone being Christ Himself.

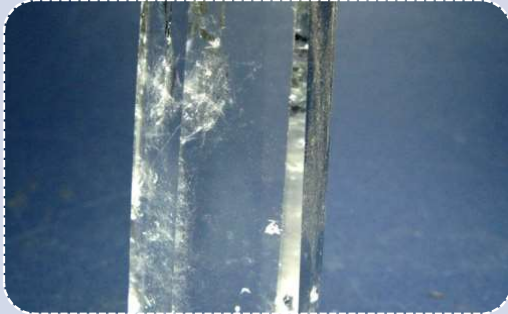
✦ “Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone” (Eph 2:20)

Revelation 21

Ἀνοκ αἰνάσ ἐπὶ κωτ ἡνοπολις / εσοψα ἡνοσβ / χιώνι ἄμνι πικαρταριτη / c εθνεσως	I saw the walls of a city/ covered with gold, / and precious stones and the beautiful jewels.	أنا نظرت إلى بناء المدينة / المصفاة بالذهب ، / والحجارة الكريمة / والجواهر الحسنة.
Ερε Πενσωτηρ θεν τεσμητ :/ εφτχλοα χι ταιο ἡννεθεμει ἄμοφ.	Our Savior is in its midst: / crowning with honor those who love Him.	ومخلصنا في وسطها / يكلل بالكرامة الذين يحبونه.



Foundations



Jasper (quartz) –
يشب

- Transparent white
- Purity, Christ
- Also: Color patterns and formations
- Love (for everyone)



Sapphire –
ياقوت أزرق

- Blue
- Heavenly
- Exalted above earthly pleasures



Chalcedony –
عقيق أبيض

- White
- Purity
- Void of sin

Foundations



Emerald –

زمرد ذبابی

- Transparent Green
- Growth in grace



Sardonyx –

جزع عقیقی

- Reddish zebra-striped with white bands
- Purity through Blood of Christ



Sardius –

عقیق أحمر

- Blood-red
- Redemption
- Redeemed by His Blood

Foundations



Chrysolite -
زبرجد

- Translucent green
- Does not rust
- Does not change nor end



Beryl –
زمرد سلقى

- Calm waters
- Calmness in the City



Topaz -
ياقوت أصفر

- Bright amber
- Enlightenment

Foundations



Chrysoprase -
اسمانجوانی

- Solid Green
- Unbreakable
- Eternity



Jacinth -
جمشت

- Magnetic
- Attraction,
steadfastness in
eternal life

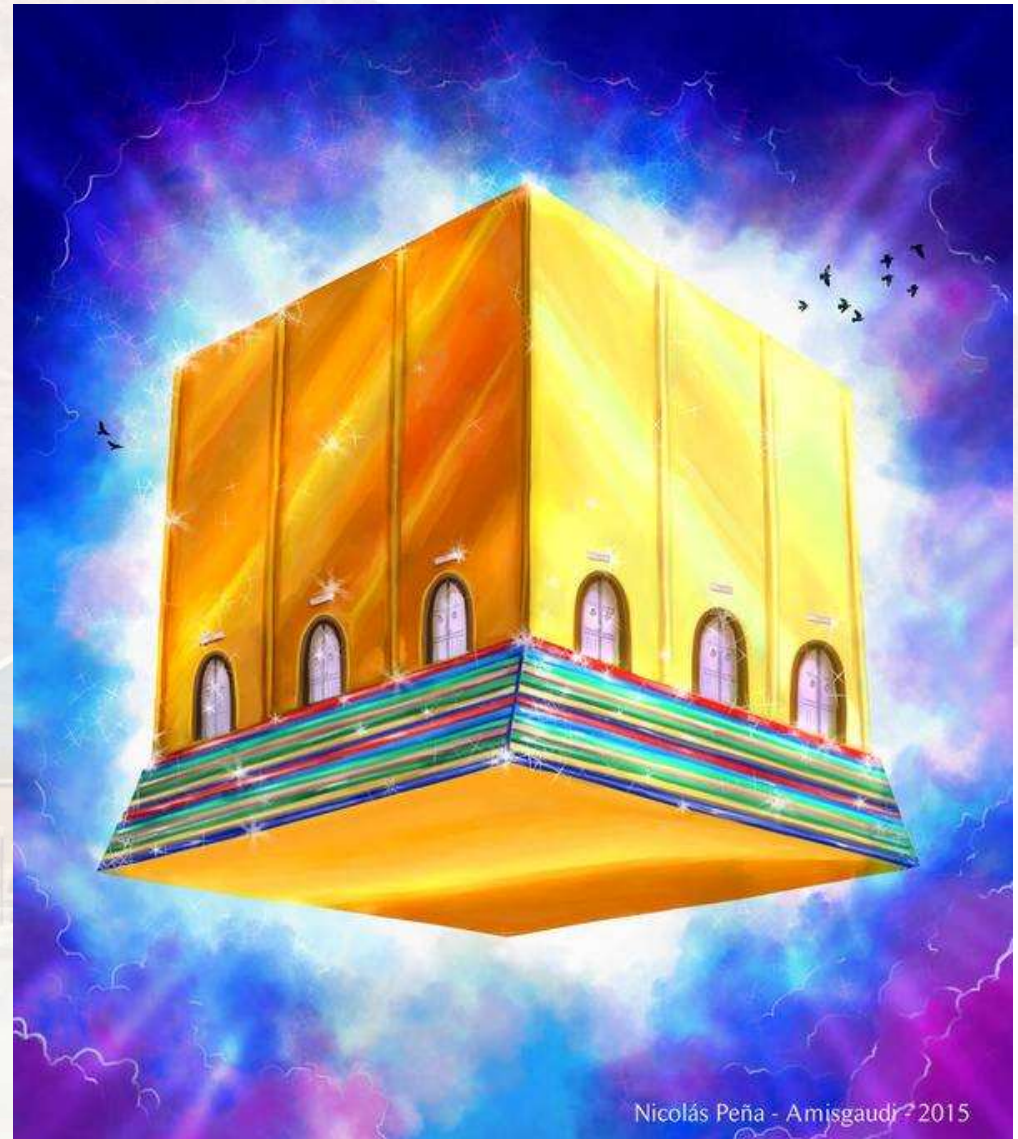


Amethyst -
عقیق أخضر

- Pure green
- Pure Life
Eternal

12 Virtues of the Citizens

Full of Love
Exultated above pleasures
Void of sin
Growing in grace
Purified through Blood
Redeemed through Blood
Does not change
Calm
Enlightened
Thinking about Eternity
Steadfast in Eternity
Living Eternity



Nicolás Peña - Amisgaudi 2015

One Pearl

† “**21** The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl.”



⌘ The foundations are 12 – many virtues that a believer must bear to enter

⌘ The gate is One: Christ

- “*I am the door of the sheep.*” (Jn 10:7)
- “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” (Jn 14:6)
- “*...when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*” (Matt 13:46)





No Temple, Sun

✚ *“22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”*

✧ A temple symbolizes the presence of God

✧ God is ALWAYS present in the city, so no need for a temple.

✚ *“23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.”*

✧ No need for earthly illumination

✧ The True Light illuminates the city.

Always Open

† ²⁴ *And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light... ²⁵ Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).*

✦ The True Light never vanishes:
no night

✦ Gates are shut at night to
protect the city

- *No enemies, no night, no shut gates*



What is Eternal Life like?

† No hunger, thirst, heat, or cold

✦ *“They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat” (Rev 7:16)*

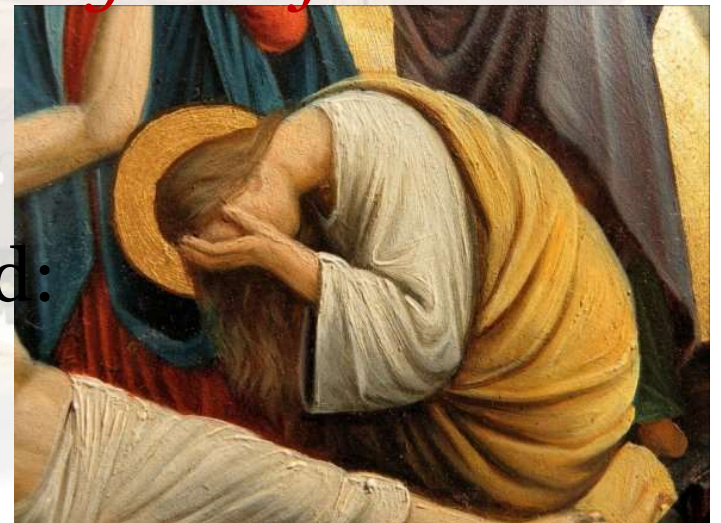
† No sadness, weeping, pain, illness

✦ *“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” (Rev 7:17)*

✦ Pain/suffering: result of sin

✦ During holy Pentecost period:

- *no fasting, metonias; all joyous*



What is Eternal Life like?

† No lusts or desires

⌘ *“In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.” (Matt 22:29)*

† No envy or conflicts

⌘ *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Ps 133:1)*

† No curse (Rev 22:3)

† No darkness



What is Eternal Life like?

† No ignorance, but complete knowledge

⌘ *“For now, we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.” (1Cor 13:12)*

† We will know and dwell with the saints and loved ones

⌘ The disciples recognized Moses and Elijah

† Continuous praising of God

⌘ *“These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation... they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple.” (Rev 7:14-15)*

In Heaven

- † We will reign with God
- † We will sit with God on His Throne
- † We will know God

† *“You will see God and that will appear wonderful. Everything will become trivial and has no value at all!” (St. Augustine)*

