

What Is the Reward of the Saved HEAVEN?

What assurance have we that our departed loved ones have gone to heaven? By **WHAT AUTHORITY** have we believed that we shall go to heaven, if we're saved?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

THIS may be a little shocking—but I want to ask you a candid question: Did you ever look into your Bible to see whether it really does say you will ever go to heaven, if you are saved? Did you ever look into your Bible to see what it reveals about what the saved shall inherit for eternity?

It's going to come as a surprise to most of you to realize that you never did. Of course, you've always heard that you'll go to heaven, if you're saved—you've just accepted it, probably—but did you ever stop to **PROVE** it—did you ever try to find it promised in your Bible? If you do, you'll probably be even more surprised!

God Makes a Promise

I want you to notice a statement in your Bible, as little understood as any passage in this wonderful Book which Bruce Barton said is the Book **NOBODY** understands! It's Galatians 3:16, and 29. This was written primarily for the **GEN-TILE** born converts in Galatia:

"Now to **ABRAHAM** and his Seed were the **PROMISES** made. . . and if ye be **CHRIST'S**, then are ye Abraham's children, and heirs according to the **PROMISE**."

The Christian is not yet a possessor of his reward—he's an heir—and what he shall inherit, if saved, is the **PROMISE** made to Abraham. Whatever shall be the reward of the **SAVED**—whenever we shall spend eternity if **SAVED**—is a definite, specific **PROMISE** of God—and that **PROMISE** was made to Abraham, called, in this same Book of Galatians written for **GEN-TILE** converts, the **FATHER** of the faithful. If one is converted, whether Jew or Gentile—regardless of race or color or sex—IF one is **CHRIST'S**, then he becomes one of Abraham's children, and an **HEIR** of the **PROMISE** made to Abraham. What he is to inherit, then, is

whatever was **PROMISED** to Abraham.

If you'll look into your Bible to find out what God **PROMISED** to Abraham—to find out **WHAT** is the reward to those who are saved—to find out **WHY** we have to be **ABRAHAM'S** children to inherit this promise of salvation—**WHEN** and **HOW** we shall inherit the promise—you're in for a shocking surprise!

There is **NO MORE IMPORTANT QUESTION IN YOUR LIFE**—why, this matter concerns **YOUR ETERNITY**—and yet you probably never thought to really look into it, for yourself—**IN YOUR OWN BIBLE!** The statement we read from the Book of Galatians actually sums up the **WHOLE** of the Gospel—it is a condensed statement of the very **PURPOSE** and **PLAN** of God for mankind! Your hope of **LIFE ETERNAL** of salvation—depends altogether on what is stated in that greatly misunderstood passage!

Christ Confirmed the PROMISE

In order to **UNDERSTAND** this most important question in the world, notice what is written in Romans 15:8: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the **PROMISES** made unto the fathers."

In bringing a new message—the **GO-SPEL**—Jesus came to confirm the **PROMISES** made to the **FATHERS**. But **WHO** were the **FATHERS**? and **WHAT** are the **PROMISES** made to them?—heaven—purgatory? **YOUR SALVATION** depends on the answer! You read in Acts 3:13, in the inspired words of Peter: "The God of **ABRAHAM** and of **ISAAC**, and of **JACOB**, the God of **OUR FATHERS**, hath glorified His Son, Jesus!" The **FATHERS**, then, were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If you are **CHRIST'S**—if you are a **CHRISTIAN**—you are an heir to inherit—**NOT** what **MEN** might de-

vised in their imaginations—you are an heir according to the promise! If you're an **HEIR**, you are going to inherit something. If you're an heir according to the promise, you are going to inherit whatever was **PROMISED**—and not something else.

That **PROMISE** to Abraham is important! Whatever it is—that is what **YOU** shall inherit—if you are saved! You find the account of that **PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM** in the Book of Genesis.

It begins in the 12th chapter of Genesis—verse 1: "Now the Eternal had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land I will show thee."

First, God called Abram—his name was then—out of the land of **BABYLON** where he lived—surely symbolic of the spiritual **BABYLON** in which **WE** live, today—just as, today, God calls you and me out of **THIS** world—**THIS** Babylon! Abraham didn't quibble or argue. The verse says: "So Abram **DEPARTED**." He went to a **CERTAIN** LAND, where God led him—the land we call Palestine today! Abraham **OBEYED** God. "So Abram departed!" it is written! That's why **HE** was made the **FATHER** of the precious **PROMISES** in which **YOUR** eternal salvation rests! He **OBEYED**—immediately he **DEPARTED**! Yes, just as **YOU** must obey, if you, with Abraham, are to inherit that **PROMISE**!

Men today have **NO CONCEPTION** of what is really in store for the one who is really **SAVED**. The inheritance that awaits **YOU**—if you surrender to God—if you **OBEY** as Abraham obeyed—if you rely, not on **YOUR** faith, but the very **FAITH OF CHRIST**—if you are really **BORN AGAIN**—that very inheritance surpasses anything you have ever conceived **SO FAR**, that you haven't the



slightest conception of YOUR TRUE POTENTIAL DESTINY!

As we read in I Corinthians 2:9—"Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him..." the inheritance which God has prepared for YOU cannot even be CONCEIVED by the natural mind of man—but God DOES reveal it to us "BY HIS SPIRIT!" (I Cor. 2:10.)

Now what did God promise ABRAHAM?

Genesis 12:6, 7: "And Abram passed thru the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Eternal appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give THIS LAND." So the promise was the inheritance of the LAND OF PALESTINE.

The PROMISED Land

Let's continue. Genesis 13:14-15: "And the Eternal said unto Abram, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for ALL THE LAND WHICH THOU SEEST, to thee will I GIVE IT, and to thy seed FOREVER! The land where Abram was, is the land of Canaan, called PALESTINE today. That, then, is the PROMISED LAND—that's why it's called the PROMISED LAND!

But for how long?—FOREVER! The inheritance is to be an ETERNAL inheritance, which of necessity involves and includes EVERLASTING LIFE!

If one inherits a piece of LAND, the deed must describe the exact BOUNDARIES of the property. Is such a description given in THIS deed of the land we may hope to inherit?

Genesis 15:18: "In the same day the Eternal made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given THIS LAND, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." From the Nile River in Egypt, to the EUPHRATES in the Near East!

We've all seen enough WAR MAPS to know where that is, and I'm sure we all know it isn't up in heaven somewhere, but RIGHT HERE ON THIS EARTH. If ye be CHRIST'S, then are ye ABRAHAM'S seed and heirs ACCORDING TO THE

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Incidentally, let me add, OTHER Scriptures show that the TERRITORY of Christ's Kingdom is to expand and spread until ultimately it shall include the WHOLE EARTH.

Obedience Before Inheritance

In making this promise to Abram, God conditioned it on OBEDIENCE. Abraham DID obey! First, he left his native land, his friends and relatives, his old ways of life—He forsook ALL, and followed where God led. AGAIN God conditioned the promises on obedience. Abram was commanded to sacrifice his only son Isaac. And again he did not stop to reason it out, or make excuse, or rebel—he OBEYED! God didn't take the son—He merely wanted Abram's WILLINGNESS to obey, in FAITH.

But now notice, AFTER Abraham HAD obeyed—HABEEN put to the test and found faithful—were there any further CONDITIONS to the promise?

Let's read Genesis 22:15-18: "And the angel of the Eternal called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou HAST DONE this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine ONLY son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I WILL multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED; BECAUSE THOU HAST OBEYED MY VOICE."

Now it was UNCONDITIONAL! Abraham already had performed His part of this COVENANT—HIS AGREEMENT! And so today WHOEVER WILL from EVERY nation may come and take of the waters of LIFE freely, because God has kept His promise, and the promised Seed, Christ, has come.

Yes, the PROMISES now ABSOLUTELY SURE. Why? "BECAUSE," as we read further in Genesis 26:5, "Because ABRAHAM OBEYED my voice, and KEPT my

charge, MY COMMANDMENTS, STATUTES, AND MY LAWS." Again let me say that SIN is the transgression of the LAW, the same fundamental, eternal, SPIRITUAL law that Adam transgressed when he SINNED, and the same laws and commandments Abraham obeyed and KEPT—long before the sacrifices and rituals of Moses—make possible all the blessings we have today, both material AND spiritual!

Now you remember that Isaac and Jacob also were included in "the FATHERS." We find now that these same PROMISES were made also to them.

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And again the promise was made to JACOB, recorded in Genesis 35:9-12: "And God appeared unto JACOB... and said unto him, Thy name is JACOB: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but ISRAEL shall be thy name... I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation [today the United States] and a company of nations [today the British Commonwealth] shall be of thee, and KINGS shall come out of thy loins; and the LAND which I have given to Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land!"

Even the Gentile born, THRU CHRIST, becomes not only Abraham's seed, but a spiritually adopted ISRAELITE AS WELL.

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and JOY! Happiness and joy—a GLORIFIED condition such as YOU may inherit—is not a matter of geographical location! It is a SPIRITUAL CONDITION! There will be NO SIN in that happy WORLD TO COME! No liars—no murderers—no thieves or robbers. Think of it—there'll be NO SATAN, no locks on doors—no jails, no hospitals—no poor-houses! No strife, no war—no sickness or disease—no poverty, nor hunger, nor want!

When Do We Inherit the Promises?

NOW let me ask, WHEN shall we inherit these promises? How shall we inherit them? Has Abraham, himself, already gone to his reward—Has Abraham already inherited the promises?

First, notice the inspired words of the first Christian martyr, Stephen, full of faith and the Holy Spirit—Stephen who paid with his life for these inspired words of Scripture. You'll read them in Acts 7:25:

"And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into THE LAND which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and... removed him into THIS LAND, wherein ye now dwell [PALESTINE]. And He gave him NONE INHERITANCE in it, nor, not so much as to set his foot on..."

God gave Abraham none inheritance in that land—"yet He promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child."

Abraham NEVER RECEIVED the promised inheritance—the God's promise was made UNCONDITIONAL because Abraham had obeyed God! But let's go further. Notice, now, Hebrews 11:8-10, 13:

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an INHERITANCE, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the LAND OF PROMISE, as in a strange country." Notice carefully—Abraham merely sojourned in the land—which he was AFTER to receive for an

INHERITANCE—“and dwelling tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God . . . These all DIED in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, but having seen them afar off.”

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the FATHERS to whom the promises were made, all DIED, in faith, NOT having received the promises! My friends, do you grasp what that inspired Scripture of God SAYS? In plain language it says they DIED, but did NOT receive their REWARD—yet FATHERS to whom the promises were made did not “go to their reward at death!” THUS SAITH THE LORD!

Now further, the Scriptures tell us that Abraham is DEAD. When the New Testament was written, many hundreds of years after his death, Abraham was still DEAD, as recorded in John 8:52, 53. There you read plain words: “Abraham is DEAD.” Abraham has not received the promised inheritance, even to this day!

All thru the New Testament you read that Christians who become his children thru Christ are not now, in this age, inheritors—they are now HEIRS. An HEIR is one who has not yet come into his INHERITANCE.

Now WHY has Abraham, even to this day, as yet NOT INHERITED the promise? WHY? Listen! Since “eternal inheritance” of THE EARTH constitutes the BETTER PROMISES of the NEW Testament, and since the MESSAGE which Christ delivered in CONFIRMING these promises was the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, it follows that the LAND OF THIS EARTH—the land of the PROMISE—JESUS came to CONFIRM—is the TERRITORY occupied and governed by the KINGDOM OF GOD!

WHEN We Inherit Kingdom

But that Kingdom, Jesus said, is not off this world — THIS AGE! In His great prophecy of WORD NEWSTODAY of the World Wars, and 20th century world upheaval NOW, Jesus Christ said in Luke 21:31:

“When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is NIGH AT HAND.” The Kingdom of God

is to RULE THE WORLD. It is not yet established—but today it is NIGH AT HAND—and it’s LATER THAN YOU THINK! In Luke 19 Jesus gave the parable of the “pounds,” BECAUSE they thought the Kingdom of God should IMMEDIATELY APPEAR. He represented Himself as the young nobleman going to the far country—heaven—to receive the right to RULE the kingdom, showing it would be set up and take over the RULE over ALL NATIONS, at the second coming of Christ!

But there’s still another reason—yes, another reason why WE can be only HEIRS at this present time. I Cor. 15:50: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot INHERIT the Kingdom of God!” No HUMAN can inherit the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is NOT A HUMAN KINGDOM—there are NO HUMANS IN IT—it is a DIVINE Kingdom—the God Kingdom!

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CAREFULLY: “we shall all be CHANGED.” The word CONVERTED means CHANGED—changed from one SUBSTANCE to another—from one COMPOSITION to another.

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Now this text does not say, as so many suppose, that Christ is coming part way from heaven to MEET THE SAINTS as the SAINTS are starting off for HEAVEN. No, Jesus said in John 14: “If I go, I WILL COME AGAIN.”

What a glorious PROMISE! Jesus promised He would COME AGAIN to earth. And further, WHEN He has returned to EARTH, that He would, as He said, “receive you unto myself”—why, of course, right here on this earth! The saints, both dead and alive, resurrected and changed to IMMORTALITY shall rise to MEET HIM, as He is RETURNING TO THIS EARTH. They MEET in the CLOUDS, (airiness fly higher than that every day). And, in Zech. 14:4 we read that in THAT SAME DAY Christ’s feet shall rest on the MOUNT OF OLIVES, in Palestine, the promised land—and those who MEET Him as He comes will EVER be WITH HIM, where He is. Yes, that’s different from the fables of this day, but that’s the PLAIN TRUTH OF GOD’S WORD!

The Reward Is NOT Heaven

And Jesus said: “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit THE EARTH.” That’s part of the sermon on the Mount—and certainly every Christian must BELIEVE the sermon on the Mount! Then we must BELIEVE, if we are Christians, that what the saved inherit is THE EARTH—and not heaven! Jesus plainly said, “NO man has ascended up to heaven” (John 3:13).

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INHERITANCE—“the dwelling tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God . . . These all DIED in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, but having seen them afar off.”

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the FATHERS to whom the promises were made, all DIED, in faith, NOT having received the promises! My friends, do you grasp what that inspired Scripture of God says? In plain language it says they DIED, but did NOT receive their REWARD—the very FATHERS to whom the promises were made did not “go to their reward at death!” **THUS SAITH THE LORD!**

Now further, the Scriptures tell us that Abraham is DEAD. When the New Testament was written, many hundreds of years after his death, Abraham was still DEAD, as recorded in John 8:52, 53. There you read plain words: “Abraham is DEAD.” Abraham has not received the promised inheritance, even to this day!

All thru the New Testament you read that Christians who become his children thru Christ are not now, in this age, inheritors—they are now HEIRS. An HEIR is one who has not yet come into his INHERITANCE.

Now WHY has Abraham, even to this day, as yet NOT INHERITED the promise? Why? Listen! Since “eternal inheritance” of THE EARTH constitutes the BETTER PROMISES of the NEW Testament, and since the MESSAGE which Christ delivered in CONFIRMING these promises was the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, it follows that the LAND OF THIS EARTH—the land of the PROMISE—JESUS came to CONFIRM—is the TERRITORY occupied and governed by the KINGDOM OF GOD!

WHEN We Inherit Kingdom

But that Kingdom, Jesus said, is not of this world—THIS AGE! In His great prophecy of WORD NEWSTODAY of the World Wars, and 20th century world upheaval NOW, Jesus Christ said in Luke 21:31:

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The wisest man who ever lived was inspired to write, as part of the divine WORD OF GOD, “The righteous shall never be removed, but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth” (Prov. 10:30). I think most of you have read those Scriptures. That’s the “THUS SAITH THE LORD” on the question. There is absolutely NO Scripture in all the Holy Bible that promises HEAVEN as the reward the saved shall inherit. And yet, have not most people just sort of blinded their minds to these positive, plain STATEMENTS from God Almighty, and carelessly taken for granted, without question, the idea of going to heaven?

Notice WHEN the Kingdom shall be inherited—WHEN the HEIRS of the promises to Abraham shall come finally into their reward, and receive the actual INHERITANCE. It is recorded in Matthew 25:31-34: “When the Son of man shall come in His GLORY, and all the holy angels with Him, THEN shall He sit upon the THRONE of His glory: and THEN shall the King say unto them on His right hand, COME, ye blessed of my Father, INHERIT the KINGDOM PREPARED for you from the foundation of the world!” Yes, the KINGDOM of God is the PLACE PREPARED. Jesus said He went to PREPARE A PLACE for us. He also said He went to GET FOR HIMSELF A KINGDOM, AND TO RETURN. And WHEN He returns, as KING of kings, and that KINGDOM IS ESTABLISHED (we find # is the PLACE PREPARED), THEN it is that the joyful call goes out, “COME! ye blessed of my Father, INHERIT the KINGDOM PREPARED for you!”

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