

At The End of the Beginning

Death just does not seem like a beginning, and most people think of it as an end. Of course, it is the end of life as we know it, but could it also be the start of another life? An eternal one? Could death possibly be to another life, what birth is to life on earth? A beginning...

To many, death is something that scares them. Why? One reason is that no one can conquer it. The strongest, smartest, or most seemingly good person will lose the battle against dying. Another reason is that it means giving up what you love and treasure here on earth. Your money, possessions, social standing, friends, family, and the only life you have ever known will all disappear. This brings the fear of the unknown into play. "What will come next? Anything?" souls ask, "Or is this just the end?" The answer is no; death is a beginning—a start of life in hell or in heaven.

Hell is a place of eternal destruction. It has a lake of fire and brimstone, and there is no way out of this pit of suffering. Satan is master there and his demons thrive in this haven of evil.

In a sharp contrast, heaven is a place of eternal goodness. Nobody knows for sure what heaven is like, but the Bible does give us some insights. If you multiply the beauty of the prettiest sight you have ever seen by trillions you would not come close to describing God's dwelling place. Children of God will live there in transformed, glorified bodies. Enormous walls of jasper with twelve pearly gates surround the city. The jeweled foundation shimmers with twelve different kinds of precious stones. With the brightness and light shining from the Son of God, I imagine that there is probably a dazzling color spectacle.

Inside the city flows a river, clear as crystal, through the center of the main street. All the streets are made of gold; in fact, the Bible talks about the great abundance of gold in this paradise. Planted by the river, stands the tree of life that bears much fruit. In addition to all this, there is no pain, no sorrow, no tears, no evil, no death, and we are forever in the presence of God the Almighty.

A question that has puzzled men for ages is "How can a man get to heaven?" The men who built the tower of Babel thought they could climb to heaven if there were only a structure tall enough. Others believe they must do a certain amount of good works. Yet, the plain truth is that the only way to get to heaven is through Jesus Christ. You must make the decision to follow Him before death though, in order to escape the destruction of hell. I made the choice at age five, others make it as an adult, and still others never make it at all before they die. For those people, death would frighten them so much more if they only knew what would come next.

However, Christ's followers have something too glorious to imagine in store for them after death. I have a hope and an assurance greater than anything one who does not know Christ could ever have. Because of that, I do not have to be scared of death. I am to lay up my treasures in heaven and have no fear of the unknown because I know what is coming... a wonderful new life that started at a beginning called death.