

Lesson: PARADISE OF GOD

In our last study, Jesus told one of the thieves on the cross next to Him, *"Truly I say to you, **today** you shall be with Me **in Paradise**."* (Luke 23:43/ Matt.27:38-45)

When teaching a group of Jews, the **Parable of Lazarus and rich man**, Jesus referred to **this place** as *Abraham's bosom* (luke16:23).

Why the change in the name?

- Was it based on race or religion of something else with **this thief**, that Jesus called it Paradise?
- What was **this place** called *before Abraham*?
- When a believer died before Abraham where did he go? What was the name of the place?
- Did Jesus call this place by its **original name** before Abraham because of its Messianic association?

This lesson will study **SIX aspects** of the place called the **PARADISE OF GOD**.

1. The origin of the biblical *Paradise of God* was introduced in Gen.2:6-9 as the Garden (paradise) of God. Pay attention to the word GROUND.

God created a mist to rise from surface of the **ground** (2:6).

God formed Adam's body out of the dust of the **ground** (2:7).

God planted a Garden (paradise) from the **ground** in Eden (2:8).

God grew four kinds of trees from the **ground** of the Garden of Eden (2:9)/ sight, food, life, and knowledge of good and evil).

2. In the Parable of Luke 16:19-31, two men died and went to two different places which had different names.

Unbelieving Rich man died and went to **Torment of Hades**.

Believing man, Lazarus, died and went to **Abraham's Bosom** (Luke 16:22-23).

Jesus called where He and the one thief were going as **Paradise** (Luke 23:43)

There were 20 generation of believers who died before Abraham (Luke 3:34-38).

Where did they go? What was the name of this place before Abraham?

Note that the place of Torment was not changed nor the name of Hades.

3. Holy Spirit called the place where church age believers go after death as Paradise in **Rev.2:7**.

Church of Ephesus: “He who has an ear, let him **hear what the Spirit says** to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the **tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.**” (**Rev.2:7/ Gen.3:24**)

Paul also called it “**caught up to the Third Heaven**.” (2 Cor.12:2)

Paul also called it “**caught up into Paradise** and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.” (2 Cor. 12:4)

4. Paradise was moved from a **place of descending** to a **place of ascending** based of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“(Now this expression, ‘He ascended **what does it mean except** that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who **descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens**, so that He might fill all things.)” (**Eph.4:9-10/ Acts 1:9-11; Heb.4:14**)

5. At the resurrection of Jesus Christ, “the tombs were opened, and **many** of the bodies of the **saints** which had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the **tombs AFTER His resurrection** they entered the holy city and appeared to many.” (**Matt.27:52-53**)

Notice these were called **SAINTS (hagios)**. In the old covenant, they were called **holy ones (hagios)**. “Precious is the sight of the Lord is the death of **His godly ones**.” (Ps.116:15)

Saints were followers of Christ. “**To all the saints in Christ Jesus**.” (Phil.1:1; 4:21; Rom.1:7)

6. Jesus taught on this subject at the Last Supper in **John 14:1-6**. He talked about going to Prepare a Place for every CAB (church age believer).

“In My Father’s house are many dwelling **places**; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to **prepare a place** for you. If I go and **prepare a place** for you, **I will come again** and receive you to Myself, that **where I am, there** you may be also.” (John 14:2-3)

This is **where** every CAB goes at death. “I was **caught up into Paradise** and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.” (2 Cor.12:4)

Remember it was also called **Third Heaven** in 2 Cor.12:2.

“Therefore, being always of **good courage**, and knowing that while we are **at HOME in the BODY** we are **ABSENT from the Lord**.” (2 Cor.5:6)

“We are of **good courage**, I say, and prefer rather **to be ABSENT from the BODY and to be at HOME with the LORD**.” (2 Cor.5:8)