

Sermon #112 — Isaiah Series

Title: **GOING HOME**

Text: Isaiah 35:10

Subject: *Heaven*

Date: Sunday Morning — December 1, 2019

Reading: *Isaiah 34:16-35:10*

Introduction:

I purposefully think about dying every day. I try to think as much as I can about Heaven and Eternity. I think a lot about going home. I want to talk to you from my heart and from the Book of God about — **GOING HOME**. Our text will be Isaiah 35:10.

(Isaiah 35:10) “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

What “*good words and comfortable words*” those are! When the Lord God has finished all things, all “*the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*”

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Proposition: Every sinner loved and chosen of God, every sinner ransomed by the sin-atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be brought to glory by the mighty operations of his grace.

- They shall enter Heaven triumphantly, as a people prepared and made worthy to possess it.
- They shall enter with songs of praise in their hearts and everlasting gladness upon their heads.

I want us to think and meditate for a little while about this promised ingathering of the Lord's ransomed ones into heaven. May God the Holy Ghost give us grace to put everything else out of our minds. Let us, O Lord our God, set our hearts on things above this hour, for Christ's sake. Set our hearts now upon heaven, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Keep from our hearts and minds the things of the earth.

Let us now focus our hearts and minds on our all-glorious Savior and on the everlasting joys of heaven with him. My reason for preaching this message is

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that our hearts may long for those glorious mansions that are yonder provided for us by the Lord Jesus.

(John 14:1-3) “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.”

(Colossians 3:1-3) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

THE REQUIREMENT

Let me begin my message by showing you from the Book of God what is required of us, if we are to enter into heaven. If you would enter into heaven, you must meet the requirements of God to enter that

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Celestial City. If I am to enter into this place called heaven, I must meet God's requirements. Here they are.

(Revelation 21:27) And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

(Revelation 22:11) He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

- You must be chosen of God, one whose name was written in the Book of Life before the worlds were made.
- You must be sinless — Redeemed!
- You must be righteous — Justified!
- You must be holy — Regenerated!

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In Christ, all who are in Christ, meet these requirements (Colossians 1:12).

Divisions: I will give you my message in five points:

1. A Brief Description of Heaven
2. The Employment of God's Saints in Heaven
3. The Excellence of Heaven
4. Six Questions I Must have Answered
5. Six Great Struggles I Have with Regard to Heaven and Going Home to My God and Savior

HEAVEN

1st — Let me first give you **a brief description of heaven** according to my own limited understanding of Divine Revelation. — **Heaven is a place of rest without rest.** This is clear from Hebrews 4:9 and Revelation 4:8.

(Hebrews 4:9) “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”

(Revelation 4:8) “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full

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of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

Heaven is a place where the soul is always satisfied yet never satisfied. The psalmists says, and we say with him, — *“I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness!”*

- There we shall always see God in Christ. Yet, we shall ever want to see more of Him.
- We shall always embrace Him, yet ever want to embrace Him more.
- We will always feed on Him, yet want to feed on Him more.

In heaven there is both satisfaction and hunger. **Heaven is full of mysteries.** We know far, far, far less about heaven than any of us can imagine. — **“As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”** (1 Corinthians 2:9)

Heaven is a place where peace, and joy, and love eternally flow into our souls, while admiration,

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and praise, and love eternally flow out to our God and Savior. All the saints' language in heaven is, "Hallelujah! Praise to the Lamb who sits on the throne." Oh, what shall it be to be taken within the gates of that blessed city to hear that heavenly music? What shall it be to enter into that rest in which we shall never rest from Immanuel's praise? What will it be to be satisfied with that great satisfaction that ever hungers and thirsts for Christ without lack of satisfaction?

HEAVEN'S EMPLOYMENT

2nd — Think for just a few minutes about **the employment of God's saints in heaven.** There are **five things** that constantly occupy God's saints in heaven: (1.) admiration, (2.) praise, (3.) joy, (4.) love and (5.) gazing upon blessed face of the incarnate God, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb who died, the Lion who reigns, the God who is, who was, and who shall be forever!

There is not one look there that is not fixed on our precious, all-glorious Redeemer, — not one

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movement of the tongue that is not spent in commending Him, — not one step of the feet that is not bent on following Christ, — not one stir of the hand that is not occupied in unfolding Christ, — not one thought that is not filled with Christ, — not one desire that is not taken up with loving Christ! — **But what about the multitudes of saints and angels there?**

- Loving Christ is loving them!
- Extolling Christ is their joy!
- Speaking about who Christ is and what he has done is their mutual delight!

What makes heaven such a blessed, lovely home?
Is it not Christ, who is precious to our hearts? The Lamb is its light of that place (Revelation 21:23). Heaven would be a dark house if Christ were not there. The Lamb of God, crucified, risen, reigning, glorious is the light of that house.

Do you see what I am saying? – Heaven is that everlasting world of light, adoration, holiness, perfection, and ceaseless worship to which God's saints are rapidly moving. If you only knew, the

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charms of that place would make you long to join us there in eternity. All the three persons of the Blessed Trinity cry, “*Come up hither!*” “Come up here to us who are here.” All the angels and saints cry, “Come up here to us who are here.”

Will you be taking up your lodging there? Only if you are made clean every wit, totally righteous, holy, and without blame before God by the blood and righteousness of Christ, only if you are robed in the spotless garments of salvation and righteousness by faith in him.

- **What makes heaven sweet?**

(Revelation 7:13-17) “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? *14* And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. *15* Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple:

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and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. *16* They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. *17* For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

- What makes heaven desirable?

(Revelation 14:1-5) “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. *2* And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: *3* And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. *4* These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are

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virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

(Revelation 14:13) “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

- What makes heaven glorious?

(Revelation 21:1-8) “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they

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shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

- **What makes heaven exciting?**

(Revelation 21:22-27) “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the

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Lamb are the temple of it. 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. 27 And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

HEAVEN'S EXCELLENCE

3rd — Let me direct your thoughts, as best I can in this feeble frame, to **the excellence of heaven**. We know that heaven is a pleasant place. But what makes it pleasant, except that it is a place covered over and filled with the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley? Heaven's windows and streets are all

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sprinkled over with the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley. His fragrance fills the air!

What a great sight John had when the angel talked with him and said, “Come up hither, and I will show you the Bride, the Lamb’s wife,” and carried him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him the holy city, the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:9-10).

(Revelation 21:9-10) “And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. (10) And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”

What is it that makes heaven such an excellent place? It is the soul-satisfying vision of God that we have there in the person of his dear Son, our Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, in all his glory!

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There we shall see God face to face! It is written, **“They shall see his face!”** What could be more excellent and glorious? What could be more rewarding and honoring? What could be more joyous and satisfying?

Here we see Christ dimly, as *“through a glass darkly.”* There we shall see Him face to face. **What will be the Bride’s thoughts when Christ first takes her in His arms?** Who can imagine such things? — *“This is my Beloved! — He has brought me now into his banqueting house! — His banner over me is love!”*

Andrew Gray once said to his congregation, “What shall be your thoughts when Christ shall take you in His arms, if ever He will take you? I think we shall fall apart! O is not heaven an excellent place?”

SIX QUESTIONS

4th — Now, here are **six questions I must have answered.** As I meditate upon the excellence and glory of heaven, **I cannot help asking these six**

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questions of my Savior. I hope you will be asking them as well, as I relate them to you.

1. The first is this: — **Shall this tongue,** that has so often taken my Savior's name in vain and so often polluted the holiness of God, ever be made like the tongues of angels, to express the greatness and glory of Christ?
2. The second question is this: — **Shall these eyes,** that have been the windows through which so much evil has come into my soul, ever see the Spotless One who sits on the throne of glory?

When I see Christ I would blush to look Him in the face, were it not for the fact that he has declared "*sorrow and sighing shall flee away!*" When we see His face, His transforming face, where shall we turn our eyes? A sight of Christ will make us eternally wonder. Do you not groan, my brother, my sister, for the sight of Christ? — Soon, we shall see him as he is!

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3. The third question is this: — **Shall these ears**, that have listened to so much foulness and enjoyed so much vanity, ever hear those songs above?

We must hear either the eternal shrieks of the damned in hell or songs the choirs of heaven. Oh, how sweetly they sing! **For now comfort yourselves with this**: — The day is coming when you shall no more hang your harps upon the willows because you are in a strange land, but you shall eternally cry out, “Worthy is the Lamb! All praise to Him who sits on the throne!”

4. The fourth question is this: — Shall **these feet** of mine, that have pursued endless vanities and follies, ever follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth?

5. The fifth question I ask is this: — **Shall this heart** of mine, which has been house of many idols and the birthplace of so much sin, ever be made the unrivalled dwelling-place of my Savior?

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6. The last question I ask is this: — **Shall these hands**, that have been the instruments of so much iniquity, transgression, and sin ever embrace and hold that matchless Holy One who sits yonder on the throne?

Oh, what will we do when we first get Christ in our arms? We might well imagine that our first day in heaven will be the most glorious. But that shall not be the case. Though we have never seen our Husband before, the longer we are with Him in heaven's glory the more we will love Him and the more we will know his love for us!

What will we discover in glory? — There is no outcast there, no desertion, no unbelief, no misunderstanding of Christ, no questioning His wisdom, no doubts about His ways, no misinterpreting of His will, and no displeasure with His purpose. When we go through the gates of the New Jerusalem we shall pass over the graves of desertion, and jealousy, and unbelief, and all our idols, and we shall never return to them!

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What a pleasant day that will be when faith and hope shall yield themselves to love and sight.

- Faith and hope are our attendants here; but love and sight shall be our eternal attendants above.
- Faith and hope fight the battle here; but love and sight will sit at home and divide the spoil in heaven.
- Faith and hope embrace Christ through the veil; but love and sight embrace Him face to face.
- Soon, we will leave both faith and hope; but we shall never weep for leaving these dear, blessed companions.

One more thing we will forever leave behind when we leave this world is repentance. — In heaven we will have nothing to repent of!

SIX STRUGGLES

6th — Here are six great struggles I have with regard to heaven and going home to my God and Savior.

1. I have a constant struggle here with sin, unbelief, hardness of heart, indifference, and

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spiritual ignorance. I confess, with Agur, “*Surely, I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy*” (Proverbs 30:2-3).

Still, I am comforted with this: — **As soon as I enter the gates of that blessed city all my clouds shall dissipate immediately.** I will never again have a wrong thought of God throughout all eternity. Then, I will begin to say to myself, “Is this me, the ignorant and brutish man?”

2. **I am often under a sense of desertion. I seldom try go to my God in prayer but that I find an absent God, a hidden Christ, and a quenched Spirit. Often, more often than not, I cannot even speak to Him in prayer, but only groan before Him.**

Still I find comfort in this: — There is no desertion in heaven. There are none in glory land who cry, “*How long, Lord, wilt thou hide thy face from me?*” (Psalm 13:1). This is almost too much for this sinful soul to

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grasp, but it is a blessed fact. (I cannot tell you how I rejoice in it!) — **In heaven, I will never again find it hard to speak to my God.** — I will never again grow weary of serving Him. — I will never again find it difficult to worship, and praise, and commune with my Beloved!

3. I must also acknowledge this fact. (I do not want to pretend that things are different with me than they really are! I want to be honest. I don't want to be a hypocrite!) — **I sometimes struggle hard with assurance.** — **I sometimes question whether I will go home to heaven with Christ when I leave this world, or perish in hell.**

How I wish it were not so, but I am often like Newton when he wrote,

“‘Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I His, or am I not?”

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Perhaps the struggle itself is horribly evil. Perhaps I should never have the struggle. But I do, and it is real. I often have terribly painful questions concerning the reality of my faith. Oh, how I long to trust Christ perfectly! Completely! Without doubt! Without unbelief! **But, even with regard to these things, my God gives me great consolation and hope.** — **It is not the measure of my faith, or the quality of my faith, or the evidences of my faith that give me hope, but Christ, the solitary Object of my faith!** — Oh, what comfort there is for my soul in this! There will be no more doubting and unbelief in heaven. When I cross over the threshold of Heaven's Gate, I will bid everlasting, "Farewell" to all unbelief, doubts, and question!

4. I have another, painful complaint, a bitterness in my soul that is almost unbearable. — **My love for Christ is so horribly little that I often fear I have no love for Him at all.**

Yet, bless God, honesty will not allow me to say, (Horrible thought!) I do not love him. Oh, no! When I hear my Savior say, "*Lovest thou me?*" I hang my

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head with shame, but confess, “*Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee.*”

(1 John 4:19) “We love him, because he first loved us.”

I take great comfort and delight in this: — **Soon, I will love my Savior perfectly!** As soon as these eyes are closed in death, as soon as I have gasped my last breath in this weak, mortal, sinful frame, **I will love Him who is altogether lovely as he ought to be loved!**

5. Here is another terrible, heavy burden in my soul, a burden from which I find no relief in this world, a burden that makes me a little anxious to go home. — **So long as I am in this world, I know that I will never prevail over my many idols, and get them forced out of my heart.** I flee idolatry constantly, but can never leave it altogether behind. I struggle to keep myself from idols; but find the struggle a constant, uphill battle. — There are many, many idols that compete with God my Savior for my affection and devotion.

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Still, when I think of going home, when I think of heaven, I find comfort, even in the face of this. — All my idols will be slain before I get home. In one day, at once, all shall be slain as I behold the Lord Jesus standing at the right hand of God to receive me. **My Savior demands all my heart, and deserves it. Blessed be His name, soon He shall have it!** In heaven's glory there will be no rival in my heart's affections to Him!

6. And I have another great struggle in my soul: — **I fear that I know very little, if anything, of true prayer.** Prayer is often found on my lips; but I often question whether prayer is ever found in my heart!

In heaven, when I get home, I will never again have this struggle. Then, I will never again have need of prayer. All my soul's desires shall be fully satisfied at once. Then, I will see...

- My God and Father glorified.
- My Father's will fully performed.
- His kingdom come.

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- My Savior satisfied.
- I will forgive even as I am forgiven.
- I will love even as I am loved.
- And I will be like him, when I see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

(Psalm 17:15) “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.”

(1 John 3:1-3) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

APPLICATION

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The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the three persons of the Blessed Trinity, are each crying out, “Come up here to us who are here!” And the joys of heaven, if they had a tongue, would cry out, “O come up here!” And that sweet and blessed transcendence in the face of Christ cries out, “Come up here!” Does not your soul’s need cry out, “Go up there!”?

Some of us may be in eternity before long; and that does not matter much either, for eternity is sweet if we go to heaven. I remember a word in Job (9:25) — “*My days are swifter than a post; they flee away as the ships.*” **For the believer death cuts all the cords that tie us to this world, but it makes the everlasting knot that binds us to Christ. Death is our friend. Our death day will be our coronation day.**

Someone once said, “Death is Christ’s messenger to bring you home, sent to you either with a letter of commendation to speed you on or with a love letter in his hand to make you shout for joy. O, therefore, let us love Him and long to be with Him.”

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Take one more look at our text, and I will send you home rejoicing, my brothers and sisters in Christ, at the prospect of going home.

(Isaiah 35:10) “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

- All the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion!
- All shall return with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads!
- All shall, upon their return, find joy and gladness!
- “*And sorrow and sighing shall flee away!*” — Oh, happy, happy, blessed day! Soon, “*sorrow and sighing shall flee away!*”

(Revelation 21:1-5) “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (2) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of

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heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. (4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

“We read of a place that’s called heaven.

It’s made for the pure and the free.

These truths in God’s Word He hath given. —

How beautiful heaven must be!

In heaven no drooping nor pining,

No wishing for elsewhere to be.

God’s light is forever there shining. —

How beautiful heaven must be!

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Pure waters of life there are flowing;
And all who will drink may be free.
Rare jewels of splendor are glowing. —
How beautiful heaven must be!

The angels so sweetly are singing
Up there by the beautiful sea.
Sweet chords from their gold harps are ringing. —
How beautiful must be!

How beautiful heaven must be!
Sweet home of the happy and free,
Fair heaven of rest for the weary, —
How beautiful heaven must be!”

Amen.