



# BBC UPDATE

## Death of a Saint

Dr. Thomas Strouse



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### Introduction

Christians have the biblical assurance that saints go to heaven when they die. However, some believers have a vague idea about the details of the life after death for the Christian. The Lord has given specific revelation about "heaven." Here are some biblical truths about the death of His saints.

David revealed the Lord's perspective about the believer's death, saying, "*Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints*" (Ps. 116:15). The Lord values the life of every believer and desires for them to be with Him in glory. Although there is grief and a sense of loss when a Christian dies from man's perspective, the Lord God apparently desires the believer to be with Him, which is both a "gain" and "far better." Paul said, "*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. 23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better*" (Phil. 1:21-23).

### A Gathering

The Old Testament (OT) saint had the expectation of being gathered unto his people (of faith). Scripture states concerning Abraham, saying, "*Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people*" (Gen. 25:8). The "father of faith" (Rom. 4:11) gave up his spirit, died, and was gathered by God to his people. For the saints until the ascension of Christ the place was called "Abraham's bosom" (Lk. 16:22; Eph. 4:8). Likewise, Scripture states about Isaac, saying, "*And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him*" (Gen. 35:29), and about Jacob, "*And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people*" (Gen. 49:33).

### A Prepared City

The OT saints looked for a city. Scripture states, "*For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*" (Heb. 11:10) and "*But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city*" (Heb. 11:16). Paul continued the thought by affirming likewise, saying, "*For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come*" (Heb. 13:14). This city had already been prepared (hetoimasmenen), as John affirmed using the perfect Greek tense, saying, "*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*" (Rev. 21:2).

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*(Article continued from Front Page)*

The beauty of it had been unknown as Isaiah predicted, *"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him"* (Isa. 64:4), and Paul affirmed, *"But 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"* (I Cor. 2:9). The Lord Jesus Christ needed to complete the city with the final preparation (Jn. 14:2-3), namely His presence with His shed blood, as Paul revealed, saying, *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"* (Heb. 9:11-14).

### The Lord's Presence

The Apostle Paul revealed that the Lord Jesus Christ is currently in the heavenly Jerusalem, saying, *"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel"* (Heb. 12:22-24). Since the Scripture states that *"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) 8 We are confident, I*

*say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord"* (II Cor. 5:6-8), the saint will be present with the Lord in the heavenly Jerusalem. When Paul had his out-of-body experience due to stoning (Acts 14:19-20), he expressed the experience, saying, *"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter"* (II Cor. 12:2-4). Twice he recorded that he did not know if he were in his natural body or transitional body as he temporarily entered paradise (cf. Lk. 23:43; Rev. 2:7) in the third heaven.

### The Heavenly Paradise

The heavenly or new Jerusalem is a beautiful paradise, as John the seer revealed (Rev. 21:2). It is garnished with the beautiful colors of precious stones and has a radiant beauty throughout with pearly gates and a street of gold, as he stated, saying, *"And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. 19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; 20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysopterus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the 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"* (Rev. 21:18-23).

This is the heaven to which deceased saints go, and of course it contains the glorified Lord Jesus Christ, as John described Him, saying, *"And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle."*

*14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. 1:13-16).*

### A Sober Warning

However, the scripture gives a sober warning to all unbelievers, teaching that everlasting torment

is awaiting the unrepentant, saying, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3), and "then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt. 25:41), and "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15), and "if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:19).

## OBITUARY- BROTHER WESLEY CODRINGTON

Wesley J. Codrington, 62, of Bloomfield, beloved husband of Linda (Hill) Codrington, passed away Saturday (November 28, 2015) at Bloomfield Health and Rehab. Born in Queens, NY, Wesley has been a Connecticut resident since 1985 and resided in Bloomfield since 1995. Wesley received a Certificate of Theology from Emmanuel Baptist Theological Seminary in Newington. He was employed at Lincoln Financial Group in Hartford for 25 years, then briefly at New York Life at the Trumbull Office, retiring in 2014.

Wesley was born in a Christian home. As a teenager, he repented of his sins and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. He loved and trusted Jesus and he loved the local church. He served in the local assembly as an usher, children's bible teacher and deacon. At his death, he was a faithful member of Bible Baptist Church of Cromwell.

Besides his wife Linda, he leaves two sons, Joseph and Daniel Codrington both of Bloomfield; his mother, Alvina (Jenkins) Codrington of Atlanta, GA; two brothers, Philip Codrington and his wife Nicole of Queens, NY and Steven Codrington of Elmont, NY; three sisters, Linda V. Codrington of Stuart, FL; Alvina Markes of Atlanta, GA; and Alison Gray and her husband Charles also of Atlanta; several nieces, nephews and cousins. Wesley was predeceased by his son Wesley Joseph Codrington Jr.; his father, Wesley F. Codrington; his brother Brian Codrington and his sister Robin Codrington.

Funeral services will be held Saturday 12:30 PM at Emmanuel Baptist Church, 296 New Britain Avenue, Newington. Burial will follow in Fairview Cemetery, New Britain. Calling hours are Friday 5 to 8 PM at Carlson Funeral Home, 45 Franklin Square, New Britain. A brief prayer service will be conducted by Pastor Thomas Strouse on Friday evening at 7 PM during calling hours. Please share a memory or note of sympathy at Carlson Funeral Home- New Britain, CT

# PEACE ON EARTH-IN CHRIST ARTICLE

Dr. Cas Reeves



Pastor Cas Reeves

*"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).*

Glory to God! For He has showed good will toward men and blessed men through the birth of Jesus the Christ, the Savior of all mankind. The angelic host declared God's peace toward men. And peace always comes with a price. The greater the peace means the greater the price. We are told that, "God was in Christ, reconciling [making peace with] the world unto himself, not imputing [charging] their trespasses unto them" (2 Corinthians 5:19). Yes, God is extending to man an olive branch, a way for a sinner to come to a holy God, and to have peace and to be saved.

God had promised peace for sinful mankind. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the coming Messiah, said, "He is despised and rejected of men; Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our PEACE was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:3-5). Our peace with God was gained at a great price. A price, only the God of heaven could pay for us, through the suffering death of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. God kept his promise to mankind, to give him a chance to live in peace with Him; but it cost Him greatly.

The forerunner to the Lord Jesus, John the Baptist, is called "the prophet of the Highest" and was to go before...to prepare his way." He was "to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of PEACE" (Luke 1:76-79). This way of peace was announced and declared to be in Jesus Christ.

Jesus declared this peace to be in Himself. Speaking to his disciples: "And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it" (Luke 10:5-6). Upon Jesus' entry into Jerusalem the crowds shouted, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, glory in the highest" (Luke 19:38). Jesus also spoke these encouraging words to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). And then he declared, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace" (John 16:33). True, heaven sent PEACE is in Jesus Christ. He invites all who would have this peace. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [PEACE]" (Matthew 11:28).

-CAR

## Quotes From the Past:

**John Clarke**

**1609-1676**

**Baptist Preacher**



John Clark

*"It is not the will of the Lord than any one should have dominion over another man's conscience....[Conscience] is such a sparkling beam from the Father of lights and spirits that it cannot be lorded over, commanded, or forced, either by men, devils, or angels."*

## Grow in Grace for Women

**Job 1:3** *“His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.”*

**Reflection:** Job was perfect and upright in God’s eyes and was blessed by God. He was faithful when times were plentiful and he was faithful when the LORD allowed calamity in his life.

**Job 13:15** *“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.”*

Are you thankful in the good times and in the times of calamity in your life knowing that God is GOOD ALL the time? Or do you praise, worship, and thank God only when things are going good?

**Challenge:** We do not know what is happening in the spiritual realm but we trust God is sovereign. Hide Job 13:15 in your heart and remember that the Lord has given permission for every trial that comes into your life for your GOOD and His purpose.

2 Peter 3:18

*“But grow in grace, and in the service of our Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen”*

# THE BOOK CORNER

## The Book Corner

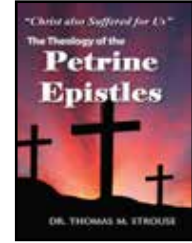
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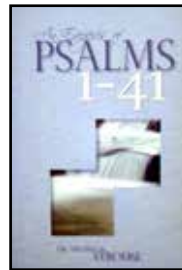
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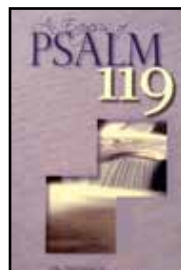
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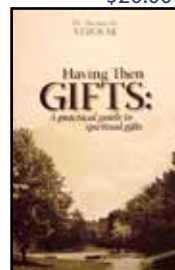
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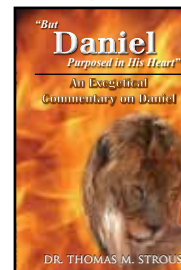
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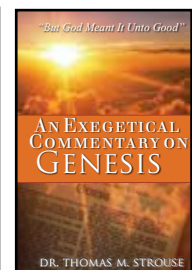
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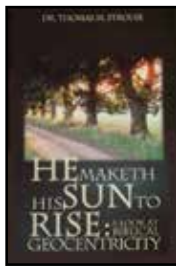
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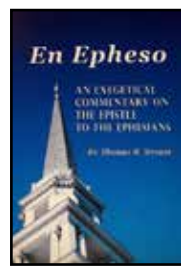
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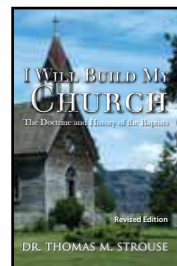
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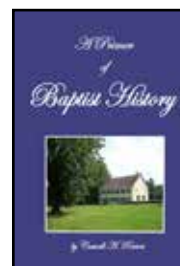
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**March 7-11, 2016**

BBTS Modules Endocott, NY  
"The Book of Matthew"  
"Hebrew Exegesis-The Book of Malachi"

**March 19, 2016**

Ladies Fellowship

**April 15, 2016**

BBTS Spring Lecture Series

**Cancelled:**

**December 4, 2015**

**Annual BBC Christmas Banquet**  
**New Date TBA**

If you have any news for the next issue of the BBC Update, please send email to:

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