

"No, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to countless thousands of angels in a joyful gathering. You have come to the assembly of God's firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge over all things. You have come to the spirits of the righteous ones in heaven who have now been made perfect. Hebrews 12:22-23 NLT

lectio // Hebrews 12:18-29

Ah city life! Welcome to Mount Zion! Who are the occupants in this city? God is there. Countless thousands of angels are there. The assembly of God's firstborn children (I have no idea who this is) are there. And, all the spirits of the righteous ones, who have been made perfect are there. What a grand reunion! The question is, does this sound like the kind of place, the kind of people you want to spend all of eternity with? If you're not sure, I get that. Maybe unfamiliar with all the "perfect" beings? I get that too. A couple of things about that. One, we've made supernatural and even "holy" relationships out to be weird and unfamiliar. Another thing, we've settled with the fact that "we" as fallen, broken, sinful beings would feel out of place there. Like, hanging out at a Catholic priest party where no one can dance (because they have no rhythm) and no one laughs (because it seems out of sync) and everyone looks the same in chaffing-brown robes and bald heads! This is NOT what heaven looks like!!! This is not what a gathering of God's people looks like. Think of huge family get togethers or reunions where everyone gets along (no one is drunk and/or fighting). There's lots of laughter, great stories, dancing, music, singing and the guest of honor is Jesus - who is the most normal, amazing person ever. We have a hard time imagining a place without sin, shame and judgment because that's ALL WE'VE KNOWN for so long! I promise you, there will be humor in heaven! There will be celebration with zero hangovers! There will be love with no regrets! So let's get our head out of the toilet and see the new city for what it really is - a reality reset on all we've ever known about ourselves, God and what life is about. Welcome to God's city!

oratio

Dad,

I get so frustrated with the picture we've been given of what heaven is really like. It's been couched in all the weirdest, worst thoughts of monasteries and monastic monks Gregorian chanting with incense hanging from from chains. I'm sick of it, it's given people the wrong impression of you and the new heaven that awaits. Is this what religion has done to our perspective? On how we see ourselves and our future with you? Help us oh God get a realistic glimpse of heaven that doesn't look like a scene out of a 1950's movie with harps, halos and clouds! Don't let sin rob heaven of its beauty please!

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root