

Unspeakable Gift; Unspeakable Words; Unspeakable Joy

(2 Cor. 9:15)

(2 Cor. 12:4)

(1 Peter 1:8)

Introduction

Three different Greek words convey the meaning of the word “unspeakable”. Altogether, they mean that no human words can give utterance to the precious things of heaven. God’s unspeakable things are so much greater than human intellect, and no mortal tongue can express or describe them!

- **Unspeakable Gift.** (Gr. *Anekdiegetos*. Meaning ‘not expounded in full, indescribable’)

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” 2 Cor. 9:15.

“For God so loved the world, that He **gave His only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” John 3:16-17.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the unspeakable gift of God.

Paul exhorts the saints at Corinth to give willingly to the work of the Lord because of the unspeakable gift that God gave them. Human beings cannot fully comprehend the vastness and infiniteness of the Son of God. God ascribes the whole creation from the beginning to this wonderful, tremendous, infinite person (John 1:3; Col. 1:16).

“And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.” Heb. 1:10-12.

He made the sun and moon, including the vast expanse of space with myriads of stars beyond the reach of human vision. Human words cannot describe God’s unique creation. “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.” Psa 33:6.

The works of His hands are unspeakable.

His person Himself is unspeakable.

His love for sinners and His sacrifice and death for them is unspeakable.

When we get to heaven, our glorified beings will be able to take in more than we can now of the unspeakable things of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. We will continually discover more about our wonderful Saviour throughout the eternal ages. Unsurprisingly, Paul refers to Him as God’s “unspeakable gift.”

- **Unspeakable Words.** (Gr. *Arrhetos*. Meaning ‘unsaid, inexpressible’)

“How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” 2 Cor. 12:4.

From our little information, it would appear that Paul was referring to himself when he was stoned at Lystra (Acts 14:19) about fourteen years before writing to the Corinthian saints. Because of the severe persecution inflicted upon him, it appears the Lord gave Paul a memorable trip up into Paradise in heaven, into the immediate presence of God. He could not give expression to the words that he heard. The Lord Jesus Christ, God’s unspeakable gift, is also the “Living Word.” Therefore, the words Paul heard would have had association with the Lord Himself. Paul does not even mention the things he saw up in Paradise!

His human brain could not comprehend, nor could his human tongue express the words he heard. The word “not lawful” means “not possible” or “unutterable”. What a wonderful place heaven must be where the unspeakable gift of God dwells in whose presence is spoken unspeakable words.

- **Unspeakable Joy.** (Gr. *Aneklaetos*. Meaning; ‘nor spoken out, unutterable’)

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” 1 Peter 1:8.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, God’s unspeakable gift, is directly associated with His unspeakable joy. All true believers constrained by the love of Christ to live their lives for His pleasure and glory (2 Cor. 5:14-15) will willingly obey all the commandments of the Lord Jesus: “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” John 14:15.

These saints live as pilgrims and strangers in this world, and their faith will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ in their eternal home. While suffering temptations and waiting for their Lord to take them to heaven, He gives them a foretaste of “Joy unspeakable and full of glory”.

David expressed the joy of being in the presence of the Lord. “In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Psa. 16:11.

The expression “Fullness of joy” is a joy that human language cannot fully describe. It is the perfection of “Joy unspeakable and full of glory” in the presence of the unspeakable gift of God, in the place where God’s unspeakable words are spoken.

Unspeakable sorrow

In contrast to the unspeakable joy, peace and bliss of heaven are the indescribable things of Hell and the Lake of Fire.

All who reject God’s unspeakable gift will have to pay the wages of sin themselves and be cast into the Lake of Fire on the Day of Judgment (Rev 20:11-15). The human tongue cannot fully describe the torment of this fire. A lake is a place for water and coolness, but no coolness exists in the Lake of Fire. The man in Hell in Luke 16 had no water to cool his tongue. Earthly fire is a light source, but God describes the Lake of Fire as the “blackness of darkness.” Fire always consumes fuel, but the Lake of Fire “shall not be quenched”, nor do its victims burn away. Therefore, the words used in Scripture are words from our vocabulary, which do not fully express the torment of the suffering souls who died without God’s Great Salvation.

The noise of “weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth” is heard in the Lake of Fire. In contrast to the “unspeakable words” of heaven, this noise uttered by the sufferers is of no specific language and is “indescribable speech”. They express the unutterable sorrow, pain and torment of the suffering souls in direct contrast to the unspeakable joys of heaven.

Conclusion

Beloved, when we ponder these solemn facts, there should rise within us thanksgiving to God for His unspeakable gift. There also rises unspeakable joy, and eventually, we will hear those unspeakable words in the presence of the one who loved us and gave Himself for us. We can also thank God that we shall never experience the sorrows of the unspeakable torments of the Lake of Fire. Our blessed Lord suffered unspeakable sorrow for us on the cross to save us from that awful eternal abode. He took our place and died in our stead.

May we value the breaking of bread each Lord’s Day, and may we cleanse our hearts to be in a fit spiritual condition to remember God’s unspeakable gift and offer thanksgiving with unspeakable joy for His infinite beloved Son. “This do in remembrance of me.” 1 Cor 11:24.

“By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.” Heb. 13:15.

Throughout the remainder of the week, it is the Lord’s will for us to “Shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” 1 Peter 2:9.

Our blessed Lord radiated the joys of heaven in every word, thought and deed. He was full of grace, truth, peace, joy, longsuffering, patience and every heavenly virtue. God wills that His redeemed people reflect something of Christ in their daily lives. “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” 1 Peter 2:9-10.

“In whom ye greatly rejoice, though now, for a season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.” 1 Peter 1:6. God wants His children to overcome the heaviness of daily temptations with His unspeakable joy in their souls. With the peace of God (Phil. 4:7) and the words of the Lord (John 15:7) reigning in our hearts, we too may reflect something of the unspeakable things of heaven in our testimony for the Lord Jesus day by day.

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.” Ephesians 5:1-2. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” 2 Cor. 9:15.

J. McIlvenna.