**“In My Father’s House are Many Mansions”**

*John 14*

**Introduction**

1. Does **John 14:1-6** refer to places in heaven, and Jesus’ final, personal return in judgment to take the saints to heaven?
   1. This is the overwhelming consensus on these verses.
   2. Yet, it is not the only possibility.
2. In context, the “Father’s house” and “mansions” (dwelling places) in it seem to more naturally refer to the family/church of God, and the fact that there is room for all in it.
3. Questions to Answer
4. What is “My Father’s house” referring to?
   1. House – *oikia (****John 14:2****), oikos* – both used as the literal dwelling place, or figuratively for the inhabitants, i.e. a family.
   2. Temple? – **John 2:16** (***“My Father’s house”***) (We know this is not what Jesus referred to in John 14.)
   3. Family? – **John 4:53** (***“household”***); **John 8:35** (***“house”***)
   4. Heaven? – **Acts 7:47-50** (***“Heaven is My throne”***); **Psalm 33:13-14** (***“heaven…His dwelling”***)
      1. NOTE: while the concept of a house is “a dwelling place,” and God’s dwelling place is heaven, heaven is not referred to as God’s “house” specifically.
      2. *Oikia* and *oikos* are never used to refer to God’s dwelling in heaven.
5. What are the “many mansions?”
   1. *monē* – “a staying abiding” (VINE)
   2. **“many rooms” (ESV); “many DWELLING PLACES” (NASB)**
   3. Mansions – we like to think of such as a figurative way of describing heaven, similar to things we read in Revelation.
      1. The word does not mean what we think of in English regarding “mansions.”
      2. It simply means an abiding place.
6. How will Jesus “come again?”
   1. Personal, visual coming – 2nd coming?
   2. Figuratively, representatively? – HS?
7. When Jesus receives them to Himself where will they be?
   1. Is this of necessity a reference to heaven?
   2. Can one be with Jesus where He is in another sense? Presently?
8. The Text in Context
9. The Upper Room with the 12 Apostles
   1. ***“He sat down with the twelve” (Matthew 26:20).***
   2. ***“He came with the twelve” (Mark 14:17)***.
   3. ***“He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him” (Luke 22:14)***.
   4. ***“His own…He loved them to the end” (John 13:1)***.
   5. Apostles – *Apostolos* – it., “one sent forth” *(apo*, “from,” *stello,* “to send”). (VINE)
      1. a delegate; specially, an ambassador of the Gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ (“apostle”) (with miraculous powers) (STRONG)
      2. **Matthew 10:1-4** – these specific men chosen by Christ were His special delegates, ambassadors, representatives, and proclaimers of the His gospel.
      3. Gospel (Jesus’ message) committed to their trust – **1 Timothy 1:11**
10. Judas’ Betrayal Predicted
    1. Disciples perplexed – **John 13:21-22**
    2. Disciples sorrowful – **Matthew 26:21-22**
    3. Judas identified (at least to some degree – he knew) and told to leave – **John 13:26-27, 30**
    4. Significance – of these men who devoted themselves to the mission of Jesus, and followed Him through His ministry, who were to be sent into the world with His gospel, ONE WOULD BETRAY HIM.
       1. “Is it I?” – they are troubled.
       2. Recognized – fallibility, weakness, vulnerability – STILL TO GO ON THE MISSION?
11. The Disciples’ Dispute About Position in the Kingdom
    1. Example of Jesus’ humility did not censor their pride.
    2. Talk of a betrayal did not censor their pride.
    3. **Luke 22:24-30** – your greatness is not recognition among each other and others, but servitude.
       1. **(vv. 28-30)** – nevertheless, as those who have followed Jesus in His ministry, their role would be prominent.
       2. Bestow on them a kingdom – *basileia*; from 935; properly, royalty, i.e. (abstractly) rule, or (concretely) a realm (literally or figuratively) (STRONG)
       3. Eat and drink at table – partake in the joys of fellowship with the King.
       4. Sit on thrones judging – apostolic authority. (**Acts 2:42** – apostles’ doctrine)
       5. WHAT GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.
    4. Dispute about greatness ultimately stemming from a misunderstanding about the nature of the kingdom and their roles in it.
    5. Will some be greater in this than others? Differences of roles? Limited positions regarding prominence? (**cf. Mark 10:35-37** – James and John as an example)
       1. ***“you”*** – plural
       2. The position of which He speaks is for them all (apostles’).
12. Peter’s Denial Predicted; All to be Scattered
    1. Peter’s denial predicted – **John 13:36-38**
    2. Jesus also indicated all would be scattered – **Matthew 26:31**
13. Instruction and Information Regarding Their Ministry
    1. Working of miracles and preaching the gospel – **14:12**
    2. Need for prayer in ministry – **14:13-14**
    3. Love by keeping commandments – **14:15**
    4. The promise of another Helper, the Holy Spirit – **14:16-18, 25-26**
    5. Abide in Jesus to bear fruit – **15:1-8**
    6. Understand the coming persecution – **15:18-25**
    7. Testify of Jesus along with the aid of the HS – **15:26-27**
    8. Be of good cheer in the world of tribulation knowing Jesus has overcome – **16:33**
    9. Instructive prayer regarding their sanctification and unity in God and Jesus – **17**
14. Summation
    1. Apostles are troubled about the betrayal and scattering prediction.
       1. Will they be severed from this work if what Jesus says is true? (Think especially of Peter)
       2. Troubled about Jesus departing from them – **John 13:3, 33, 36**
    2. Yet, they are still zealous concerning their ministry.
       1. Confused about their place in the kingdom – dispute about greatness.
       2. No doubt intimidated by the thought of Jesus leaving them to this ministry by themselves.
15. The Text
16. Their troubled hearts are at issue from the start of the chapter to the end **(vv. 1, 27).**
    1. **(v. 1)** – troubled hearts:
       1. Judas’ betrayal; Peter’s denial; All to be scattered; Dispute about greatness (anyone to be left out, or in lesser position?).
       2. Ultimately – **13:33, 36** – Jesus leaving them.
    2. **(v. 27)** – troubled hearts addressed again.
       1. Same phrase – ***“Let not your heart be troubled”***
       2. Follows with the same comfort – **(vv. 3, 28)** – He is going away, BUT HE IS COMING BACK.
17. Jesus’ comfort involves His coming to them from the start of the chapter to the end **(vv. 3, 27-28).**
    1. **(v. 3)** – comforts them by explaining His reason for going.
       1. Prepare a place – doing something to provide a place for them – service.
       2. **13:8** – don’t wash, have no part.
       3. Place where? – **(v. 2)** – dwelling place in Father’s house.
       4. How? – **Hebrews 9:13-14, 24-26** – taking blood into Holiest of all.
       5. WHEN HE HAS PREPARED, THEN HE WILL COME BACK TO RECEIVE THEM TO HIMSELF.
          1. They cannot follow – **13:33, 36**
          2. Does not necessitate His personal return on the day of judgment **– Acts 3:26** – Jesus “came” to bless the Jews after His ascension in the preaching of the Gospel – that by the HS.
          3. **(vv. 27-28)** – don’t be troubled, for He will come to them.
    2. How will He come to them?
       1. **(v. 18)** – I will come to you.
       2. **(v. 23)** – We (Jesus and Father) will come to Him.
       3. Are these different? If so…
          1. **(vv. 3, 28)** – obvious reference to the same thing.
          2. **(vv. 18, 23)** – in between refer to something different? NOT LIKELY.
    3. His coming is not personal here, but figurative/representative:
       1. **(v. 18)** – He will not leave but will come to them.
          1. Come – implies a departure – if He never left He couldn’t come back.
          2. **13:33** – He is leaving His “little children” – but He will not cause them to be orphans.
          3. Orphans – *orphanos* – 2 pert. to being without the aid and comfort of one who serves as associate and friend, orphaned. (BDAG)
       2. (**vv. 15-17)** – If they remain faithful to Him, He will send the Helper.
          1. **Helper** – *paraklētos* – lit., “called to one’s side,” i.e., to one’s aid (VINE)
             1. summoned, called to one’s side, especially called to one’s aid (THAYER)
          2. **Another** – *allos* – *Allos* expresses a numerical difference and denotes “another of the same sort”; *heteros* expresses a qualitative difference and denotes “another of a different sort.” (VINE)
             1. Implies that they already have a *paraklētos*, and the ***“the Spirit of truth” (v. 17)*** would be another of the same sort (nature).
             2. **Jesus is their *paraklētos*** – **1 John 2:1** – WHICH IS WHY THEY ARE TROUBLED AT HIS DEPARTURE.
          3. **(v. 18)** – Jesus is coming to them representatively in the HS – by instrumentality.
    4. Coming of **(v. 28)** is a reference to **(v. 3)** but also His coming of **(v. 18)** by instrumentality of the Helper, the HS:
       1. **(vv. 25-26)** – ***“Spoken…while being present”*** in contrast with going away, but with the sending of the Helper, the HS.
       2. **(vv. 27-28)** – Peace left with presence of HS, i.e. Jesus “coming back” representatively through HS.
          1. **(v. 28)** – Rejoice because He is getting to go back to His Father.
          2. **16:5-7** – Rejoice because when He goes away He will send the Helper.
       3. **Conclusion** – JESUS’ COMING THROUGHOUT THE CONTEXT, **(V. 3)** INCLUDED, IS IN REFERENCE TO HIS COMING IN THE SENDING OF THE HELPER, THE HS.
18. When Jesus comes to them, He will be with them, and they will be where He is **(vv. 2-3, 23).**
    1. **(vv. 2-3)** – the dwelling places in the Father’s house will be accessed when Jesus comes back to receive them.
       1. **(v. 3)** – As they are in the dwelling places, they are where Jesus is.
    2. **(v. 18)** – come to them through HS followed with further explanation.
       1. **(vv. 19-22)** – they will SEE Him, He will be IN them, He will MANIFEST Himself to them.
          1. ***“At that day”*** **– (v. 16)** – when He comes in the sending of the Spirit.
       2. **(vv. 22-24)** – Not a visible manifestation as Judas thinks, but one that includes even the Father.
          1. Keep commandments, keep word – (**vv. 15, 21, 23)**
          2. Following **(v. 15)** – come via HS.
          3. Same in **(v. 21**) – manifest via HS.
          4. Same in **(v. 23)** – make home via coming of HS – Father included.
             1. Why Father included?
             2. **(vv. 3, 6)** – where I am, come to the Father.
             3. **(vv. 7, 9-10)** – Jesus in Father, Father in Jesus.
             4. **(v. 23)** – Jesus comes, Father comes.
    3. How can they be where Jesus is? – **(v. 2)** – ***“many mansions”***
       1. **Mansions** – *monē*; from 3306; a staying, i.e. residence. (STRONG)
          1. *menō;* a primary verb; to stay (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy): (STRONG)
             1. 120x, 34x in John.
             2. 4x in **John 14** – (**vv. 10, 16, 17, 25)**
             3. Verb – the act of abiding.
          2. *monē* – noun – “a staying abiding” (VINE); THE PLACE OF ABIDING.
             1. 2x – IN ALL BIBLE.
             2. **John 14:2, 23** – ***“mansions,” “home.”***
             3. **(v. 2)** – apostles “abiding place” with the Father and Jesus in FATHER’S HOUSE.
             4. **(v. 23)** – Father’s and Jesus’ “abiding place” with apostles – instrumentality of the HS.
       2. **It does not follow that the “mansions” are in heaven.**
       3. **Then it does not follow that the “Father’s house” is heaven.**
    4. The ***“Father’s house”*** which has many “abiding places” is the household of God, where they will be with Jesus when He comes to receive them **(vv. 2-3).**
       1. Father’s house – *oikia* – in John (5x)
          1. The inhabitants, family – **John 4:53** (family of nobleman); **8:35** (family of God – Son, Jesus, abides in family forever).
          2. The place, house – **John 11:31; 12:3** (house of Mary and Martha)
          3. Father’s house – **John 14:2** – place, or inhabitants (family)?
       2. *Oikia* and *oikos* are never used to refer to God’s dwelling in heaven.
          1. **1 Timothy 3:15** – house (family) of God, church.
          2. **Hebrews 3:1-6** – Moses a servant in the house (family) of God, but Christ as a Son.
             1. **(v. 6)** – we, as Christians, are of that house (family).
             2. **Hebrews 10:21** – have advantage of High Priest as part of that family.
          3. **1 Peter 2:5** – being built up a spiritual house – **(v. 10)** – those who belong to God.
          4. **1 Peter 4:17** – house (family) of God – those who obeyed the gospel.
19. Conclusion – **John 14:1-4**
    1. There are many “dwelling places” ***(“mansions”)*** in the ***“Father’s house”*** (family/church).
       1. ***“if it were not so, I would have told you”*** – disciples disputing about places (of greatness) in the kingdom.
       2. **If there weren’t enough places of significance for all of you, I would have told you, but there is room for all of you.**
    2. Jesus goes to prepare a place in the family of God by the offering of His blood.
    3. He returns through instrumentality of the Spirit that the apostles can have their place in the family of God, the church of God, and be where Christ is.
       1. Sending of the Spirit marks the institution of the church/kingdom/people added to God’s family – **Isaiah 2;** **Joel 2; Acts 2**
       2. In conjunction, this makes their work in the family of God/church as apostles possible through the guidance of the HS.
    4. **Cf. Ephesians 2:4-7, 19-22** – sitting together with Christ in the heavenly places (spiritual realm, family of God, church, kingdom), members of household of God, apostles foundation (so a part of that house), are a dwelling place of God IN THE SPIRIT.
       1. We don’t receive the Spirit in the same way as the apostles.
       2. However, Spirit dwells in us through their Spirit inspired word, and God dwells in us in that way.

**Conclusion**

1. While the common approach to **John 14:1-6** is that Jesus is speaking of heaven and coming personally for the final time to receive disciples to Himself in heaven, this is by no means the only possibility.
2. The context seems to favor that the ***“Father’s house”*** is the family of God – the church of God – which has room for all (***“many mansions”*** – abiding places).
3. Jesus will come again after preparing a place for us in God’s family by virtue of His offered blood, and He will do so through the Holy Spirit’s revelation which will allow fellowship between God, Christ, and those who follow the Spirit’s teaching.