



# Heaven 101

A Biblical Guide Study of Our Heavenly Home

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Heaven 101 Class Notes  
Calvary Chapel Palm Harbor

## CONTENTS

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Why study about Heaven?.....	6
1 Where do Believers go at Death? Do we Really Die? .....	12
2 When a believer dies, would you bring him or her back? .....	15
3 How do we learn about Heaven?.....	16
4 What did the Early Church believe about Heaven?.....	18
5 Are dead people just sleeping? .....	18
6 What are believers doing in heaven? (See Question 26) .....	19
7 If heaven's our home, does it mean the Earth isn't? .....	20
8 Where is Heaven? (See Questions 39 & 40).....	23
9 Will we see God in Heaven?.....	32
10 Will the New Jerusalem cover the whole Earth?.....	37
11 What will our resurrected bodies be like? .....	39
12 Will we remember what happened on earth? .....	56
13 Do we become angels when we die?.....	58
14 Will we all look alike in heaven?.....	58
15 Will we eat and drink in heaven? .....	61
16 Will we be the same age in heaven as when we die? .....	62
17 Will we be learning in Heaven? .....	63
18 Can people in heaven see and hear us now? .....	65
19 When we die, will we remember where we lived, what we did, and who we knew?.....	66
20 Will we remember things in heaven? (see Question 42).....	68
21 How can we be sure we'll go to heaven? (See Question 24) .....	72

22	Will there be animals on the new earth? .....	77
23	How do I explain heaven and death to a child when one is dying?....	85
24	How do I explain God's offer of salvation? (See Question 21).....	89
25	Is Heaven one place or two?.....	90
26	What will we do for all eternity (see Question 6)?.....	93
27	Will there be time in Heaven?.....	102
28	If people in heaven know of bad things, could it really be heaven?..	103
29	Will we recognize our loved ones in heaven? .....	104
30	Is there marriage in heaven? .....	106
31	Is the present heaven a physical place? .....	108
32	What's "new" in the new earth?.....	110
33	Will Earth be destroyed or renewed?.....	111
34	Have you ever wanted to walk on the Earth with Jesus? .....	115
35	Is our Destiny Really to Rule and Reign with Christ?.....	115
36	What's in the New Jerusalem? .....	120
37	Will we work in Heaven? .....	122
38	Is it a good thing to think about Heaven? .....	123
39	Is heaven really a Place and Location? .....	124
40	What is heaven? .....	125
41	Is there an intermediate holding place before Heaven?.....	126
42	Will we grieve for loved ones when we are in heaven? (See also Question 20).....	130
43	Are there two Books of Life? Judgements Afterward?.....	131
44	Are children and mentally handicapped in heaven?.....	147
45	Do we have the right to say who is going to heaven?.....	148
46	Does Satan know in advance who will accept Christ?.....	150

47	Is it wrong to pray for God to take us to Heaven? .....	151
48	Where do infants, small children, and aborted infants go at death?.	152
49	What body will the infant have? Will we know them?.....	155
50	Why do we care about hearing about Heaven? .....	157
51	Are we all familiar with the <i>Star Wars</i> saga and final rebellion?.....	159
52	Are the heavenly realms Geographically close (Also see Question 33)? .....	160
53	What are the Three heavens? .....	160
54	How can all old and new believers fit in the New Earth?.....	162
55	How many people go to heaven or hell every day? .....	163
56	When do we get our glorified Spiritual body?.....	163
57	Where did the saints from the old testament go when they died?....	169
58.	Will everyone face God's judgement when their life ends?.....	174
59	How brief is your life? .....	176
60	Why is death so unfamiliar to us now?.....	177
61	Until God takes us home to Heaven, how do we reflect His love? .....	179
62	Why hasn't Jesus returned? .....	180
63	What do angels do today? .....	181
64	Will we see, eat, and sleep, etc. in Heaven ?.....	181
65	Time concept in Heaven? .....	181
66	Will we have free will in Heaven? .....	181
67	How does the resurrected body happen if we're cremated? .....	182
68	Are those in Heaven seeing the heartache on earth? .....	183
69	If I have a pet that I dearly love, will it be with me in Heaven?.....	185
70	Does a chasm exist between hell and earth? .....	186
71	Will we have a temporary body?.....	189

72	What is the white stone that we receive in heaven?.....	194
73	Does Satan have access to Heaven now?.....	195
74	Does Satan Know the Plan of God? .....	197
75	Where did Jesus go when he died? .....	198
76	Who will the residents of New Jerusalem be?.....	201
77	If God knew the fall was going to happen why did he create?.....	203

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May God use this information to glorify Himself and enlighten all to the reality of the adventure that awaits us through our transition of death in our continued life with Him, in the home He has created us for in Heaven.

## WHY STUDY ABOUT HEAVEN?

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At the beginning of our first Heaven 101 class, we asked the class, "Who can remember having one hour of teaching on 'What will Heaven be like?'" No one indicated that they could remember having at least one of teaching on what heaven would be like! The material that you will be exposed to in these notes, both can and will, change your life now and forever!

There are 4 questions that we all ask ourselves:

1. Who am I, really?
2. Where did I come from?
3. Why am I here?
4. Where am I going?

Death is in front of all of us. By answering question 4, where we are going when we die, we will cover the answers to questions 1-3. Our lives are tragically brief with an ultimate destiny...where will we spend it? What will it be like?

These Class notes will dispel Hollywood misconceptions and give you a vibrant and accurate image of how and where believers will spend eternity. You will obtain the tools to encourage those who fear death and face their future with uncertainty, and have biblical answers to questions that your friends, relative and children have about death and learn about (as the Star Trek television series always said)"*The Final Frontier*".

To provide a quick reference resource study guide we have used a question & answer format. This format allows God's word in a particular verse or text to be referenced in several questions and is used to allow a quick guide for your application.

This is a PASS/FAIL Course and there is only a final exam by God. We will give you the scriptures allowing God to imprint His eternal adventure on, and in, you.

The best commentary on the bible is the bible; and the best commentator on the biblical subject of Heaven is God. God gives us His word to inform us and to transform us. God is our source of the blessings and peace as He reminds us in Numbers 6:24-26.

**“The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.”**

We naturally wonder about dying...what's next? Is it nothing? Is it reincarnation? Is it Heaven or Hell?

What actually happens one second after you take your last breath?

If you were going to live forever, wouldn't you want to know where you are going, or what you will be doing and what that place would be like? What if you could have information given to you to find out exactly what is on the other side of death? What if you can actually know with certainty what happens after death? Would you want to know? Of course you would; and you would want to make sure your family and friends had the correct information of where you are, so they could end up in the same destination!

We all die.

An Italian Proverb says, ***“When the game is over, the king and the pawn go into the same box.”***

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” These words were found written in Jim Elliot's bible after he and 4 other Christian missionaries were killed by the Waorani tribe of the Amazon region of Ecuador in 1956. His friends had thought he was throwing away his future and his College education by becoming a Christian missionary.

Only God knows the time of your death. You were created to live forever; and God will honor your free will and the free will choices you make that will determine your eternal destination. God has given you the opportunity

to live today, like you will die tonight. Live your life with an awareness of the brevity and uniqueness of your individual life. Die with the knowledge that there were no missed opportunities to love others and bring others with you to heaven; that they too were created to be forever with God for whom you were each created to love forever!



Looking at the diagram above, you now live in the dot, and the arrow represents your life beyond the dot, as our life continues forever. Decisions are made in your life time on earth now living in the dot. Decisions made now will determine your life forever. When you die you will then see, as Paul Harvey used to say, *"the rest of the story"* in the continuation of your life.

Are you afraid of dying? Intellectually, you know, as a believer in the life, death, resurrection and acceptance of Jesus as your savior; that dying is a transition to being with Jesus...but, *are you ready to die tonight*, when you lay your head on your pillow? We naturally fear what is an unknown future event.

Hebrew 2:14-15 – Jesus came to deliver us from the fear of death, ***"So that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death"***.

Jesus has set you free from your fear of death. With biblical knowledge, you can have a strengthening of your belief and an increased confidence of your present life and future destination.

1 Corinthians 15:55 – Since we have the coming resurrection of our present bodies, Paul asks, ***"Where, o death, is your victory? Where, o death, is your sting?"***

So how will this study of Heaven Help you?

In 1952, Florence Chadwick, a long-distance American long-distance swimmer who was swimming the 22 miles from Catalina Island to mainland southern California. She had already been the first woman to swim the English Channel both ways, a distance of 23 miles, each time setting a record. In the Catalina swim she swam in foggy, chilly weather, barely able to see the boats that were following her as she swam. Tired, and both physically and emotionally exhausted, Florence wanted to stop swimming. In the boat alongside her, her mother encouraged her telling her that she was close to finishing, and she knew she could make it. But, Florence surrounded by the thick fog, stopped swimming, and was pulled out of the water. On board the boat, Florence discovered that her destination of the shore was less than half a mile away from the boat she then sat in!

At a news conference the next day, Florence said, "If only I could have seen the shore in the thick fog, I know I would've been able to continue to swim; I would've seen the finish line and would've finished strong."

So how does this story help you? You are limited to the short-sighted vision that you currently have while on earth now. You wish you could see more and know more of the future outcome when you are in the middle of the problems you face. When you can't see in the fog of uncertain health situations and circumstances; you can focus our thoughts and fix your eyes on Jesus's words. You can visualize your eternal home, Heaven, and you can finish your life living strongly...in spite of the fog of uncertainty that you are currently in.

God doesn't tell us everything He has said or done....but, He tells us a lot about our final destination, Heaven. Together we'll explore, reveal and discover what Heaven will be like, and the adventure that awaits us as we rule and reign with our older brother, Jesus, in our Father's kingdom.

Philippians 3:12-14 – ***"I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ...I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."***

Colossians 3:1-2 - ***“Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”***

Is this a suggestion, or a command? When this verse says, “set your hearts on things above,” it means to have a single-minded pursuit for heaven. Setting our hearts and setting our minds does not, happen automatic, it is a command for us to continually choose to decide and follow God’s command to continually think about heaven.

When the shepherd *looks* for his lost sheep in Matthew 18:12, or when a woman *searches* for her lost coin in Luke 15:8, or when the merchant *looking* for fine pearls in Matthew 13:45, in each case it implies, “to keep searching.”

We control our free will choices; and we are to “keep on setting our heart and mind on things above”, i.e., setting our heart and mind on the future reality of heaven that awaits us.

God doesn’t tell us everything about heaven, but God does tell us a lot.

John 14:2 – Jesus said to John’s disciples, ***“In my father’s house are many rooms... I go to prepare a place for you.”***

He intentionally chose to use common, physical terms (i.e., house, rooms, place) to describe where He was going and what He was preparing. He wanted to give his disciples tangible things to look forward to – a place, a home where they (and we) would be with Him. He used things they understood, not because they couldn’t understand, but he wanted them to look forward to a continuation, and enhancement, of what they did know and understand.

God is still on his original plan for His creation. He will restore what has been corrupted by sin, He will bring Heaven down to a place called the New Earth, and He will dwell with all who respond to His invitation to live

with Him forever. God loves us, and while He has created us to love Him, but we must make the decision to accept his plan of salvation to be with Him.

God's Kingdom is not about what happens in a remote, unearthly place; but what happens on the earth which God created for His glory. God has tied His glory to the earth, and everything connected with the earth—mankind, animals, and everything on it.

Have you ever heard the saying, "Everyone wants to go to heaven...but no one wants to die to go there"?

We know how the supply and demand economic principle works...the less the supply of anything, the more the demand will be. Everyone wants to attend the event, ride the ride, or see the show. Things that are advertised then become the things that everyone is desiring to be involved in. The more knowledge we have about an event or place, the more our desire will grow to go to that event.

Many people live and think as if the present life is all there is to our lives. When we think of our future home of Heaven: the more we know of God's words about the reality of heaven that awaits us, the more our passion will grow; as we realize that we are created to live forever.

2 Peter 3:13 – Scripture says, ***"We are looking forward to new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells."***

The Bible is the only authoritative word about the afterlife; not the movies we see, the talk shows we hear, or what other people think or believe.

Heaven is not something that we think naturally about and automatically look forward to. The thoughts of a new Earth, a redeemed universe, and our role as God's delegated rulers after we experience our physical deaths is not in our normal thoughts. But the reality of God's word tells us these things are our future!

John 8:44 – Jesus spoke of the devil, ***“When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is the father of lies.”*** Some of Satan’s favorite lies are about heaven, e.g., “It’s not real, you can’t really know much about it, it’s so spiritual that you can’t enjoy it”, etc.

We’ve been content too long, with too little of an understanding of Heaven. Our lack of biblical knowledge concerning heaven makes Satan very happy, since it prevents us from focusing on the excitement and anticipation of reaching our life’s goal of being with God forever.

We are a purpose-driven people; created by a purpose-giving God; and we are destined to live forever in heaven. Jesus has paid the price of our sin by taking God’s just wrath that we, as sinners, couldn’t pay. By our acceptance of Jesus’ life, death, burial bodily resurrection and ascension, and acceptance of him as our Lord and savior, God has given us the gift of eternal life with Him by our belief in the work of his righteous Son. We now are seen by God as the righteousness of his Son, Jesus and we have access and an eternal relationship with the Holy God.

## **1 WHERE DO BELIEVERS GO AT DEATH? DO WE REALLY DIE?**

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I Thessalonians 4:13 – ***“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.”***

When a believer dies their life doesn’t stop existing; nor do they fall asleep as people who do not believe in Jesus think of sleep. They are still alive but are now in another place (Heaven) with Jesus. It is not unreasonable to think that the God who has created the vast universe that we see, has created us to live forever. Where we live is determined by the choices that we make while on this present earth.

John 11:1-14 – ***“Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume***

***on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." When he heard this Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it. Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days. Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." "But Rabbi", they said, "a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light." After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will better." Jesus had been speaking of his earth, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there so that you may believe. But let us go to him."***

It took a day for the message from Mary and Martha to reach Jesus and another day for the trip back, and Jesus waited 2 more days.

Why did Jesus wait 4 days? The rabbis taught that the spirit did not leave the body for 3 days. They would listen at the tomb for 3 days to hear if the person was alive. For there to be no doubt of the miracle that He would perform in raising Lazarus, Jesus took 4 days to get there.

Death has always had an element of fear to humans. Did you ever wonder where did the term "dead ringer" and "graveyard shift" come from?

Without the medical advances we have today, the fear of being prematurely buried alive peaked in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century during the cholera epidemic when a large number of patents for safety coffins were issued.

These allowed the person who revived to ring a bell via a cord in a conduit to a bell on the surface. The graveyard had an attendant that would listen

for the bell for the “dead ringer”, and the midnight shift at the graveyard was known as the “graveyard shift”.

When we mention Heaven, we mean the place where Christians go when they die, we’re referring to the intermediate, or present, heaven. It is fully Heaven and fully in God’s presence, but is not our final destination. It is a wonderful place, but it’s not the place we are ultimately made for, and not the place where we will live forever. God has destined us to live as resurrected bodily beings on a resurrected, renewed earth. Our true final destination is the New Earth, where and when, God will then dwell with us, as He did in the beginning in Eden with Adam and Eve.

We will be with the Lord forever but not exactly in the same place as heaven is now (present heaven). In the present Heaven, everyone is in Christ’s presence. However, everyone is looking forward to Christ’s return to new earth, when they’ll experience their resurrection body and walk on Earth again.

The Heaven we now go to at death isn’t our eternal destination. There will be a new Heaven *and* a new Earth – a renewed creation where we will live with God forever.

Imagine you are going on a trip to Israel, but you went to Orlando to change planes. When someone asks you what your destination is, you would not say the intermediate place, Orlando, but rather the final destination, Israel.

The heaven we go to when we die is with the Lord and is a wonderful place where we will all see friends and family in the temporary heavenly dwelling place. Like us right now, they are also looking forward to their bodily resurrection, after which we will all live on the Earth that God is preparing for us.

We will live with Christ and one another forever, not in the present Heaven but on the New Earth, which God will make into Heaven by the relocation

of his throne and his presence when the city of Jerusalem will come down from heaven to the New Earth, where HE will be at home with his people forever...as he was in the Garden of Eden, before the fall of mankind by disobedience of God and sin entered His creation.

## **2 WHEN A BELIEVER DIES, WOULD YOU BRING HIM OR HER BACK?**

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No. They are still alive and now are with the most wonderful person in the Universe, Jesus Christ. They have no health problems, sadness nor sorrow, anymore. It would be cruel to bring that person back to earth where there's still the pain, disease and death effects of the curse. We will love our loved ones forever, and the sorrow we have, by being temporarily separated for a period of time, is balanced with our belief and knowledge of the fact that they are now happy, and have arrived at our future home, and await us to join them with our Lord Jesus.

Jesus does not say that the story in Luke 16 is a parable, and this is the only story wherein Jesus gives a name. Jesus, who came from heaven and knows what is factually "behind the spiritual curtain," gives us a look that tells us important factual information.

Luke 16:19-31 ***"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered in sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores."***

***"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus at his side. So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire."***

***“But Abraham replied, “Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you is a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.”***

***“He answered, “then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.”***

***“Abraham replied, they have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.”***

***“No, father Abraham, he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will not repent.”***

***“He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”***

So, to answer the question of when a loved one who believes in Jesus' death, life, burial and resurrection and has accepted him as their Savior dies, would you bring them back if you could?

If Lazarus were your believing loved one, would you bring him back once he has died his natural death?

### **3 HOW DO WE LEARN ABOUT HEAVEN?**

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Heaven is God's home and the most reliable place to learn about heaven is in God's book. The Bible doesn't tell us everything that God said and God did, but it tells us a lot about heaven. And from the information that He tells us, we can know about our abilities and adventures in that await us Heaven.

When a believer who loves Jesus dies, they leave their bodies here, and they immediately enter into the arms of Jesus in heaven.

Jesus was a carpenter and builder, and he promised He was going to prepare a place for us. Maybe there's a big sign that says, "Welcome Home."

John 14:1-6 ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled, trust in God, trust also in me. In my father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way where I am going." ...."I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.***

When you want to win the prize of a game....you have to make sure you are following the rules of the game. God has offered eternity with himself and has outlined his plan and his rules for us, to follow in order to qualify for the prize of spending eternity with Him in heaven. Hollywood movies and earthly authors are not where we find accurate information about heaven and eternity. When King David was confronted by God's prophet, Nathan after his adultery with Bathsheba, he wrote in Psalm 51:2-4, wherein he said, ***"Against you and you only have I sinned"***. Similarly, when Potiphar's wife asked Joseph to *"lie with her"*, he said in Genesis 39:7-9 ***all that Potiphar has, he has put in my authority, except only you his wife. How can I sin against God by doing this thing?*** We consider all of the collateral people that were involved in David's adultery and murder of and Uriah that were sinned against. But God has given us His words through King David and Joseph to let us know that all breaking of His rules is a sin against Him as the rule-maker, the Lover of our Soul and our God. Sin is a personal thing with God, and both David and Joseph realized this. There are consequential damages to others, but our sin is a sin against God.

## 4 WHAT DID THE EARLY CHURCH BELIEVE ABOUT HEAVEN?

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What did the early church believe about Heaven and death?

According to pictures on catacombs, Heaven was often depicted with landscapes, children playing, people feasting at banquets

In A.D. 125, Greek Athenian statesman, Aristides wrote to a friend about Christianity, explaining why this new religion was so successful:

*"If any righteous man among the Christians passes away from this world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God, and they escort his body with songs and thanksgiving, as if he were setting out from one place to another."*

The early church lived and died believing, literally in the fact that Jesus said whoever believes in me shall never die, do you believe this? They believed their life continued after their physical death and they would go directly to be with the Lord.

John 11:26 ***"Whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"***

## 5 ARE DEAD PEOPLE JUST SLEEPING?

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Appearances can be deceiving. Dead believer's bodies appear to be sleeping, but the Bible says they are still alive and their spirits go straight to Heaven. Remember what Jesus told the dying thief on the cross?

Luke: 23:38-43 - Jesus said, ***"Today you will be with me in paradise."***

Luke 23:38-43 - ***There was a written notice above him, which read: This is the King of the Jews. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"***

***But the other criminal rebuked him, "Don't you fear God, "he said, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing***

**wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”**

Philippians 1:23-24 – **“I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.”**

Paul said that to depart and die, is to be with Christ. And to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord...Looking forward to being with someone wouldn't mean much, if you were asleep, would it?" There is no such thing as soul-sleep, and the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16 shows us that.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8 - **“So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. For we live by believing and not by seeing. Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.”**

## **6 WHAT ARE BELIEVERS DOING IN HEAVEN? (SEE QUESTION 26)**

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Revelation 6:9-11 shows us three key points:

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, **“How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you avenge our blood?”** Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, ***“How long sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”*** Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

We notice four things from Revelation 6:9-11 about these people who died:

- These people are alive and awake and aren't like ghosts at all
- They remember what happened on Earth
- They're asking God to do something about it
- This means that they know about how things are on Earth and pray to God about them

These four things tells us that in Heaven they have abilities and activities and we will also have abilities and activities.

## **7 IF HEAVEN'S OUR HOME, DOES IT MEAN THE EARTH ISN'T?**

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Genesis 2:8-10, 15 – ***“Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground- trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food, In the middle of the garden wee the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river watering the garden flowed from Eden.”***

In the perfect environment there was a perfect garden created for a perfect people; there were animals without cages, tigers and lambs that coexisted, no death, no fighting, and no hunting. God made people to tend and care for animals and to rule the world He had created for them to live on.

Then Adam and Eve disobeyed God. They listened and obeyed Satan rather than God; and they chose for everyone who lived after them for all

generations to follow. When they sinned against God, it put the whole world and His creation under a curse, damaging and altering everything God had created. We all have the same nature and tendencies of selfishness as Adam...and we all sin, as Adam did.

God sent them out of the garden, for He is so holy and righteous that He can't allow sinners or sin in His presence. Exodus 33:20 - **"You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."**

God gave the people freedom to choose, and God honored their choice. They chose to listen to Satan rather than God and all creation was changed. As a result, all people now live under the curse and this curse includes, pain, illness, death and separation. As a result we, and the earth today, are not the way that God intended when He first made mankind in Eden.

God has promised to make us and the earth perfect again. God who is all-knowing, is still on Plan A for His creation.

In the first few chapters of Genesis and the last few of Revelation, we read of the paradise lost and paradise restored; the curse's beginning and the curse removed, and the earth created and the earth restored. God will dwell with His people again on the New Earth.

We have never seen the earth as God made it. Our planet as we know it is a distortion of the original world. How much beauty will we see on the new Earth?

Psalm 24:1 – ***"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."***

God will bring back the heavens, earth and mankind. The claim on humanity that was temporarily lost and is fully restored will be better than ever in Christ. The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.

The reason the son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

1 John 3:8- ***"He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from***

***the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."***

He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work (the word "beginning" here means the beginning of his rebellion. Lucifer was created as perfect [see Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:12-17]).

***Isaiah 14:12-14 – "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High."***

***Ezekiel 28: 12-17 – "Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: This is what the Sovereign Lord says: You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were made in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: Carnelian, chrysolite, and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God/ you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until the wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and expelled you, guardian cherub, from the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty and, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings."***

“Devil”- means accuser or slanderer. Satan opposes God and God’s plan. He is a deceiver and the instigator of sin and rebellion against God, God’s people and against God’s law.

God’s original plan *will be* realized:

1. To remove the destruction inflicted on creation
2. To redeem the world
3. To place mankind on Earth to fill, rule and develop it for God’s glory

God’s glory is important and a priority of God. Isaiah 43:7 – ***“Everyone who is called by my name, whom I have created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”***

In Genesis, the devil tempted Eve and in Revelation, he’s cast into the lake of fire forever. The Tree of Life that was in Genesis’s Garden of Eden will be in New Jerusalem.

Genesis begins the story on a perfect earth, then shows its ruin. Revelation ends with Christ’s return, our resurrection, the judgement and the new earth, and a new beginning that never ends.

The original good creation that God created is to be restored by God so that his redeemed creation might have fellowship with him for his Glory. God will be with His people on God’s New Earth.

## **8 WHERE IS HEAVEN? (SEE QUESTIONS 39 & 40)**

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God is everywhere, but by definition Heaven is where God’s throne is and earth is our home.

Jesus Christ as the God-Man links God and humans, and He also links heaven and earth together forever.

Ephesians 1:9-10 – ***“He has made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put***

***into effect when the times reach their fulfillment- to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ."***

Matthew: 27:51- ***"At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split."***

Just as the curtain that separated man from the Holy of Holies where God resided was torn in two at Christ's death, so will the separation of the locations between heaven and earth be gone, and they will be in the same location....One Universe united under one God, forever.

Heaven is God's central dwelling place. God is present everywhere, yet heaven is the special location place of his throne from which he rules His creation of the universe.

1 Kings 22:19 – ***"Micaiah continued, "therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left."***

When God's Children die, we immediately go to heaven to be with Christ.

Luke 23:43 – ***"Jesus answered him, Truly, I tell you today you will be with me in paradise."***

God's children will relocate from the present heaven to the earth to rule and reign with Jesus on earth during the 1,000 year period. After the millennium, the city of New Jerusalem is relocated from the present heaven to the renewed earth and God will dwell with his people on earth again. The throne of God and of the lamb will be in the city new Jerusalem on earth.

Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 19:28 – ***"At the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."***

Acts 3:21 – ***“Christ must remain in heaven until the time for the final restoration of all things, as God promised long ago through his holy prophets.”***

God had a plan in place for humanity’s redemption and the restoration of creation without the corruption of sin and death.

The exact location of the present heaven is unknown. It seems likely that heaven is outside of God’s creation, and could exist in another dimension.

We aren’t always aware of, and can’t always see, the reality of God’s spiritual forces at work. When the King of Aram’s army surrounded Elisha and his servant came worried Elisha ask God to allow him to see a different perspective.

2 Kings 6:15-17 – ***“When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh, my Lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more that those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open up his eyes so that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”***

Revelation 22:3 – ***“No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city and his servants will serve him.”***

Revelation 21:3 – ***“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.”***

God’s throne will be in New Jerusalem, the new earth’s capital. Heaven and Earth will be the same place as by definition Heaven is where God’s throne is.

God's plan is to bring all thing in heaven and on Earth together, under one head, His Son, Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 45:6 – ***"I am the Lord, and there is no other apart from me there is no God." I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me."***

Psalms 19:1– ***"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the skies display his craftsmanship"***. God created the entire universe for his glory.

When we look at the creation we are confronted with a choice of how our universe and earth was created, "coincidence?" or "providence?"

Did you ever wonder why God created everything exactly as he did? Was it just a coincidence that we live on earth? Was it really God's Providence? Providence and Coincidence are mutually exclusive...so which is more logical and rational? Did the creation just coincidentally and fortuitously happen? Or is there a designer and creator responsible for the creation? Let's look at the creation.

Atmosphere: God has perfectly placed our planet in the universe in a location that allows and sustains our life on earth. The earth is located at the right distance from the sun. We have temperature swings of -30 degrees to +120 degrees (Fahrenheit). If the earth were any farther away from the sun, we would all freeze. Any closer and we would burn up. Even a fraction variance in the earth's position to the sun would make life on earth impossible.

Distance: Our earth is 93 million miles from the sun. If the earth was closer like the planet Venus (67 million miles) all of the water on the earth would evaporate and life on earth would be impossible. If the earth was farther like the planet Mars (142 million miles) everything on earth would freeze and life on earth would be impossible.

Gravity: The earth is the correct size of 8,000 miles in diameter and provides us with the correct gravity for our lives here. If the earth was the

size of the moon (2200 miles in diameter) our earth would be weightlessly sterile. If the earth was the size of the planet Jupiter (89,000 miles in diameter) our earth would trap poisonous gases that suffocate life as on Jupiter

The earth's gravity holds a thin layer of mostly nitrogen and oxygen gases that extends about 50 miles above the earth's surface. If the earth were smaller, an atmosphere would be impossible, like on the planet Mercury. If the earth were larger, its atmosphere would contain free hydrogen like Jupiter. Jupiter's atmosphere is so gassy that it has 400 mph hurricane winds that are twice as wide as the earth and has lightning that is 100 times brighter than on earth.

Our moon is the perfect size and distance from the earth for its gravitational pull. The moon creates the ocean tides that moves the water to prevent the ocean waters from stagnating. Ninety-seven percent of the earth's water is in the oceans, and yet our oceans do not overflow our inhabited lands.

On our earth there is a system designed to get the salt from the water and distribute the water across the earth. Evaporation takes the ocean water, leaves the salt, and forms clouds, which are moved by winds to disperse water across the land for plants, animals and people. A system of purification and supply sustaining life with a reuse and recycling system designed and maintained by God.

Earth is the only known planet equipped with an atmosphere of the right amount of gases to sustain our plant, animal, and human life.

The vast size of our universe amazes us. The sun is so big that it contains 99.86% of all of the mass that is in our solar system. The Sun has a diameter of 866,000 miles compared to the earth's diameter of 8,000 miles. The sun could contain 1,306,000 earths. But there is another star called Betelgeuse that has a diameter of 215,000,000 miles and could contain

160,000,000 of our suns (each one containing 1,306,000 earths within them).

On Thursday, November 8, 2019, the voyager that had been launched on September 5, 1977, 42 years ago had reached the edge of our Solar System. Our Solar system has a diameter of 700 light-minutes, which is equivalent to 8.2 billion miles. The Milky Way galaxy, in which our solar system is contained, has a diameter of 100,000 light-years (NOT MINUTES). Light travels at 700,000,000 miles in one hour and travels in one light year 500, quadrillion, 880 trillion miles (500,880,000,000,000).

From the Hubble space telescope pictures sent back to us, astronomers now estimate that our galaxy is just one of 100 billion other galaxies in the Universe; and each galaxy has 200 billion stars in each one of them.

Jeremiah 32:17 – ***“Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for you.”***

Jeremiah 32:27 – ***“I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is there anything too hard for me?”***

With God there is no Coincidence... only Providence. God has created everything for his glory.

It is logical and reasonable and understandable, that a universe-creating God, as proved by all of the creation that we see, could and, would create each of us to live forever to bring glory to himself.

All these wonders were created by God, but what goes beyond them?

Deuteronomy 10:14 – ***“To the Lord, your God belong the heavens, even the “highest heavens.”***

Is this where the “third heaven” is? Does it completely engulf our universe? Is it above the universe? Is it in another dimension than his creation?

Isaiah 66:1 – ***“Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool.”***

Psalm 53:2 – ***“God looks down from heaven on all mankind.”***

2 Corinthians 12:2 – ***“Paul was caught up to the third heaven.”***

Up and down lose their meaning when we realize that heaven, even the highest heaven, exist beyond our space-time continuum. Time is part of the fourth dimension, and the fourth dimension is only a small part of infinity.

Beyond this fourth dimension is the fifth and beyond dimensions, where light-years of distance are only a snap of a finger away.

To the thief who, when he died, instantly appeared in paradise alongside Jesus...The Lord gives us a clue of how he does it in the book of Revelation:

Revelation 1:8 – ***“I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”***

Jesus is the God of the now, the great “I Am” who always lives in the present.

We are not told in the scripture the location of heaven, but there are things we are told. Heaven is a literal place. Jesus said I go to prepare a place for you.

Genesis 5:21-24 – ***“Enoch lived sixty-five years and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”***

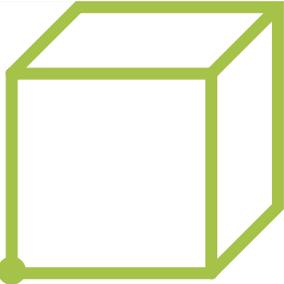
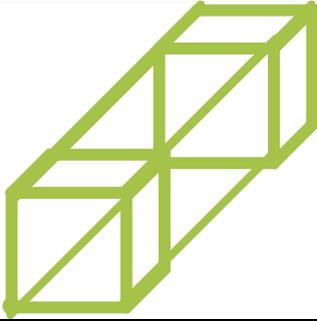
2 Kings 2:11- ***“Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.”***

Enoch and Elijah ascended in a literal body to a literal place.

In Luke 22:29 Jesus said, ***“I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”***

Heaven is a place, a kingdom, where Jesus is, was, and shall ever be a king, a place where time and distance are no longer obstacles in a dimension of infinity. In fact, it’s closer than we imagine, even though we can’t see it.

Jeremiah 23:23-4 – ***“Am I only a God nearby,’ declares the Lord, ‘and not a God far away? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? Do not I fill heaven and the earth?’ declares the Lord.”***

What is our Place in Time?	
	You
	1 <sup>st</sup> Dimensions (Length)
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dimension (Height)
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Dimension (Depth)
	4 <sup>th</sup> Dimension - when the 3 <sup>rd</sup> dimension moves through time and space
Each dimension includes what was established in the one before it, but it always builds on and adds something to the one before. If we think of	

**heaven and eternity**, that is essentially a **fifth and beyond dimension**. It will comprise all the elements of the others, plus it will add something.

Scientists now believe in a universe of dimensions. Dimensions are simply the different facets of what we perceive to be reality. Beyond the dimensions that are visible (i.e., x, y and z axes), the Superstring Theory proposes that there exists at least another 6 dimensions beyond the 4 that we are aware of, or at a minimum ten dimensions in the universe.

At the point of the ten dimensions, scientists reach a point in which everything possible and imaginable is covered. Beyond this, nothing can be imagined by us lowly mortals, which makes it the natural limitation of what we can conceive in terms of dimensions. Beyond that, only God knows.

THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD.

Isaiah 46:9 - ***“Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like me.”***

One day, we'll take the same trip as the dying thief and arrive in paradise.

Colossians 1:16 – ***“For by Him, all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And he is before all things, and in Him all things exist.”***

John 17:3 – ***“This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”***

Now back to the earlier question on page 26, why did God create everything exactly as he did? God created everything for his glory. And a God who can create what he did create can also create humans to live forever. He created us with free will so that we can choose to accept his

invitation to have fellowship and relationship with him forever amazed at God's glory.

Revelation 4:10-11 – ***“The twenty-four elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, you are worthy, o Lord, to receive glory and power: for you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created.”***

We are always amazed that God shows an interest in us, and in Heaven, it will be clear that every earthly thing that happened to you and around you happened so that we would show an interest in Him. In every trial, happiness and heartache, God wanted us to think about Him.

Psalm 90:12 – ***“Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”***

By seeing the inevitable reality of our own death, we gain wisdom; and with wisdom, we can make our daily decisions wisely to maximize the opportunities that God gives us to love him and love others enough to tell them about God's love.

From all that we see from the above information we see what God has done. Now, the question we have is, what will we do with this knowledge?

## **9 WILL WE SEE GOD IN HEAVEN?**

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God is a not just a powerful God that deserves our praise and worship; He is a personal God who loves us with a pure agape love.

Have you ever ask yourself, why does God want to see me in heaven? What does God think about me? Who does he say that I am?

***“I am the creator and you are my creation. I breathed into your nostrils the breath of life”*** (Genesis 2:7)

***“I created you in my own image”*** (Genesis 1:27)

***"My eyes saw your unformed substance"*** (Psalms 139:16)

***I knit you together in your mother's womb*** (Psalms 139:13)

***I know the number of your hairs on your head, and before a word is on your tongue I know it*** (Matthew 10:30; Psalms 139:4)

***You are fearfully and wonderfully made*** (Psalms 139:14)

***You are more valuable than many sparrows*** (Matthew 10:31)

***I have crowned you with glory and honor as the pinnacle and final act of the six days of creation*** (Psalm 8:5; Genesis 1:26)

***The penalty of sin is death and eternal separation from me*** (Romans 6:23)

***What you deserve is my righteous judgment*** (Psalm 7:11-12)

***Because I really love you, I gave my unique son, that all who believe in Him will not perish but have everlasting life*** (John 3:16)

***You were reconciled to me by the death of my Son*** (Romans 5:8, 10)

***All your sins are forgiven and you're cleansed by the blood of Jesus*** (1 John 1:7-9)

***I have given you my Holy Spirit to be with you and in you to guide you into all truth, help you obey me, and empower you to do my work*** (Romans 5:5, John 14:17, John 16:7-13, Galatians 5:16)

***Walk as my children for you are my light to the world, and I have chosen you and called*** (Ephesians 5:8, Matthew 5:14, Revelation 17:14, 2 Peter 1:3)

***One day you will be delivered from your body of death through Jesus Christ, and your dwelling place will be with me*** (Romans 7:24-25; John 14:3)

***You have a glorious future as an ambassador of my Son and as a citizen of heaven*** (Romans 8:18, Philippians 3:20, 2 Corinthians 5:20)

***"You will see my face and be where I am"*** (Revelation 22:4; John 14:3)

God created a physical earth, a physical universe and physical humans to live on earth. He chose to become a physical man himself on earth.

Why did God want to redeem mankind and earth? To glorify himself by having a relationship with his creation forever.

Genesis 3:8 - ***"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden."***

God's Original Plan is still God's Ultimate Plan which is consistent with an all-knowing God. God could have taken Adam and Eve up to heaven to visit with him; but, he didn't. Instead, God (Jesus) came down to them and walked with them here in their own world, on earth. That's what God will do, just as he said as he dwells with his people on the new earth, forever in relationship with a "people made perfect" who are living on a "perfect world" in a "perfect universe", once the curse of sin is removed from all of God's creation.

Psalms 42:1-2 - David said, ***"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the Living God. When can I go and meet with God?"***

Exodus 33:18-23 – God told Moses, ***"...you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."***

1 Timothy 6:16 – Paul says God ***"lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see."***

Hebrews 12:14 – Paul also wrote that ***"without holiness no one will see the Lord."***

Before Jesus' birth, life, death and physical body resurrection believers did not have a pure heart and righteous standing, of all sins forgiven, before God and no one could be within the presence to see God's face.

Matthew 5:8 – Jesus said, ***"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."***

Jesus said that believers will be with Him. ***"And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also"*** (John 14:3).

Jesus prayed to his Father: ***"Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."*** (John: 17:24).

Job 19: 25-27 – ***"For I know that my redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at last on earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another."*** Job knows he will see God in his (Job's) body.

Hebrews 12:14 – ***"Pursue peace with all people and holiness without which no one will see the Lord."***

Paul spoke of the day when we will see God. 1 Corinthians 13:12- ***"For now I see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face."***

1 Tim 6:15-16 – ***"He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of Lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be everlasting power."***

Revelation 22:4 – John tells us, ***"They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads."***

Revelation 22:3 – ***“And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it (New Jerusalem), and His servants shall serve Him.”*** Notice there is ONE throne for God and of the Lamb...One God, our Father who art in heaven, your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven....realized when we are there together with God, forever!”

It’s only because we’ll be fully righteous in Christ and completely sinless that we’ll be able to see God and live in His presence.

God promises that we, as resurrected human beings, will in fact see God.

1 Corinthians 15:6 – ***“For I delivered to you that which I also received that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he arose again the third day according to the scriptures, and that he was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as one born out of time.”***

Over 500 people recognized Jesus in his resurrected body when He appeared to them. Jesus was emphasizing that he was the same person in spirit and body who had gone to the cross – with crucifixion marks on the same body.

Notice Paul pointed out that many of the 500 witnesses that Jesus appeared to all at once were still alive, and available for corroboration, at the time of his writing his first letter to the church at Corinth. Our entire jurisprudence system is built and relies on eye witness testimony.

Revelation 21:3 – ***“Now the dwelling of God is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.”***

Heaven is compared to a country and a city.

Hebrews 11:16- ***“Instead they were looking a better country-a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”***

Through the plan of God and the righteousness work of our Savior Jesus we will see God’s face as we stand and live before, and with, God forever. We will be still who we are, but we shall also be who we were meant to be, as we will be both holy and righteous. We will experience the new earth without the curse of sin’s effect on our bodies, on our earth, and on our minds.

Believers will spend eternity in God’s presence; but this is not limited to the present heaven. Not only will heaven be the home of believers, but also the new earth will be our home. God’s kingdom involves everything there is, the heavens and the earth and the entire universe.

Ephesians 2:7 – ***“So that in the ages to come He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”***

We will be serving and reigning with Christ on the new earth in the new universe, joyfully learning, and being continually amazed at the kindness, favor, grace, mercy and holiness of God...forever.

## **10 WILL THE NEW JERUSALEM COVER THE WHOLE EARTH?**

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No.

Revelation 21:15-17 – ***“And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. He measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth and height are equal. Then he measured its wall. One hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man.”***

The size of the city will be 1500 miles in length, width *and* height. If the city of New Jerusalem were in the United States, it would cover a surface area that is 61% of the area in the United States.

Revelation 21:22-27 – ***“But I saw no temple in it (New Jerusalem) for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day for there shall be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”***

Kings of earth’s nations will travel to the city of New Jerusalem. There will be countries and cities and rural country on the earth outside of the city of New Jerusalem.

When God (Jesus) became a man, He changed everything. Jesus went back to Heaven after his resurrection, and He will remain human forever. He will always have a resurrected human body suited for his life on Earth and Heaven. He will bring Heaven down to the new earth where he’ll reign as King of Kings. We will be God’s Children and rule under our brother, Jesus.

No sin, no curse. Only God and his family...us, forever with our Father...forever for His glory.

Job 19:25-27 – ***“I know my redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the Earth. And after my flesh has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God, I myself will see Him with my own eyes – I, and not another.”***

This means he will die; his body will be destroyed. Yet one day, he will have that same body again...a body that will be upgraded and like Jesus’ body he will see with His own eyes in his resurrected body.

1 Timothy 3:16 – ***“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”***

God has shown us in the book of Job that he, and we, will be ourselves in our resurrected body!

## **11 WHAT WILL OUR RESURRECTED BODIES BE LIKE?**

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1 Thessalonians 4:14 – ***“Since Jesus died and broke loose from the grave, God will most certainly bring back to life those who die in Jesus.”***

For any follower of Christ, the promise is simply this: The resurrection body of Jesus is both a proof and a preview of our own resurrection body. But can we trust the promise? Is the resurrection a story or a reality? Are the claims of the empty tomb really true?

This is not just a question, it is THE question of our faith and of our life. Paul wrote, **“If Christ has not been raised, then your faith has nothing to it; you are still guilty of your sins”** (1 Corinthians 15:17)

If Christ has been raised, then his followers will join him; but if not, his followers are fools. The resurrection, then, is the keystone of your Christian faith, and worthy of your understanding as you understand the reality of the hope that you have for your eternal life in your resurrected body.

Of the Americans who believe in a resurrection of the dead, 67% believe they will not have bodies after the resurrection! This is a contradiction...how can believers not believe the bedrock tenant of their faith? A non-physical resurrection is like a sunless sunrise. If we didn't have bodies, we wouldn't be resurrected! Resurrection by definition requires a resurrected body. We will not be disembodied spirits in the world to come, but redeemed spirits, in redeemed bodies, in a redeemed universe. God will make all things renewed.

Our resurrected new bodies will be like Jesus' resurrected body, and His body was the same real human body that he had when he was with his disciples prior to his crucifixion; but, with additional upgraded special abilities. His body could go through walls, disappear, and His body was immortal, never again to die. Our resurrected glorified bodies will have eyes, ears, a mouth, hands and feet. We'll eat, walk and talk. We will be similar to a computer that has new enhanced software and upgraded capabilities.

Our bodies will be the same, but different, as the New Earth will be like the old earth, but better, without the previous effects of the curse.

Similar to Jesus' body, your new body that has been raised will not be something completely unlike your present body that was buried or cremated following your death. You don't die and become someone else in the resurrection. When God said, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; if he had meant to say I was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He would have said so. Abraham was still Abraham, Isaac was still Isaac and Jacob was still Jacob; and similarly, we will still be ourselves, but with increased capabilities as our bodies will then be like Jesus' body. There will be similarities between our earthly bodies and our heavenly bodies.

1 John 3:2 – ***“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”***

The example given us by God of what our resurrected body will be like is Jesus's resurrected body. The scripture promises that the bodies of resurrected believers will be like His.

Was Jesus' resurrected body spiritual or physical? Yes.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 – ***“I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures***

***and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the scriptures."***

Jesus had a physically resurrected body that was recognized by his disciples as the same body that they knew but with marks of his crucifixion. This body allowed him to walk, talk and eat, but his body was upgraded with capabilities allowing Him to pass through locked doors, appear and disappear.

***John 21:12-14 – "Jesus said to them, "come and eat breakfast." Yet none of his disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" – knowing it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them and likewise the fish. This was the third time Jesus showed Himself, in the same physically recognizable body, to his disciples after He was raised from the dead."***

***Luke 24:30-32 – (disciples in Emmaus) "Now it came to pass, as sat at the table with them, that he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight."***

Our bodies will be like his, according to I Corinthians 15:20, 48-49, Philippians 3:20-21, and 1 John 3:2

***1 Corinthians 15:20, 48-49 – "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep." "As was the man of dust, and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly man."***

***Phil 3:20-21 – "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body,***

***according to the works by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."***

1 John 3:2 – ***"Beloved, now we are the children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."***

In our resurrected bodies we'll be as physical as we are now. No more death, mourning, crying or pain.

Revelation 21:3-4 – ***"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look, God's dwelling place is now among his people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."***

Our resurrected bodies will be as physical as our bodies are now; just as Jesus' resurrected body is as physical as his earthly body was.

Luke 24:39 – ***"Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself; touch me and see, a ghost (spirit only) does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."***

1 Corinthians 15:20 – Paul said, ***"But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep."***

Proof? Christ appeared to Cephas, the twelve and more than 500 of the brothers at the same time, then James, then to all the apostles and last of all me (Paul) also."

On the resurrection day, Jesus appeared five times, and over the next 39 days five more times. (Also he appeared to Paul at a later date). He ate on these occasions. His physical appearance, especially his scars, was enough to convince Thomas that Jesus had been resurrected and was truly the

Jesus that he knew and was truly the Son of God. His disciples interacted with Jesus Himself in his bodily form.

His post-resurrection body was similar but superior to his pre-resurrection body:

John 20:19-26 – ***“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for the fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”***

He could materialize at will even through locked doors. This happened twice in 40 days.

He also could disappear at will, such as at dinner at Emmaus.

Luke 24:30-31 – ***“And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.”***

In Colossians 1:18 – ***“And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.”***

We should not think of the resurrection as the reception of a new body in the sense that we are given a different body that is disconnected to the body we had on earth. The bible teaches that the resurrection body is a continuation and transformation of the same body that we had on the earth. Our bodies are a very important part of the identity of who we are.

If we deny that our bodies will be transformed into glorious bodies, we are left with the idea that we will forever be subject to the weaknesses we now have, such as sickness, fatigue, etc.

Our old body will become our new body, but it will still be our body. There will be continuity as God does what only God is able to do.

Christ was raised in the same body that he had before he died, his tomb was empty, and his resurrected body had retained the scars from the crucifixion (Luke 24:1, John 20:25, 27). Christ's resurrection is the pattern that our resurrected body will follow (Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 15:49).

The term "*resurrection of the dead*" means "*that which is dead*" (our body) is made alive (1 Corinthians 15:13). If the same body that died is not the body that is raised, it could not be called the "*resurrection of the dead*", and would be no resurrection at all. If God meant to start all over with no continuity between the body that we have now and the one that we will have, why would Paul have said, "*the dead are raised?*"

Jesus speaks of the resurrection involving the coming out of the tombs, indicating the same body that was in the tomb becoming alive.

John 5:28-29 - "***An hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, and those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.***"

John 6:39, 40, 44 - "***And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son, and believe in Him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day.***"

Paul referred to Jesus' resurrection as "the firstborn from the dead."

The word "firstborn" comes from the Greek term from which we got our English word, "prototype." Jesus' resurrection body was, and is, an example, or prototype, of what our resurrection bodies are going to be like.

1 Corinthians 15:48-49 – ***“As was the man of dust, and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly man.”***

Paul tells us we'll have a spiritual body. We now have a body created for inhabiting earth but will have an upgraded body for inhabiting heaven and earth.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 – ***“So it will be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.”*** In Paul's statement “*it is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body*” notice that the “It” is the same body in both the natural body and the spiritual body!

Just as a seed becomes a better state, or phase, as a plant, notice that both are phases of the same organism; likewise, the same body that we have now will become our future resurrected body. As the plant is a resultant body or form, of the earlier seed form that has been transformed into something better with new and different qualities and capabilities; so also will our current natural physical bodies that are now weak, perishable, mortal and unglorified, be also transformed into our spiritual bodies that are stronger, imperishable, glorified, powerful, immortal and supernatural. In our spiritual body we will not get sick, die, age, or become injured and our spiritual body will be filled with the Holy Spirit and have additional capabilities.

The word “glory” is used in 1 Corinthians 15:52 of the shining radiance that surrounds the presence of God himself. This suggests that in our glorified bodies we will also have a kind of brightness or radiance surrounding, or emanating our bodies, that will be evidence of the position of exaltation and rule over all creation that God has given to us.

In the same manner that Jesus was in his transfiguration of Luke 9:29, **“As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and his robe became white and glistening.”** The NIV says, his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightening. It suggests here a brilliant flashing light, similar to lightening! The word in Greek is *literally, “emitting light”*, and the word is only used in the new testament here in Luke. This was a manifestation of his glory that he possessed prior to coming to earth in the human body.

In Matthew 13:43, Jesus says, **“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”** And in Daniel’s vision of Daniel 12:3 we read, **“And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”**

According to verse 1 Corinthians 15:44, we are buried as a natural body, but we will be raised as a spiritual body. The word for “body” ... in, raised a spiritual body is “soma,” the Greek term for body. The term is used 144 times and in every instance of the New Testament, “soma” refers to a physical body. (Coincidence, or is God telling us something? With God, there is no coincidence, only providence!).

Our spiritual bodies will be physical bodies with upgraded abilities, similar to when we get software significantly upgraded on our computers—they are still our same computers, but they then have new upgraded capabilities.

For a Christian, death is a transition from an inferior place and body to a superior place and body. Unless you are an alive believer when Jesus returns for us at the rapture, most of us will experience a physical death as we pass immediately into the presence of Jesus.

Not only are Enoch and Elijah exceptions to the rule about death, there will be others that will never die, as they meet the Lord in the air at the rapture. Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, **‘For the Lord Himself, with a shout, with the archangel’s call and with the sound of God’s trumpet, will descend from Heaven, and the dead shall rise first. Then we who**

***are alive and remain will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be with the Lord forever.*** Those believers who are alive at the rapture will not have to have their body resurrected, but will be changed and will be with Christ forever in their glorified body, from mortality to immortality, from corruptible to incorruptibility. ***“Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet”*** (1 Corinthians 15:51-58).

1 Corinthians 15:20 – ***“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.”***

The word “death” comes from the Greek term “Thanatos,” which means “separation.” Death is a necessary separation from our earthly body so we can put on our new bodies...and then, the adventure continues for the rest of our eternal lives!

2 Corinthians 5:17 – ***“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has gone and the new has come.”***

Similarly, we are the same person but are a newly transformed person. The old person was not eliminated, but transformed.

In spite of the changes that occur from our salvation, death and resurrection, we still remain the unique beings that God created. God will restore and renew us to our original design and we will then be able to reach beyond our present abilities being unaffected by sin’s effects and increased abilities with our bodies that are then like Jesus’ resurrected body.

Job 19:26-27 – Job said, ***“In my flesh I will see God, I myself will see Him with my own eyes – I, and not another.”*** This shows a continuity from our present life to the next eternal phase of life.

1 Corinthians 15:53 – ***“For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.”***

The same body we have (which is mortal) will be the body that will be immortal. *"Mortality puts on immortality."* We will walk on the new earth that will be without the effects of the curse and will be as God originally intended.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 – ***"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."***

We will be with the Lord forever.

John 2:19 – Jesus answered them, ***"Destroy this temple and I will raise it up, again in three days."***

John 2:21 – John tells us, ***"The temple He had spoken of, was His body."***

Jesus' physical body was killed, and that physical body was raised up again. Jesus had the same recognizable body, but with new upgraded abilities.

A resurrected body is a physical body reunited with the spirit body without any imperfection or weakness. Our body will be like the resurrected body of our Lord Christ. Jesus ate, drank, walked and talked before he died, and again in his resurrection body. But, he also had other abilities that were not present in his earthly body, e.g., appeared behind through walls and locked doors and disappeared when with his eleven disciples and the disciples in Emmaus.

In our resurrection bodies, we will be who God created us to be, but without sin, disease, high blood pressure, any health problems or attraction toward sin.

Job 19:25-27 – Job said, ***"In my flesh I will see God...I, and not another."***

Luke 24:36-43 – Jesus after his resurrection said, ***“Look at my hands and feet – it is I myself. Touch me and see me; a ghost doesn’t have flesh and bones as you see I have.”***

The basic truth about our resurrected bodies is that our same body which God created for us will be raised up to a greater perfection and capabilities than we have ever yet known. The new earth will still be an earth, but a changed, restored earth without the curse’s effects. An earth that will be as God intended it, the perfect place for the perfect people to dwell with the perfect God forever.

Jesus was showing them that He was the same person in His body *and* spirit that had gone to the cross, and the body he had been crucified with; he had the crucifixion wounds. Jesus ate, drank, walked and talked like He did before He died, and then again in His resurrection body; showing a continuity of relationship and memories.

In John’s gospel, Jesus deals with Mary, Thomas and Peter in very personal ways based on His previous knowledge of them. This demonstrated that he had all of his previous knowledge that he had prior to his death.

If we aren’t ourselves in the afterlife, how can we be rewarded or held accountable for what we did in this life?

According to the story of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16:19-31, Jesus called people by their name when they were in heaven.

Also notice in all instances that Jesus raised people from the dead, he talked to them as though they were still alive:

- Luke 7:14, widow of Nain’s son, he said, ***“young man I say to you, get up”***,
- Mark 5:41, he said to the daughter of Jairus, ***“Little girl, I say to you, get up!”***
- Luke 11:43-44, we read, ***“Now when he had said these thing, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he who had***

**died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth, Jesus said to them, *“Loose him, and let him go.”***

Jesus, who knew the reality of life lasting forever, talked to each of them knowing that they were still alive. Appearances can only be deceiving to those who don't know the truth. We see only one side of the transitional doorway called death. Jesus saw both sides of the doorway and knew, and still knows, that life continues after death's transitional doorway.

On the new earth we'll eat with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We'll be called by earthly names as they were, because that's who they are, and when we are in heaven, we will be the same people that we were on earth, but then perfect.

Mark 9:2-7 – At the transfiguration of Jesus, the Moses and Elijah that appeared with Christ, were not holographic images of Moses and Elijah, but were the real Moses and Elijah. Likewise we also will be the *real us*.

Philippians 3:20-21 – ***“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”***

The Lord Jesus Christ will transform our bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.

1 John 3:2 – ***“Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”***

1 Corinthians 15:49 – ***“And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the heavenly man.”***

Remember the earlier quote...*Of the Americans who believe in a resurrection of the dead, 67% believe they will not have bodies after the resurrection!*

Lots of people, including Christians, think they will be ghosts in the eternal heaven. They think they will be spirits without a body, even though Jesus said He was no ghost, according to Luke 24:39.

Luke 24:39 – ***“Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”***

If Jesus was a ghost, there would not have been any resurrection of his body. And with no resurrected body walking about the earth for 40 days there would have been no proof that Jesus had destroyed the power of death. Jesus became the firstborn of the resurrected that would follow as believers in the life, death, burial and resurrection of the Son of God, showing how we would live as resurrected human beings on the new Earth.

John 21:4-21 – After his resurrection when Jesus told his disciples to throw the net on the right side of the boat, Jesus stood, on the shore one morning. He was not floating in air but standing, and while He was with the disciples, he also started a fire and cooked fish. He took the bread and gave it to them, was touched and could materialize behind locked doors. His body was the same but improved and with much greater capabilities.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 ***“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable, it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power, it is sown a natural body, it is raised spiritual body.”***

Paul speaks of resurrection bodies. He says, *“the body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.”*

When Paul refers to “spiritual” body, he is not talking about a body made of only a spirit, or a nonphysical body; “spiritual” is an adjective that describes the body, not a noun that replaces it.

In 1 Corinthians 15:35-37 when Paul says ***“what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow the body that it will***

**be, but the grain.**” Paul is not denying that the body is the same, rather, in the resurrection our bodies will be in a more improved, much better, state than they now are.

Judging from Christ’s body, a spiritual body looks and acts like a regular physical body most of the time, but it may have, as Christ’s body did, some physical capabilities beyond those of the normal physical bodies that was limited and effected by sin’s curse.

In John 20:19 Jesus came through a locked door to the apostles.

In Luke 24:13 it says that He disappeared from the sight of the two disciples at Emmaus.

Luke 24:13-35 – They asked questions, and He taught them.

Luke 24:31 – When Jesus rose to Heaven, defying gravity, were these abilities only for Jesus’ body or for us too? His resurrected body looked like His normal body, but had additional upgraded abilities than when he was living on earth.

Jesus’ resurrected body was suited for life on earth, as Jesus was raised to come back to be on earth. Our bodies will also be suited for life on the new earth.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 **“We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.”**

Some Christians believe there will be only one general resurrection at the end of time, scripture seems to speak of more than one resurrection. The “first resurrection” will be that of believers and the “second resurrection” will be that of unbelievers.

The resurrections of the “first resurrection” do not appear all at one time. The resurrection of believers is separated in time. It has been about 2,000 years between the resurrection of Christ and the rapture of the church is still in the future. After the church has been raptured and resurrected, there

will be the resurrection of the tribulation saints who have died for their testimony of Christ during the great tribulation period. At that time the Old Testament saints will also be raised. After the thousand year of Christ on earth (the millennium) there will be one final resurrection. This will be the unrighteous dead from all time as well as the millennium saints who have believed in Christ during the Millennium period. After the Great White Throne judgment, there will be no more resurrections.

When will the resurrections occur? (See the charts included in Question 56)

1. Jesus Christ is the First Resurrection

Jesus was the first person to come back from the dead, never to die again. Paul wrote: "***But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep...But each in his own order: Christ first fruits, afterward those who are Christ's at his coming***"(1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

2. The Resurrection of the Saved at the Rapture of the Church

At the rapture of the church, the bodies of the living and dead will be changed.

***"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are alive and are left will be caught up with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words."*** (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

Paul told the church at Corinth about the change that would take place: "***Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." "Where, O death, is your***

***victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know your labor in the Lord is not in vain"*** (1 Corinthians 15:51-55).

3. The Tribulation and Old Testament Saints at his Second Coming.

A) The Tribulation Saints Resurrection

At the Second Coming of Christ, the Tribulation Saints will be raised. ***"And I saw the thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years"***.

(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.)

This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years."

B) The Old Testament Saints Resurrection

The believers, who lived before the time of Christ, will be raised when Christ returns. In Daniel 12:1-2, Daniel says, ***"At the time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of tribulation, such as that has never occurred since the nation's first came into existence. But at that time you people shall be delivered, everyone who is***

***found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."***

After the tribulation period is over, Jesus Christ returns. He will then resurrect the Old Testament saints. Every believer, from the time of Adam until the second coming of Christ, will have been resurrected at this time.

#### C) Thousand Years Rule of Christ

When Christ rules, there will be a thousand year period of peace when He rules in righteousness. This period is known as the Millennium.

#### 4. The Great White Throne and Millennial Saints

At the end of the thousand years, there will be a final resurrection. This will come at the Great White Throne Judgement. ***"Then I saw a Great White Throne and the one who sat on it, the earth and the heaven fled from His presence, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and all were judged according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; and anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire"*** (Revelation 20:11-15).

The resurrection of unbelievers will take place after the thousand year reign of Christ upon the earth. All of the unbelieving dead that have ever lived will be resurrected and judged at this time.

#### 5. Righteous Believers Born in the millennium Period

There will also be some righteous people who will be judged at the Great White Throne. They will consist of the children who were born during the Millennium and became believers in Jesus. They have been born to people who entered into the Millennium period with mortal, not resurrected bodies.

## 12 WILL WE REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED ON EARTH?

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We will have a lot of things to remember and share when we get to eat at the feasts in the kingdom of heaven.

Luke 14:12-15 – ***“When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the man who will eat in the feast in the kingdom of God.”*** This was referring to literally eating and feasting, celebrating, laughing and enjoying the feast we will eat in heaven.

Matthew 8:11 – ***“I say to you that many will come from the east and the west and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Israel and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.”***

Luke 22:18 – Jesus said to his disciples, ***“For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God comes.”***

While the bible does not answer all of our questions about heaven, it appears that those who have entered Heaven may be aware of events on earth. People in Heaven may know a lot more about earth than we may realize. We know from Luke 16 that there is an awareness of that there are ones that are not saved. And we know from Luke 15:10 that there is rejoicing in heaven whenever one person repents.

We will have to have the memories of the things we have done in order to correlate the rewards, assignments and opportunities on the future new earth based on response and actions with the opportunities that God had given us here on the present earth. We will see and understand then that God is totally just and fair, and always righteously correct in his decisions.

The Bible says that we'll all stand before God and tell Him about our lives on earth. 2 Corinthians 5:10 – ***“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”***

Actions which happened during the believer's time of earthly ministry. This does not include sins, since their judgment took place at the cross. The Greek terms used in the words translated “good or bad” do not refer to moral good and moral evil, compare “valuable things with useless things”; our sin has been dealt with by the death of our Savior.

We will have better minds and memory recall capabilities in our upgraded bodies. To praise God for his works here, we will remember our lives on earth and what he has done for us and we will glorify God's amazing grace and work within each of our lives.

Psalm 112:6 – ***“For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever”***. If the righteous will be remembered forever, it could mean that the unrighteous will not be remembered.

Isaiah 65:17 – ***“I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.”***

All the things of the former heavens and earth will have been forgotten; this could include all of the people that have rejected Jesus' sacrifice to pay for their sins.

God tells us there is no pain in heaven. *Revelation 21:4-* ***“He (God) will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more, for the first things have passed away.”***

God's answer to the question of the memory of the unsaved loved ones could be that they will be erased from our memory, and those who have not trusted in Christ as their Savior will be forgotten by believers that will reign and rule in the never-ending adventure of life with God forever.

## 13 DO WE BECOME ANGELS WHEN WE DIE?

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1 Corinthians 6:3- ***“Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life.”***

The Bible says that one day we'll be in charge of angels. We will not become angels. We will still be people when we die and go to Heaven.

This isn't disappointing – it's God's plan. With the exception of sin, God created us to be who we are. The things we love are previews of the greater adventure in life to come. We will become all he intended for us to be as his child, without the scars and mars of the curse of sin in, and on, our lives.

Will we be men and women on the new earth? Yes. After His resurrection, Jesus was still a man, just like He was before His resurrection, but with upgraded capabilities. Our resurrected bodies will be either male or female.

## 14 WILL WE ALL LOOK ALIKE IN HEAVEN?

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No. According to Revelation 7:9- ***“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.”***

Heaven will have people of every tribe, nation and language.

Each snowflake is unique and so is each person.

When Moses and Elijah appeared at Christ's transfiguration they did not look like each other but looked like the distinctive individuals that they originally were... and they still are, Moses and Elijah.

Who will eventually inhabit Heaven?

A. God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)

Heaven has been, and always will be, the dwelling of the Triune God.

*Psalm 102:1- "For he looked down from his holy height; from heaven the Lord gazed upon earth."*

*Psalm 103:19- "The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his Kingdom rules over all"*

*Acts 7:49- "Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool"*

B. Saved from the nation of Israel

Those who have trusted Christ from the nation Israel

*Hebrews 11:16- "But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God for he has prepared a city for them"*

C. The New Testament Church

The New Testament church will also occupy heaven. They consist of all who have believed in Christ from the day of Pentecost until the rapture of the church. They are a separate group from believers in other ages.

*Revelation 7:9-12 - "After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen"*

Matthew 25:34- ***"Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, take your inheritance, the kingdom, prepared for you since the creation of the world."***

D. Gentile Believers who believed God's promises before Christ:

Apart from saved Israel and the New Testament church, heaven will also consist of Gentile believers who have trusted in the promises of God before Christ came into the world.

E. The Tribulation Saints

Many will come to Christ during the Great Tribulation period.

***Revelation 20:4- "I saw thrones on which those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years."***

F. The Millennial Saints

There will also be people who have put their faith in Christ during the Millennium. They will be children born to parents who enter the Millennium in non-glorified bodies. These believers will also be in heaven.

G. Certain Elders

There are certain elders who are in heaven. Their identities are unknown.

***Revelation 4:4- "Around the throne were twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads"***

## H. Angels

Angels are ministering spirit beings that are now occupying heaven.

***2 Chronicles 18:18- "Therefore, hear the word of the Lord. I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right and on his left."***

And they will also occupy heaven in the future.

***Revelation 5:11- "Then I looked, and heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."***

## **15 WILL WE EAT AND DRINK IN HEAVEN?**

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***John 21:1, 13-14 – "Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead."***

Jesus' risen body was recognized by his disciples as the same body that he had when he died. After his resurrection, Jesus fixed breakfast for disciples and ate food with them, using a real human resurrected body.

***Luke 14:15 – "When one of those at the table with him heard this he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat in the feast of the kingdom of God."*** Jesus was referring to a literal eating and feasting in the kingdom of God.

***Matthew 8:11 – "I say to you that many will come from the east and the west to take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."***

Luke 22:18 – Jesus said, ***“I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God comes.”***

In Luke 22:29, Jesus said, ***“I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”***

In each of these cases, there will be eating and drinking and enjoyment of feasting together, celebrating, telling stories and laughing.

Jesus was eating and drinking in his resurrection body and we will have bodies like his and be eating and drinking in heaven.

1 John 3:2 – ***“When Christ appears, we shall be like him”***

## **16 WILL WE BE THE SAME AGE IN HEAVEN AS WHEN WE DIE?**

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Not every question that we will have will have a definitive answer in the bible. Our age does not matter when we die.

Will there be children and older people in heaven or will we all be the prime health age of about 30 years old?

Will a child finish growing up on the new earth?

We do know we will have a body and there will be a continuity of appearance and memory, and we will look like ourselves and we recognize others in heaven.

In our resurrection, God can make us any age that he wants. Many theologians speculate that we will be the age of Jesus at 30-33. With the characteristics of DNA it is consistently reasonable from what we know that God could give us bodies of a prime, or peak period of health age. We have found DNA of Egyptians Pharaohs that are thousands of years old and the DNA is Still DNA. Trust God...he won't forget your DNA.

What about the children that are mentioned in Isaiah 11:6-9 and 65:18-20?

Isaiah 11:6-9 – ***“The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra’s den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper’s nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”***

Isaiah 65:17-20 – ***“See I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years.”***

Will children that have died young be resurrected at the age they died and then could grow up on the new earth and the parents enjoy raising their children to the peak of their health age? This would give on the new earth a rejoicing as compared to the sorrow of a lost young child that had been experienced on the old earth.

## **17 WILL WE BE LEARNING IN HEAVEN?**

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God is infinite and God is omniscient. God sees all and knows all and cannot learn anything, since He already knows everything.

1 Corinthians 13:12 – ***“For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”***

In heaven, we will see things more clearly, but we will never *know* everything; only God is God, and we will always be learning more Him.

Not knowing everything is not a flaw. It's just a part of being finite. Angels don't know everything and they long to know more.

1 Peter 1:12 – ***“It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you though those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.”***

Ephesians 2:6-7 – ***“We’ll spend eternity gaining knowledge in heaven in the coming ages that God might show the incomparable riches of his grace.”***

When we enter heaven, we'll begin with the knowledge we had at the time of our death – transition. God will reveal new things and we'll be learning new things. In our resurrected bodies with our resurrected brains, our capacity to learn will be greatly increased from what we have today.

Matthew 11:29 – Jesus said to his disciples, ***“Learn from me.”*** As Mary sat at Jesus' feet and walked with Him over the countryside as His disciples did on the New Earth, we'll have the privilege of sitting at Jesus' feet and learning from Him.

Luke 24:27 – Jesus taught the disciples on the way to Emmaus, ***“and beginning with Moses and all of the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself.”*** Did you ever wonder what He taught them of how the Old Testament scriptures all foretold, foreshadowed and talked about Jesus? In heaven you will be learning and will be taught by the best teachers in the universe! Then, we will hear and know....the rest of the story of how all God has told us in the bible are foretelling His plan of salvation through His Son Jesus.

In the coming ages, God will be revealing to us the riches of his grace and kindness to us...we'll always be learning more about God and because God is infinite, there'll always be more for us to learn.

Paul in Ephesians 2:6-7 wrote: ***“God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms on Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace”***.

- In this case, “show” means to reveal
- “In the coming ages” – indicates this will be a progressive ongoing revelation in which we learn more and more about God’s grace

Think of the many great stories that we’ll hear and learn about in heaven. We’ll be learning for an eternity.

## **18 CAN PEOPLE IN HEAVEN SEE AND HEAR US NOW?**

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Luke 9:31 – ***“They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.”*** When Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus at the transfiguration, they spoke about his exodus or departure, which he was about to experience in his trial and crucifixion. They were fully aware of the drama that was transpiring on earth and God’s plan of redemption that was about to be accomplished.

Revelation 6:9-11 – ***“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “how long Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood? Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.”***

People (the martyrs) in heaven realized what was happening on Earth. Everyone in heaven is watching God’s plan of redemption being worked out on earth.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - ***“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in***

***righteousness. That the man of God be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."***

Were these two examples the exception or the norm? We know that all scripture is given to us for doctrine and instruction. What we read of happening in heaven, unless it says explicitly otherwise, we reasonably assume that it will be so for others in heaven also.

## **19 WHEN WE DIE, WILL WE REMEMBER WHERE WE LIVED, WHAT WE DID, AND WHO WE KNEW?**

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***Revelation 21:12-14 – "It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels on the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gate on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the apostles of the Lamb."***

The scripture says the new earth will have a memorial for the tribes of Israel and the apostles (names over the gates of the tribes of Israel and names of the apostles on the foundations of the walls). Jesus promised those in Heaven who endured bad things on Earth will be comforted.

Christians who were killed by bad people remember their troubles, on Earth, but God comforts them and gives them joy.

***Luke 16:19-31– There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered in sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send***

***Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire."***

***"But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you is a great chasm has been set in place, and those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us."***

***He answered, "then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment."***

***"Abraham replied, they have Moses and the Prophets, let them listen to them."***

***"No, father Abraham, he said, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent."***

***"He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."***

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31, the rich man remembered his life, brothers etc.

We know this is true when we remember that after Jesus raised Mary and Martha's brother, Lazarus, the chief priests who could not deny the miracle, said they would have to kill Lazarus too.

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 – ***"Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. For we say this to you by a revelation from the Lord: We who are still alive at the Lord's coming will certainly have no advantage over those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, and with the archangel's voice, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.***

***Then we who are still alive will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we always be with the Lord. Encourage one another with these words."***

Paul anticipated being with the Thessalonians in heaven. If we wouldn't know them or recognize them, as we recognize our own loved ones, there would be no comfort of an afterlife reunion as taught in this verse.

Who do you look forward to seeing again in Heaven?

## **20 WILL WE REMEMBER THINGS IN HEAVEN? (SEE QUESTION 42)**

Often we wonder about heaven and the relationships that will be there? Will we recognize one another in heaven? Will we remember and know our loved ones? Will they know us?

1. The story of David and his son illustrates the fact that we will know our loved ones. After the child had died, David said, ***"While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, "Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."*** (2 Samuel 12:22-23).

In this statement David is acknowledging the fact that he will someday be united with his son. If David did not think that he would recognize his son in the next life, then there is no reason he would have made this statement. David knew he would be with the Lord forever; and he would see his child there too!

In Psalm 23:6, By God's Holy Spirit, David said, ***"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."***

2. Transfiguration

At the transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus: ***“And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. And let us make three tabernacles; one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah”*** (Mark 9:4-5).

Moses had died (1451 B.C.) centuries before and Elijah (859 B.C.) was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire. Notice that they did not lose their identity, or their ability to be recognized...Moses was still Moses, and Elijah was still Elijah; and also notice without a formal introduction, Moses and Elijah were immediately recognized by Jesus' three disciples, James, John and Peter .

### 3. Patriarchs in Heaven

Jesus mentioned sitting down with the patriarchs in heaven.

***Matthew 8:11- “And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven”***

### 4. Paul's Desire

Paul said that part of him wanted to die and be with Christ: ***“I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far”*** (Philippians 1:23).

### 5. Rich man and Lazarus

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus we find the rich man recognizing both Abraham and Lazarus and Abraham recognized the rich man (See scripture reference of Luke 16:19-31 in Question 19).

### 6. Jesus was recognized

The Bible tells us that we shall be like Jesus in our resurrected body. We find in the New Testament that Jesus was recognized after his

resurrection in the same body that he had before his resurrection; and, so will our bodies be.

***1 John 3:2 - "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when He is revealed, we will like Him, for we will see Him as he is."***

7. Knowledge in Heaven will be Greater than it is now.

***1 Corinthians 13:12- "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I see in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known."***

***Isaiah 66:22- "As the New Heavens and the New Earth that I make will endure before me, declares the Lord, so will your name and descendants endure".***

We will be able to recognize each other with the greater knowledge that we will have in heaven.

From the factual examples in the passages shown above, in heaven we will recognize those we love, and both they and we, will keep our same unique identities.

Much of this life's memories of how God has guided, cared, protected and provided for us in our life will carry over to the next phase of our life as we praise and glorify God's intimate love for us. In our present time on earth we have the opportunities to learn daily of God's divine appointments to share the grace and love of Christ for others.

Remember that in Christ's resurrection body He showed his disciples the nail scars in his hands and feet? These will always remind us too how much Jesus loves us; and endured a horrible torture and died a lonely, shameful death to take our just punishment. The excitement and adventure that awaits us in Heaven is all about seeing every thought and every action

through God's eyes and experiencing the excitement and joy of seeing and doing everything for God's glory.

God wants us to know about those who've died and gone to heaven. He doesn't want us to grieve like the rest of the world, who have no hope...we'll be with the Lord forever...we will see those who have gone to be with the Lord before us, and are to encourage each other with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 – ***“Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.”***

We naturally feel sad and sorrow when a loved one leaves us by dying.

Remember when your child without you, went to elementary school the first time?

Or, remember when your loved one left you to go on a trip, or they left you to go to the service or college; and you would not be seeing them, eating with them, and talking with them every day, as you had for all the time before?

It's right to feel sad when we are apart from those we love; even when we know where they are, and know we will be seeing them again.

Jesus cried about the pain, suffering and sorrow that came from the death of his friend Lazarus. Jesus knew His creation was never meant to live this way. The curse of Adam's sin had changed the lives of all people and the entire creation, and sickness and death's reality must now display the effects of sin's curse.

God says our grief is different than those who have no hope of seeing their loved ones again. Our loved ones have gone on before us to be with the Lord, but our relationship with our loved ones who are believers in Jesus' sacrifice does not end with their leaving. They are already there before us in

heaven before we will be in heaven...but knowing that we're going to the same place, Heaven, makes all the difference in the world to our sorrow!

Death has only interrupted our relationship but, has not terminated our relationship. It is similar to when they have gone on a trip and are apart from us: we miss them, but we know where they are, and we also know we will see them again. This is the type of grief and Godly sorrow that we feel from being apart with our believing loved ones who die before us. Not like the worldly sorrow, as those without a belief in Jesus, must suffer in the loss of their loved one.

For the unbeliever, in Luke 16 (See scripture reference in Question 19), before the resurrection of the Lord, unbelievers could see those believers being comforted by Abraham. After the resurrection of Jesus, the unbeliever will be at the white throne of judgment where God is; and this is where they may see the believers.

We'll join our loved ones together and we will always be together with the Lord, and we'll be with him when he brings his throne to the new earth.

We'll all be together, and Jesus will be the center of everything, and every day will bring new adventure, reigning and serving with Jesus in his kingdom.

Those who go ahead of us can be first in line after Jesus to welcome us to heaven.

One day, after the resurrection, we'll all walk on the new earth. We will worship Jesus side by side with our believing loved ones.

## **21 HOW CAN WE BE SURE WE'LL GO TO HEAVEN? (SEE QUESTION 24)**

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1 John 5:12-13 – ***"The one who has life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in***

***the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.***"

While we are here on earth we must choose whom we will serve; and a decision not to decide, is a decision to reject God's invitation of God to be saved. We each have the free will power of choice to believe the promises of God or to reject the promises of God. The choices we make in this, our lifetime on earth will determine where we will spend eternity. We must make our decision based on the cards that you now hold, not the cards you wish you had. God has given you the people and opportunities to believe in His way to be with Him. Believers will have eternal life and unbelievers will have eternal separation or death. Eternal life is a relationship with the person, Jesus Christ.

***John 17:3- "And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."***

We don't have to guess where we're going, or hope to know where we're going. If we trust Jesus for our salvation, we can know for sure.

Unfortunately, many people just assume they are going to heaven without Jesus. Maybe they think they are good enough. Nobody wants to believe they are going to hell.

In a recent Barna Group survey, for every one person who says they are going to hell when they die, 120 say they are going to heaven! Hell is real. Jesus said more about hell than anyone else in scripture

***Matthew 7:13-14 –"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."*** More people take the wide road to their destination than those who take the narrow road. Don't depend on the majority to make your decision of where you will spend eternity.

Romans 3:23 – ***“All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. This means we don’t deserve to go to Heaven.”***

If we don’t make any decisions to change anything, or believe in God, our automatic destination by default is Hell. This is a heavy responsibility when we remember that God told his prophets that if they don’t warn others to repent and turn to God, the blood of those not warned would be on the prophets.

Why did God create Hell? If it is God’s sincere desire that everyone come to know Him why did He create hell in the first place? The bible teaches that God did not create hell as a judgment for humans. God created hell for a punishment for the devil and his angels and not as a place for human beings to suffer. Jesus said in Matthew 25:41: ***“Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels”***.

Hell was created as a judgment for Satan and those who follow him in their rebellion against God. The devil and his angels will eventually be sent to hell. Revelation 20:10 – ***“And the devil who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”***

Human beings, who are created in God’s image, are not meant to spend eternity away from God’s presence. The place god created for humanity is heaven. Jesus spoke of this place prepared for those who trust Him.

John 14:2-3 – ***“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. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I, there you may be also.”***

*Will God make us go to Heaven? Vs. Free Will?*

*To not choose to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior...is to choose not to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. To not accept, is to reject the gift of pardon from our sins, and gain entry to Heaven and God's presence through the righteousness of the Son of God, Jesus the Christ.*

Did you ever wonder why God, if he really loves us, just doesn't just forgive us and give us a pardon for our sins? How does a pardon really work.

In 1829, two men, George Wilson and James Porter, robbed a US Mail carrier and were caught and sentenced to death by hanging in May, 1830.

James Porter was executed on schedule, but George Wilson's friends pleaded for Mercy from President Andrew Jackson. A presidential pardon was given, but was refused acceptance by George Wilson. The case was escalated to the Supreme Court to decide if he had to accept the pardon.

Chief Justice John Marshall wrote, *"A pardon is an act of grace from the execution of the laws, but delivery is not completed without acceptance, and may be rejected by the person to whom it is tendered...and we have no power to force it on him."*

We get our justice system from the fact that God IS always just and always fair.

You have the right and responsibility to choose your destiny; to refuse or accept offers of rescue is your decision. God will not force on you His will. God will honor your free will choice, whether it is a good choice or a bad choice...it is your choice of your life's future.

John 3:18 – ***"Whoever believes in him is not condemned; but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only son."***

God is completely good without anything bad, God is completely holy without any unholy, and God is completely sinless without any sin.

Our thinking and doing bad things breaks our relationship with God's

It's like when you shop at a store and buy some clothes, there is an electronic "tag" that sets off the alarm when you exit the store.

Our sin prevents anyone from entering the presence of God's holiness. We need a way to remove our "sin tag" in order to allow us to enter God's presence.

God had to do something to change us and make us holy. Jesus took our death sentence on Himself so that we don't have to go to Hell. God is holy and only a Holy God can pay the price to our sin, taking the wrath we deserve. He died for us, and when we believe that Jesus lived, died, and was raised and came back to life, and when we accept Him as our Lord and Savior, God applies the righteousness of His son Jesus to our account and He accepts us into a relationship as His children. We're not perfect, and we are guilty of our own sins, thoughts and actions. When we accept Jesus' sacrifice for us, we are forgiven and become a new person.

John 14:6 – ***"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"***. Jesus is the only way to get to heaven.

John 7:37 and Revelation 22:17 – ***"Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the gift of the water of Life."*** The gift is free for us, but it was not free to Jesus and cost Jesus His life. Jesus rose from the grave, defeating sin and death. By trusting Jesus as your savior, we can live with Him forever because you believe in Jesus' sacrifice for your sins, when God looks at you He sees you as pure and sinless as Jesus and in the righteousness of His only begotten Son.

Luke 15:7 – Jesus said *that* ***"whenever a sinner turns away from sin and turns to God, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels in heaven."***

This means the angels, and those who are with them, rejoice when people accept Jesus. They are happy we are going to heaven instead of hell. Our loved ones that have gone to heaven before us are happy when they see us accepting Jesus and look forward to being with us forever.

The good news is that we can know that we have eternal life. Trusting Christ as Savior provides the assurance that life everlasting is ours. When we make the decision to accept Jesus as our savior, we have eternal life. As Paul said, in *2 Timothy 1:12*- ***"This is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him for that day."***

This is the promise of God's word....and you can know you that you will live forever with God. How cool is that?

## **22 WILL THERE BE ANIMALS ON THE NEW EARTH?**

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The new earth will be the original earth remade, just like our new bodies will be our old bodies remade. The similarity of the new earth to the old earth is also like how much our new bodies will be like our old bodies.

Animals were important in God's design for earth. In Genesis 1:25, ***"God made the wild animals according to their kinds and livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move according to their kinds and God saw that it was good."***

We love animals because God created us, and them, to love each other.

God made Adam and Eve, and their job was to take care of the garden and animals, and to love each other and have children to fill the Earth and rule it for God's glory.

Earth would not be complete without people *or* animals. God made animals as a part of his covenant promises in Genesis 9:9 after the flood.

Genesis 9:9-10 -***"I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that was with you- the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, and all those that came out of the ark with you-every living creature on earth."***

Isaiah 65:17 ***'Behold I will create new heavens and a new earth'***

Isaiah 66:22 – ***“As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me”, declares the Lord. So will your name and descendants endure.***”

Isaiah 65:25 – ***“The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent’s food. They will neither harm nor destroy an all my mountain.”***

Isaiah 11:6-9 – ***“The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child will put his hand into the viper’s nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of Lord as the waters cover the sea.”***

On the New Earth, will there be no more harm.

Romans 8:21-23 – ***“The creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.”***

Mankind, animals and all creation are linked together in the curse, judgment and deliverance. The new earth will be as God intended, but the curse of sin had prevented on the old earth.

Animals were included by God in his covenant of the rainbow as shown below in Genesis 9:12 and 9:15-16 – ***“And God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant I am making between Me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come...I will***

***remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every land...And whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of every kind that is on the earth."***

It is consistent that God will follow through on His original design. God knows the pleasure that his created animals provide for his children. There will indeed be animals on the New Earth.

God has touched people's lives through His holy prophets *and* through His animals. God can do anything, and it's simple for Him to recreate a pet in Heaven if He wants to. Remember God knows the DNA of everything that he has created.

God could either create new animals, bring animals back to life through recreation rather than resurrection, or both.

Revelation 21:5 – ***"He who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."***

Everything in the verse above means all of creation, people, earth and everything on earth, including animals, will be renewed, and become beneficiaries of Christ's death and resurrection. The emphasis of Christ is not making new things but rather making old things new. Christ is saying, I'll take all the things I made the first time, including people, nature, animals on earth, and bring them back as new, fresh and indestructible.

The whole world and all of creation fell when humans sinned; and the whole world and creation will rise in the resurrection. Plants and animals suffer and die because of our sin. But when our redemption is complete, all of creation will be delivered...including animals. The whole creation suffers and longs for deliverance. Animals who are in this world will be part of the New Earth where there will no longer be any suffering.

Matthew 19:28 – ***“At the renewal of all things, when the son of men sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Notice....all things would be ‘renewed.’”***

The term “renewal” comes from two words that mean “New Genesis,” or “coming back from death to life.” When Jesus said all things will be renewed, the disciples would have understood Him to mean all things “on earth”, which was the only place they knew.

It is not only people that will be renewed, but also the earth and the animals that are on earth are also a part of “all things”. People are made in God’s image, animals are not. Christ died for humanity and indirectly he died for everything that has been created and affected by humanity’s sin curse, including the animals.

Romans 8:19-22 – ***“For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.”***

As mankind goes, so goes all of the creation. God is still on His Plan A; we are pawns on His time table.

God brings judgment on men and animals because of man’s sin.

Exodus 9:22 – ***“Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt – on people and animals and on everything growing in the fields of Egypt.”***

Jeremiah 7:20 - ***“Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: My anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place- on man and***

***beast, on the trees of the field and on the crops of your land- and it will burn and not be quenched."***

God's blessings are not only on humans but also on animals.

Deuteronomy 7:14 – ***"You will be blessed more than any people, none of your men or women will be childless nor will any of your livestock be without young."***

Deuteronomy 28: 2-4 – ***"All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God. You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. The fruit of your womb will be blessed and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock - the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks."***

Luke 3:6 – ***"And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."***

The word "flesh" in Greek is more inclusive than "all mankind", and includes the animals.

Psalms 104:24, 27-30 – ***"O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your possessions. These all wait for you, that you give them their food in due season. What you give them they gather in; you open your hand and they are filled with good. You hide your face, they are troubled; you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. You send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth."***

When God says, "You send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth", it seems to refer to animals and humans who have died and return to dust. God sends his spirit and creates them. It appears that he is talking about re-creating animals after they've died. The "renewal of all things" mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 19:28 includes all things.

Did you ever see the movie, Jurassic Park? When you saw the movie, did you wonder, what would it be like to see dinosaurs alive?

When God replies to Job (Job 40-41) of his creation of the Behemoth of the land and the Leviathan of the sea as a display of his glory as God, Job acknowledged God's greatness and his unworthiness of understanding God's ways. Unless God made a mistake, and he didn't, why wouldn't he include all animals, big and small, current or extinct in the renewed earth when there is peace and no danger?

Genesis 3:1-6 – ***“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, you must not eat from any tree in the garden?’ The woman said to the serpent “we may eat fruit from any tree in the garden, but God did say “You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.” “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”***

(Notice that the serpent was not a reptile but a wild animal). There is so much for us to learn about how great our God is, and how exciting God was, and God still is. Our future with God in Heaven will be exciting as we will be learning all about how glorious He and His creations are.

People imagine that Satan possessed the serpent, a “dumb animal”, but the bible doesn't say that. A demon can speak through a person, because a person has the ability to speak. The fact that Satan spoke through the animal in Eden, suggests that the animal then had the capacity to speak. Notice that Eve was not surprised to hear an animal speak, and had a routine conversation similar to one she would have with Adam, etc. This appears to show us that animals prior to the curse could speak. We know that animals, birds and insects communicate, but are they speaking and now we are not aware?

Remember when God spoke through Balaam's donkey?

Numbers 22:22-35 - ***"But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, it turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat it to get it back on the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path through the vineyards, with walls on both sides. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat the donkey again. Then the angel of the Lord moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to right or to the left. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat it with his staff. Then the Lord opened the donkey's mouth, and it said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?" Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of me! If only I had a sword in my hand, I would have killed you right now." The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?" The angel of the lord asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away from me, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared it."***

Was the donkey speaking by God then giving it the power of speaking, or was God temporarily restoring the ability to verbalize its own instinct, perceptions and feelings that it was having?

In Revelation 8:13, ***"As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the three other angels!"***

On the new earth will there be enhancements, or restorations of the capabilities that the animals originally had prior to Adam's sin in Eden? Remember how much you talked with your favorite pet? What will your pet say to you?

Did the creation originally communicate in ways that the creator knew?

Genesis 4:9-10 – ***“Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” And he said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground.”***

Luke 19:37-40 – ***“When he came near the place where the road goes down to the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” “I tell you”, he replied, “If they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”***

In these examples, is God merely using words or phrases without meaning...or are these facts that we are not yet able to be aware of? When we see the restoration of all things as God originally created and intended them to be we will understand more about how awesome God is.

We have all realized, as we have seen ants and animals reacting together and coordinating, etc., and there must be communication in ways that we just do not know. Will we in heaven have a type of communication as original God intended to have with his entire creation? There are many possibilities, unknown adventures and surprises that await us in the new heavens and on the new earth.

Christ's mission, was and is, to redeem what was lost in the fall and to destroy all who reject God's authority and power. When everything is put under his feet and mankind rules the new earth, as kings under the King of

kings, everything at last will be as God intended it to be, as it was from the beginning in the Garden of Eden. The rebellion will be over forever. At last, all God's people and His redeemed universe will enjoy the Joy of God, as God receives the glory He so richly deserves.

## **23 HOW DO I EXPLAIN HEAVEN AND DEATH TO A CHILD WHEN ONE IS DYING?**

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To help us understand what it's like when a loved one who loves Jesus and wants to be with Him, but doesn't want to be separated from his family; here is a way to explain the reality of believer's eternal lives:

- 1) Ask the child to step into the next room, then close the door behind him. Then, one at a time, let the entire family come through the door to join him. Pretty soon, everybody is together with the child in the next room.
- 2) Just as the child goes ahead to the other room, and the rest will follow; in a similar manner, when a believer goes through the death's transitional doorway they immediately enter into heaven. When they die, they will not be left alone. Remember in Luke 16 when angels carried Lazarus to the place of comfort? The child will be welcomed by Jesus, family and friends who have died earlier and who are already in heaven.
- 3) A God who can create the universe and a sun that consumes 5 billion tons of nuclear hydrogen fuel every second is certainly capable of creating us to live forever; some on earth and some in heaven or hell.
- 4) Our God loves us so much that He has created us to live forever. During the phase of our life here on earth we have the opportunity to learn about how much He loves us, how he has sent Jesus to take away our sins and allow us to make the choice to accept or reject his gift of life to be with Him forever.

5) Each of us has the same decision whether to be together with Jesus and each other forever, or not. No one else can, or should, make the decision for us. For we must live with the consequences of the choice. As believers in Jesus we all are going to be together forever; and, just like we each enter the room at different times, we all at different times are going to end up in the same place, heaven. Those of our family who go before the others will be able to show us the wonderful things that they have discovered while waiting on us to come there too.

Luke 16:22 – ***“The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried.”***

Notice that the Bible says that when Lazarus died, he was taken to Heaven by angels. They were with him all the way...But the rich man was buried.

Remember the plan that God has for us here on this earth.

2 Peter 3:11-13 – ***“You ought to live holy lives as you look forward to the day of God.”***

2 Peter 3:1-15 – ***“The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?”***

Once you understand there will be a new heaven and new earth that will be like the original Garden of Eden on the new earth, our looking forward to Heaven will help us say no to the temptations of sin, and yes, to living our life to please Jesus.

When we stand before God someday, if we’ve put Him first, He will say, ***“Well done my good and faithful servant! ...Come and share your Master’s happiness.”*** (Matthew 25:23)

We need to prepare our loved ones for the reality and facts of our deaths; the fact that we are still alive, but living in a new home with Jesus. When the time comes, it won't be easy for them, so remind them that dying is a part of living and our death is our transition to our continued life with Jesus. As a believer in Jesus, you know where you're going and who is waiting for you there. The question for believers is not, *"If we will Die"*, or *"Where we will go"*, but *"When we will go" to be with the Lord*.

We are not afraid to die, as that is the way we get to be with the Lord. We look forward to seeing them later in heaven. Being sorry they are not with you now, and missing you now, and crying because we are apart is a naturally good thing to do.

As a believer we grieve in a different way from those who do not believe in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We grieve with the hope and knowledge that we will be with them and Jesus forever, as Paul tells us in 1Thess 4:13-18 (see also the discussion in Question 20).

There is something else to remember as the bodies of our loved ones get older and their capabilities lessen. This is just God's way of reminding us that when we are with Him he has a new body for us that will have more capabilities than we have ever seen or imagined.

So, if they can't get out of bed or can't recognize you anymore, remember that condition is just a temporary one. You're not past your prime or have yet experienced your peak of health. The strongest and the healthiest that you've ever been is just a hint of what you'll be in your resurrected body. The best is truly yet to come. The caterpillar is not aware that the body it presently has is a necessary body, so that in the future it can become the butterfly that it was always intended by God to be.

If someday, they hear people say, it's too bad they can't walk and think straight anymore...you can tell them that they will have a body that's going to be a lot stronger and smarter than it *ever* was! The bible is full of facts

that they are there to encourage, and keep Satan from confusing or discouraging, God's children.

It's natural that our loved ones don't want us to die, and the process of death doesn't excite us. However, what's waiting for us on the other side of death's doorway does excite us. Jesus, family, heroes and friends will be there to welcome us home.

Remember when you were learning to swim and were afraid to even jump in the water? Just remember when your Dad said, "Don't worry, I've got you! I'll catch you! Just Trust Me."

Focus on what we know:

- 1) We were created to live forever.
- 2) Dying is a part of living forever.
- 3) We counter fear the unknown with the knowledge that we have.
- 4) God, your Father in Heaven ...in His Love letters to us, He tells, "Don't worry, I've Got you, I'll catch you! Just Trust Me. "

Revelation 21:3-5 – ***"God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, mourning, crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, write this down, "For those words are trustworthy and true."***

You can count on these words of King Jesus. He promises to be with you always. When our time is up, He will take us to Heaven.

We were all made for a person and made for a place. Jesus is the person we were made to please, and Heaven is the place we were made to live in.

Our goal in this life is to please Him and hear Him say, ***"Well done good and faithful servant"*** (Luke 19:17).

In Heaven we'll all be together, and Jesus will be at the center of everything, and every day will bring a new adventure for us as we rule and reign with Jesus. Those who go ahead will be first in line after Jesus to welcome us to our Heavenly Home.

One day, after the resurrection, we'll all walk on the New Earth. We'll worship Jesus side by side. Maybe he'll send us to places together, or take us with him. God has given us the hope that guides and provides our lives with meaning. The atheist and agnostic have no hope except for this brief period of their life here on earth.

## **24 HOW DO I EXPLAIN GOD'S OFFER OF SALVATION? (SEE QUESTION 21)**

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Romans 3:23 – ***“For everyone has sinned: we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”***

Romans 6:23 – ***“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.”***

Romans 5:8 – ***“God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”***

Romans 10:9-10 – ***“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.”***

Have you trusted in Jesus to save you? Are you still waiting? We don't know how much time we each have left on this earth. It doesn't make sense to delay making as important a decision as where you will spend eternity. Why not confess now you're a sinner, and ask God to forgive you?

God has made your salvation as simple as praying something like this: God, I admit I've done wrong things against you. I understand that I deserve to

be punished and I thank you for sending Jesus and his taking my punishment for me when He died on the cross. Thank you that he conquered sin and death when you raised Him from the grave. I know there's nothing I could ever do to earn it my eternal life in heaven and I thank you for giving me this free gift by my belief in Jesus' work for me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## 25 IS HEAVEN ONE PLACE OR TWO?

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When a believer dies their soul (consciousness) and spirit goes to be with God. In the future their body is resurrected and instantaneously changed into a glorified body when Jesus comes back for the church of believers at the rapture. Afterward those who are alive at the rapture will receive their glorified bodies and together in our resurrected bodies we will always be with the Lord.

This is not what is known as purgatory. Christ has paid the full and complete price for our atonement; and no one can add anything to the complete atonement that Christ has already made.

The place we go when we die is not the place we will live forever.

Revelation 21:1-3 – ***“Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.” Our eternal home, when God will come down to dwell with His people, is called the New Earth, our future heaven.”***

Heaven is, by definition, God’s dwelling place.

Matthew 1:23 – ***“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).*** Immanuel doesn’t mean “us with God” but rather “God with us.”

In the intermediate, or present Heaven, we will be joyful with Christ, but it will not be our permanent home-heaven. We and our loved ones will eventually go to the new earth together. On the new earth, God will dwell with us in the permanent Heaven and there will be no curse and we will reign and rule with Christ and God on his throne in the city of Jerusalem.

Revelation 22:5 – The words Jesus spoke, ***“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven,”*** will be a reality forever, as God originally and always intended.

Daniel 7:18 – ***“The saints of the most high will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever.”***

John 14:23 – Jesus said, ***“If anyone who would be his disciple, “My Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him.”*** This is a part of God’s ultimate and original plan; God will make His home with His disciples.

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 – ***“For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he “has put everything under his feet”. Now when it says “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.”***

Christ, the Creator, will become the unchallenged and absolute ruler of the new universe. Then he’ll turn it over to his Father, the Kingdom that He has won. For God’s Glory...everything created is and has always been all about, and for, God’s Glory.

God's redeemed people will get to be God's delegated rulers of the New Earth where God will live with us as we each experience an eternally deepening relationship with God praising Him and being continually amazed at God's glory in everything that we see and everything we do all of the rest of our eternity with God.

Revelation 21:23, 26 – ***“The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.”***

“Nations” on the New Earth suggest that there will be civilizations when we have our resurrected bodies.

Romans 8:18-23 – ***“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we await eagerly for our adoption to son ship, the redemption of our bodies.”***

We've never known or experienced an earth without the effects and consequences of Adam's sin, including illness, suffering and death. All of creation is longing to be delivered from the curse that assuredly will one day will be realized.

Isaiah 65:17- ***"I will create a new heavens and a new earth."***

Isaiah 66:22- ***"As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the Lord."***

The New Earth is the world that we look forward to, and will be the world we will live in forever with God.

God chose to make physical humans to live on a physical earth, but He chose to become a physical man on that physical earth to redeem mankind in order to forever enjoy the company of humans on the new earth that was made for them. A perfect God will make for a perfect people, a perfect earth to enjoy a perfect relationship with them, forever.

## **26 WHAT WILL WE DO FOR ALL ETERNITY (SEE QUESTION 6)?**

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Even among Christians, there is a myth that Heaven will be a boring place without exciting adventures. Sometimes we can't imagine anything that we'll do other than strumming a harp as we have seen in cartoons.

Deception is Satan's strategy to blaspheme God and slander His name and His dwelling place will never change. Revelation 13:5-6 – ***"The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who are in heaven."***

Hell is a place of continual torment and dark isolation, where friendships and good times do not exist. Hell will be consistently and torturously the same.

Without God, there will be nothing pleasurable or different to do in hell except experience the same torture that is painful, regretful and boringly the same.

Psalms 16:11 – David wrote, ***"In your presence is fullness of Joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."***

Outside of God's presence there is no joy.

The concept of heaven being boring is based on the misconception and the lie of Satan that Godliness, holiness and purity is always boring; and to be Godless and experiencing sin is always desirable and exciting.

Our desire for pleasure and joy come from God. Our ability and capacity to enjoy comes from our God who loved us and created us to enjoy his pleasure; and created us for His good pleasure.

Revelation 4:11- ***"For you are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are all created."***

Our thought that "it'll be boring all the time" comes from the assumption from the devil's lie: that sin is exciting, and righteousness is boring. Satan employed his strategy with Adam and Eve to make them and us believe sin of disobeying God, and not trusting God, brings fulfillment. Satan's deception and his lies tempts us into thinking that excitement comes from minds that are affected by sin.

This type of thought is like a drug addict convinced that they can't find a happy life without drugs, blind to the fact that drugs make their life miserable.

Freedom from sin will mean freedom to be what God intended, and freedom to find greater joy in everything that pleases Him.

Psalms 16:11 – ***"You make known to me the path of life; you fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."***

This tells us in Heaven, we'll be filled with joy and eternal pleasures.

When we are trusting God to fill our lives with divine appointments and delighting in his daily kindness, we will live our earthly life as the adventure of being led daily by God's spirit.

Revelation: 22:3 –***“No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.”***

We will serve God in Heaven. In Luke 19:11-27, in the parable of the 10 minas, 5 minas and 1 mina given to servants when the king leaves; and his reaction of pleasure with the servants doubling of the 10 and 5 minas, and displeasure with no multiplication of the servant with 1, has an important point. The servants of the 10 and 5 were given 10 and 5 cities to be have authority over, reign, rule and exercise leadership and authority making important decisions over.

Revelation 5:9-10 - ***“And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”***

We'll set goals, devise plans, and share ideas. Our very best days on earth when everything turns out better than planned, or when everyone on the teams pulls together, are a shadow of the reality of the joy that our work will bring us on the New Earth seeing everything through God's eyes.

We are going to help God reign on the new earth and the new heavens and we will have an eternity full of things to do. No wonder that Satan works hard to deceive us and distracts us from the excitement and fulfillment that awaits us in ruling with Jesus forever in Heaven.

The myth that we will have a disembodied existence comes from Platonism and the thought process that says, material is bad, but spirit is good.

Platonism was expanded by the Gnostics in the first century to include Christo-Platonism that believed that Jesus being the Son of God could not really be flesh (from Plato's teaching, we are a "good spiritual entity trapped in an evil fleshly body"); but merely had the appearance of humanity, e.g., when he walked on the beach, he left no prints. Paul in

Romans 1 tells us how Satan uses the pride of humans to motivate us to knowingly choose to not acknowledge the creator God and his word.

Our bodily resurrection on the New Earth will be forever exciting as we enjoy a relationship with God and the other believers who are serving God.

Luke 6:20-23 – ***“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who hunger now for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in Heaven.”***

Many people in life today believe this life is all there is. “You only go around once, so grab all you can,” they say. But as a child of God, you don’t go around only once on earth. You’ll get another opportunity for a life on the New Earth. You’ll live on the New Earth forever, and you’ll live with the God who you cherish and with the people you love together forever.

Those who go to Hell will indeed only go around once on this earth, and due to their decision to reject God’s plan and His son, this will be the only time they’ll live on earth.

Luke 6:20-23- ***“Rejoice in that day and leap with joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.”***

God promises us blessings in Heaven for the difficulties we now on earth face. Matthew 5:3-5 – ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”***

Earth is the setting for God’s comfort. All the blessings of Heaven that Jesus promised us will be ours in the place we’ll live forever: the New Earth.

On the New Earth, we’ll have perfect bodies. With our present –world perspective, we sometimes think the life we have now is the best that it can

be. Our future bodies, cultures, relationships and lives in heaven will be superior in our perfect life to on the New Earth.

Luke 16:9-13 – ***“And I say to you make friends for yourself by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. He who is faithful for in what is the least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own? No one can serve two masters; for either he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”***

Whoever can be trusted with little can be trusted with much. “Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, the last of life, for which the first was made.” That’s not scripture, that’s Robert Browning who had a biblical perspective with this statement.

We see disease, senility, incapacity, accidents and eventually death which brings the separation from our loved ones; and from a human perspective, we feel helpless as we see their mental and physical capabilities decreasing with age.

Psalms 139:16 – Your eyes saw my substance, yet unformed. ***“All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”***

Scripture tells us that God has a purpose for every believer who is still here; and after a brief deterioration, we will leave earth to go to Heaven. Then one day, God will raise our bodies and we will have a resurrected body and be ready to start living again on a New Earth doing righteous things, in a righteous world, to bring glory to our righteous God.

All our attempts to hold onto our youthfulness are unsuccessful. When God tells us to be like children and then he gives us a new universe, a new earth, and unlimited amount of time, then we'll understand that by "like children", he means enjoy as a child the joy, imagination and fulfillment of your dreams as you experience heaven on earth.

At the end of Peter Jackson's film, of JRR Tolkein's *The Return of the King*, an elderly Bilbo Baggins is invited to board an Elven ship to sail from middle earth to Valinor (a sort of intermediate heaven in the fictional universe established by Tolkein). Bilbo replies, "I think I'm ready for another adventure." We too will be ready '*for another adventure*' after our death as our life continues in heaven.

For Christians, death is not the end of their life's adventure, but a doorway to the beginning of a world of unending adventures.

After Columbus discovered the new world, to remind everyone there was bigger and better things to come, beyond what they currently have known, the King of Spain mounted coins with the slogan, "Plus Ultra," which meant "to more beyond", or "further beyond". There will always be more to discover about God.

Five minutes after we die, we'll know exactly how we should have lived, how we should have given, how we should have prayed, how we should have how we should have shared our faith, and how we should have mediated on God's scriptures. However, it will be too late to go back and live our lives over again. So, live today as if you know you are dying tonight.

Now is our opportunity to be true disciples and students of Jesus Christ. Think about what you'll regret 5 minutes after you die and live ready to die and to be with Christ which is "**better by far**" (Philippians 1:23).

According to Matthew 6:20, "***Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.***" "Plus Ultra" means there is "more beyond" ...much more, and the better we use our time and opportunities here for God's glory, the greater

will be our opportunities there, according to the principal in Luke 19:10-19 wherein the servants were given authority over cities in proportion to the gain they had made the master while he was gone.

The facts of the Christian's future life are:

- The last of our lives, before we die, is not the rest of our lives.
- We'll go on living, in another place, and one day after our bodily resurrection, we'll live again on a New Earth created by God for us.
- Millions of years from now we'll still be young and alive
- The great adventure that we were created to have, awaits us on the other side of death's transitional doorway to be with Jesus

A God that could create a universe and body as intricate, complicated, and miraculous as they both are would also create us to live forever.

God is good, all the time; and all the time, God is good...trust his word and his promises. "Plus Ultra", or further beyond, is the national motto of Spain, a Latin phrase taken from the King of Spain's personal motto, and was a reversal of the original before Columbus proved otherwise, "non plus ultra" which meant, "nothing further beyond". With the knowledge of Columbus' return, their "*Facts*" of "*nothing further beyond*" what we now know were changed to "*further beyond*", since they then knew there was more than they used to know.

Hebrews 11:24- 26 – ***By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.***

Remember the bible tells everything we need to know of God's love and God's plan for our lives to live with him forever; but it does not tell us

everything that God said and did. From the above we see that Moses knew more than maybe we first thought about the future rewards and of Christ.

Moses was looking forward to his reward. Once we're in heaven, we'll never die again. The story isn't over when we die. It's only the beginning! In my flesh I will see God Death is not the beginning of our end; it is the end of our beginning.

Job 19:26-27-***"After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes- I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"***

Jesus provided at a great cost to Him...our life's happy ending will never end. To be heaven-oriented believer, is to be goal-oriented believer.

Philippians 3:13-14 – ***"One thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."***

Thinking of heaven motivates us to press on toward the goal to live each day in thankfulness to God. According to Hebrews 12:28, ***"Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful."***

A person who gives thought to Heaven where Christ is and to the future resurrected earth where we will live forever with Him, is a changed person that God can use to draw others to the reality of what He has in store for us as his children.

Hebrews 2:14-15 – ***"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death – that is the devil- and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."***

Have no fear that your life will ever end or that God will ever abandon you. If you know Jesus, the Chosen One, the closer you get to Heaven and death's doorway the closer you are to seeing Christ.

Revelation 21:1, 3-5 – ***“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among his people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”***

We will be strong and healthy with a resurrected body on the New Earth...and our life of adventure will continue to be better and better.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 – ***“and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”***

At death, your spirit leaves your body behind and you continue to live.

From the story of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16:22-31, we learn that our destiny is determined while we are on this earth. Whether we go to heaven or hell at death is based on the decisions that we have made before we die.

2 Corinthians 5:8 – ***“We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”***

Revelation 6:9-11 – ***“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “How long Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.”***

Philippians 1:23 – ***“I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.”***

There is an immediate conscious existence after our death; we are not sleeping, but are wide awake and have an awareness of everything.

Revelation 22:4 – ***“They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.”***

Ezekiel 37:27 – ***“My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people.”***

2 Corinthians 6:16 – ***“As God has said: I will live with them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”*** We’ll see God’s face because we’ll be fully righteous by our belief in Christ. Without sin we’ll be able to see God and live.

Matthew 5:8 – ***“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”***

Knowing God, we’ll see all people and events through God’s eyes seeing beauty in everything and everyone.

God and mankind will live together forever in the same home on the new earth.

## **27 WILL THERE BE TIME IN HEAVEN?**

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God, who created time is infinite and timeless, and can enter into time.

The phrase “and time shall be no more” comes from a hymn, not from the Bible.

Revelation 8:1 – ***“And when he had opened the Seventh Seal, there was silence in heaven about half about the space of half an hour.”*** From this verse we note that there is the time of half an hour.

Revelation 5:9 – ***“And they sang a new song, saying worthy are you to take the book and break its seals; for you were slain, and purchased for***

***God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."***

There is music in heaven and inherent in music is tempo and pauses, each of which involve time. Songs, like conversations, have a beginning and end which involves time. Singing in heaven requires time for harmony.

2 Peter 3:8 – ***"with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and thousand years are like a day."*** This refers to God, not humans, and is speaking of God's infinity. God exists outside of time and space, which He created, but we don't now exist outside of time.

Luke 15:7 – ***"I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents conversion than over the ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."*** God created us to live in time and space as finite creatures. Heaven is aware of time events on earth and rejoices over each sinner's conversion. This is consistent with Luke 24:6 when the angel told the women in the tomb, ***"He is not here; He has risen! Remember how he told you, while He was still with you in Galilee?"*** They saw and heard what Jesus had said to them earlier on earth when he told them he would meet them in Galilee.

Revelation 6:9-11 When the tribulation martyrs anticipated judgments on earth, they were asking God, ***"how long until you avenge our deaths?"***, and being ***told to wait a little longer***. Waiting involves the passage of time.

## **28 IF PEOPLE IN HEAVEN KNOW OF BAD THINGS, COULD IT REALLY BE HEAVEN?**

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God knows exactly what's happening on Earth, and Heaven and isn't any less God by his knowledge of what is going on.

In Luke 16:23-26 Abraham and Lazarus saw the rich man's agonies In Hell, but it didn't cause paradise to cease any to be paradise for them.

Nothing God's people could see on Earth would ruin heaven for them. Our happiness in heaven is based on our perspective, not on our ignorance. We should be encouraged that our loved ones who are with Christ are very interested with what is happening in God's kingdom on earth as they cheer us on in our service to our King. Our loved ones love us and know what awaits us when we join them in Heaven.

Hebrews 12:1 – ***"We are all surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses,"*** is referring to the past saints that we will be following into God's presence into Heaven.

Believing loved ones who have departed from us doesn't mean that is the end of our relationship with them; it is only an interruption for a period of time. Just like when a loved one goes on a trip they are away from us temporarily, but we know where they are; and if we are going to the same place that they have gone to before us, they are there before us waiting for us to arrive.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 – ***"Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope...After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so will we be forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words."*** We've not lost them if we know where they are as they are now experiencing the Joy of Christ's presence. We'll be together in a reunion and with them and the Lord and we are to encourage each other with these words.

## **29 WILL WE RECOGNIZE OUR LOVED ONES IN HEAVEN?**

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In Matthew 17:1-4 at the transfiguration, the three disciples, Peter, James and John recognized Moses and Elijah even though no one told them who they were. They could not have known what they looked like (Google and cameras weren't available in the first century A.D).

If we can recognize people we haven't known on earth, we will also be able to recognize people that we have already known here on earth. We will know everyone with a perception and recognition; and be known by everyone else in heaven.

Nowhere does the scripture suggests that our memory will be erased, causing us to no longer recognize our family and friends. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 tells us we are to be comforted by the knowledge that we will be reunited with our loved ones after this current phase of our life here on earth.

When we relocate to the New Earth in our glorified bodies made for a new earth and the new heavens' existence, it will be the culmination of our history but will not erase the previous history that we have previously known.

Our families here on earth and our children will always be our children, but foremost they are God's children. All our present and the future friends are our family and all our family are our friends.

Luke 8:19-21 – When Jesus replied to being told his mother and brothers were waiting to see him, He said that ***“My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.”*** We are his family, and he is our family.

Jesus was saying that devotion to God creates a spiritual bond that transcends our biological family ties. Many things that read about in the bible gives us shadows of the reality that we will experience in heaven.

Mark 10:29-30 Jesus said those who follow Him will gain ***“brothers, sisters, mothers, and children.”***

In other words, everyone is family in heaven! Whether you've had a good or bad relationship with your family on Earth, you'll have rich, deep and loving family relationships in heaven.

### 30 IS THERE MARRIAGE IN HEAVEN?

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What will happen to those who have been married several times? To whom will they be married in heaven if all of the previous spouses are there? Jesus was asked this question by the religious leaders. They posed a question about a woman that had been married to seven brothers.

Matthew 22:28 - ***“Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”*** Jesus said their problem was one of misunderstanding the word of God and the Power of God.

Jesus said, ***You are in error because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven***” (Matthew 22:29-30).

The Sadducees mistakenly assumed that that the resurrection state was a continuation of the present relationships here on earth. Luke 20:35-36- ***“But those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die anymore, for they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”***

Husband-wife relationships will not be destroyed but built upon as our lives in Heaven take on a new meaning. We will no longer have the same married state as we do here now on earth. We will retain memory of our loved ones and enjoy fellowship with them. In heaven we are all family and adopted sons and daughters in God’s family. ***“He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will”*** (Ephesians 1:5).

In Heaven all believers will be married to Christ. Revelation 19:7-9 - ***“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him the glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, “Write***

***this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are true words of God."***

There will not be marriages of resurrected people to each other in heaven.

Ephesians 5:31-32 – ***"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery-but I am talking about Christ and the church."***

There will be marriage in Heaven and it will be the marriage between Christ and his bride. We will be brothers and sisters of Jesus and joint heirs of his kingdom. Our earthly human marriages are similar to the higher reality that we will have in heaven.

Jesus said human marriages would end, having fulfilled its purpose to be a picture of the intimacy that the marriage intimacy that we will have between Jesus Christ and us as his bride in Heaven.

He did not say, or imply, that the deep relationships built between married couples would end. The intimacy that you have developed together with your spouse will be the beginning point of the continued intimate relationship that you will build on in heaven.

God is our Father and we are His children. We are each other's brothers and sisters. We are Christ's bride, and He is our husband. So, we will indeed have marriage in heaven.

Once the ultimate marriage begins at the Lamb's wedding feast, all the human marriages will have served their purpose. Heaven is a place of gain, not one of loss as the reality of the one great marriage with Jesus will be realized.

We'll bring to heaven our memories and those memories connect us to people we're closest to on earth; and these relationships of family and friends will be the core relationships we'll begin with in Heaven as we

develop the new relationships with others as our brothers and sisters with Jesus.

Mark 12:25 – ***When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage, they will be like the angels in heaven.***

This does not mean we'll become angels but like the angels, we'll not be married together and not procreate.

Isaiah 54:5 – ***For your maker is your husband.*** Marriage in Heaven will be a special relationship with Christ who purchased us with His blood.

Hosea 2:19-20 – ***I will betroth you to me forever...In righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness and you will acknowledge the Lord.***

All fleshly thought will be gone, and we will have a greater bond with our Almighty God.

### **31 IS THE PRESENT HEAVEN A PHYSICAL PLACE?**

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The present Heaven is normally invisible to those living on earth. It is real, but is it physical?

Sometimes humans can see into Heaven.

Acts 7:55-56 – ***When Stephen was being stoned, he looked up to Heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.***

God didn't create a vision to make heaven appear physical. He allowed Stephen to see the present heaven that was, and still is, physical.

The prophet Elisha asked God to give his servant Gehazi a glimpse of the invisible physical realm that was all around them.

2 Kings 6:17 - ***“Lord, open his eyes so he may see. He looked and saw hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around the soldiers, horses and chariots of the enemies.”***

Both Gehazi and Stephen saw things that were actual and physical. Physical and spiritual are not contradictory, as Paul refers to our resurrection body as a “spiritual body.”

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 - ***“So it will be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory, it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.”***

Notice that both the natural body and the spiritual body are physical bodies. The present heaven is a real place that we go to be with God and His people. God made physical humans to live on a physical earth with a God (Jesus), who chose to become a man on the same earth. Why? To glorify himself (God) and enjoy relationships forever with humans in the new earth that He will make for us and Him.

Believers who have died, or are still living, at the rapture will pass from the current earth to the present heaven through death’s doorway; but eventually we’ll be back again to live eternally on the new earth after the millennium.

This present earth is now our current home and we are made to live here. This present earth has been devastated by the effects sin’s curse. We look forward to our resurrected, glorified bodies and to living in the new heavens and the new earth. We will become what God intended from the beginning; a righteous people living and glorifying God eternally in a personal relationship with God.

## 32 WHAT'S "NEW" IN THE NEW EARTH?

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Revelation 21:1 – ***"I saw a new heaven and a new Earth...I saw the Holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God."***

If I promised you a new car...you wouldn't say, what is a car? Will it have a door, transmission or engine, would you? Because all these things are what makes up a car; and we are familiar with what a car is.

When we say new earth, we know it will be earthly and familiar; but instead of calling it earth, God will call it New Kingdom or Dwelling place.

In new earth, the word "new" is an adjective of the noun earth, and the main subject is earth. The "new earth" is an "earth" that is "new".

Genesis 1:1 – In the beginning, God created the *"heavens and the earth."* The word "heavens" means the entire universe.

Isiah 65 and 66, 2 Peter 3, and Revelation 21 speak of "new heavens" and a "new earth." They indicate a transformation of the entire universe.

Revelation 21:1 – the word "new" is the Greek word "Kairos," which means "new in the sense that what is old has become obsolete and should be replaced by what is new" ...The new is of the kind to the old, but superior.

2 Corinthians 5:17 – Paul uses the same word "Kairos" when talking about a believer in Christ who became a "New" creation. The believer is still the same person, but he has been made new.

This thinking of earthly is very different than thinking of eternity as a non-earthly, without-a-body, spiritual state in which earth is a distant memory.

We will be like a computer that has been upgraded with a new operating system, new apps and software that gives us expanded upgrades and capabilities.

### **33 WILL EARTH BE DESTROYED OR RENEWED?**

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2 Peter 3:7-13 – ***“But by the same Word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgement and destruction of the godless. But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with His promise, we wait for the new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.”***

Is the destruction by fire mentioned above a total dissolution into nothing, or like the destruction of Noah’s earth by water, with a renewal afterward similar to the renewal of life after the flood? 2 Peter 3:3-7 – ***“Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this coming he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation. But they deliberately forget that long ago by god’s word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By the same waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the Day of Judgment and destruction of the ungodly.”***

This talks about the scoffers will say “nothing changes”, but they forget that God judged people in Noah’s time by water; and will again judge them by fire.

Rev 21:1- ***"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there was no longer sea."***

The present heavens and the present earth will pass away after the millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment.

When Peter, hoping for the commendation or reward, pointed out to Jesus that the disciples had left everything to follow him, the Lord did not rebuke him. Instead he said, Matthew 19:27-28- ***"At the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."***

Notice Christ's choice of words. He didn't say, *after the destruction of all things, or after the abandonment of all things, but at the renewal of all things.* Jesus explicitly said, "All things would be renewed."

The word "Paligensia", translated "renewal" in Matthew 19:28, comes from two words together that mean "new genesis". Or "coming back from death to life." When Jesus said that "All things" would be renewed, the disciples understood him to mean all things that were a part of their life that they knew, i.e., those things on earth.

The bible speaks of three heavens. The fact that Jesus passed through the heavens gives us evidence there is more than one heaven.

Hebrews 4:14- ***"Seeing then that we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession."***

The first heaven is our immediate atmosphere heaven around the earth. This includes the air we breathe (20 miles) and the additional space that surrounds the earth (42 miles). God spoke of this heaven in Genesis 6:7 saying, ***"I will destroy humanity whom I have created from the face of the earth, both humans and beasts, creeping thing and birds of heaven."***

The second heaven is the outer space or universe heaven that includes the sun and moon and stars. Jesus speaks of this heaven in Matthew 24:29, ***"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."***

The third heaven is in the presence of God. God cannot be limited to any one geographical place. 1Kings 8:27- ***"But will indeed God dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain you"***.

But there is a place where God and His throne is. Hebrews 8:1- ***"We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven."***

Heaven is in the presence of God. Hebrews 9:24- ***"For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."***

However, all three of the heavens will not pass away. Sin entered the first two that will be changed, the earth and universe, but God's realm was untouched by sin and remains perfect. There will be a new earth and new universe and earth without sin and corruption. God will dissolve the old universe and earth and make it new by means of fire.

This is an Old and New Testament realization of prophecies:

- Psalm 102:25-27- ***"Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands, they will perish, but you will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak you will change them, and they will be changed."***
- Isaiah 65:17- ***"Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, or come to mind."***
- Isaiah 66:22- ***"So as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your descendants and your name remain."***

- Luke 21:33-***“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall by means never pass away.”***
- Hebrews 1:10-12- ***“And you, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; and they will grow old like a garment; like a cloak you will fold them up, and they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will not fail.”***

All the sinners of all the ages, both demons and men, including Satan, the beast, and the false prophet will be in the lake of fire forever. The whole universe having been destroyed, and then God creates a new universe to be the eternal dwelling place of the redeemed.

The Old Testament saints, the tribulation saints, and all those converted during the millennial kingdom will be incorporated into the redeemed bride and will dwell in New Jerusalem. As a part of our citizenship in heaven, our eternal destiny is to rule, live and reign on the new earth that will be heaven since God will dwell with us forever on the new earth.

We love newness and new things, a new car smell, a new house, a new pet, and a new child. We don't like things that utterly foreign to us. Instead, we like fresh and innovative variations, of things that we already know and like.

The belief that the ultimate Heaven that God prepares for us will be an unearthly place could not be more unbiblical. Earth was made for people to live on; and, people were made to live on earth. The destiny and capabilities that we will have in heaven are so much more than we have ever imagined.

Redemption buys back God's original design. Salvation restores us to God's original purpose, and guarantees that our opportunity to exercise dominion, under God, over the whole earth will be fulfilled, for God's glory.

It is on earth that God promises, that ***“the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it.”*** (Isaiah 40:5)

So what will be new? As mentioned earlier in Matthew 19:27-28, all things that God has created will be made new.

### **34 HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO WALK ON THE EARTH WITH JESUS?**

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Earth is unique; it's the one planet, perhaps in billions of planets created, where God chose to act out the drama of human redemption to reveal the wonders of his amazing grace. The New Jerusalem will be the capital city of the new earth and the new earth will be the capital planet of the universe. God will establish his eternal kingdom where he will bring ***“unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ”*** (Ephesians 1:10). All things means all things...animals, trees, flowers, mountains, and valleys.

If you know Christ, you will have the opportunity to live on the new earth.

Jesus promised we would eat with Him in His kingdom – This is having intimacy with God, to eat a meal with Jesus will be to eat a meal with God.

Revelations 21:3 – ***“God Himself will be with them.”*** Why does it emphatically say God himself? God won't merely send us a delegate, as he did in earlier times with prophets on this present earth. God will actually come to live among us, his children, on the new earth. We will walk and talk on the new earth, eat and laugh with God the Son.

### **35 IS OUR DESTINY REALLY TO RULE AND REIGN WITH CHRIST?**

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Christ will exercise dominion over all nations of the Earth. According to Psalm 72:8, ***“He will rule from sea to sea and from River to the ends of the Earth...All kings will bow down to Him and all nations will serve Him.”***

***“The holy people of the most high will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever”*** (Daniel 7:18).

Where is the kingdom? On the old earth God’s people will reign over it for 1000 years and forever. God has never abandoned his original plan for righteous humans to rule, reign, work, and take care of his creation and God will merge together heaven and earth, fully under Christ’s Lordship.

God’s saints will fulfill on the New Earth the role God first assigned to Adam and Eve on our present earth. In Revelation 22:5, on the New Earth, God tells us that speaking of his children, *“they will reign forever and ever.”*

Christ will be the king of kings in the greatest kingdom of history. When Christ returns and we relocate to the New Earth, God’s kingdom that will continue forever for the glory of God.

Zachariah 9:9-10 – ***“Rejoice greatly...see your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from River to the ends of the Earth.”***

Matthew 21:5 – the first part of prophecy was literally fulfilled when Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. And the second part will be literally fulfilled when Jesus brings peace to the nations and rules them all.

Revelation 19:11-16 – Jesus will return to Earth as ***“king of kings and lord of lords.”***

Zachariah 14:9 – We’re promised that ***“the Lord will be king over the whole earth.”***

Daniel 7:18 – ***“But the saints of the highest one will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.”***

Daniel 7:27- ***“Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of***

***the saints of the highest one; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey him.***

Revelation 22:5 – ***“And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have the need of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.”***

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 – ***“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you not unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life? We will reign, rule and judge the world and angels.” Do you not know that we will judge (or rule) angels?”*** The verb form implies that we won't judge them a single time; but indicates not an event of judgment, but a process of judging, and we will continually judge or rule.

In Luke 19 in his parables, Jesus speaks of believers ruling over cities

2 Timothy 2:12 - Paul speaks of this future reality as something everyone should know. ***“If we endure, we will also reign with Him.”***

Revelation 22:5 – God said that (his servants) ***“will reign forever and ever”*** on the new earth.

Genesis 1:28 – God gave the commission to Adam and Eve: ***“Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”***

David confirmed: ***“That God gave mankind charge of everything you made, placing all things under their authority.”***(Psalm 8:6)

Psalm 4:6- ***“What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him ruler over the works of your hands, you put everything under his feet.”***

From start to finish, we're told that our God-given purpose and destiny was to rule the earth. God is now preparing us for what we'll do forever.

Preparation isn't easy, but necessary, and the rewards for our preparation now on earth are huge when we get to heaven. God makes our roles as kingdom rulers dependent upon our faithful service, here and now. God is now making you ready for your future assignment. Cooperate with God's plan and submit to his training, learning to rely on His strength and His wisdom. Greatness is not easy, and serving is greatness.

Revelation 22:5 – ***“There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.”***

God's plan will not be achieved until Christ has given us the kingdom He has won. It is God's idea that we'll rule the Earth, govern cities, and reign forever.

Similarly, Jesus told the disciples, Luke 22:29-30 - ***“I confer on you a kingdom, just as my father conferred on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”***

The Bible's central story revolves around a question of who will reign over the Earth. It is the realm where God's glory has been the most resistant and challenged, earth...and will also be the place where God's glory will be the most graphically demonstrated.

By reclaiming, restoring, renewing and resurrecting earth, and empowering a regenerated mankind to reign over it, God will accomplish His purpose of bringing glory to Himself.

Christ will make rulers of everyone who serves him humbly and faithfully. Matthew 25:21 tells us, ***“His master replied, ‘well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.’”***

As Christians, we've been born into a family of an extremely wealthy landowner. Our father's holdings stretch across the universe. He'll entrust management of his business to us for an eternity, to represent him and rule as his children and his ambassadors.

We will be a part of God's family in God's heaven; he's the king, ruling the universe and he allows us, his children, to reign and rule with Him.

We will rule over other people and angels and other people will rule over us. There will be no pride, envy, boasting, elitism or anything sinful. The difference in our future responsibilities will be the reward for our faithful service opportunities here and now on this present earth as God will evaluate our service for Him on Earth to determine how we'll serve Him in the future on the new earth.

Luke 14:11 – ***“Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”***

Luke 16:10 – ***“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.”***

Ruling will likely involve the management of all God's creation. How you handle persecution is important. According to Matthew 5:12, ***“rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.”***

Revelation 3:21 – ***“To the one victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my father on his throne.”***

Romans 8:17 – ***“Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.”*** Isaiah 11:4 – ***“With righteousness, he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decision for the poor of the earth.”***

Revelation 20:6 – ***“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with Him forever.”***

## 36 WHAT'S IN THE NEW JERUSALEM?

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As humans, we were made to seek out new things and new worlds. On the new earth we will be sinless people in a sinless world, and will be learning and exploring forever God's creation for God's glory.

As we explore God's creation in ages to come, we'll be eager to know him better as we grow in our knowledge and worship of him for his wonderful love for us?

Before we explore the universe, we'll explore the largest city that's ever existed; the new earth's capital city, the city of New Jerusalem.

According to Revelation 21:15-16, the city's dimension will be 1500 miles length by width by height. That is a city that spreads 61% of the USA surface area!

Luke 19:17, 19 – Jesus mentioned ruling in the stewardship parables, where he said, in the kingdom, some will rule over *“five cities and some over ten cities”*.

In Isaiah 60:11 we read that the kings of nations will bring their treasures into the New Jerusalem and come from and return to other cities on the New Earth. No other city will be like the home of the King of Kings, the City of New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:11 – ***“It [New Jerusalem] shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.*** In Revelation 21:12, we read that there will be 12 gates and on them will be the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Revelation 21:14 - ***“The wall of the city had twelve foundations and on them will be names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”***

Revelation 21:18-19 – John tells us, ***“The wall was made of Jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone.”***

Revelation 21:21-22 – ***“The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass. I did not see a temple in the city because the Lord God almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”*** Revelation 21:23-25 – ***“The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of god and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.”*** Revelation 22:1-2 – ***“The river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city.”***

All of these represent to us the awesome riches of God’s splendor in God’s City on God’s new earth.

Why is water important? Because the city is a center of human life and water is an essential part of life. Ghosts or non-physical entities do not need water, but human bodies do.

John was writing to people who lived in a bone-dry climate, people who knew what it is like to be thirsty and people who would understand the wonder and excitement of available fresh, pure, uncontaminated water.

Revelation 22:2 – ***“In each side of the river (or the water of life) stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”*** It appears that heaven’s inhabitants may draw their strength through eating of this tree’s fruit and the healing from the leaves. The Greek word for “healing” in this verse ( *therapeia* ) is translated “household” in Matthew 24:45 and Luke 12:42, referring to the staff of servants employed in keeping the affairs of a great house running efficiently. The leaves of the tree will be for the “therapy”, or the effective services of the nations in the new earth. As the fruits of the tree will contain nutrients for happy vigorous service by Christ’s

servants in the ages to come; as its leaves may contain a complexity of substances useful in the occupations and economy in the future ages.

Ever wonder why the tree of life is in heaven? Will we be physical and similar to Adam and Eve experience the “living forever effect” of eating from the tree of life as mentioned in the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Genesis?

Genesis 3:22-24 – ***“And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good from evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”***

Revelation 2:7 – ***“to him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”***

Wherever we go and whatever we do, we’ll never leave the presence of the king, who, though He will dwell centrally in the New Jerusalem where His throne is, will also be fully present to the ends of the earth and ends of the universe.

## **37 WILL WE WORK IN HEAVEN?**

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In Genesis 2:15, when God created heaven, he took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work and take care of it.

Work was part of human life on earth. The effects of the curse then made work change from “tending work” to “toiling, tedious and frustrating work”.

Genesis 3:17-19 – ***“Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and by the sweat of your brow you will eat your food.”***

But again, on the new earth, work will be restored as we rule and reign over God's creation in the manner that He originally intended for us to do before disobeying God that brought the curse of sin upon all of God's creation. Revelations 22:3 – ***"No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city and his servants will serve him."*** "Serve" is an active verb, and servants are active people who will be continuously carrying out tasks of service to God. John 5:17 – ***"My father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."*** "We'll have work to do that is satisfying, fulfilling and never boring.

When we enter heaven, we will be continually engaged in fulfilling work; we are not offered retirement but rather a job of ruling: "Well done, good and faithful servant, you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you a ruler over many things. Enter now into the joy of your Lord."

John 17:4 – Jesus said to His father, ***"I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do."*** In other words, we will glorify God for eternity by doing everything he tells us to do. The first thing God told mankind to do was "fill the earth and exercise dominion over it." We'll glorify God by exercising dominion over the new earth, demonstrating God's creativity as his children and image-bearers.

## **38 IS IT A GOOD THING TO THINK ABOUT HEAVEN?**

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Is it good to think about what awaits us through death's door and to think about being with your loved ones from whom we've been separated?

A bride always wants to be with her groom more than anything else. If he's gone away to build beautiful place for her, she will be thinking and talking about him and the place he is preparing by her. Jesus said, in John 14:2-3, ***"My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will return to take you there to be with me that you may be where I am."*** The new heavens and new earth will be the

means by which God reveals Himself and His love to us. We will be thankful, grateful and appreciative, worshipping and glorifying God who created us, loved us and saved us. Every thought of Heaven moves our hearts towards God.

For the Christian, the thoughts of our loved ones at their death is not as the unbeliever thinks, "they are gone" but, rather thoughts of "they have arrived."

Everyone is in the process of deterioration and dying every day. Most of our lives will be spent on the other side of death. This fact makes it prudent that you be certain of your relationship with Jesus Christ. ***Trust Him only*** to save you. With this assurance you can get excited about what's beyond the doorways of death, knowing that dying is only a temporary transition of your life forever with God.

Just as you can't get into another room without leaving the present room by going through the doorway; neither can you get to heaven without believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and acceptance of him as our savior; and passing through the transitional doorway of death to continue our life forever with God.

## **39 IS HEAVEN REALLY A PLACE AND LOCATION?**

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Jesus mentioned Heaven seventy times in the book of Matthew alone. Fifty-four of the sixty-six books in the Bible mentions Heaven, from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 21:10.

- Genesis 1:1 – ***"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."***
- Revelation 21:10 – ***"He showed me the Great City...descending out of heaven from God."***

John 14:2-3 – ***"My Father's house has many rooms, if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?"***

***And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."***

Before Jesus was arrested and crucified, he told his disciples that He would return to His father in heaven to prepare an eternal home for all who would believe Him. He left his promise: "I am going there to prepare a place for you...that you also may be where I am."

The Bible doesn't tell us everything we'd *like* to know about heaven, but it does tell us everything we *need* to know about Heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:1 - ***"We know that if the earthly tent (body) we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands."*** Heaven is our promise, and Heaven is our destiny. John 14:4, 6 - ***"You know the way to the place where I am going." "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*** The place that we are going is heaven, and Christ is there now, preparing for our arrival.

We are not "in the land of the living, on our way to the land of the dying"; but instead, we are "in the land of the dying, on our way to the land of living". Death is our transition to the majority of our everlasting lives.

## **40 WHAT IS HEAVEN?**

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Heaven is the place where God dwells. He created it, He lives there, and someday, so will all those who have accepted his way of salvation, Jesus, the Messiah. In Deuteronomy 26:15, Moses prayed, ***"Look down from Heaven, your holy dwelling place, and bless your people Israel and the land you have given us as you promised on path to our ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey."*** In 1 Kings 8:30, at the dedication of the temple, Solomon prayed, ***"Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place."***

Hebrews 12:22-23 – ***“Heaven is the city of the living God and the redeemed.*** John 14:1-3 – ***“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? Now if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you may also be with me.”***

Notice that Jesus said, “I am going to prepare a **place** for you”. **“Place”** is a location, a Greek term for “room, habitat, lodging, domicile, and almost always is a word that indicates an inhabited location. “A place for you,” in the context of John 14, refers to a real, physical place, and that place is Heaven! Heaven is a place for us...What a God!

## **41 IS THERE AN INTERMEDIATE HOLDING PLACE BEFORE HEAVEN?**

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*Matthew 9:36* – ***“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”*** God has a shepherd’s heart for his flock and God will hold those who assume the role of shepherd to their responsibility to fulfill His expectations of caring for, feeding them by accurately representing Him and His word and tending to the needs of His sheep. God will judge His shepherds and the false shepherds, not by their standards, but by His Holy Standards in His Word. Our human nature gives us a desire to feel like we have earned something in order to get something. Therefore, if we experience some sort of suffering for our sins, it would make us feel better about getting to go to heaven.

The concept of accepting God’s free gift of salvation by grace is difficult for us prideful humans; but, it is a biblical teaching of scripture. Salvation is not something we earn. ***“For it is by grace that you are saved, through faith- and this not from yourselves, it is a gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast.”*** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The background of purgatory comes from early Christians who taught that when the believer died they went to a place a little superior to their earthly existence. In this place they had to become prepared, by purging of their sins, while they waited for the resurrection. Consequently, elaborate teachings were developed with this waiting period and place.

The idea of purgatory was developed in medieval times with the purpose of designating a place where those who died were sent to be purified from sin. The Roman Catholic belief in an after-life purification is based on the practice of praying for the dead which is mentioned in 2 Maccabees that the Catholic Church has declared to be part of their sacred scriptures.

"Therefore they praised the work of the Lord, the just judge, who reveals what is hidden; and turning to prayer, they asked that this sin might be entirely blotted out. The noble Judas called on people to keep themselves free from sin....But since he had in view the wonderful reward reserved for those who die a godly death, his purpose was a holy pious one. And this was why he offered an atoning sacrifice to free the dead from their sin."

2 Maccabees 12:42, 44, 45

2 Maccabees is not included in the text of sacred scriptures and the teaching of purgatory has no relevance for believers. The practice presupposes that the dead are assisted between death and their final place. The Catholic Church's teaching of purgatory was defined in church councils in 1274 AD and 1438 AD, and the current Catholic teaching was formalized in the Council of Trent in 1445 AD.

In 1517 Martin Luther nailed the 95 Thesis to the church door at Wittenburg to denounce the economic exploitation of indulgences, and invited the church leaders to debate publically the practice of indulgences. The practice of selling certificates to reduce the temporary punishments in purgatory by purchasing of the indulgence certificates was denounced as unscriptural. Martin Luther denied that a person's actions had any role to

play in salvation, saying that faith alone was what counted. The sale of indulgences was abolished by the Pope in 1567.

Roman Catholicism teaches that not every believer who dies goes immediately to heaven. Even if a person dies at peace with the church, if they are not perfect, they have to go through a time of purging. The only people who enter heaven immediately are some martyrs and other highly favored individuals.

Although these people have been forgiven of their sins, it is still necessary that they experience some temporary punishment, suffering and purification, to free them from any defect before their admittance into heaven. Most people go to purgatory because they need to have their unforgiven sins forgiven by refining or purging before they can enter God's presence.

Roman Catholics concluded there must be a place, out of which they can pray for people to be released from these imperfections and sufferings. Since death ends all opportunity for good works, the removal of defects can only occur by means of help from a person still living. If a person dies in the state of a mortal sin, that separates the person from the grace of God, they forfeit their chance for purgatory; but, if they die with an unpaid debt of venial sins, that causes injury to their relationship with God, they must spend time in purgatory. There are ways that venial sins can be forgiven: Suffering by the person in purgatory, gifts or services by the church and people living, prayers by priest, and masses provided by relatives. All unbaptized adults, and those who have committed mortal sins after their baptism, go immediately to hell per the Roman Catholic belief.

The bible does not teach anything of a purification process between death and resurrection that the believer must undergo. The righteous dead are immediately conscious in God's presence.

2 Corinthians 5:1, 2, 8 - ***“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heaven. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed, we shall not be found naked. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”***

The bible also tells of the dead as being immediately happy. Lazarus was happy in the company of Abraham while the rich man was suffering in torment. ***“The poor man died and was carried away by the angels away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side”*** (Luke 16, 22, 23).

Jesus told the man that died next to him on the cross. ***“Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise”*** (Luke 23:43). How can he immediately in the presence of the Lord, if he has to first go to purgatory?

The church on earth does not have any authority to forgive sins, either by prayers, or Mass, or suffering or gifts or services by the church or living members. Isaiah 43:25 - ***“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for my sake; and I will not remember your sins”***

The church may declare someone forgiven, if they have met the conditions that God has set down- repentance and faith. John 20:22, 23 - ***“And when he said this, He breathed out, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”*** The church has no power, in and of themselves, to remove the consequences of sin, either in this world, or the next. God is the only one who can forgive sins and judge sins. Jesus' death on the cross was sufficient for our sins and nothing else is needed. Jesus said, John 17:4 - ***“I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.”*** When he died on the cross Jesus acknowledged that he finished his task. John 19:28-30 - ***“Later, knowing***

***that all was as all now completed, and so that the scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When Jesus he had finished the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." Then He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."***

***Colossians 2:13 – "When you were dead in your sins...God made you alive with Christ, and forgave us for all our sins to be saved from God's wrath." Hebrews 10:12, 14 – "This man (Jesus) offered one sacrifice for all sins forever...For by one offering, He has eternally perfected those who are being sanctified."***

The Bible is clear that Christ has already removed our sins with his one-time sacrifice on Calvary's cross, and there is nothing we can do to add to it. The idea of purgatory negates the promises that a believer can look forward to being in His presence immediately upon death. The final condition in the next phase of our life is determined by the choices we make in this life; and there is no middle place where we will wait. Nothing can make us more righteous or sin-free in God's sight than we are through the cleansing blood of Jesus. Our salvation is purchased...completely. No more payment and further removal of sin is required.

## **42 WILL WE GRIEVE FOR LOVED ONES WHEN WE ARE IN HEAVEN? (SEE ALSO QUESTION 20)**

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Psalm 9:6 - ***"Even the memory of them will disappear."*** One day our limited understanding will be deeper as we comprehend God's mercy and justice. Isaiah 65:17-18 – ***"the former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind...be glad and rejoice."*** There may be things and memories that we will not remember in Heaven as we are in the joy and presence of our Lord, His Spirit and our Father God.

1 Corinthians 13:12-13 - Paul says, ***“Now I know in part’ then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now the three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them in is love.”***

In Heaven our faith, our hope and our love will be complete, for then we will see God face to face. Our hope will then become our reality, for we will no longer have to wait before being in His presence. In Heaven, the love that He exhibited for us on earth and the love He gave us will continue forever and the knowledge we will have will be fuller that we have ever known. God’s love will be our focus, trusting in God will be utmost in our minds and we will not grieve those who remain on earth.

### **43 ARE THERE TWO BOOKS OF LIFE? JUDGEMENTS AFTERWARD?**

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Is there one or two books of life? In the New Testament and in the Old Testament we see verses that refer to the “Book of Life” and the “Lamb’s Book of Life”.

Although they are similar, there are differences between these. The New Testament refers to the Book of Life eight times, and the Old Testament three times refers to the book that righteous names are written and the book of the living (Psalm 69:8).

Revelation 13:8 tells us that those who worship the beast are not those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. John the Baptist said that “Jesus is the ‘Lamb of God who comes to take away the sin of the world.’”

Revelation 20:12, 21:27 – ***In God’s presence, books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the Book of Life...only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life will enter Heaven.*** If you’ve given your life to Christ, your name is already written there. Jesus promised that if you belong to Him, nothing will ever be able to remove your name from its pages.

Revelation 3:5-6 – ***“He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will never erase his name from the Book of Life, and will confess his name before my Father and His angels He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*** These are those who have overcome the trials, sin, death and Satan in their earthly lives, having proven their salvation is real.

Conversely, Revelation 20:15 – ***“If anyone’s name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the Lake of Fire.”*** This is the fate of those who have rejected Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. You were created with the ability of free will, and God will honor your free will choices. Your choices in this life determine your destiny eternally. One second after your last breath...your destiny is then irreversible.

In the bible and in our life...it’s all about Jesus. God’s plan is to provide eternal life to those who believe in His Son’s life, death, resurrection and Lordship.

Philippians 4:3 – ***“Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women since they have contended by my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are written in the book of life.”***

Revelation 13:8 – ***“And all who dwell on earth will worship the beast and everyone whose name that has not been written in the Lamb’s book of life. Those who approve of the antichrist are not found in the book of life and are not written in the book before the creation of the world.”*** Revelation 21:27 – ***“But nothing unclean will ever enter in it, not anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”***

The question of “Are there two books?” has two viewpoints:

1. Since the book of life is the record of all who have eternal life through the belief in the Lamb; the book of life and the Lamb’s book

of life are two references to the same book; and, everyone who is created is written in the Book of life and, once the unbelievers are removed, the Book of Life becomes the Lamb's Book of Life with those who are destined for eternity in Heaven.

2. There are two books of Life. One called the book of life contains the names of all living people. In Exodus 32:33 the Book of Life is called the Father's book and contains all those who are created by God. God said to Moses Exodus 32:33 - "**Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot him out of My Book.**"

The Lamb's Book of Life includes only the names of people who call on the name of Jesus for salvation. The Lamb's Book of Life is referred to as the Son's book in Revelation 13:8. Those who are in the Lamb's Book of Life are Jesus said, in Revelation 3:5, "**He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life.**"

### What will be Judged?

In Genesis 18:25, Abraham said to the Lord, "**Shall the Judge of all the earth do what is just?**" Since God is a God of justice, what will be the judgment of humanity that happens in the future? On what basis will people be judged in the after death phase of our lives?

All people (believers and unbelievers) will be judged according to what they have done in this life. Psalm 62:12 - "**Surely you will reward each person according to what he has done**"

The judgment will be performed by the Son of God and will be based upon the deeds done in this life. Luke 12:48 - ***“And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required,”***

Jeremiah 17:10 - ***“I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.”***

Unless we think that God will weigh our good deeds against our bad deeds, He has told us of what the work of God consists:

John 6:28-29 - ***“Then they said to Him (Jesus), “What must we do to perform the works of God? Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him, whom He has sent.”***

Judgments will come after the death and resurrection of each person and will occur in God’s timing. ***“The Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each will receive commendation from God.”*** (1 Corinthians 4:5) Paul said, in Acts 17:31, ***“He (God) has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a Man whom He has appointed, and of this He has given proof to all by raising Him from the dead.”***

Romans 2:16 - ***“On the day when, according to the gospel, God will judge the secrets of humans through Christ Jesus.”***

Peter said, 1 in Peter 4:5, ***“But they will give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead.”***

In Jude 14-15, Jude wrote: ***“Behold the Lord came to execute judgment to all, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”*** The context here is that God will judge the unbelievers.

Hebrews 9:27 - ***“And just as it is appointed for humans to die once, and after that the judgment.”*** God’s judgment will involve remembering things done on earth.

Matthew 12:36 - ***“But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the Day of Judgment for every careless word they have spoken”*** The context here is Jesus talking to the unbelieving Pharisees who have accused Him of casting out demons by the power of Satan.

Revelation 20:11-12 - ***“And I saw a Great White Throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence the earth had fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things that were written in the books, according to their deeds.”***

What are these books mentioned in Revelation 20:12?

In a judicial sense, condemned prisoners are guilty before the God of Justice. There will not be any sinners left in the universe.

Daniel 7:9-10 – ***“I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated, His garment was white as***

***snow, and the hair of His head was like wool. His throne was a firey flame, its wheels a burning fire; a firey stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands administered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.***

Daniel's vision of God's throne, from which God's Judgement on those who have rejected His plan and God's Son's payment of their sins ...will come true!

Notice that in Revelation 20:12 ***"the dead were judged from the things that were written in the books."***

These books record every thought, word and deed of sinful men. All recorded by God's omniscient is the evidence provided of the outstanding charges of each of their life's sins; and the just verdict of each unbeliever. The unbeliever, whose sins have not been forgiven by the blood sacrifice of God's Son, will be shown and convinced of the just verdict of his/her guilt as they stand before God. The undisputable evidence of guilt and justification of the eternal condemnation will be evident to each of those who have rejected the only way to forgive their guilt. God will then proclaim their eternal fate of being cast into the Lake of Fire.

Psalm 69:27-28 – ***"Charge them with crime upon crime; do not let them share in your salvation, may they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous."***

Who will be the STAR Witness at this judicial proceeding?

Matthew 10:32-33 - ***"Therefore whoever confesses Me before***

***men, him will I confess before My Father who is in Heaven. But whoever denies me before men, him will I also deny before My Father who is in Heaven."***

Will there be any "books" for the believers? Based on the earlier stated verses in Jude 6, and 14-15 and Matthew 12:36 that are talking to unbelievers, there will be judgment of condemnation and accountability for the deeds that are written in the "books".

When we look at the following scriptures regarding the status of the deeds of the believer when they are at the Bema seat judgment of commendation, if there are any "books" to record any outstanding sins or deeds, there will be nothing written in them in agreement with the following scriptures:

- 1 John 1:8-9 – ***"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us all of our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."***
- Psalm 103:12 – ***"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."*** We have a north pole and a south pole on our earth. If you began traveling around the earth at the South Pole and travel northward you would only travel one half of the earth's diameter and then you would be at the North Pole, and then you are to traveling in a southerly direction toward the South Pole. When you travel easterly from any point you can travel easterly forever. Your sins are separated forever from you when you are forgiven by Jesus' blood. Jesus' cleansing

of your sins is a total cleansing of your sins...they are no more!

- Hebrews 8:12 – ***“And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.”***
- Jeremiah 31:34 – ***“I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”***

Only God can forgive our sins, and that is exactly what He does; He sent His only begotten Son to die for us. We deserved to die, but He took all of our sins, past, present and future, on his cross when He died for us; that we might have the opportunity to live forever with Him.

### Who will be Judged?

The righteous and the unrighteous will be judged. Jesus' blood will cover all of the sins that have ever occurred in the believer's life. The righteous will go away to eternal life while the unrighteous will be eternally separated from God.

Greek, like English, uses the word judge in two senses: the first one is in condemnation, and the second is the giving out of rewards in commendation. Unbelievers will be judged in the first sense, condemnation; and believers will be judged in the second sense, receiving rewards.

There are three types of judgment: Bema Seat, Sheep and Goats, and the Great White Throne. The timing of the judgments varies, but the fact of these judgments remains. After the resurrection body is received there is a judgment.

1. Christians, who are members of the New Testament church, who have trusted in Christ as Savior from the Day of Pentecost until the coming of Christ for His church at the rapture, are going to heaven because Jesus has forgiven their sins, and will discover that God will judge their works. This is called the "Bema" judgement seat, and comes a word translated "court, or tribunal". It was on a platform where the judge of the games at the Olympic arenas sat to judge. And afterwards the contestants would gather to receive their rewards of commendation.

The believer's judgment will involve the evaluating of the "spiritual works" that we have done in our earthly life. All of us will give account of what we have done after trusting Christ as Savior. Therefore, the judgment seat of Christ is a judgment of believers' works *after* our salvation. This judgment is to receive the rewards and will vary according to each one's faithful service to Jesus. Our Christian life is a race, we want to finish strong, and Jesus is the judge and He will give each person their proper rewards.

The rewards are called crowns. 2 Timothy 4:7 - ***"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness. Which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing."***

The judging of believers will occur after they receive their resurrected mortal bodies that are changed instantaneously into their immortal bodies at the rapture of the church when the church will meet Jesus in the clouds, but before the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth's surface again.

Revelation 19:7 - ***“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the lamb has come, and has made herself ready fine linen, bright and clean, was given to her to wear”*** Fine linen stands for righteous acts of the saints. The bride is clothed with righteous deeds and has already been at the judgment seat because they are ready for the groom when he comes back to earth at His second coming.

This judgment after the rapture does not include Old Testament believers who will have a separate time and rewards at the second coming of Christ.

When the Lord comes back for those in His church at the rapture they will receive a glorified body that is incorruptible and immortal. After this event, those believers will go to the judgment seat of Christ. Judgment always follows the bodily resurrection. At the Bema seat judgment after the rapture, sins of believers will not be an issue because they have already been forgiven by Jesus' sacrifice and blood.

2. The Nation of Israel will be judged after the victory over his enemies at the battle of Armageddon. We remember that

the time after the church is raptured is the time referred to in Daniel 9:24-27 as the last seven year period. This 7 year period will determine which individuals will enter God's millennial kingdom on earth. As Daniel is nearing the 70 years of Babylonian captivity that was foretold by Jeremiah, he begins to fast and pray for the nation of Israel. Gabriel is dispatched to bring a message to Daniel. Daniel is told there will be a period of 70 seven year periods that will take place (your people and your city) on the nation of Israel and on the City of Jerusalem. The first 69 seven year period deals with the entry into Jerusalem of the Messiah; and is literally to the day, fulfilled by Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The tribulation is the 70<sup>th</sup> seven year period that has been determined for Israel and Jerusalem.

The righteous from Israel, those who have put their trust in Christ, will enter God's kingdom. They will experience the long promised blessings that God has given to Israel. These survivors will be regathered from all over the world to the land of Israel. Ezekiel 20:34-36 - "***I will bring you from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with outpoured wrath. I will bring you into the wilderness of the nations and there, face to face, I will execute judgment upon you. As I judged your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt.***"

When Christ returns to the earth again in the future after the tribulation, He will bring those Christians who received their body when they were raptured before the tribulation, to be with Him at the battle of Armageddon.

He will judge those of the nation of Israel that have survived the tribulation period (2/3 of the Jewish nation were killed), the living of other nations, the tribulation saints, and the Old Testament saints. Zechariah 13:8-9 – ***“And it will come to pass in all the land, says the Lord, that two-thirds of it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it. I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name, and I will answer them, I will say, “this is my people, and each one will say, “The Lord is my God.”*”**

Those who are alive after the battle, whether Jewish or gentile, will face the Sheep and the Goat Judgment which will separate the living saints from those who are not.

Will all Israel be saved in the end times? Romans 11:26 plainly says, ***“All Israel will be saved.”*** At the end of the tribulation the survivors of the Jewish nation will be those who have looked upon Christ in repentance at His second coming when Jesus returns to destroy the armies gathered against Him in rebellion mentioned in Revelation 19. The believers will include the 144,000 Jewish witnesses who were sealed in Revelation 7:4 and will be of the sheep who enter

into his kingdom. The goats will be the unbelievers who will be sent to the judgment.

Matthew 25:31 - ***“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on His left.”***

This Jewish Remnant are those that Jesus spoke about in Luke 13:34-35 - ***“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who have killed the prophets and stoned those sent to you, how often I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings and you were not willing. Look your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”*** After Satan is cast from heaven in Revelation 12, we read, ***“It was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place where she is nourished for a time, times and one half a time from the presence of the serpent.”*** It is not a coincidence, that the timing of providence, that this 3-1/2 years from the time that Israel flees to the wilderness to the city of Petra where they are being provided for. At the exact end of the 3-1/2 years all of Israel that are alive then will believe in and receive Jesus as the Messiah, fulfilling what Jesus said in Matthew 23:39

where he stated, ***"You will not see me again until you say, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord,"***

Zechariah 12:10 says, ***"I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son."*** This occurs at the end of the tribulation as prophesied in Daniel 9:24-27. After Israel is spiritually restored, Christ will establish His millennial kingdom on earth. Israel will be regathered from the ends of the earth (Isaiah 11:12, 62:10 and as God promised, the salvation of Israel will involve a spiritual awakening and geographical home: ***"I will put my spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land."*** (Ezekiel 37:1-14) What a God we have the privilege to serve!

3. Those Gentile (or non-Jewish) nations that are living at His second coming. These who are still alive are the living, not the dead, who will be raised to judgement in the future. Those who are alive will be judged in the valley of Jehoshaphat. Joel 3:1-2 - ***"For then, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will enter into judgment with them there, on account of my people and My heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations and divided up my land."*** The

righteous enter God's millennial kingdom while the unrighteous will be taken to judgment.

4. Like the unbelievers from the nation of Israel, they will probably will be killed at this time since their final judgment will be at the Great White Throne judgment after the 1,000 year reign of Christ.

The unrighteous will be sent away as Jesus illustrated in Matthew 25:30, "**As for the worthless slave, throw him into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**" The final judgment of the unbelievers will take place at the Great White throne judgment after the Millennium 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth.

5. The Tribulation Saints that were killed will be judged when Christ returns. They will be raised from the dead in a glorified body, receive their rewards and enter into the kingdom of God. Revelation 20:4-6 - "**They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years**"

6. The Old Testament Saints will be raised from the dead and judged. Daniel wrote in Daniel 12:2, "**Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake; some to everlasting life and others to shame and everlasting contempt.**"

But some of the Old Testament Saints will have already been raised as stated in Matthew 27:50-54: "**When Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At**

***that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the city and appeared to many people. When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!"***

7. Satan, the angel who became the devil, will also be judged by Christ when he returns. Revelation 20:10 ***"And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever."***
8. The fallen angels (demons) who followed Satan will receive their judgment at the return of Christ. Although the bible does not specifically say that the evil angels will be judged at the same time as Satan and/or unbelievers time, it is consistent with Jesus' earlier words, in Matthew 25:41, ***"You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."***
9. At the Great White Throne Judgment, all of those who received the mark of the beast during the tribulation period and all of the unsaved dead from all time will be judged after receiving their body at the Great White Throne and sent to

their final destination in the Lake of Fire by the same Jesus whom they have rejected.

10. The Millennium Believers after the Millennium period those who have trusted Christ, will be rewarded at the Great White Throne Judgment.
11. Death and Hades will be judged and thrown into the Lake of Fire. The last judgment will not occur until death and hades give up their dead. Revelation 20:13 - ***“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them, and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds”***
12. The Present heavens and earth will be judged and God will make new heavens and a new earth.

Jesus will complete all things which the Father gave Jesus to do. Paradise lost in Genesis will be regained. Sin eradicated and righteousness will be everywhere and history will have reached its goal and the adventure will continue for the believers and unbelievers as they will live forever in the destination that they have chosen by their decisions.

#### **44 ARE CHILDREN AND MENTALLY HANDICAPPED IN HEAVEN?**

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Job 3:11, 13 – Job cursed the day he was born and said, ***“Why did I not perish at birth...For now I would be lying down in peace; I would be asleep and at rest.”***

2 Samuel 12:13 – King David said, ***“Of His child who has died, He can’t come to me, but I will go to Him.”*** His child would not be able to return to earth, but David would be able to see him when he went to heaven where he would be.

Jonah 4:11 – ***“But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?”*** There were within the city of Nineveh 120,000 who were not yet able to tell their right hand from their left; and should these innocent people perish?

These scriptures refer to those young who are not able to understand, or to reject, the offer of salvation from God. If they don’t understand that by the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, and acceptance of his sacrifice and Lordship they will be saved by the grace of God. God judges those who knowingly reject His offer of salvation.

The children and the mentally handicap will be in Heaven by the grace and justice of God.

## **45 DO WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY WHO IS GOING TO HEAVEN?**

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In Matthew 16:19, Jesus told his disciples, ***“And I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth, will be loosed in heaven.”***

The “keys” indicate authority, and here Jesus tells Peter (and by extension all believers) that he has given them authority to declare what was bound and loosed in heaven. Matthew 16:19 echoes the promise of John 20:23, where Christ gave the authority to forgive or retain the sins of people.

John 20:23 – ***“If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”*** This means that believers acting in accordance with God’s word, have the authority to declare if someone is forgiven or is unforgiven. The church’s authority is not to determine these things, but to declare what the judgment of heaven is,

based on the God's Word. Whatever they bind on earth has already been "bound" or "loosed" in heaven, and they can be assured that heaven is in accord or agreement with God's Word. When a believer says the unrepentant person is bound in sin, they are saying what God's word says about that person. When the believer acknowledge that a repentant person is free and has been loosed from sin, God and Heaven agrees with God's word.

Only God knows the heart, and He has the right to judge who is genuinely saved or lost. Psalm 96:13 – ***"He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth."***

Never put yourself in God's place by saying you know a particular person will be eternally saved or lost. We do not know what happens between God and an individual in the last breaths of life, and someone can turn in faith to Jesus and be saved. This is the point of the Matthew 20:1-16 story of what the kingdom of God is like, wherein the laborer that was chosen in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour receives the same reward as does the one chosen in the first hour.

Do not presume that people will go to Heaven, just because they claim to be a Christian. Matthew 7:21 – ***"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in Heaven."***

We take seriously the following fact mentioned In 2 Corinthians 5:20, where Paul tells us that, we are ambassadors of Christ and we speak for Him. Speak carefully, speak truthfully and speak compassionately, realizing that Christ speaks through you, always remember God's words, ***"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."***

## 46 DOES SATAN KNOW IN ADVANCE WHO WILL ACCEPT CHRIST?

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There are two equal and opposite errors that humans make about Satan and his demons.

One is to disbelieve in their existence and the other one is to have an unhealthy, excessive interest in Satan and his demons

There is no creator except God, and as a consequence, there is no opposite entity to our God. The demons are fallen angels and Satan, as their leader or dictator, was once an archangel is not the opposite of God, but may be the opposite of the Archangel Michael.

Satan cannot force anyone to follow him, nor can he tell who will believe in Jesus' sacrifice and accept him as their Lord and Savior. Luke 12:5 - When Jesus said, "***Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into Hell,***" he was referring to God, not to Satan!

Each person who refuses God's way of salvation and hope of eternal life condemns himself to eternal Hell. Satan does not have authority in people's lives, but he does employ his power to tempt and deceive us toward evil.

Satan can twist human effort to serve his own purposes, and therefore we're told to beware of his deception. Only God can thwart the plans of Satan. If a man will not submit to Jesus Christ, then his life will be influenced and controlled by Satan.

While Satan can't snatch believers from God's hand, he is happy when he sees we are an ineffective Christian. Satan's mission, if he cannot get one to reject God, is to deflect them from God's plan for them. But if you are in Christ, Satan has no power over you. Satan continually tempts you to follow the desires of your flesh rather than the spiritual wishes of your heavenly Father. 1 John 4:4 - "***You dear children, are from God and have***

***overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."***

In 1 John 5:11-12,18, John wrote, ***"This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life and he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him."***

Satan cannot defeat God, and hates God and believes he can hurt God by distracting and attracting people, the specially, created humans that he loves, to follow him, and be with him, forever in his rebellion and rejection of God's authority in their lives.

Stan is the ultimate example and realization of the phrase, "Misery Loves Company".

God Loves you. Satan Hates you. Choose whom you will follow.

## **47 IS IT WRONG TO PRAY FOR GOD TO TAKE US TO HEAVEN?**

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No, we are to yearn and eagerly look forward to Heaven. The Lord is with us through our sufferings and waits for us to emerge from our tests to live with Him forever.

2 Corinthians 4:18 – Knowing what it was like to suffer, Paul wrote, ***"So we fix our eyes, not what is seen, but what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."***

As we live our daily lives, we are to focus on the goal and end of our lives...our home, Heaven. Following God's plan as we continue to work until we go home. Staying on course and keeping your defenses up.

Luke 22:40 – Jesus said, ***"Pray that you will not fall into temptation"***

"Isaiah 26:4 – Nothing surprises God. ***"Trust in the Lord forever."***

Our loved ones deserve to be happy. When they are with God they are happy, healthy and in the comforting presence of the God who has created, the Spirit who has guided them and the Lord that died for them and loves them fully. When our loved believers are suffering and it is time for God to take them we want what is best for them. We trust God and pray for His will for our loved ones and entrust them to His control and Love. We know where they are going and will see them there later, as God determines.

## **48 WHERE DO INFANTS, SMALL CHILDREN, AND ABORTED INFANTS GO AT DEATH?**

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Every infant or child who dies before reaching a condition of moral culpability, understanding and accountability instantly goes to heaven, as they have not reached an understanding of God's law, God's grace, God's payment for their sin and God's plan of salvation. Also included are those who do not have the mental capacities related to reasoning, memory, or making moral choices such as the rejection of God's Son, Jesus.

Jeremiah 19:3-7 – God called the sacrificed children “innocent.”

***“Hear the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, I will bring such a catastrophe on this place, that whoever hears of it, his ears will tingle. “Because they have forsaken me and made this an alien place, because they have burned incense in it to other gods whom neither they, their fathers, nor the kings of Judah have known, and have filled this place with the blood of the innocents( they have also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or speak, nor did it come into my mind), therefore behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, “that this place shall no longer be called Tophet or the valley of slaughter. And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hands of those who seek their lives; their corpses I***

***will give as meat for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth."***

"Tophet means drum; and was another word for the valley of hinnom at the south end of Jerusalem, where, when the children were burned in sacrifice to their idols, drums were beaten to drown out the cries of the children. Rubbish was dumped there from Jerusalem and there was continual fires....which became the symbol of the Fires of Hell.

Jonah 4:11 – When Jonah resented God's decision to forgive the repentant people of Nineveh, God responded to Jonah's displeasure by saying, "***And should I not pity Nineveh, their great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left.***" (120,000 that were too young to know their right hand from their left hand).

Deuteronomy 1:30 - When Israel came out of Egypt, God's plan was for the Israelites to enter the Land of Promise within weeks. The Israelites sent 12 spies, but 10 did not trust God to defeat the people inhabiting the "promised land." Only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to enter, and the Lord declared this: "***About the infants and young children: moreover, your little ones and your children, who you say will be victims, who today have no knowledge of good and evil, they shall go in there; to them I will give it, and they shall possess it.***" Why? Because they had no knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong. The children were completely innocent of sin.

Job 2:7-10, and 3:1 – Job experienced intense despair and suffering, but "***he did not sin with his lips.***" However, he did wish and wonder why he was not fortunate enough to be like an infant or stillborn child. "***So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck with painful boils from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head. And he took a potsherd (piece of broken pottery) with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes. Then his wife said to him, "do you still hold fast to your integrity? "Curse God and die!" But he said to her, "you***

***Speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity? In all this Job did not sin with his lips. May the day perish on which I was born, and the night in which it was said, a male child is conceived.***

Job 3:16-17 – ***“Why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, like infants who never saw right...and there the weary are at rest.”*** In Job 19:26-27, Job said, ***“After my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.”***

Job concluded he would have been better off if he'd been stillborn and gone right into God's presence to be at rest in the life to come than to be suffering as he currently was.

2 Samuel 12:22-23 – After his child from an adulterous relationship with Bathsheba died in seven days, David said, ***“While the child was alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, ‘who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live.’ But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”*** David knows he will see the child after he dies, but where will David be then? The soul of a child born of adultery was not going to hell, for they did not sin, and God's grace saves the sinless and non-rebellious. Psalm 23:6 – David wrote, ***“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”***

Ezekiel 18:20 – ***“The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.”*** Each person bears the righteous or wickedness that they have brought upon themselves.

Psalm 17:15 – David also wrote, ***“As for me, I will see your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in your likeness.”***

David knew that he would be going into the presence of the Lord, and he

knew there was also an eternal home for his baby who had gone before him. David knew where innocent infants and children go, and you can too!

## **49 WHAT BODY WILL THE INFANT HAVE? WILL WE KNOW THEM?**

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1 John 3:2 – ***“Dear friends, now we are children of God and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”*** The body that we will have will have the same qualities as the glorified resurrection body of Christ.

How do we know we will be able to recognize our child? All our bodies will be physical, genuinely human bodies, yet wholly perfect and glorified.

In 1 Corinthians 15:49, Paul wrote, ***“As we have bound the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly man (Jesus Christ).”***

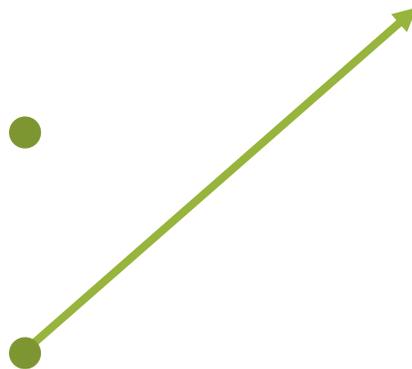
Matthew 17:3-4 – When Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, although they had died centuries before, they still maintained their same identity and were recognized for who they still were. (Moses lived 1500 years before and Elijah lived 800 years before).

Matthew 22:32 - When the Sadducees tried to trap Jesus about marriage and the resurrection, Jesus repeated the words of God to Moses: ***“I am the God of your father – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living”***. God continued to be their God and they had identifiable, distinct identities as they did when they lived on this earth. Though you have never seen the faces of others, you will know them and be known by them, as they knew Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration; and the same manner we will know our child in heaven. Heaven is a wonderful place to be, where we will be more than we ever thought we could be!

1 Thessalonians 4:17-18 – When Paul says, ***“concerning the resurrection of the Saints who have died, we alive will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. Therefore, comfort one another with these words.”***

Comfort comes from anticipation of a reunion with our loved ones!

From 2 Samuel 12:22-23, that we looked at in the previous question, we know that if David would not be able to recognize his first son from Bathsheba that has died,, there would be no comfort in his saying, ***“I shall go to him.”*** From this statement we know that we also will know our infant that has died and gone before us to be with Jesus; even if the infant has never been born.



Our loved ones who are believers and die before us go ahead of us to be with Jesus. Our life here is but a dot on a timeline that goes on forever and ever. When we transition through death, we see behind the dot (represented by the line drawn above )that we now live, and our life continues on the path to the destination that we have chosen by our free will decision to accept or reject God’s salvation through our belief or unbelief in His Son, Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for our sins.

When we are removed from our time here and in heaven, our time here without the company of our loved ones doesn’t compare to an eternity reunited with them, together forever with Jesus.

In tragedy, our flesh wants to ask, why did my child or loved one have to die? There is no satisfactory answer to “why.” However, the question of “what now” can turn the question of “why” that looks back; to “what now”

that moves a person toward the future reality of heaven together with your child who is now with your Lord. Live with the knowledge that you will be with them in a little while.

## 50 WHY DO WE CARE ABOUT HEARING ABOUT HEAVEN?

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We're all going to die and then step into eternity, and knowing where we're going and looking forward to what we'll be doing gives our life meaning and purpose. This adds to the excitement and reality of our life's destination with God on a perfect earth prepared for us.

There are two mindsets, or mottos, of the way to live your life now:

- 1) Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die. But God said to the rich man in Luke 12:16-21 who'd built bigger barns to store his stuff: ***"You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared for yourself?"***

So, it is with the man who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

Keep in mind: the word "required" is a term used when a loan has become due and payment is required.

- 2) Psalm 90:12 – ***Teach us to number our days that we may present to you a heart of wisdom.*** Everyone will leave this world at some point. God alone will determine how long we'll be on this Earth. When a believing loved one suffers, remember, God determines the "when" that they will transition through death to be with Him.

In addition, a reason we care about learning more about heaven is the fact that relationships last an eternity beyond the brief time we are here on this earth. In a thousand, thousand years from now...you'll still be alive. When we were working we were always reminded to make a plan and your work your plan. What's your long range plan?

Genesis 27:2 – Isaac once said, ***“I am old and I do not know the day of my death.”*** Job 14:5 – ***“A person’s days are determined...God has decreed the number of his months and...set limits he cannot exceed.”*** You will not live any second longer than God has predetermined.

Colossians 3:1-2 – God says, ***“Keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on Earth.”***

Knowing where we will be going and what rewards we’ll receive and that we’ll be serving Christ directly affects how we live today. Knowing our choices make an eternal difference; including our choices of our personal holiness and how we act toward others that affects their personal choices.

In 2 Peter 3:13-14 after saying, ***“we are looking forward to a new heaven and new earth, where righteousness dwells”***, Peter added, ***“So then, dear friends...make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”*** C.S. Lewis said, *“I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country, which I shall not find until after death; I must never let it get turned aside; I must make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others to do the same.”*

Knowing Jesus means we’ll have the opportunity and future to live together on the resurrected world with the Lord we love and the friends and family that we cherish. We will embark on the ultimate adventure in a spectacular new universe. As God the father intended originally, God will walk and talk and have relationships with each of us, his children. Jesus will be the center of all things and we will really live “happily ever after.” That’s why we care about hearing about our final home, Heaven.

## 51 ARE WE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE *STAR WARS* SAGA AND FINAL REBELLION?

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Did you ever wonder why there is always a bad guy and a good guy in our movies and books? Why do we have a desire for fairness, and always want the “white hat” good guy to win in the end of the war, battle or movie?

It was not George Lucas of *Star Wars*’ Fame who first thought of the phrase, “You’re our only hope” (a message sent to Obi Wan by Princess Leia). Good and Evil concepts were not invented by Hollywood, but by God.

After the dead in Christ are raised at his return to Earth, we’ll reign and rule with Him on this planet for a thousand years. At the close of the 1,000 year millennial reign, the devil will be loosed from the abyss and will entice to rebellion those born from the humans that had entered after the tribulation and who have not accepted Christ as their savior. The people born throughout the world during the millennial sets the stage for Satan’s “Final Rebellion.” Every human who is born from the living people who have entered in the millennium must make their individual decision, and live with the consequences, whether to believe, or choose to reject, Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

In Revelation 20:9 fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured those in the rebellion. God will win, and the devil will lose. Wicked people will be resurrected, the Book of Life will be opened, and the day of final judgment will come at the Great White Throne of Judgment.

After the final destruction of the devil and his followers, the earth will be consumed in fire, cleansed and/or made new, and prepared for our eternal habitation. (See the discussion of question 33, Will the Earth be destroyed or renewed?)

2 Peter 3:13 – ***But in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells.*** Heaven,

our home, where we will be co-heirs with Christ, and where we'll be busier and happier in our service to the Lord than we ever imagined.

There is a God and He will be victorious over the rebellion of Satan and his fallen angels. After the last conversion of a believer, whose timing only God knows, we will see the end of the rebellion. From the beginning to the end of the rebellion, God has been, and always will be, in control. God is just and God is victorious. There is no God but the one true God that we serve, today and forever.

## **52 ARE THE HEAVENLY REALMS GEOGRAPHICALLY CLOSE (ALSO SEE QUESTION 33)?**

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The sixth chapter of 2 Kings suggests that, while we are not aware of the presence of the spiritual world and the heavenly realm, they may be close and in another dimension not normally visible. The curtain has been in the past opened to reveal its reality.

2 Kings 6:16 – ***The servant of Elisha looked from the walled city of Dothan one morning and saw countless enemy horses and chariots of the Syrians that had come at night and surrounded the city. He ran to Elisha saying, O Lord, what shall we do? To which the response was, "Don't be afraid. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."***

2 Kings 6:17 – And then Elisha prayed that his servant's eyes might be opened to see the heavenly realities all around him. The Lord answered his request, and the servant saw that ***"The hills were full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."***

## **53 WHAT ARE THE THREE HEAVENS?**

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l) The 1<sup>st</sup> heaven is earth's atmosphere.

- Exodus 20:4 – ***You shall not make any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.***
- II) The 2<sup>nd</sup> heaven is outer space, which starts at 62 miles above sea level includes the planets, stars, and billions of galaxies in the universe.
- Exodus 32:13 – ***Remember, Abraham, Isaac and Israel will be your servants to whom you swear to. They said, “I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed and they shall rule it forever.”***
- III) The 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven is the presence of God, where all Christians immediately go to when they die.
- 2 Corinthians 12:4 – It is sometimes called “Paradise,” a place the thief on the cross went when he died and Paul was later caught up into.
  - Exodus 20:22 – ***And the Lord said to Moses, “This you shall share to the children of Israel, you have seen that I talked with you from heaven.”***
  - Revelation 21:20 – ***...he showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”***
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven will be our eternal future home that includes it’s relocation to the new earth as the New Jerusalem described in Revelation will descend from the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven to the newly created earth; giving us heaven on earth. At this time the Phrase, Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, will become a reality.
- Revelation 21:1 – ***“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first time, heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.”*** Revelation 21:3 – ***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 will be with them, and be their God.***

- The 3rd heaven will literally be “heaven on earth,” where the Old Testament saints and all Christians from Jesus’ time of death until the resurrection will live eternally together with God.

## **54 HOW CAN ALL OLD AND NEW BELIEVERS FIT IN THE NEW EARTH?**

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Revelation 21:2-3 ***“I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven (3<sup>rd</sup> heaven) from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look, God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God.”***

Revelation 21:16 – the capital city on the New Earth is a 1500-mile Height, width and depth. If it is cube shaped, that is 2,350,000 square-mile surface area. New York City in comparison is only 305 square miles.

In one skyscraper in that city, each floor is 12ft high. New Jerusalem at this story height would have 792,000 stories. In Dubai, the tallest building in the world is only 163 stories and 2717 feet tall, which is nothing compared to New Jerusalem’s building--7,920,000 feet tall!

At a 10 foot height per floor there would be 792,000 floors; and each floor would contain 960,000 acres.

Revelation 21:17 – *The thickness of the walls will be 216 feet thick.*

Revelation 21:1 – *“Then I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.”*

The ocean, which we break down into five large ocean basins, covers 71 per cent of the earth’s surface. The space of the oceans holds over 99 percent

of the area that could be inhabited, or over 858,000,000 cubic miles of space.

There have to date been 100 billion people that have lived on earth, and if we assume 20% are believers in New Jerusalem, it will have enough room for 20 billion residents and each individual resident has 38 acres. If God had saved all 100 billion people that have ever lived on the earth, each person would have 7.6 acres. But, we have the entire new earth and the currently uninhabited area of the oceans as there will be no more sea and the climatic conditions will be different without the curse's effects of sin in the universe. There will plenty of room in God's universe as we rule and reign assisting our brother Jesus in managing the family creation and bringing glory to our Father God.

## **55 HOW MANY PEOPLE GO TO HEAVEN OR HELL EVERY DAY?**

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According to United Nations World Population Prospects Report, 7,452 people in the United States die every day, that's 5 people every minute, 310 people every hour, and 2,719,980 people every year that will go to heaven or hell. In the world there are 2 people who die every second.

From Luke 16 we know that once we take our last breath our destiny is set, our destination is determined and our fate is sealed. If our belief in God, His Son and His wrath is real, why would we be reluctant to share the most important thing in this world?

## **56 WHEN DO WE GET OUR GLORIFIED SPIRITUAL BODY?**

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All Christians, including those who died prior to the rapture, as well as those Christians who are alive at the rapture and never experienced death, will receive their resurrection body at the rapture of the church.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 – ***For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout with a voice of the archangel with the trumpet of God,***

***and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with their words.*** 1 Corinthians 15:51-2 – Paul tells us of this instantaneous change: ***“Behold I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”***

Revelation 20:12 – At the end of 1000-year reign, unbelievers will have their bodies resurrected and will face the Great White Throne Judgement.

There is another type of death in scripture that is different than physical death and spiritual death. This is an eternal death, known as the second death. The term second death occurs 4 times in the New Testament.

- 1) Revelation 2:11- ***“Whoever has ears let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.”*** T
- 2) Revelation 20:6 – ***“Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and will reign with Him for a thousand years”***
- 3) Revelation 20:14- ***“Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.”***
- 4) Revelation 21:8 – ***“But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murders, the sexually immoral, those practice magic arts, the idolaters and all the liars- they will be consigned to the firey lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”***

The “first resurrection” is used to describe the time when all believers will receive their new bodies for eternity. According to Revelation 2:11 and 20:6, those who overcome the devil’s tribulation, are holy and have part in the first resurrection, will not experience the second death.

Revelation 2:11 - ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”*** Revelation 20:6 – ***“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”*** The first resurrection does not occur at a single point in time. Instead, different groups of Christians will receive their new bodies at different times in the future.

1 Corinthians 15:22-23 – ***“Since Adam, all will die, but in Christ will all be made alive, but in His own order.”*** “Order” in Greek terminology refers to a military procession, with corps falling in at their appointed time. At death, every Christian’s spirit is immediately in the presence of God, but we do not receive our bodies until our assigned time or order.

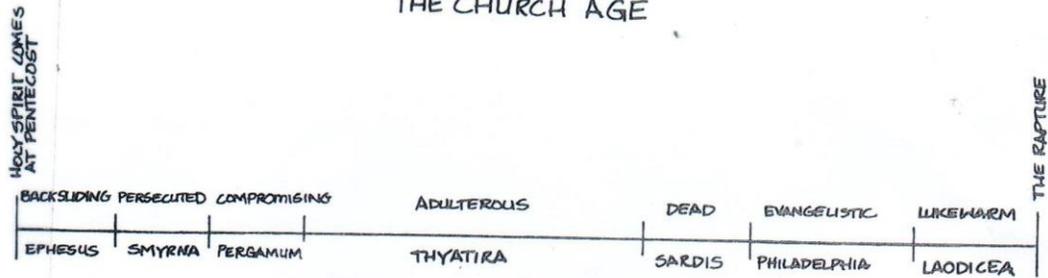
*See the following Charts and Timelines*

### What Happens to a Person after Death<sup>2</sup>

	At Death	Bodily Resurrection	Judgment	Eternal Destination
<b>Old Testament Believer</b>	<p>Paradise/ Abraham's Bosom</p> <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at Christ's Second Coming</p>	<p>Judgment on Earth for Rewards</p>	<p>Heaven</p>
<b>Christian</b>	<p>Christ's Presence</p> <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at the Rapture</p>	<p>Judgment Seat of Christ in Heaven for Rewards</p>	<p>Heaven</p>
<b>Millennial Believer</b>	<p>Christ's Presence</p> <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at the End of the Millennium</p>	<p>Judgment on Earth for Rewards</p>	<p>Heaven</p>
<b>Tribulation Believer</b>	<p>Christ's Presence</p> <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at Christ's Second Coming</p>	<p>Judgment on Earth for Rewards</p>	<p>Heaven</p>
<b>Unbeliever</b>	<p>Sheol/Hades Torment</p> <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at the End of the Millennium</p>	<p>Judgment at the Great White Throne for Sin</p>	<p>Hell/Gehenna/ Lake of Fire</p>

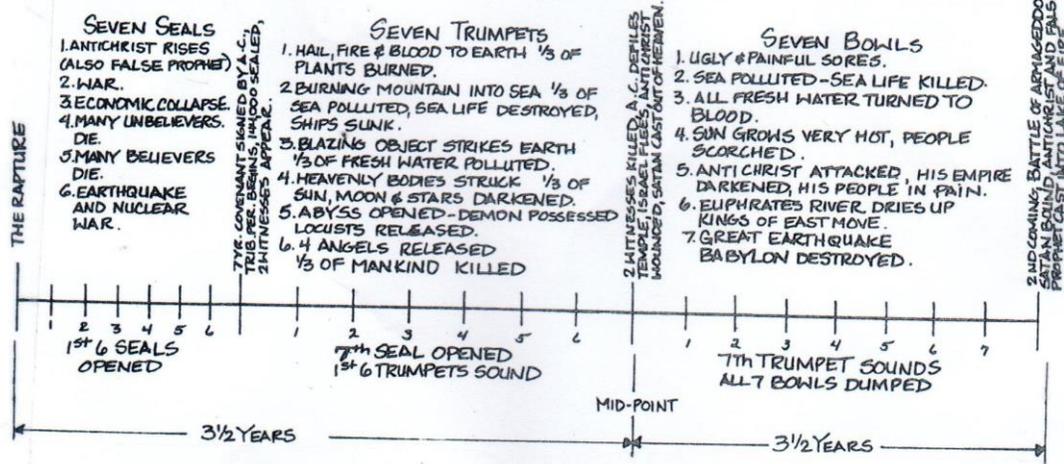
**Time Line #1**

THE CHURCH AGE

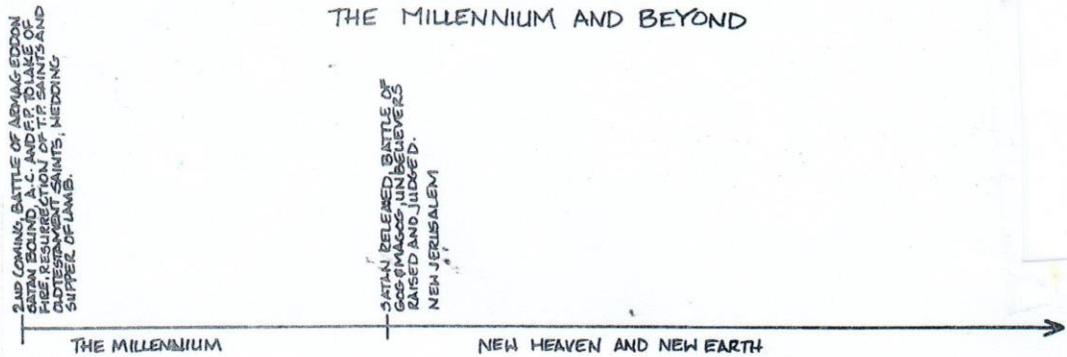


**Time Line #2**

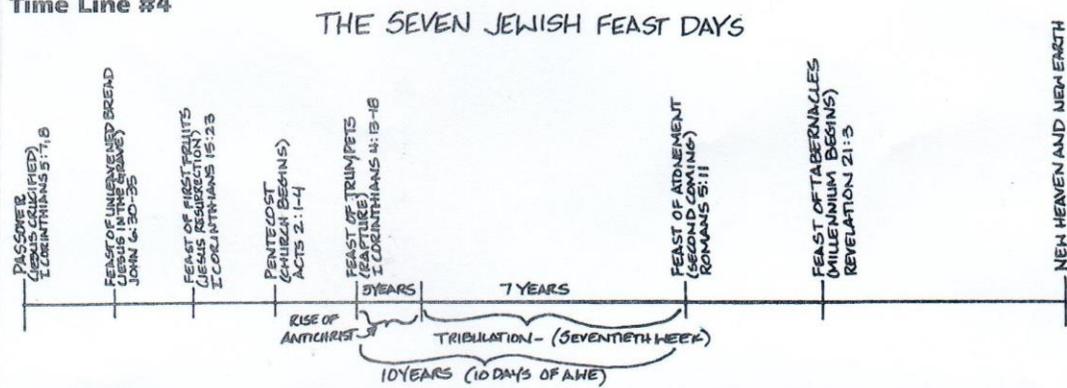
FROM RAPTURE TO THE SECOND COMING



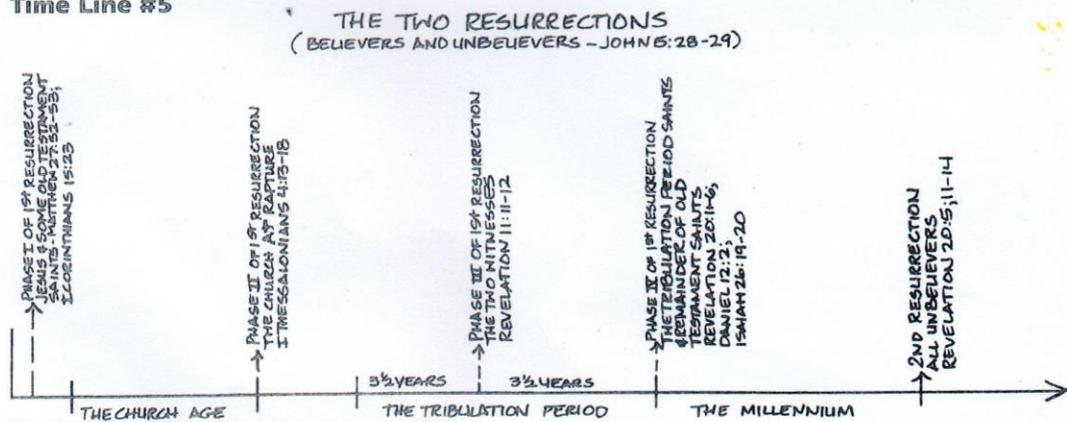
**Time Line #3**



**Time Line #4**



**Time Line #5**



## 57 WHERE DID THE SAINTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT GO WHEN THEY DIED?

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Where did the saints from the Old Testament go when they died? Did they go to heaven? Are there exceptions of people going to heaven instead of going to Hades; or was the part of Hades and the reality of being comforted by Abraham an expression and viewed and considered heaven by them?

Genesis 5:24 and Hebrews 11:5 – Enoch was transported directly to heaven; not to the holding place in Sheol, or Hades, when God took him. (Sheol in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word that in the New Testament the Greek is translated Hades). 2 Kings 2:1, 2:11 – Elijah was taken by a whirlwind to Heaven. They were not saved by obeying the Law of Moses. *Romans 3:20 - "No one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law "*

All believers, whether they lived before or after Christ came, are saved the same way; by faith in God and the death of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament sacrificial system gave them physical touchpoints for placing their faith in God's goodness and mercy. It provided a clear example of a blood sacrifice exchanging one life for another-all pointing to the final sacrifice of Jesus which was yet to come.

People in the Old Testament died placing their faith in things hoped for but not yet seen. Genesis 15:6 - For those who lived before Christ, his payment was "credited" to their account the moment they by faith believed in God's revelation. Abraham lived 2000 years before Christ, yet he believed in the God and His promised salvation, redemption and messiah, and the Lord accounted it to him for righteousness. Genesis 15:6 – ***"And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness."***

The Bible tells us what we need to know to trust Him and His plan to save us; not everything that was ever said and done and believed by others.

How does "accounted" or "credited" work? When you give a credit card to purchase an item, the item is given to you based on the future promise to fully pay the price necessary for purchasing it. Similarly, the believers who believed in the future promise of God's salvation in the messiah were "credited" with righteousness. So where did they go when they died? Jesus made it clear that prior to His death which opened the way to heaven who died before that time no one had gone there. Acts 2:29-32 –

***"Brothers, I can tell you with confidence that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God promised him an oath that He would place one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did His body see decay. God has raised this same Jesus to life, to which we are all witnesses."***

***"No one has ascended up into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man."*** (John 3:13) What did Jesus mean here? We know that Jesus died, ***"Father into your hands, I commit my spirit!"*** And ***having said this he breathed his last"*** (Luke 23:46)

So if they didn't go to heaven when they died, where did they where did they go? There are two terms that refer to the place of the dead: the Hebrew term *Sheol* and the Greek term *Hades*. *Sheol* is mentioned in Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2:27 – for you will not leave my soul in sheol, nor will you allow your holy one to see corruption.

*Hades* is mentioned in Matthew 16:18 – ***"and I also say to you that you are Peter (petra is pebble stone), and on this rock (petro is foundational rock), I will build My church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."*** There were 2 components to *Sheol* (Hebrew)/*Hades* (Greek). Luke 16:19-26 – One called paradise where the righteous reside (Abraham's

bosom) and hades, place of torment where the unrighteous reside. Jesus, who has come from heaven, tells this story to show truths, and He does not call it a parable. This story contains a name of one of the stories' participants, as do none of the parables that Jesus tells. Luke 16 tells us the story of a real rich man and a real beggar man named Lazarus in a real place. *Hades* is also acknowledged in Luke 16:23; ***"And being in torments in Hades we lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom."*** "Abraham's bosom" is a place of comfort that those who died in faith were waiting for the opening to enter heaven and the presence of God. Notice Abraham's bosom was "afar off" but there was the ability to see and converse between the rich man and Abraham.

Psalm 16:10-11, 23:6 – David believed that God would not abandon his soul to sheol but would give him "fullness of joy" in God's presence. He believed he would dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Ecclesiastes 12:7 – According to Solomon, ***"the dust will return to Earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it"***.

Believers go immediately into the presence of Lord through death.. They are alive and aware in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven as they wait for their resurrected body that will be transformed into their glorified body, at the Rapture, and they will be with God in the New Heavens and on New Earth where they will live eternally with God.

Revelation 20:11-15 – Meanwhile, non-believers at death go immediately to Hades, a temporary destination. Hades is not their final destination, but it is where they await resurrection of their bodies for the Great White Throne. Their judgement is here, and they will be thrown into the lake of fire as their names are not written in the book of life. The lake of fire is also referred to as *Gehenna*, the eternal destination of non-believers.

The New Heavens and the New Earth (the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven that is relocated to the New Earth when the City of Jerusalem comes down from heaven and God dwells with His people on it) are the eternal destination for all

believers. 2 Peter 2:9 – ***“The Lord knows how to keep the unrighteous man for the day of Judgment.”***

In both cases, whether a believer or non-believer, the moment we die on this present earth, our decisions are over and our eternal destiny is sealed forever as God honors the free will choices we have made.

When is the second resurrection and Death? Physical death is the separation of the body from the spirit. Spiritual death, the way we were born, is the spiritual separation of each of us from God. All of us are born spiritually dead, separated from God. The Lord said to Adam, ***“But you must not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die”*** (Genesis 2:17). Adam and Eve died spiritually at the time that they sinned- they became different beings than the ones that God originally created and they also began to physically die.

There is a third type of death in scripture that is different from spiritual death and physical death. This is known as eternal death. Eternal death, or the second death, is the eternal separation of a person from God.

Revelation 2:11 - ***“The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.”*** Unless spiritual death is reversed in this life, and one is born again, the result will be eternal death which is an unending separation between the one who rejects Jesus and their creator, God. John 3:16-17 – ***“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whosoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”*** Why is a message so simple that a child can understand it, so continually rejected by many? The only question that will decide your fate in eternity is what you believe about Jesus.

Believers will participate in the first resurrection and are not affected by the second resurrection and second death. *Revelation 20:6 - "Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years."*

See the time Line 5 of the preceding charts and timelines for the pictorial representation of the above information.

Unbelievers will be a part of the second resurrection, which will occur at a single point in time, prior to the great white throne judgment. The final judgement, or the lake of fire, is the time when the second death occurs. *Revelation 20:13-14 - "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hades gave up the dead that were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and hades were thrown into the lake of fire, the second death."*

The second death is reserved for unbelievers. Those who experience death are those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

*Revelation 21:8 - "But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars- their place will be in the fire lake of burning Sulphur. This is the second death"*

If a person dies in a state of spiritual death, they enter eternity separated from God. This is the second death. Once a person has experienced the second death there is no hope for them, it is irreversible.

Just as believers will receive physical resurrected and glorified bodies in which they can enjoy the eternal benefits of the new heaven and new Earth, unbelievers will be resurrected and receive physical bodies to endure the eternal torment from the lake of fire. The judgment is final, conscious, and bodily. The second death is eternal death from which there is no hope. The lake of fire is the final destination of unbelievers. Those who have been temporarily kept in Hades will eventually be placed in the lake of fire as

their eternal judgment after the Great White Throne of Judgment. In Revelation 20:10 we see that those suffering eternally are consciously aware in torment.

The wicked are suffering in a bodily form. John 5:28-29 - ***“Do not marvel at this for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and will come out- those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”*** In Matthew 24:31 at His second coming, Jesus says, ***“And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”***

The elect is the Tribulation saints (believers), the redeemed from both the Old and New Testament periods, and all will reign with Christ during the 1,000 year millennial reign. This is referred to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:2, ***“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?”***, and 2 Timothy 2:11-12 ***“- If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He will also deny us.”***

## **58. WILL EVERYONE FACE GOD’S JUDGEMENT WHEN THEIR LIFE ENDS?**

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Yes. For non-Christians, the judgment is called the great white throne judgment, which results in eternal death.

Revelation 20:11-15 – ***“Then I saw a great white throne and He who sat upon it, from whose presence on Earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades***

***gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged; every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire...and if anyone's name was not found within the Lamb's book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."***

At the bema judgment seat of Christ, believers will receive rewards different from the eternal life they have already been given.

2 Corinthians 5:10 – ***"For we all must appear before the judgement seat of Christ so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."***

Christ has already dealt with our sin on the cross. Our work on Earth since our salvation will be evaluated, and we'll be rewarded according to God's perfect justice.

In 1 Corinthians 3:8-9, we read ***"The one who plants and he one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor"***. For we are God's workers, in God's field, and God's the master who will reward his laborers. Our motives are known by God, and though we don't all share the same abilities, we'll each be judged according to our faithful response to the gifts and the opportunities given to us by God.

Matthew 5:12 – Jesus said, ***"rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven."*** 2 Timothy 4:7-8 - Paul wrote to Timothy, ***"I have fought the good fight ... There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will give to me on that day, and not to me only but to all who have loved his appearing."***

Revelations 22:12 - Jesus said, ***"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what He has done."***

Our motivation is to hear from our Lord, "well done, good and faithful servant." Matthew 25:23 – ***"Well Done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many***

**things. Come and share your master's happiness!"** Christians also face God's judgment at the end of their life on Earth. This judgment, or evaluation, is referred to as the Bema Judgment seat of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:10 – **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one (believer) may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad"** (Have they used the opportunities and abilities that God has given each to store up treasures that will last or will they have hay and stubble that will be burnt up)? The Christians' judgment is one of evaluation and commendation; and not one of unbeliever's condemnation leading to eternal hell. The commendation by God and the rewards will impact the kind of responsibilities in heaven they will experience.

## **59 HOW BRIEF IS YOUR LIFE?**

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Why study death, life beyond death, heaven, and hell? A large part of the Bible deals with the afterlife and final state of humanity. When a person understands there is a continuation of our lives they see their life from an eternal perspective, then making daily decisions of how they live in light of where they will spend eternity is easier to do with the eternal perspective.

Some people view death only like a condemned person on death row, and every death they see is a forecast of what waits for them, and all they can do is wait fearfully for their own death. Others who are believers, who have lost loved ones, gain comfort and encouragement knowing that death is not the end, but only a pause and they will be reunited with their loved ones, who also have believed and trusted Jesus as their Savior.

God told Ezekiel in 33:11, **"As surely as I live declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn, from your evil ways! Why will you die?"** Knowing it is God's will that everyone repent and be saved from hell, but rather that we spend eternity with him in Heaven, gives

us both motivation and a sense of compassion and urgency to talk to those who do not know the Lord. God uses us to save them from an eternity of torment.

Psalm 90:10-12 – ***“Soon our years disappear, and we are gone. Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are, help us to spend them as we should.”*** James 4:14 – ***“you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.”***

Psalm 39:4-5 – David said, ***“Show me, Lord, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is. You have made my days a mere handbreath; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Everyone is but a breath, even those who seem secure.”*** Hebrews 9:27 – ***“He has appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”*** Christians and non-Christians will each face God’s judgment when we arrive at the end of our lives on this earth.

Believers who accept Christ’s gift of salvation and nonbelievers who reject Christ, will both be judged—one for rewards and the other for sins not forgiven by the blood of Jesus.

## **60 WHY IS DEATH SO UNFAMILIAR TO US NOW?**

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When is the last time you thought of the fact that you will physically die? Death is a part of life as much as birth, eating and sleeping.

When people die today, it is more likely than not in a medical facility. When people die today, they don’t see it or even think about it as a normal part of life. Death today occurs in a carefully managed, sanitized place where professionals and processes make the decisions to stop giving care. We can’t avoid death and its effects, and we shouldn’t avoid talking about it either.

Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, death was a public, not private event. The dying person often knew when they were dying and there was no blind faith that medicine would make a difference and offer an excuse for facing the reality of their death. The death bed was a public place and parents, friends and neighbors were present, including children. Death was a common part of life.

On their way to worship Sundays, they usually passed through a graveyard full of gravestones of loved ones and served as a reminder to them that they too would be die and be lying there in time. Today, however, we think death is like an accident... something that happens to everyone else.

Death tells us all that we are not indispensable, nor are we too important to die. The serpent in Genesis 3:3-4 reverses God's words by saying, "*you will not surely die*"...you can't die, you're too important to die. But remember, Satan is the father of all lies.

In John 3:16 John tells us that you are important enough "***that God gave his only Son so that if you could believe in Him, and you will not perish but have eternal life***".

Death is not the beginning of the end of our life. Death is the end of the beginning of our life.

The reality of death was easier in our earlier history to understand as a part of life experienced by all. In the 1600's the average couple would give birth to 9 children, but 3 would die before age 21. When you got married, you were expected to bury your children. When a child got a fever, it could mean death for everyone else in your family.

In the late 1800's, 80% of people died before the age of 70, and the average life expectancy was in the late 30s. By the 1980s, only 17 percent of deaths occurred in the home.

In previous centuries, death happened where life happened. Death by disease was an agonizing process that occurred to someone you loved,

perhaps in the room you slept, in a place you would often see. Now, death has shifted to an institution that people that most people rarely visit, where our loved ones are cut off from all the things that matter to them in life.

Today, it is possible to live into adulthood, even most of your life, without having a personal up-close encounter with death. Patients and doctors behave as if death, like a disease, can be eliminated. Doctors resist letting go as death to them will always seem like a failure; not the inevitable end to every human life. Medicare devotes 25% of its spending time to the 5 percent of patients who are in their final year of life, and most of that money for care in the last couple of months.

Our lives are full of transitions, and death is our final transition here on earth. No matter who we think we are, we can't get to heaven without dying. 1 Corinthians 15:50 – ***"I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable."*** Flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God and death provides the necessary transition and change to bodies that are suited for heaven.

As a believer, be honest about your death and enjoy each day's opportunities to love, be loved and invite others to join you in a life with God forever. Remember death's is transition leads to a life of that we were created for.

## **61 UNTIL GOD TAKES US HOME TO HEAVEN, HOW DO WE REFLECT HIS LOVE?**

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As we submit our lives to Jesus, His Holy Spirit changes us from within allowing our mind to lead us to Godly actions:

Matthew 25:35-36 – ***"I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you***

***came to visit me". Romans 12:1-2 – "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be conformed to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God."***

Romans 8:29 – ***"We are in the process of being conformed to the likeness of His Son"***. We mature by feeding on God's Word, which will have a purifying effect on our heart, mind and activities. God wants everyone to come to repentance and will use you to reach others, reflecting His love to others and bringing glory to God.

## **62 WHY HASN'T JESUS RETURNED?**

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John 9:4 – Jesus said, ***"as long as it is day, we must do the work of He who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work."***

John 15:8 – We are the church, and our mission is stated by Jesus: ***"By this my father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."***

2 Peter 3:9 – ***"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."***

As long as God has us on this earth, God's purpose is for us to bring honor and glory to Him by the way we live and by the way we work and win souls for His kingdom. We are called to be ambassadors and witnesses for Christ to a confused world that is searching for all the wrong things. God wants everyone to have the opportunity to know Christ through repentance and faith in Him; and He uses us to accomplish His will.

## 63 WHAT DO ANGELS DO TODAY?

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Hebrew 1:14 – Angels are “***ministering spirits sent to save those who will inherit salvation.***”

Hebrew 13:2 – “***Some people have entertained angels without knowing it.***”

Psalms 91:11 – “***He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.***”

Angels are ministering spirits, and are around us when we don't see them, and they are guardian angels sent by God to protect us.

## 64 WILL WE SEE, EAT, AND SLEEP, ETC. IN HEAVEN ?

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See answer for question 15.

## 65 TIME CONCEPT IN HEAVEN?

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See answer for question 27.

## 66 WILL WE HAVE FREE WILL IN HEAVEN?

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We will retain our abilities of free will when we are in Heaven. We will be forever grateful to God for his grace and mercy in loving us and daily be amazed as God reveals the intricate knowledge of how he participated in our lives, guiding, protecting and allowing us to be a part of His divine appointments.

We will choose of our free will to love the Lord and will eagerly serve him, bringing the glory to God in everything we do as we rule and reign in his kingdom throughout the universe with Jesus.

God created the both the angels and humans with the power of free will to make decisions, and he will honor the choices that we make.

Satan and the angels were also created and had the reason, freedom and free will in Heaven to make their decisions. Just as each person uses their free will in making their decision to choose to serve God today, or choose to rebel against God today, in the past one-third of the angels used their free will choice to follow and serve Satan who had also used his free will in making the decision to rebel against God.

In Revelation 12:9 we read, ***“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the devil, and Satan who deceives the whole world; he was cast out to the earth with him.”***

God is not threatened by the power of free will that He has given to His creation.

## **67 HOW DOES THE RESURRECTED BODY HAPPEN IF WE'RE CREMATED?**

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Genesis 3:19 - ***“In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken: for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”*** The same elements that make up the dust, are also the same elements of the human body.

1 Corinthians 15:35, 50-53 ***“But someone will say, how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.” “For this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption....We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed...the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.”***

At the resurrection it will not make any difference if the body is buried or cremated. God created us and has the DNA formula for our existing bodies and will reconstruct us as he did when he formed us in our mother's womb. Psalm 139:13 ***“For you created my inmost parts; you knit me together in***

***my mother's womb.***” The new body will be like the old but radically changed and glorified as was the exalted body of Christ. Our spiritual body will never experience weakness, suffering or death. As we serve as our Lord’s assistants in the millennial reign and on the new earth our bodies will have capabilities that we do not yet possess. Philippians 3:20-21 - ***“For our citizenship is in Heaven from which we also eagerly await for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ- who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to his glorious body according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”***

There are examples of cremation in the bible. Joshua 7:25 ***“And Joshua said, why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day. So all Israel stoned him with stones and they burned them with fire after they stoned them with stones.”*** 2 Kings 23:20 ***“He executed all the priests of the high places who were on the altars, and burned men’s bones on them and he returned to Jerusalem.”*** 1 Samuel 31:12 ***“All the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan and they came to Jabesh and burned them there.”***

## **68 ARE THOSE IN HEAVEN SEEING THE HEARTACHE ON EARTH?**

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Do people who have died and are in Heaven now, know what is going on and will they be sad for their family who have not yet believed in the lord?

There are two viewpoints on answering this question:

1. We will not remember those who are unrighteous

Job 24:19-20 - ***“As drought and heat consume the snow that withers, so the grave consumes those who have sinned. He should be remembered no more.”***

Psalms 9:6 - ***“Even the memories of our enemies have perished.”***

Psalms 112:6 - ***“The righteous will be remembered forever”***(Inferring that the unrighteous are not remembered?) Isaiah 65:17 - ***“I’m about***

***to bring new heavens and a new earth. The former things shall not be remembered or come to mind."***

2. Those in Heaven know what is going on in the earth.

Revelation 6:9-11 – The martyrs ***"who had been slain called out in a loud voice, How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood...they were told to wait a little while longer."*** They remembered their treatment and death they had experienced on earth and knew that they had not yet been avenged on earth.

The bible assures us that Heaven is a place of absolute happiness and joy and peace. Ephesians 1:3 ***"Praise be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."*** Those who have already entered into heaven may be aware of events on earth.

Hebrews 12:1 pictures life as a great arena, with those who have gone before us cheering us on our daily spiritual struggles. In Luke 15:10 ***"There is rejoicing in the presence of angels when a sinner repents."*** Notice the rejoicing is not by angels but by those people in heaven who are in the presence of the angels.

Once Jesus' appearance was changed and his heavenly glory shone through, Moses and Elijah spoke with him about the events on earth (Luke 9:30-31).

Does this mean people in Heaven are sad when evil seems to be winning? No. They see the whole picture in Heaven, whereas, we on earth see a partial picture. They know God is trustworthy and mighty and is in control. The key to heaven is not ignorance but perspective. They know even in the middle of life's heartaches and trials, God is still working behind the earthly scenes. They know that Satan is defeated and someday all evil will be destroyed and Christ will rule in perfect justice and perfect peace. Being in

heaven they see through a different paradigm or perspective that we on earth now see through. In Luke 16, Abraham knew that the rich man was suffering in Hades and the rich man knew that Lazarus was experiencing comfort in Heaven.

## **69 IF I HAVE A PET THAT I DEARLY LOVE, WILL IT BE WITH ME IN HEAVEN?**

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Additionally see the answer on question 22.

Gen 9:9-10 - ***"I now establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you- the birds, the livestock and all of the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you- every living creature on earth."***

Between Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 that discuss the new earth, there is Isaiah 65:25, that tells us the wolf and the lamb will feed together and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but the food of the serpent will be dust. Animals are on the new earth with us.

Revelation 21:5 – Christ proclaims from his throne on the new earth: ***Behold I make all things new.*** The emphasis is not on making new things, but in making old things new. Christ is saying all the things that I originally made, I will make new again so that the original plan of God will be realized and he will then dwell with and communicate in relationships with his creation just as he originally intended. All things, includes the animals.

The whole earth and universe fell when Adam sinned. When the redemption is complete all creation will be delivered. God could choose to create new animals, bring animals back to life through re-creation, or a combination of both. We know whatever God does, we will be the happiest that we have ever been...and loved as we have never yet been loved, totally and forever.

## 70 DOES A CHASM EXIST BETWEEN HELL AND EARTH?

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As a chasm exists between heaven and hell, does a chasm exist between hell and earth, and can demons and dead spirits go between and visit humans?

Should we pray for and pray to the dead? Is there any chance that those on earth can help anyone after they are dead?

First, let's look at some information about Satan and his angels. Satan and his demons are currently not in Hell; they are roaming the earth and they have access to heaven. Peter says that **Satan "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"** (1 Peter 5:8).

In the beginning of Job, Satan comes before God in the heavenly realms: Job 1:6-7 – **"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."**

These pictures of Satan are not those of a powerful ruler, a master of hell, but rather a wanderer without a home. The bible teaches that God has power over all of His creation, including heaven and hell. In Revelation 1:17-18, Jesus says, **"Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys to death and Hades."** Satan is not the master of hell, but God is.

From Matthew 25:41, we see that hell was created by God as a place of everlasting torment for Satan and his demons. It also is the place of judgment's punishment for those people who have chosen to follow the rejection of His authority as Satan did when he rebelled against God.

From Luke 16 we learn that there is no one that can pass from the location of the unrighteous to the location of the righteous. Praying for the dead

gives a false hope to people and diverts the prayers from the living that our prayers should be focused. The bible tells us that our fate is determined in our life on the present earth.

Spiritism is the belief that the living can contact the dead. Through a person, the living are able to speak to someone in the unseen world.

Those who practiced this were condemned in Exodus 22:18 – ***“You shall not permit a sorceress to live.”***

Leviticus 19:26 ***“Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits, do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.”*** There is a possibility that lying spirits will deceive you. 1 Timothy 4:1- ***“Now in the later times some will renounce the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons.”***

The bible is clear that the living should not attempt to contact the dead. In ancient Israel those who practiced such things were put to death. Talking to the dead relies on supernatural guidance that comes from another source than God and leads people from the living God.

Leviticus 19:26,31 and 20:6,27- ***“You shall not eat anything with blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying...Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them, I am the Lord your God...And the person who turns after mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set my face against that person and cut him off from his people...A man or a woman who is a medium or a wizard shall be put to death, their blood is upon them.”***

*Did you ever wonder why Satan and demons care about you?*

Satan hates God and hates you because God loves you. There is only one God and Satan is no match with the power of God; but, he can hurt and

deflect from you from God's will. Satan knows that God's humans were created in God's image and that God loves them so much. Satan has a terrible plan for your life. If he cannot succeed in robbing you of eternal life with God, he will do everything in his power to deprive you of the joy, influence and rewards that come from God for serving Him in this life. Satan is a created angel and can't be more than one place at a time, and he has delegated much of his work to his demons who will distract, discourage, deflect and deceive you from loving and obeying God's will in your life.

### *Can a Christian be possessed by demons?*

Jesus taught us in Matthew 6:31, "**Father, deliver us from the Evil One**", and by saying that, Jesus indicated that the devil is not a figment of our imagination. Satan is your real adversary. To win in any battle you must first know your enemy and his tactics; and then, we can recognize and prepare to fight and defeat him. "If you know the enemy, and know yourself, you need not fear the results of a hundred battles"(Sun Tzu, The Art of Warfare).

Satan's cleverest tactic is to make you believe that he doesn't really exist. Another successful tactic is to think he is only in hell. He will be in Hell one day, but he's not there today. Matthew 25:41- "**Then He will say also to them on the left hand, depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.**" 1Pet 5:8 - "**Be aware and vigilant because your enemy, the devil, is as a lion walking about seeking whom he may devour.**"

Satan plants doubt of God's word, and fear of the unknown, in the battleground of our minds. He gets our thinking diverted to where we are not seeing life correctly through the prism of God's word and God's will; but instead are seeing life through our selfish desires.

Our weapon is the words of God's word and prayers to our God whom we represent. The devil has no anti-prayer missiles that he can use to shoot down our prayers! Paul mentioned that he was once buffeted by a messenger of Satan. Never once are we told that a Christian can be possessed by a demon. Paul never once made a reference when he was addressing behavior in a Christian mentioned that bad behavior could be caused by demonic activity. If demon possession was ever a possibility, the writers of the New Testament would have mentioned it. We are possessed by the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor 6:19- **"Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit"**. The Spirit of God is literally living in you. This means, God's strength, God's power, God's Spirit, God's character, grace, wisdom are living in you. 1John 4:4 - **"Greater Is He that is in you, than he that is within the world."**

## **71 WILL WE HAVE A TEMPORARY BODY?**

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Will we have a temporary body in the intermediate, or present, Heaven. From the time believers die until they return with Christ at the rapture, when He sets up His kingdom, is there an intermediate body that they will be in when they are with the Lord? We know from Luke 16 that there will be an awareness and consciousness state of being after we die. There are three main views of what the form of this state will consist of:

### 1. Disembodied Spirit

The believer is a conscious spirit in their intermediate temporary state until they receive their glorified body at the resurrection when the rapture occurs. The righteous will receive their bodies sometime in the future.

The disembodied state is far better than living in this body because they are with Christ. Christ was the first to receive a resurrection body and we know we will receive one at the rapture. I Corinthians 15:20, 23 – **"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those**

***who have died...But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ."***

## 2. Glorified Body

The believer receives their glorified body at the time of their death and there is no waiting period for a general resurrection of the dead. This position is supported by Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 5:1 – ***"For we know that, if the earthly tent that we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."***

The problem with this view is that it contradicts 1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17– ***"For the Lord himself will come down from Heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."*** It also contradicts 1 Corinthians 15:51– ***"Listen, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we all be changed- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortality with the immortality."***

The time of the new bodies for the believers that the old bodies of believers will be changed into will occur when Christ returns at the rapture, not before he returns.

## 3. Intermediate Temporary Body

The believer has a temporary body in the intermediate state of time in which the spirit and soul (consciousness) of the believer exists between

physical death and the resurrection of the body and receipt of their glorified body. Though the Bible does not have a whole lot to say concerning the intermediate state of the believer there are some basic conclusions we can make.

- i. The spirits of departed believers are with the Lord. ***"Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it."*** (Ecclesiastes 12:7)
- ii. Hebrews 12:23 - ***"and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect"***
- iii. At death, the spirit of the believer enters immediately into Christ's presence. Jesus promised the dying thief on the cross that he would be with Him immediately after death. ***"And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).***
- iv. Paul taught in 2 Corinthians 5:1, 2, and 8 that believers would be in Christ's presence upon their death. ***"For we know that if our earthly house, this tent is destroyed, we have a building from god, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed, we shall not be found naked...We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord"***. Paul said in Philippians 1:23 that his death would be far better for him than remaining alive because he would be in the presence of Christ. ***"For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better"***
- v. Jesus talked in John 17:24 about believers being with Him in the next world. ***"Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me,***

***may be with Me where I am, to see My glory, which You have given Me before the foundation of the world"***

- vi. Another indication that the believing dead go immediately to be with Christ is upon his death, the martyr Stephen called upon Jesus to receive his spirit in Acts 7:55, 56, 59 - ***"And he (Stephen), being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God! And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"***. The usual picture is Jesus sitting on the right hand of God the Father. But when Stephen was about to die, Jesus stood to welcome Stephen into God's presence.
- vii. Though Christians who die go to be with the Lord, the intermediate state is not the place they receive their resurrection body. Final rewards will occur after the resurrection which is still future.
- viii. Believers have an awareness after death. Jesus told the religious leaders of his day that God is the God of the living as He reminded them of what God said to Moses. ***"I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"*** (Matthew 22:32)
- ix. When the beggar Lazarus died the scripture indicates a physicality, ***"So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. And the rich man died and he was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side"*** (Luke 16:22, 23). Paul also told us in 1Thessalonians 5:10 ,that believers will always be with the Lord. ***"Whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."***

- x. The bible only reveals a limited amount of information about what goes on in the presence of the Lord. Paul wrote of his experience, ***"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body, I do not know- God knows. And I know that this man- whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows - was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that people are not permitted to tell."***(2 Corinthians 12:2-4). If we knew exactly how wonderful it was, we probably would not be content to remain on the earth, following God's will and God's plan to reach others to join us in heaven.

We understand from the following statement of Paul. ***"For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life"*** (2 Corinthians 5:4). Paul's desire was to be clothed with a body, not to be in a spirit without a body. The three step process would be an earthly body, a temporary body, and then a glorified body at the resurrection when Christ raptures the church.

While it is not clear that there will be an intermediate, temporary body, our main concern is with the ultimate destiny of unbelievers and believers. Jesus said in 1 John 5:29, ***"For the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice and will come out-those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation."***

Although believers have a natural curiosity about the intermediate state, scripture focuses us on the time when Christ will return for His church at the rapture and will return again to earth with believers. At that time He will raise and judge the dead and set up His kingdom.

## 72 WHAT IS THE WHITE STONE THAT WE RECEIVE IN HEAVEN?

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Revelation 2:17 – ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him whom overcomes I will give some of the manna to eat. I will give him a white stone, and on the stone will be a new name written which no one knows except Him who receives it.”***

Revelation 3:12 – ***“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the Temple of God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God. And I will write on him my new name.”***

Revelation 2:7 – ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”***

He who overcomes, is all Christians as we see in 1 John 5:5, 11 – ***“Who is he who overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” “And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”***

In ancient Greece jury members would cast a white stone to signify acquittal and a black stone to proclaim the guilt of the defendant. Romans would use objects, called “Tessera”, as tokens which conveyed special privileges to its owner such as the admittance to events in the arena. Romans would also as a custom give a white stone to the victors of athletic games. The name of the winner would be inscribed on the white stone and served as their “ticket” to the special awards ceremony. The word “white” in revelation 2:17 is “leukos” and can also mean “brilliant, bright”, as a precious stone or diamond.

The new name will be a personal message from Christ to his believers that He loves, and it will be so personal that only the person who receives it will know what it is. Will the new name that Christ gives us, as the believing overcomers, be our name, or Christ's name?

The Lord will give each one a name chosen by Himself that will be a special communication and fellowship known by the giver and the receiver, a name reflecting our service for Him in this world and the world to come. At the moment we see Christ, whatever we may have called Him and understood by that name will be pale in the comparison of the reality of what we see, and by which we will forever know Him. The intimacy that we knew in marriage upon earth is but a shadow of the intimacy that we as the bride of Christ will have with Jesus as we wear and bear His name forever.

### **73 DOES SATAN HAVE ACCESS TO HEAVEN NOW?**

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Does Satan have access to heaven now? Why does God allow him access? Who are the sons of God appearing to God in heaven in Job 1:6?

The term sons of God (ben elohim) is used only in Job and Genesis 6. The term is a reference to the angelic realm and they are angels God created, including Satan himself who was the highest angel. We read of Satan's origins in Ezekiel 28:12-16. He was created to be the "covering cherub" guarding the mercy seat of the Heavenly tabernacle until he sinned and was cast out of the tabernacle. Satan still has access to the throne room of God until a time in Revelation 12. In the book of Job we see Satan visiting the throne room at times when the entire assembly of the sons of God (angels) are present (Job 2:1).

Notice in Job 1, Satan stood before God to give account of himself. God initiated the meeting, God led the proceedings, and God remained in

absolute control. The result was that Satan's power was limited and God was glorified.

Why does God permit Satan access to the throne? Revelation 12:7-12 gives us an answer: ***“And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and one-third of angels waged war, but they were not strong enough to win, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. For this reason rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having a great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.”***

Revelation 12 describes a moment in the future, in the middle of the seven year tribulation on earth, when the Lord will finally and forever bar Satan and his demons from access to the heavenly throne room. This will be exactly three and one-half years before Christ's second coming to the earth. The expulsion of Satan means terrible things for the inhabitants of the earth, because Satan understands that he has little time remaining before Christ's return to earth.

In the last 3-1/2 years of the tribulation Satan becomes enraged and takes his vengeance out on the people of earth in the most horrible turmoil ever that has existed on earth. Since the Lord knows that this will be the result of his being banned from heaven, the Lord mercifully delays this moment until the end of this age.

God has delayed provoking and expelling Satan from having access to Him in heaven in order to show mercy to mankind. He permits Satan access now; but here will be a time the Lord will judge Satan as mentioned in Revelation 20:7-10 as shown above.

## **74 DOES SATAN KNOW THE PLAN OF GOD?**

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To understand Satan's work, we have to remember God is always in control of all things, including Satan's actions. From Job, we see that Satan cannot act to cause harm without God's permission and allowance. Secondly, Satan is a created being, so he is limited by his created nature and in his capabilities. As a fallen angel, Satan is a prisoner of his own sinful nature, leaving him unable to understand God's word or act in any other manner than opposing God's will.

Satan does not understand the plans or purposes of God beyond a limited degree. In a similar manner one of the reasons Jesus taught through parables was to obscure interpretations to those to whom it was not opened for them to understand. This included along with the Pharisees and those who attempted to trap him; Satan and his demons. Only those God grants through the Holy Spirit the ability to understand the scriptures will know the future.

God is preventing Satan from taking steps too early, in keeping with God's timing. For example, Satan would prefer to raise up an antichrist at any time, but God is restraining Satan until the church has been removed from the earth at the rapture, as Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-10. Satan's plans to disrupt creation are managed by the Lord to ensure that it falls within God's timing and purposes.

## 75 WHERE DID JESUS GO WHEN HE DIED?

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There are questions that we wonder about concerning Jesus' activities after he was placed in the tomb.

1. Does John 3:13 mean that no one went to Heaven before Jesus?
2. In Ephesians 4:7-10, Did Jesus descend into Hell?
3. Did Jesus preach to the dead?

### 1. Does John 3:13 mean that no one went to Heaven before Jesus?

In John 3:13 Jesus says to Nicodemus, "**No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man.**" This verse is often misunderstood. For a proper meaning of scripture it must be kept in context. In verses 10-12 of John 3, we see Jesus is talking about His authority and the validity of His teaching. Jesus tells Nicodemus that He has been teaching what he knows from firsthand knowledge. "**We speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen.**" (John 3:11). Then we have verse 13, "**No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man.**" Jesus explains why he is uniquely qualified to teach about heaven and the kingdom of God- namely, because he alone came down from heaven and possesses the knowledge of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus alone has seen the Father, and he alone is qualified to declare God to make Him known. John 1:18 – "**No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, has declared Him.**"

Jesus is saying in John 3:13, none of your earthly teachers can really teach you about heaven, because none of them have actually been there. However, I have come to you from heaven, and no one has ever gone to

heaven and returned; but the Son of man has come down from heaven and can authoritatively speak about heavenly things.

He was not teaching that no one had ever before gone to heaven before. Enoch and Elijah had been taken there without dying. Jesus was teaching that of all of the rabbis, he had the best credentials and with his direct contact he is the expert on the subject.

## 2. In Ephesians 4:7-10, Did Jesus descend into Hell?

What happened to a person who died prior to the death and resurrection of Jesus? The soul went to Sheol and his body saw corruption and decay. In Acts 2:29-31, Peter tells us that David, writing in Psalm 16:10 foresaw the resurrection of Christ, ***“that he was not abandoned to Hades (that is, his soul wasn’t), nor did his flesh see corruption”***.

Prior to Jesus’ death, souls normally went to Sheol (Hebrew), or Hades (Greek), and bodies (flesh) decayed. We are all familiar with the reality of our bodies decaying after death, but the concept of our soul’s existence is more remote to us.

Where did Jesus tell the thief on the cross that he would with him at? Luke 23:43 does not say that Jesus would be in the presence of God; it says that he would be with him in paradise. Based on Luke 16, it seems likely that the repentant thief would be at Abraham’s side, a place of comfort and rest for the righteous dead which Jesus calls “Paradise.” Jesus had confidence that God would raise him to eternal life as David said in Psalm 49:5 and Psalm 86:13.

Psalm 49:15 – ***“But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me.”*** Psalm 86:13 – ***“For great is your mercy toward me, and you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.”***

Following his death for sin, Jesus journeys to Hades and liberates Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, John the Baptist, and the rest of the Old Testament

faithful that have been waiting there, not having received what was promised, that their spirits would be made perfect along with the saints of the new covenant (Hebrews 11:39-40, 12:22-24).

Hebrews 11:39-40– ***“And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.”***

Hebrews 12:22-24– ***“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”***

Now, in the church age, when the righteous die, they aren't just carried by angels to Abraham's bosom; now they depart to be with Christ, which is far better. Philippians 1:23 –***“For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”***

The wicked, however, remain in Hades in torment, until the judgment, when Hades gives up the dead who dwell there, and they are judged according to their deeds, in the books, and then Death and Hades are thrown into Hell, into the lake of fire as mentioned in Revelation 20:13-15.

### 3. Did Jesus preach to the dead?

Some believe that Christ descended into hell where he preached to the damned and many were saved and Christ led them out of hell at his resurrection and into heaven at his ascension. They point to Matthew 27:51-53 as those that were resurrected. They also point to 1 Peter 3:19 – ***“by whom he also went and preached to the spirits in prison”***. But the

next verse tells us more about who these prisoners were; ***“who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is eight souls were saved through water.”***

Colossians 2:15 – ***“Having disarmed the principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. While his body was dead, his spirit went to the abyss and announced his victory over sin, Satan, death and sin.”***

In Matthew 27:52 – ***“and the graves were opened; and many of the bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised”***, we see that the people who were raised were saints before they had fallen asleep (died). Not people who were unbelievers who had died.

## **76 WHO WILL THE RESIDENTS OF NEW JERUSALEM BE?**

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Will only the church be the inhabitants of New Jerusalem?

Revelation 3:12-13 – ***He who overcomes, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven from my God. And I will write on him my new name.*** The “Pillars” are believers will enjoy an unshakable, eternal, secure place in the presence of God. ***“Write on him the name of my God”*** - In biblical times one’s name spoke of his character. Writing His name on us speaks of imprinting His character on us and identifying us as belonging to him. Write on him a new Name - At the moment we see Christ he will give us a new personal name that we will eternally know him. The church will be citizens of New Jerusalem and will have a special relationship with Jesus.

Name of New Jerusalem – The capital city of New Jerusalem indicates that the overcomers will enjoy an eternal citizenship in New Jerusalem.

Overcomers are Christians. Revelation 2:7 - ***“He who has an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise.”*** | John 5:5 – ***“Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”***

In Revelation 21:2 – 22:5 it seems that at this point in the chronology of Revelation that the Old Testament Saints, Tribulation Saints, and the Millennial Saints will be incorporated into the ultimate redeemed bride and will dwell in the city of New Jerusalem. The consummation of the plan of God in Christ and the New Jerusalem coming down to earth to allow God and redeemed mankind to dwell forever with him.

Hebrews 11:10 and 11:16–***“For he (Abraham) waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” “But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He has prepared for them a city.”*** The city, occupied by all believing saints is called by the bride and all the saints will be the bride that God has provided for his Son, and they will dwell with him eternally bringing glory to God forever and forever.

One possibility is that the church will be the inhabitants of New Jerusalem, another is that it will be the believers of the Jewish nation, and another will be all of the believers; Old Testament, the church and the tribulation and millennial saints. All believers in eternity will dissolve into the people of God and will have access to the holy city but it cannot be emphatically stated who is excluded from living there.

## 77 IF GOD KNEW THE FALL WAS GOING TO HAPPEN WHY DID HE CREATE?

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If God knew the fall was going to happen, that Satan would rebel and Adam and Eve would sin, why did he create them?

We've have all wondered, *"Why were we created? Why are we here?"* If God knows all things and God is not surprised by anything, then why did He create everyone? **"God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything"** (1 John 3:20).

Since God knew Satan would successfully tempt Adam and Eve, why did he create them with the ability to sin?

Let's see what we know:

1. God is the only perfect being. Romans 3:4- **"Let God be true though everyone were a liar."** Every created living person, including humans and angels, has the ability to choose to sin; remember, one-third of the angels chose to follow Satan in his rebellion against God.
2. God can use even sin as part of His perfect, sovereign, divine plan. Though sin displeases God, and He is not the author of it, the curse of sin that began in the Garden of Eden was the reason that sin entered into the world. Sin revealed the necessity of a Savior who would conquer both sin and death. This victory over sin and death came through Jesus Christ, as Romans 8:2 teaches, **"For the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death."**
3. God created humans with the freedom of choice. God could have chosen other alternatives; such as, creating people without the ability to make choices, or people that could not make bad choices, or not to make people at all. People without the ability and free will to

choose, would have created a robotic type of relationship that would not reflect the Love of God and the plan of God for His creation. Instead, God created people with the ability to make choices both in their life, and for their life, including decisions that could and would be right or wrong, as part of His sovereign plan for creation. Isaiah 55:8 – ***“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, declares the LORD.”*** Our understanding cannot completely comprehend the thoughts and ways in which God’s plan and our human choices work together; yet Scripture reveals both of these facts to be true. God’s perfect plan continues to move forward despite human sin.

4. God created Adam and Eve with the ability to make a choice to sin or not, in order to give them the choice of trusting Him by obedience of His rule. By their choices they would prove whether they loved Him or not. Only a creation that loved would be able to return a creator’s love for them, and this would bring God glory. God’s glory will be displayed at the end of time, once the curse is ended and the effects on all creation have been removed. Revelation 21 and 22 shows us that the curse of sin is not permanent for those who believe in Christ, but will be removed when we are in God’s presence forever in Heaven.
  - i. ***“For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*** (2 Corinthians 4:6).
  - ii. ***“Knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you to himself. For all things are for our sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.”*** (2 Corinthians 4:14-15)

5. We will be eternally amazed at God's Love, God's Grace and God's Glory, and be eternally thankful that he chose us before the creation of the world to believe in Him and become His children and He will be our Father and the King of Kings. 1 John 3:1 – ***“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God.”***

God has given us His clear command to believe the truth of His Son Jesus Christ's sacrifice in order to accept God's only way of salvation from His just wrath which will be delivered on a sinful world. John 6:29 – ***“Jesus answered, The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”***

Until God takes us from this earth to be with Him, our life's purpose is given by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:20-21, - ***“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”***

6. When we think about God; it is logical that there awaits for us in eternity so much more that we may not yet understand. We will have an eternity together to learn about the interweaving of God in our lives and God's power, love, justice, grace and wisdom that He has showered on us as His children. When we look at the complexity of our creation and the impossibility that it could be coincidental, we are confronted with the truth that God does exist and God loves us. It is not possible that things just happened in such a series of fortuitous occurrences of accidental circumstances could have just happened without the existence of an outside designer and creator.

Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle was right when he wrote in *Sherlock Holmes*, "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains must be the truth."

The truth is there is God, and He created everything and holds everything together, for His glory. Colossians 1: 16-17 – ***"For in him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."***

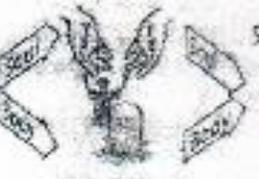
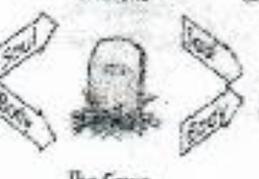
7. By faith we live, and by faith we die; and it is impossible that everything is created was just an accident. We are His people, and we were created for His good pleasure and we will live with Him forever. Our life is about the ministry of the God whom we serve.
8. To review what we know of the factual story of God's redemption of His creation:
  - Christ was the first resurrection and the first fruits of the bodily resurrections.
  - Those who are in the church are those who have become believers of Christ's sacrifice from the Pentecost to the rapture will be joined by those believers who are still alive to meet the Lord in the air and will go to heaven.
  - The tribulation saints are the people that have become believers and have believed in Jesus during the tribulation seven year period which will follow the rapture.
  - After the judgments the tribulation period will end with the second coming of Jesus to begin the 1,000 year millennial kingdom.

- Then the tribulation saints with the Old Testament saints will have their bodies raised at the second coming to reign with Jesus during the millennium.
- Those who have been born and die during the millennium kingdom may be transformed instantly into their glorified bodies. The only people that will be bodily raised after the final rebellion led by Satan, will be the unbelievers that will occur at the end of the millennium, and at the Great White Throne Judgment of God they will be cast into the eternal lake of fire to be eternally tormented.

An aid to the above information can be seen in the chart (*What Happens to a person after death*) shown earlier in Question 56, which asked when we get our spiritual bodies.

See the following Chart – What Happens to a person after Death for Order or sequence of receipt of Resurrection Bodies

### What Happens to a Person after Death<sup>2</sup>

	At Death	Bodily Resurrection	Judgment	Eternal Destination
<b>Old Testament Believer</b>	<p>Paradise/ Abraham's Bosom</p>  <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at Christ's Second Coming</p> 	<p>Judgment on Earth for Rewards</p> 	<p>Heaven</p> 
<b>Christian</b>	<p>Christ's Presence</p>  <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at the Rapture</p> 	<p>Judgment Seat of Christ in Heaven for Rewards</p> 	<p>Heaven</p> 
<b>Millennial Believer</b>	<p>Christ's Presence</p>  <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at the End of the Millennium</p> 	<p>Judgment on Earth for Rewards</p> 	<p>Heaven</p> 
<b>Tribulation Believer</b>	<p>Christ's Presence</p>  <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at Christ's Second Coming</p> 	<p>Judgment on Earth for Rewards</p> 	<p>Heaven</p> 
<b>Unbeliever</b>	<p>Sheol/Hades Torment</p>  <p>The Grave</p>	<p>Resurrection at the End of the Millennium</p> 	<p>Judgment at the Great White Throne for Sin</p> 	<p>Hell/Gehenna/ Lake of Fire</p> 

1 Corinthians 15:20-28 – ***“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits, of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, resurrection of the dead comes through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits, then, when he comes, those who are belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.”***

9. God does everything for His glory because he alone is God. This is consistent with His commands that all creation worship Him.

Isaiah 43:7 – ***“Even everyone that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory.”***

1Corinthians10:31 – ***“Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”***

Matthew 5:16 – ***“Let your light so shine that they may see your good deeds and give glory to your Father in heaven.”***

Isaiah 42:8 – ***“I am the LORD. That is My name. My glory I give to no other.***

God made everything including people out of a desire to glorify Himself. If it didn't glorify God to make us, to save us, to love us, then he wouldn't have done it. We are continually reminded there is no God like our God. In heaven we will be endlessly amazed at the glory of our glorious God.

Exodus 20:3 - ***"You shall have no other gods before me"***

1 John 3:1 ***"Behold what manner of love that the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God!"***

So, what have we learned? Live today, love today and pray today, as if you have no tomorrow with those you love and those you know. Live today, to make your Father in Heaven proud of your love for Him. Our life is, and has always been, about God's Holiness and God's Glory. Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 - ***"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."***

We are God's ambassadors and our lives here on this present earth brings honor to Him, who has created us for His good pleasure. We will never be truly happy and satisfied until we are glorifying God.

Revelation 4:11 - ***"For thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for you have created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."***

Hebrews 10:4-7 ***"It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offering you were not pleased. Then I said, "Here I am- it is written about me in the scroll- I have come to do your will, my God."***

Revelation 22:13 ***"I am the alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."*** 1 Peter 2:24 - ***"He who Himself bore all sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness."***

Everyone believes that one day we'll think about death and dying...when we are 90; but, life doesn't work that way. In this class you've been reminded of what God tells you about Heaven, your final destination that God has prepared for the rest of your life!

When you go on a trip; you always stay alert and pay special attention at the airport so that you get on the right plane to reach your correct destination. The clock is ticking, and your plane will be departing very soon. For Heaven's destination your ticket must be stamped in the blood of Jesus Christ, or you will not be permitted to enter into Heaven.

You will have a last moment here on this earth, the last second before you die. And a moment later, you can be certain from everything that God has taught you in this class, that you will still be alive, even though others will say, *you have died*...You are still alive, and as a believer, you are more alive than you have ever felt in your entire life up to this point.

Remember the last day of school, when your last class was over? Well, you've now finished your "Heaven 101 Class" notes review. Whether you PASS or FAIL the course ... depends on the choice you have made to accept or reject God's offer of salvation.

God has given you, in your bible, His book of Love Letters outlining the only way that you can be with Him forever. Your life is yours. God has created you with the power to make free will choices. The choices in your life are yours to make.

God will honor your eternal life's choice. Choose wisely...for, you will live with your consequences forever. Have you ever been thankful that there are rescue places for pets? There are rescue places for humans too. God's rescued people gather together at his church to learn and encourage and support each other.

The bible is all about God's created design for his world, humankind's fall into sin and rebellion, and God's gracious plan to rescue his loved people

from the terrible implications of their sin. Right after the first sin, God promised to send His one and only Son who would defeat Satan and sin forever.

Charles Shelton's book, "In His Steps, What Would Jesus Do?" was written in 1896 and has sold more than 50,000,000 copies and is based on the effects of actually making every personal and business decision in complete alignment with 1 Peter 2:21 – ***"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving an example, that you should follow in his steps"***. Jesus' ministry lasted 3 years, and he lived his life in complete agreement with God's will. John 8:29 – ***"The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."*** When Jesus was at the last supper with his disciples he told them in the bread and the wine do this in remembrance of me. Make your life a light that shines to glorify your Father in Heaven and a life that remembers Jesus.

We're all going to die, some of us know it, and some of us live like we know it. One day we'll see the Genius of God's handiwork; and at the center of it all we'll see the cross. We can't wait to see the masterpiece that God has made of us by His involvement, and interweaving of His will, in and through our life.

We believe in our God above. We believe in Jesus Christ. We believe in the Holy Spirit. We believe in the Jesus and our resurrection. We believe Jesus is coming back. Throughout this study, God through his words and thoughts has reminded you of the reality of your life and the reality of your death. May you enjoy your life, and may you enjoy your death.

*"I want to know God's thoughts; the rest are details"* – Albert Einstein

*... Trust me, I love you and look forward to being with you forever* – GOD