

A STUDY OF HEAVEN

PART 2

Review

1. No, we are not going to be angels in heaven. Angels are created beings just like we are.
2. We will not be floating on a cloud playing a harp in heaven.
3. Heaven will not be boring. And it will not be one endless choir practice.

Myth: Good people go to heaven and bad people go to hell.

Myth: Heaven will be this ethereal, only-spiritual, foreign and even strange place.

Foundational Thoughts

1. God is the treasure of Heaven.
2. This study will be focused on the restoration not the destruction of the earth, what it will mean to see God and worship God in heaven, and what it will mean to rule God's kingdom with Christ.

Our yearning for home is rooted in our yearning for God.

All of our yearnings and desires in this life are rooted in our desire for God.

Without our capacity to turn any of our desires into an idol, we will enjoy things because of Him, not instead of Him!

We were made to love things about life, and we will enjoy them fully on the New Earth.

When will we be delivered and get to experience Heaven?

Romans 8:19-23

“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 firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”

Post-millennial Viewpoint

Christ's kingdom is spreading throughout the world, now. God's justice will prevail across the earth prior to Christ's return. After his reign is established through His people for a long duration (not necessarily a literal 1,000 years), Christ will physically return to an already substantially redeemed world.

Pre-millennial Viewpoint

The Millennium will be a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ, which will begin immediately upon His return when He defeats His enemies in the battle of Armageddon. During these 1,000 years, God's promises of the Messiah's earthly reign will be fulfilled. Redeemed Jews will live

in their homeland, and the church will govern the world with Christ. The Millennium will end with a final rebellion and the old Earth will be replaced or transformed into the New Earth.

A-millennial Viewpoint

It's not a literal 1,000 years, nor is it something in the future. This period began when Jesus ascended. The events in Revelation 20 are happening right now as Christ's church reigns with Him over the earth. This is a spiritual reign known as the church age. This is possible now because of Christ's death and resurrection. The saints who have gone before us rule over the earth from present Heaven where they dwell with Christ. Jesus will return in judgment and establish a permanent reign on the New Earth.

Regardless of when the old Earth ends...the point is...a New Earth will begin!

And, God's original design will be redeemed and restored, and enjoyed not just for 1,000 years...but forever!

Isaiah 65:17-19

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.”

Isaiah 9:7

“The Messiah will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom forever.”

Isaiah 60:21

“Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever...”

How can we know there will be a new earth and that the old earth will not be destroyed, even after 1,000 years?

2 Peter 3:10

“The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, and the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.”

John Piper

“What Peter may well mean is that at the end of this age there will be cataclysmic events that bring this world to an end as we know it—not putting it out of existence, but wiping out all that is evil and cleansing it by fire and fitting it for an age of glory and righteousness and peace that will never end.”

Cornelius Venema

“The word in the oldest manuscripts does not mean, “destroy” or “burn up.” It means “exposed” or “laid open in a renewed state of pristine purity.”

Paul uses the Greek word kainos for the word new when he speaks of a believer becoming a new creation in 2 Corinthians 5:17.

G.K. Chesterton

“The modern philosopher had told me again and again that I was in the right place, and I had still felt depressed even in acquiescence. When I heard that I was in the wrong place...my soul sang for joy, like a bird in spring. I knew now...why I could feel homesick at home.”

Will the new Earth be familiar?

Rene Pache

“The emphasis on the present heaven is clearly rest, cessation from earths battles and comforts from earths sufferings. The future heaven is centered more on activity and expansion, serving Christ and reigning with Him. The scope is much larger, the great city with its twelve gates, people coming and going, nations to rule. In other words, the emphasis in the present heaven is on the absence of earths negatives, while in the future heaven it is the presence of earths positives, magnified many times through the power and glory of resurrected bodies on a resurrected Earth, free at last from sin and shame and all that would hinder both joy and achievement.”

Could it be that we will feel truly at home for the first time, in Heaven?

Revelation 21:1 says that the old earth, or first earth, will pass away.

The word “first” there is...”prote”

This is the Greek word from which we get our word “prototype.”

The first earth is the prototype for the New Earth.

We will enjoy the gifts of God because of God, not instead of God!

There will be no guilt or shame in enjoying the good gifts of God....because we will no longer have the capacity to get preoccupied with them or to pervert them or make them an idol!

What will it mean to see God?

Hebrews 12:14

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.”

1 Timothy 6:16

“Who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see.”

2 Corinthians 3:18

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”

What will it mean to worship God in Heaven?

If I’m enjoying God’s gifts because of Him and not instead of Him, and if I am doing the things I was created by Him to do, and doing them completely without sin...is that not worship?

J.I. Packer

“Hearts on earth may say in the course of a joyful experience, I don’t want this ever to end. But invariably it does. The hearts of those in heaven say, I want this to go on forever. And it will. There is no better news than this.”

What does it mean to rule with Christ?

Jesus is the second Adam. (1 Corinthians 15)

The church is the second Eve...or the bride of Christ.

Jesus will complete the task on the new earth that was originally assigned to Adam and Eve on the old earth...and He will do this with his bride, the Church!