

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GO TO HEAVEN?

Session Three ...

Then the excitement really begins!



WHERE WE LEFT OFF . . .

- My **BODY** was inanimate, non-inspired, and returning to “dust” in the grave
- My **SPIRIT** was quite alive, non-embodied, and conscious in a place called *hadēs/sheol*
 - I was in the section called paradise, Abraham’s bosom, or third heaven
 - At rest among angels, OT/NT saints, family/friends, and with the Trinity
 - Waiting for the Father to signal the *parousia* and resurrection
- **On the appointed day, ALL HEAVEN WILL BREAK LOOSE!**
 - *An archangel will announce The End of Old / The Beginning of New*
 - *God will come to Planet Earth – bringing redeemed spirits with him*
 - *Spirit-Body will be reunited (as “differentiated unity”) permanently*
 - *My body will have the “same-but-different” quality of Jesus’ body*
 - *Saints on Earth will be changed to have bodies like the risen saints*
 - *Judgment begins and all evil-offending elements/persons removed*
 - *Planet Earth will be transformed to its original ideal state*
 - *Eternal and Everlasting Life on renewed Planet Earth will begin*
- **Then the EXCITEMENT really begins . . .**



OVERVIEW OF 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

- Specific goal here is pastoral-comforting (v.18)
 - “Have our loved ones ‘missed’ Jesus’ coming by death?”
 - Paul: They are not deprived of the experience!
 - Paul: They will have *precedence* – raised before living are changed
- NOTE: “the coming (Gk, *parousia*) of the Lord” (v.15)
 - *Parousia* = presence, arrival, esp. royal visit
 - “Meet (Gk, *apantēsis*) the Lord in the air” (v.17b) / cf. *John 12:13; Acts 28:15*
 - Do we remain “in the air”? (Gk, *aēr* vs *ouranos*)
- *Special Note*: “rapture” not in view! (public, living *and dead*, etc.)



CONTINUITY . . . *WITH DIFFERENCES!*

1 COR. 15:42-44

The Old Body

- Perishable
- Dishonor
- Weakness
- Natural

sōma psychikos (body animated by the human spirit)

The New Body

- Imperishable
- Glory
- Power
- Spiritual

sōma pneumatikos (body animated by the Spirit of God)



NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH

- Ultimate Christian hope is not this: “When I die, I want to live in heaven forever!”
- Biblical language is the reverse: God comes to Planet Earth to dwell with us
 - This was the original plan: Eden
 - This is the renewal promised in Scripture
- “But what about Earth being ‘burned up’ in language of 2 Peter 3:10 (KJV)?
 - The word refers to fire *purifying* rather than obliterating/annihilating (cf. v.13)
 - “Burned up” (*katakaēsetai*) is poorly attested late text
 - “Laid bare” (*heurethēsetai*) is better attested as original text and adopted by RSV/NRSV (“disclosed”), NIV (“laid bare”), ESV (“exposed”)
 - The “destruction” is of *wicked people/things* (v.7) – as when the earth was “destroyed” (v.6) by the flood [Note: Not annihilated, but exposed and purged]
 - “Fire” is often a symbol for testing and purifying a thing (cf. 1 Pet 1:7; 1 Cor 3:10-15)



WE ARE GIVEN PRECIOUS FEW “DETAILS”

- 1 Peter 1:3-9 / *Peter will only take a negative approach to describing what lies ahead!*
 - God's mercy / new birth / living hope through Jesus' resurrection
 - Our “inheritance is (presently) kept in heaven for you”
 - We are “shielded” for whatever trials must be faced
 - Our “inheritance” will never perish, spoil, or fade
- Isaiah 65:17ff and Revelation 21:1ff / *two brave souls take a poetic stab at it!*
 - We don't “go to heaven at last” but see heaven come to us
 - God lives among his people (e.g., Eden, Temple)
 - Tears, mourning, crying, and pain are gone

