


Christian Book Reports

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Introduction

- I must give credit to Randy Alcorn and the research he did for his book called 'Heaven'.
 - His work has changed my perspective on Heaven and what is most frustrating is that the scriptures are familiar --- I must have been reading them with a certain preconceived bias.
 - Makes me wonder what else I have missed due to what I thought I knew.
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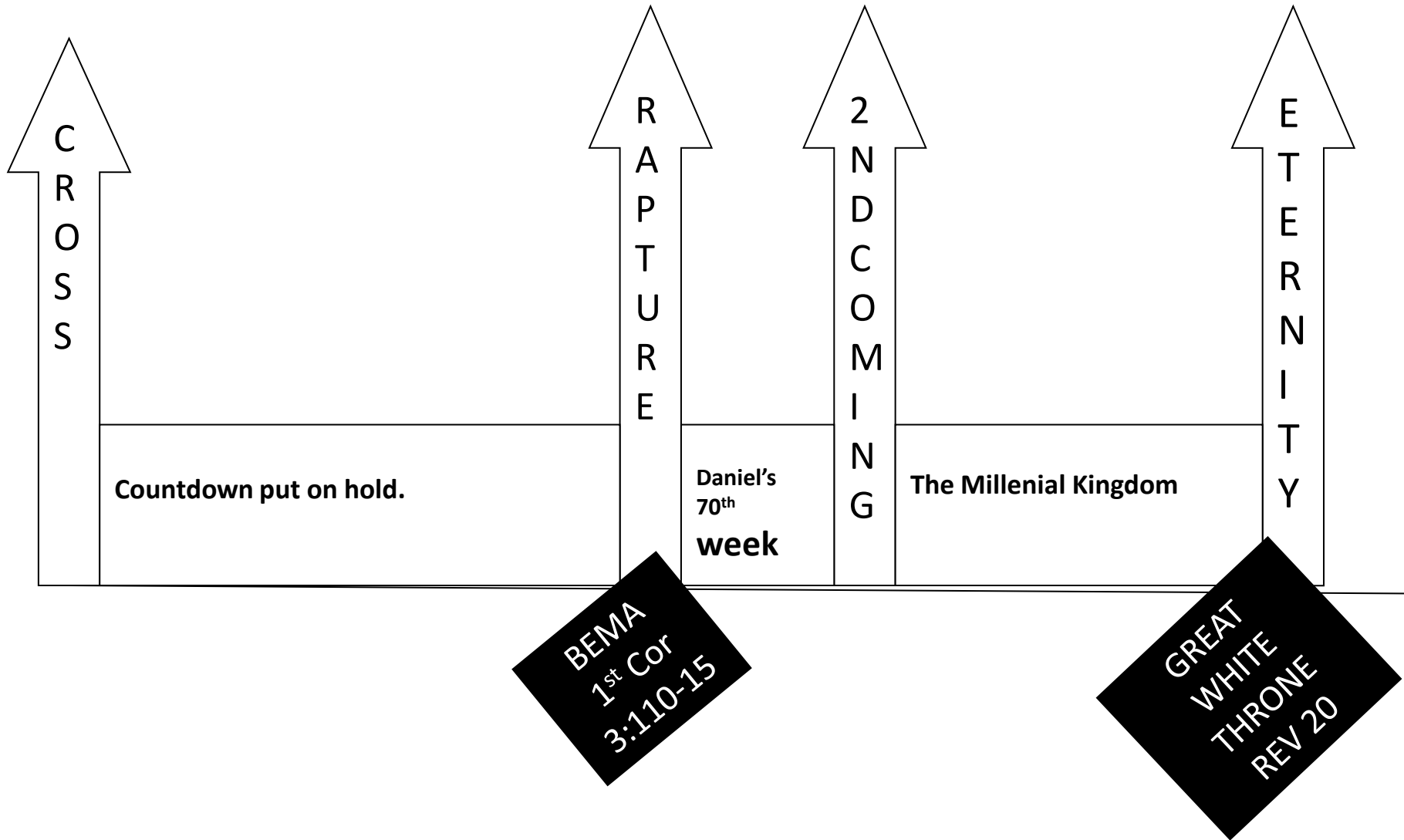


Bible Outline

Past	Present	Future
Genesis 1-2	Genesis 3 - Revelation 20	Revelation 21-22
God's original design. Perfect humans living in a perfect environment.	Fallen man struggling to survive and endure life on a sin cursed earth.	Redeemed man living on a redeemed earth.



FROM THE CROSS TO ETERNITY





Heaven, back to the future?

- **We have been given many clues about what the new earth will be like from this earth.**
- **Plants, animals, streams, and people of every imaginable shape, size and color.**
- **“While many of the world’s religions portray heaven as a mystical place, Christianity does not give up on humanity or earth” Randy Alcorn**





Heaven, back to the future?

- It is as if God has planted a longing to return to Eden in our hearts We've never been there, but it sounds like home.
- Many of the 'movements' of our time are rooted in this sense God places within us.
- Save the planet, animal rights, and human rights all originate with what God has placed within us.






Heaven, back to the future?

- So while our ancestors (Adam and Eve) came from the homeland, we are forced to live in a place that does not feel like home.
- It's the same earth Adam and Eve lived on, but it has been seriously marred by sin.
- We would love an earth that is peaceful, stable, and inhabitable Not coincidentally, that is just what God has promised.





Heaven is a real place.

- **God has not promised a 'non-earth', he promises a 'new earth'. Randy Alcorn**
 - **In Rev 21 and 22 we read of a city, buildings, streets, streams, a mountain, and plenty of people. Does that not sound very much like the earth we know?**
 - **Rev 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" NIV**
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Heaven is a real place.

- **Other religions, other people and many books tell us that heaven is more of a state of existence than a place, but there is ample evidence to the contrary.**
- **“Stop closing your eyes trying to imagine the unimaginable. Open your eyes and imagine this earth without the effects of sin”. Randy Alcorn.**
- **That is exactly what we are looking forward to – it will be familiar, but better.**





Heaven is a real place.

- **Isa 65:17** "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. NIV
- **Isa 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. NIV2 Peter 3:13
- **2 Peter 3:13** But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. NIV
- **Rev 21:1** 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. NIV






Heaven is a real place.

- **“If God’s plan were just to take us to the present heaven (the intermediate state) or a place of just spirit beings there would be no need for a new heaven or new earth.” Randy Alcorn**
- **Jesus did not die to make the most of a bad situation, he died to redeem us and to restore all things.**
- **The Devil threw mud on God’s creative canvas, but God will do more than just wipe it clean. He will completely restore it.**





Heaven is a real place.

- Reconcile, redeem, restore, return, renew, regenerate, and resurrect all point to a restoration and not an alternative plan.
 - This explains to a great extent why God is always viewing us as what we can be more so than what we are.
 - We are fallen people living in a fallen world; we will be redeemed people living in a redeemed world and that is what both parties long for.
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Heaven is a real place.

- Satan struck a blow at God's handiwork, but he did not destroy his work to a place beyond redemption.
- "If God were to end history and reign forever in a distant Heaven, Earth would be remembered as a graveyard of sin and failure. Instead, Earth will be redeemed and restored." Randy Alcorn
- When one has unlimited power to restore and repair there is no reason to start from scratch.





Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- It excites me to know that what I sense in my bones should be Will be.
- We have a deep longing for and a distant sense that things are not as He intended and that something on Earth is desperately wrong.
- Heb 11:16 Instead, they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. NIV






Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- **Isa 26:19 But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead. NIV**
- **The Old Testament saints were not looking to go to a distant Heaven They were expecting to live on a restored Earth.**
- **We do not long for something we have never seen or have any reference to; we long for things to be set right on Earth much like they were in our lives when we came to Christ.**






Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- **Isa 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. NIV**
 - **The fact of a new Earth is written in many places in the Old Testament.**
 - **The Old Testament saints were not looking for a new Earth because it was all they could relate to. They were looking for a new Earth because that is what God promised.**
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Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- **Luke 21:33** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. NIV
 - **2 Peter 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. NIV
 - **Rev 21:1** 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. NIV
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Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- **Think of this – the Apostle Paul ‘passed away’ 2,000 years ago and his body cannot be found today because it has completely changed into another form of matter, dust.**
- **However, at the rapture of the church the Apostle Paul will be resurrected and his body will be restored into a recognizable Apostle Paul.**
- **If passing away was not the complete extinction of Paul, how can we be so sure the Earth that passes away cannot be resurrected and restored as well?**






Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- **Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, 20 and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you — even Jesus. 21 He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. NIV**
 - **The prophets promised a restoration of the Earth and the Old Testament saints believed God.**
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Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- **2 Peter 3:6** By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. **7** By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. **8** But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. **9** The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. **10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.
NIV
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Will Earth be destroyed or restored?

- An analogy is set-up for us by Peter – the first destruction of the Earth by the flood and the next destruction of the Earth by fire.
- The flood of Noah’s day was devastating and served to cleanse the entire Earth, but the Earth did not cease to exist.
- Much like the forest fire cleanses the forest it seems plausible that God’s fire will serve to cleanse the Earth in the same fashion.
- “The destruction of the Earth will be no more final than our OWN.” Randy Alcorn



<p>What we assume about Heaven</p>	<p>What the Bible teaches about Heaven</p>
<p>Non-earth</p>	<p>New Earth</p>
<p>Unfamiliar Setting</p>	<p>Familiar Setting</p>
<p>Disembodied</p>	<p>Resurrected Bodies</p>
<p>Leaving Favorite Things Behind</p>	<p>Retaining the Best Things</p>
<p>No Time and Space</p>	<p>Time and Space</p>
<p>Static</p>	<p>Dynamic</p>
<p>Nothing to do, boring.</p>	<p>Unlimited opportunities to worship and serve with meaningful work.</p>
<p>No learning, instant and complete knowledge.</p>	<p>An eternity of learning and discovery.</p>
<p>Absence of evil, but little we desire.</p>	<p>Presence of the wonderful and everything we were designed to desire.</p>



So what does it all mean?

- **It means that all of the boring pictures and cliché's of Heaven are dispelled.**
- **It means the believer has much, much, more than an escape from Hell.**
- **It means we should be extremely optimistic about the future and what God has to offer to all who will trust Him.**





What does it all mean?

**If you like this Earth, just wait until
you see the new one!**

