

Heaven

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Lesson #4

Does Heaven Really Change?

- **Gen 1:1** In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth. 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 was created and therefore had a beginning and can also have an end.
 - God is immutable (unchangeable), everything else is in play.
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The New Heaven and Earth

- Man lived with God in the garden at the start and God will restore that intimate fellowship once again.
 - Gen 3:8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. NIV
 - John 14:23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. NIV
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The New Heaven and Earth

- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "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. NIV
 - “The incarnation was about God inhabiting space and time as a human being – the new Heavens and the new Earth are about God making space and time in his eternal home.”
Randy Alcorn
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The New Heaven and Earth

- We usually think of us going 'up' to Heaven, but the end game is evidently for God to come down and live with us.
 - Rev 21:2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. NIV
 - Eph 1:10 to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment — to bring all things in Heaven and on Earth together under one head, even Christ. NIV
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Do we remain conscious after death?

- Rev 6:9 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. 10 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?" NIV
 - Matt 17:2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. NIV
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Will we be judged when die?

- Rom 14:11 For the Scriptures say, "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will confess and give praise to God.'" 12 Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God.
 - Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. NIV
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Will we be judged when die?

- Most people believe the Christian is judged after the rapture and before the marriage supper of the Lamb.
 - When, is of less importance than the certainty that we will give an account of what we did with what we were given between conversion and death.
 - It is quite obvious the unsaved are judged 1007 years after the rapture at the great white throne. This judgment is not to determine 'if' punishment is due, but merely how much punishment is due.
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Will we be judged when die?

- It ought not be enough for me that I will go to Heaven when I die; I should give much more thought than I do to what God will say about me when I arrive. 😊
 - It takes faith to believe that what I do now is, to a great extent, determining what my duties and privileges will be on the new Earth.
 - Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. NKJV
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Degrees of Punishment

- **Luke 12:47** “And a servant who knows what the master wants, but isn’t prepared and doesn’t carry out those instructions, will be severely punished. 48 But someone who does not know, and then does something wrong, will be punished only lightly. When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required.
 - Both types are punished for eternity, but not equally.
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Is the present Heaven a physical place?

- Jesus had a glorified, but physical body after his resurrection.
 - Acts 1:11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into Heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into Heaven." NIV
 - The present Heaven may, or may not be a physical place, but the new Heaven and new Earth will be.
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Is the present Heaven a physical place?

- Consider this – if the present Heaven is a physical place then it is either light years away in time or it exists as a parallel universe. (or maybe there is some concept we have never imagined)
 - Randy Alcorn noted in his Heaven book the leading secular scientists of our day postulate that there are as many as (10) unobservable dimensions.
 - I find it no stretch at all to believe that Heaven is much closer than we may have ever thought. What if Jesus statement of "the kingdom of God is among you" was not just a figurative statement?
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Shadows from Heaven.

- **Heb 8:5 They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in Heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." NIV**
 - **It seems probable at least that Moses was allowed to peak into Heaven on Mt Sinai to see a copy of what God wanted him to build.**
 - **A picture is worth a 1,000 words?**
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Shadows from Heaven.

- **Heb 9:24 For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered Heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. NIV**
 - **If you were going to question which sanctuary was the 'more real' of the two, Earth's sanctuary would have to finish second.**
 - **Christ, in a real body, entered a real and evidently physical place.**
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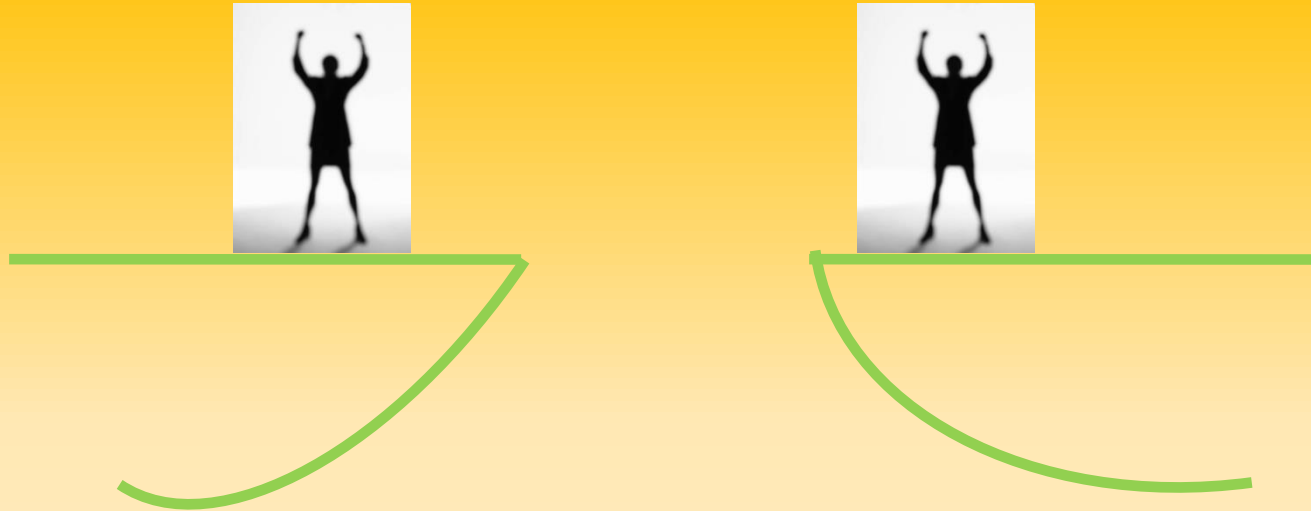
Physical bodies for us in the intermediate state?

- We cannot be dogmatic either way Randy Alcorn suggests that we may have temporary bodies because being physical is part of being human.
 - I am less sure we will have bodies because Paul went there and was not sure if he had a body or not. (nor did it seem to matter)
 - 2 Cor 12:2 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. 3 And I know that this man — whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows— NIV
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Physical bodies for us in the intermediate state?

- In Luke's account of the rich man and Lazarus it seems as though Lazarus was visible to the rich man.
 - Luke 16:23 In Hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. NIV
 - I do not think we are on solid ground to apply all of the properties of Paradise in Luke 16 to Heaven. (people in Hell cannot see people in Heaven)
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The great chasm of Luke 16.



- **EPH 4: 7-10 (Jesus led captivity captive)**
 - **LUKE 23:42-43 (today you will be with me in Paradise)**
 - **JOHN 20:16-17 (stop holding on to me I have not yet ascended to my father)**
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Questions / Comments