

Tool Box Series



Resurrection From the Dead

Resurrection

Study Outline

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Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it, Matthew 7:13-14

Important Question

People have always struggled with the question of "is there life after death?" From the beginning, the patriarchs and the saints of the Bible believed there would be a resurrection. The word resurrection means to stand again, everyone will stand again, but the real question is with what body, and where?

Job lived just after Noah's flood, and the book of Job may be the oldest book of the Bible. Even going back that far, Job had a revelation of Christ and the resurrection. Job believed that his redeemer (Jesus) would stand on the earth and that he would see him, an event that would not happen for thousands of years. He also believed that after he was dead and his body had decomposed in the ground, he would stand again and see his God. Job described the resurrection, how our body and spirit come back together after death.

Job 19:25-26 *For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh (body) I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!*

After Job, come to Abraham, we don't know if Abraham knew of Job, but he had a similar revelation of the dead rising again. Abraham had a personal relationship with God. And God had promised Abraham a son at age 75, and at the age of 100, he and his 90-year-old wife had a son, and about 20 years later, God asked Abraham to put his son Isaac on the altar as a sacrifice and take his life. Holding the knife above Isaac, God stopped him by providing a lamb (Christ) to take the place of Isaac, so Abraham passed his test.

Abraham's faith had been growing step by step for 45 years, and by that time, he believed God could raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham did not have a Bible, synagogue, or church, but he knew the most important principle of the faith, that God raises the dead. Abraham became the father of faith through that experience, and God considered him to be righteousness because of his faith. And we are also counted righteous by our faith in Christ's resurrection.

Hebrews 11:19 *Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.*

Romans 4:16-25 ... but also to **those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all** (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of **Him whom he believed God, who gives life to the dead** and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that **he became the father of many nations**, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." **And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.** He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was **strengthened in faith**, giving glory to God, and being **fully convinced** that what He had promised He was also able to perform. **And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."** Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. **It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.**

Abraham's descendants became a great nation with a legacy of faith and covenant bonds with God. The children of Israel followed in the steps of Abraham's faith, and they did amazing things by faith because they were looking for a "better resurrection."

Romans 4:12 ... *who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had ...*

Hebrews 11:32-35 *And what more shall I say? I do not have time to talk about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, ... whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. **Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released so they might gain a better resurrection.***

The Grave

In the Old Testament, everyone who died went down to the grave; the Hebrew word for the "grave" is Sheol, also translated as hell or the pit. The location of Sheol is said to be deep in the lowest parts of the earth and had different regions at that time to separate the righteous from the wicked. The righteous are in a place of comfort, while the wicked go to a place of torment.

***Psalm 63:8-9** My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me. But those who seek my life, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth*

***Psalm 55:15-23** Let death seize them; Let them go down alive into hell (Sheol), For wickedness is in their dwellings and among them ... But You, O God, shall bring them down to the pit of destruction*

We see an example of the grave, specifically the pit, with Israel wandering in the wilderness. Led by Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and a group of 250 leaders, they challenged Moses and his leadership. In response to their rebellion, God confirmed His approval of Moses through a dramatic miracle. First, the innocent people moved away from the group of rebels. Then the ground split open and swallowed Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their families, and they dropped alive straight down into the pit of hell, and the earth closed back over them.

***Numbers 16:30-34** "But if the LORD creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD." Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. So, they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. Then all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up also!"*

Both the righteous and the wicked go down to the grave, but they arrive in different places and there is a place prepared for the godly whom God has redeemed from the power of the grave.

***Psalm 49:13-15** This is the way of those who are foolish, and of their posterity who approves their sayings. Selah Like sheep **they are laid in the grave; Death shall feed on them;** The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; And their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling. **But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave,** For He shall receive me.*

Saul & Samuel

We get another picture of life after death by looking at a conversation between King Saul and the deceased prophet Samuel. Saul was in great fear, being threatened by war and vastly outnumbered. In desperation, Saul went to a witch and held a séance to speak to the prophet Samuel, who was dead.

***1 Samuel 28:13-14** And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "**I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth.**" So, he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "**An old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle.**" And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down.*

Being in the lower parts of the earth, Samuel ascended from the grave, and Saul recognized him and the mantle he was wearing. They acknowledged each other, and there was no loss of memory or identification, showing that we will remember and know each other in eternity.

***1 Samuel 28:15** Now Samuel said to Saul, "**Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?**" And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore, I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do."*

Samuel could see and speak and complained about being disturbed and brought up. He showed intelligence, memory, a range of emotions and had all his speaking and communication skills. The fact that he felt disturbed showed he preferred where he was, implying it was better.



1 Samuel 28:16-18 Then Samuel said: "Why then do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? "And **the LORD has done for Himself as He spoke by me**. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. "**Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day.**

Samuel remembered details of his past life, the words he spoke to Saul, his disobedience, and how he lost the kingdom to David. Adding to Saul's problems was the séance he just had with the witch. God strictly forbids communication with the dead, and that seance was like the straw that breaks the camel's back, and it shattered Saul's chances of any victory. Finally, Samuel delivered a prophecy from the grave, saying how Saul would die the next day, which happened as predicted.

1 Samuel 28:19 "Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines".

Samuel's prophecy was true, and the next day Israel was defeated, and Saul and his sons died and went down into the grave, but probably not to the same area where Samuel was. Samuel was a saint, but Saul was a rebel against God, demon-oppressed, shed innocent blood, sought counsel from a witch, and spoke to the dead. Saul is probably in a place of torment.

Abrahams Bosom

When Abraham died, they said that he “was gathered to his people.” That was the same thing they said when Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Aaron died. After they died, they joined all the saints who went before them, like a big family reunion. (Gen25:17, 29, 33, Num 20:24-26, Duet 32:50)

*Genesis 25:8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; **and was gathered to his people.***

Jesus told a story of two men who died and went down into Hades. The Greek word Hades is the equivalent for Sheol and correlates to Hell or the pit. This story contrasts two different places and two different men who were there. Notice it was called Abraham's bosom, he is the father of faith, so it would be like being welcomed and comforted with a big hug from a loving father, with the whole family there to greet you.

*Luke 16:19-26 "There was a certain **rich man** who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. "But there was a certain **beggar named Lazarus**, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to **Abraham's bosom**. The rich man also died and was buried. "And being in torments in **Hades**, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in **water and cool my tongue**; for **I am tormented in this flame**.'" "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that **in your lifetime** you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.' And besides all this, **between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.**'*

The beggar Lazarus was with Abraham in a place of comfort, while the rich man was in Hell, a place of torment, with an uncrossable gulf or chasm between them. They could see each other from across the gap, and they recognized each other, but they could not cross from one side to the other. In life, Lazarus begged in shame and suffering, and the rich man had lived a life of abundance and luxury. Outward appearances are deceiving, and we may be surprised to find out who is going to heaven and who is going to Hell.



Also, if you were in Hell and had one wish, what would be your wish? For one drop of water? It seems more likely that most people would be frantically begging, get me out of here!!! Everyone has the free will to accept or reject God. By the consequences of his own decisions, the rich man chose to go to Hell, and he didn't even ask to get out of Hell but just wanted a drop of relief in Hell.

It's puzzling how people get addicted to drugs, alcohol, and all kinds of sins, yet they refuse to turn to God for help and choose to stay in their situation. They will look for relief or fulfillment from any source except God. Sadly, if they die in that condition, they will be trapped in their misery forever.

Luke 16:27-31 "Then he said, 'I beg you, therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets (in the Bible); let them hear them.' "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent' "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

Possibly, the saddest thing for the rich man was that he had five living brothers, and he was worried that they would be joining him in hell. He wanted to have Lazarus go to warn his brothers. Saying that his brothers would repent if somebody came back from the dead to warn them. Of course, Lazarus could not go. As Abraham said, if his brothers, or anyone else, do not believe the prophets' (the Bible), they will not believe in someone who rose from the dead (Jesus), so they will ultimately join him in hell. That is why it is so important to share Jesus with our family and friends in this life before it's too late.

Laws of Harvest

The Old Testament laws for harvesting crops are symbolic for us, giving us an outline of the spiritual harvest of souls, revealing in what order the different resurrections will happen.

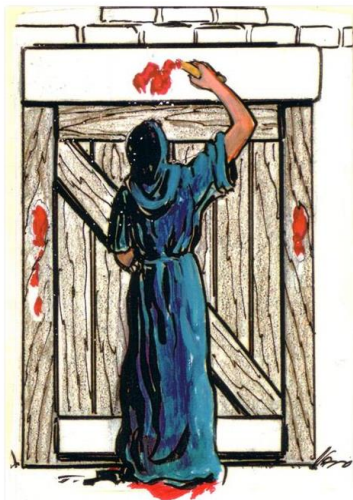
Christ the Firstfruit

The name "firstfruits" comes from the "laws of the harvest" under the law given by Moses. At the end of the growing season, the farmers would watch the crop to know when it was ripe for the harvest. When the crop was ready to be harvested the day after the next sabbath, the priest would waive the first ripe fruit before the Lord. They called the first sheaf of ripe grain the firstfruits, pointing to Jesus, the first to rise from the dead.

*Leviticus 23:10-11 ... 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a **sheaf of the firstfruits** of your harvest to the priest. 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; **on the day after the Sabbath** the priest shall wave it.*

In the year they crucified Jesus, the harvest was ready by the Passover, and there was a sabbath two days later. Jesus's crucifixion was on the Passover, and three days later, the priest waved the sheaf of the firstfruits before the Lord. So, Jesus became the first to rise from the dead and fulfilled two different Old Testament symbolisms, at the same time, first as the Passover lamb and then as the sheaf of the firstfruits in the harvest.

The first **Passover** took place when the children of Israel were slaves in Egypt. God used Moses to speak to Pharaoh and sent ten plagues against the Egyptians to force them to release Israel from their bondage. God told Moses that the final plague would be the death of all the firstborn of Egypt. The only protection against death would be to kill a lamb and put its blood on the doorpost of their houses. As God passed through Egypt and brought death to the firstborn when he saw blood on the doorpost, he would "pass over" that house, and he spared the lives of everyone inside the house. All the firstborn in Egypt died, but nobody died in homes where blood was on the doorpost. Israel was set free from Egypt the next day, and the Jewish people have celebrated Passover every year since. Jesus was crucified on the Passover, fulfilling what was planned before the foundation of the world, that he would be the lamb of God to take away sin.



*1 Corinthians 5:7-8 ... For indeed **Christ, our Passover** was sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast ...*

*Revelation 12:11 And they overcame him (Satan) by the **blood of the Lamb** (Jesus), and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

*Revelation 13:8 ... in the book of life of the **Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.***

Firstfruits

The day after the sabbath, they would waive the first ripe sheaf of grain, calling it the celebration of the "firstfruits." On the day the priest waived the first fruit of the harvest, Jesus became the fruits of the resurrection of the dead.



1 Corinthians 15:20-23 ***But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.***

Two Loaves

After they waved the sheaf of the firstfruits, they would count 50 days, called Pentecost, or fiftieth. On Pentecost, they would bake two loaves of bread and wave them before the Lord. That symbolism points to the church, which was born on the day of Pentecost.



Leviticus 23:15-17 ***... count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering ... 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves ... They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.***

Acts 2:1-4 ***When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***

The two loaves represent the church, one representing the dead "in Christ" and the other representing those who will be alive "in Christ" when he comes for the church in the rapture. The rapture is when Jesus will return to snatch the church up to heaven sometime before the seven years of tribulation begins. The church is also firstfruits (Jas 1:18) because they will be the bride of Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 For if we believe that **Jesus died and rose again**, even so, God will bring with Him those who sleep (are dead) in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep (dead)** ... For the Lord Himself will 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. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord.**

The Corners & Gleanings

Jewish law required all Israelites to remember the poor. Farmers were required to leave some of their crops to feed the poor.

The crops in the **corners** of the fields were not harvested and were left for the poor to eat. The poor could go there anytime during the season. We know Jesus and his disciples went into a field and ate some corn on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:1).

The **gleanings** were sheaves that were dropped or missed by the harvesters. When they harvested a field, they were not allowed to go back to pick up what they missed. They had to leave the gleanings for the poor to eat. Boaz intentionally left gleanings for Ruth (Ruth 2:15-16).

Leviticus 23:22 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap **the corners** of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any **gleaning** from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.'



The corners and the gleanings point to different groups that will have their resurrection during the tribulation or at the second coming. These would be people like the Two Witnesses, Old Testament saints, and tribulation martyrs. Similar to the random nature of gathering from the corners and gleanings, these different groups will resurrect at differing times, culminating at the second coming of Christ.

| Laws of the Harvest (Leviticus 23) | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Early Harvest | 1st Resurrection |
| First Ripe Sheaf Firstfruit | Christ first to rise from the dead |
| 2 Waive Loaves Firstfruits | Judgment Seat of Christ |
| | Rapture - Dead & Living "In Christ" |
| Corners & Gleanings (left for Poor) | Two Witnesses Tribulation Martyrs Old Testament Saints |
| Reap Harvest Wheat into barns Tares to burn | Throne of Glory |
| | Wheat / Sheep - Millennial kingdom Tares / Goats - Hell |
| Millennium (1,000 Years) | |
| Latter Harvest Hell - All Sinners – All Ages <i>Jeremiah 8:20</i> The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. | White Throne Judgment 2nd Death - Lake of Fire |
| | Antichrist/false prophet/Satan Sinners / Fallen Angels / Demons |

Revelation 11:17-18 ... " saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great ... who destroy the earth."

The Harvest

After the sheaf of the firstfruits and the two loaves, it was time for the harvest. There were two harvest seasons in Israel; the barley harvest in the spring (Passover) and the wheat harvest in late summer (Pentecost). There will be two harvests in the resurrections as well.

The early harvest is called the first resurrection, where all the redeemed will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to test their works and receive their rewards. The second harvest will come at the end of the world, called the second death, whereby all sinners from every age are brought out of death and hell to stand before the great white throne. After their trial before the great white throne, they will be sentenced and cast into the lake of fire.

***Jeremiah 8:20** The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.*



The Wheat & Tares

Weeds have always been a problem for farmers. Jesus told a parable about a farmer (God) who planted wheat, and his enemy (Satan) came at night and scattered tares in his field. Wheat and tares look very similar, and removing the tares would damage the crop, so the farmer let them grow together. True believers and unbelievers grow together until the harvest when God sorts them believers go to the kingdom and unbelievers to hell. (Matthew 13:25-30)

Jesus Died, Buried, Risen

Jesus knew the prophecies and understood the suffering he would endure and that he would be beaten, crucified, die, and be in the grave for three days and nights. He knew three days after his death, he would rise from the dead, and he told everyone what to expect before it happened.

***Matthew 12:38-40** Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. "For as Jonah was **three days and three nights** in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be **three days and three nights** in the heart of the earth.*

John 2:19-22 Jesus answered and said to them, "**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up** ... Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body ... Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.



Paradise

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, two criminals were also hanging on crosses, one on either side of him. In his final moments of life, one of the criminals understood that Jesus was the son of God and asked him for mercy.

Luke 23:42-43 Then he said to Jesus, "**Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.**" And Jesus said to him, "**Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.**"

Paradise is a Persian word that means the King's Garden. There was a Jewish belief that Abraham's Bosom and the Garden of Eden were side by side, comparable in beauty. Jesus and the thief both went to Paradise that day.



The Victory of the Cross

The penalty of sin is death, and when Adam sinned, he passed the DNA of sin to the entire human race, bringing all of humanity under the law of sin and death. Through one act of disobedience, all were born sinners, all will die, and earthly dominion went to the Devil. Satan tried to trick Jesus like he did Adam, offering him all the kingdoms of this world, but Jesus did not tolerate Satan's schemes, rebuking him, and surrendered nothing.

Matthew 4:8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to Him, "**All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.**" Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

On his way to the cross, Jesus acknowledged that Satan was the ruler of this world (age) at that time. The apostle Paul called Satan the god of this world and that the unsaved lie under the sway of the wicked one.

John 14:28-30 "You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away (death) and coming back to you (resurrection).' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. "I will no longer talk much with you, **for the ruler of this world (Satan) is coming, and he has nothing in Me.**

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds **the god of this age** (Satan) has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God, should shine on them.

But one man, Jesus, took back the power of death through his obedience and sinless sacrifice. Because Jesus had never sinned, death and corruption could not touch him, so he defeated sin, death, and the Devil the moment he died. Jesus has the power to give eternal life, holds the keys of death hell, and has all power and authority in heaven and earth.

Hebrews 2:14-15 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death **He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil**, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Acts 2:23-27 "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; **"whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death because it was not possible that He should be held by it.**" For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore, my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover, my flesh also will rest in hope. For **You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.**

Romans 5:15-21 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the **one man's offense many died**, much more the grace of God and the gift by the **grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ**, abounded to many ... For if by the **one man's offense death reigned** through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of **the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.**) Therefore, as through **one man's offense judgment came to all men**, resulting in condemnation, even so through **one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men**, resulting in justification of life. For as by **one man's disobedience many were made sinners**, so also by **one Man's obedience many will be made righteous** so that as **sin reigned in death**, even so **grace might reign** through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There was another problem before the cross, that was the law of Moses. The law is good, but it has a weak human partner that always sins. Adam and Eve were perfect in a perfect paradise, with no bad neighbors, no bills, no traffic, no problems, and they lacked for nothing. They only had one simple little law, and they had the whole planet all to themselves doing whatever they wanted to do.

They broke the law. If they couldn't obey just one little rule, then what are the chances that we could keep all 613 laws of Moses throughout our entire life? Impossible! Thank God that Jesus fulfilled the law and saved us from its condemnation by nailing the law to the cross.

Colossians 2:13-15 *When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross and having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.***



Romans 7:7-9 ... *Indeed, **I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died.***

Jesus' victory on the cross gives us the ability to live above our sinful human nature and live a life directed by the Holy Spirit. At the cross, we die to sin, and God gives us a new heart and makes us a new creation in Christ.

Romans 6:2-7 ... *How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ... even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Death & Hell Defeated

When Jesus died, he descended into the grave, but he didn't go there to suffer or pay for sin because he accomplished that on the cross. Instead, He went on a mission to make a proclamation, take the keys of death and Hell, and relocate the righteous captives who were in Abraham's Bosom up to paradise.

Revelation 1:18 "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And **I have the keys of Hades (Hell) and of Death.**

1 Peter 3:18-20 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited **in the days of Noah**, while the ark was being prepared ...

1 Corinthians 15:54-57 ... that is written: "**Death is swallowed up in victory.**" "**O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?**" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. **But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Christ preached the gospel to disobedient spirits imprisoned in Hell as a testimony against them, comparing them with living people that obey God and live in the Spirit. Sinners are kept in Hell until they stand before the great white throne judgment, but in the meantime, the testimony of living saints is a witness against them and continues to grow.

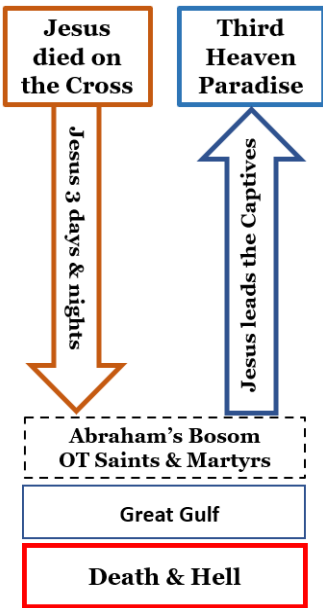
1 Peter 4:4-5 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. **They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason, the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh but live according to God in the spirit.**

The abyss is a bottomless pit, a prison for the devil and his angels. Some evil spirits are so bad they are bound in prison, inside Hell where they have been since Noah's flood. And when Jesus descended into Hell, he went there and preached or made a proclamation to them.

Jude 1:6 *And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;*

2 Peter 2:4-5 *For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;*

From Paul's letter to the Ephesians, we see that Jesus took all the people formerly captive in Abraham's bosom and relocated them to a heavenly paradise when he ascended to heaven.

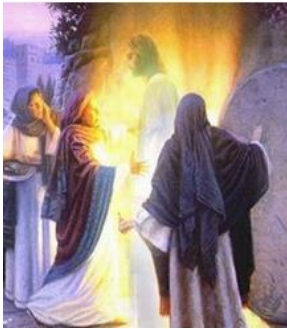


Ephesians 4:8-10 *This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people." (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)*

The Apostle Paul told us that Paradise is in the heavens. Paul said he was "caught up" beyond the first and second heavens, ascending to the third heaven and Paradise.

*2 Corinthians 12:2-4 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows such a one was **caught up to the third heaven**. And I know such a man whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows how he was **caught up into Paradise** and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

Early on the third day after Jesus rose from the dead, and before He ascended to His Father, he stopped and gave Mary Magdalene a message to deliver to **his brethren**, the disciples.



*John 20:17-18 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for **I have not yet ascended to My Father**; but go to **My brethren** and say to them, '**I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.**'" Mary Magdalene came and **told the disciples** that she had seen the Lord and that He had spoken these things to her.*

Then after leaving Mary, he ascended far above all rule, authority, power, dominion, and name.

*Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**"*

*Ephesians 1:18-23 ... the same as the mighty strength **20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet ...***

Jesus is the Resurrection

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples. They were in disbelief and thought they saw a ghost. They talked with him, touched the nail scars in his hands, and saw him eat solid food.

Then they realized that this was the same Jesus they witnessed dying on the cross, who died, and was buried. And he was now standing before them.

Luke 24:39-43 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. "When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ***They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence.***

John 20:26-28 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

His body endured 39 lashes with a barbed whip, nails driven into his hands and feet, and a spear pierced his side. He had the scars from his wounds, proving that it was the same body. Jesus told the disciples that a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have. He had the same body but resurrected, incorruptible, glorified, and eternal. He did not say he had flesh and blood. The resurrection body does not need blood, food, or air to stay alive. Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and all eternal life flows from him.

John 11:25-26 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

When Jesus came, although he was God, he humbled himself and took the form of a servant and limited his abilities as a man on earth (Philp 2:5-10).

But as the resurrected Lord in his glorified state, he has unlimited power and absolutely no restrictions regarding time or space. Jesus can appear or vanish, ascend or descend through the clouds, and there is nothing impossible for Him, and He has all power in heaven and earth.

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.*

Acts 1:9-11 *After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "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.**"*

Jesus was the first to be resurrected from the dead. Everyone else is still waiting, and there's a sequence of events that will happen before the other groups will be judged and resurrected.

John 5:25-29 *Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, **when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.** ... Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which **all who are in the graves will hear His voice "and come forth** those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

Isaiah 26:19 *But your dead will live, **LORD; their bodies will rise let those 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.***

In the same way that Jesus' physical body was resurrected, transformed, and eternally glorified, at the resurrection, believers will experience a transformation of their bodies from death to life, with various degrees of glory.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4 *Now 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. ... 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.*

Philippians 3:20-21 *But [we are different, because] our citizenship is in heaven. And from there we eagerly await [the coming of] the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who, by exerting that power which enables Him even to subject everything to Himself, will [not only] transform [but completely refashion] our earthly bodies so that they will be like His glorious resurrected body. (AMP)*

1 John 3:2-3 *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

We should not misuse our bodies for ungodly purposes or defile and disfigure them. Since we are held responsible for everything done in our bodies, the followers of Christ should seek to glorify God with their bodies and flee from sexual sins, drunkenness, drugs, gluttony, and so forth.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 *Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.

The Church - Bride

The rapture is like a wedding, and Jesus and John the Baptist both stated that Jesus is the bridegroom spoken of in all the wedding parables. The church will be raptured, removed from the earth as the bride of Christ, which will happen before the wrath of God comes during the great tribulation. Both the rapture and the (gentile) church were hidden mysteries not mentioned in the Old Testament but only revealed after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church.

Matthew 9:14-15 ... (Jesus speaking) "Can the friends of the bridegroom (John the Baptist & others) mourn as long as the bridegroom (Jesus) is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom (Jesus) will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (Rapture), at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Ephesians 5:23-27, 32 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish ... This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Jesus spoke about a wedding feast which is also the marriage supper of the Lamb (Matthew 22:1-14, 25:1-13). The bride of Christ is a position held exclusively by the church. The guests at the wedding feast will be the Old Testament saints and martyrs. Jesus said that John the Baptist was the greatest and the last of the Old Testament saints, but the least in the kingdom of heaven will be greater than John.

Matthew 11:11-13 I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist, yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he ... For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.

Even John admitted that he would be just a "friend of the bridegroom" at the wedding.

*John 3:29 (John speaking) "He who has the bride (church) is the bridegroom (Jesus); but **the friend of the bridegroom**, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore, **this joy of mine is fulfilled.**"*

Although John was said to be filled by the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb, he told Jesus that he needed the baptism of the Spirit that Jesus would give (to the church), showing that he is not part of the Spirit-filled church and the bride of Christ.

*Matthew 3:13-14 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "**I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?**"*

The Spirit-filled believers in the New Testament have a better covenant and better promises than John the Baptist and the Old Testament saints.

*Hebrews 8:6 But now He has obtained a **more excellent ministry**, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established on **better promises.***

Hebrews 9:11-14 *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come ... Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption ... how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

It's not that "we" are better than the Old Testament saints, but we have a better covenant and a different type of relationship. Who has the most honor at a wedding, the bride or the family and guests? No doubt it is the bride, but the Old Testament saints and tribulation martyrs will be the friends at the wedding, which is a great honor. But the church is given in pledge to marry Christ, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit is like an engagement ring, given as a down payment sealing the covenant until the wedding day.

Ephesians 1:13-14 *In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

2 Corinthians 1:20-22 *... Now he who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*

Revelation 19:7-9 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'"*



The Rapture

Following Jesus, the next in the order of resurrections is the church. Those who are "in Christ," both the dead and living, will be raptured, meaning snatched from the earth and caught up into the sky to meet Christ in the air and taken to heaven. The rapture could happen at any moment without warning, and it will be like a flash of lightning or the twinkling of an eye.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep (are dead)**. For the Lord Himself will 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. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

1 Corinthians 15:51-54 Behold, I tell you a mystery: **We shall not all sleep (die), but we shall 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 incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."**

Judgment Seat of Christ

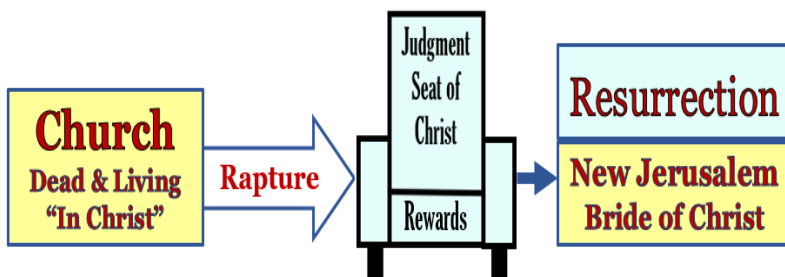
One day the dead and the living believers in Christ will be snatched off the earth and taken up to meet Jesus in the air, and then each believer will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to give an account of their lives. The Judgment Seat of Christ does not determine heaven or hell, condemnation or guilt (no sinners there) but is a judgment reserved for the saints alone to receive their rewards. All of their works pass through a test of fire to verify which ones were approved by God, the works that survive the flames of testing get rewarded, and whatever gets burned up is a total loss.

2 Timothy 4: *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:*

2 Corinthians 5:10-11 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 *For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. **It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames***

1 Peter 1:6-9 *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, **though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith the salvation of your souls.***



There is always a risk of doing works that are not approved, and there is also a risk that we could give away the crowns and rewards that should have been ours. Sometimes we forfeit the opportunities to do acts of service for God by neglect or sin, and those moments may slip away forever, and we lose our crowns.

| Eternal Rewards | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Crown of Glory | 1 Peter 5:2-4 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you ... when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. |
| Eternal Crown | 1 Cor 9:25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. |
| Martyrs Crown | James 1:12 ... who perseveres under trial, will receive the crown of life Rev 2:10 ... Be faithful, even to death, and I will give you the crown of life. |
| Crown of Rejoicing | Php 4:1 ... my brothers, my joy and crown ... in the Lord, dear friends! 1 Th 2:19-20 ... what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you ... |
| Crown of Righteousness | 2 Tim 4:8 there is in store for me the crown of righteousness , the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day but also to all who have longed for his appearing. |

Revelation 3:11 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

In the parable of the prodigal son, he took his inheritance and squandered it on wild living, parties, and women, losing everything he had. Then he returned to the father and was allowed back into the house, but he was empty and broke, and what he wasted was lost forever.

Luke 15:13, 30 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living ... (older son) But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!"

It takes a conscious effort to prioritize our lives to use each day to serve God. We need to make the best use of our time and talents while remaining faithful during the times of testing if we want to lay up treasures in heaven.

Matthew 6:20-21 "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

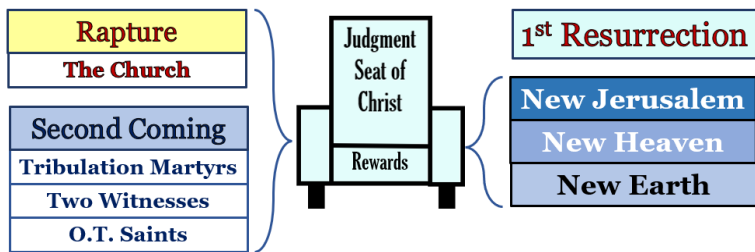
Matthew 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Revelation 3:18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich;

1 Peter 1:6-7 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Ephesians 5:15-16 ... walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Psalm 90:12 So teach us to number our days ...



Two Witnesses

The book of Revelation has the testimony of the two witnesses, who will preach for 3½ years and call for droughts, and fire to consume their enemies. They will be hated by all the ungodly of the world, and the Antichrist will kill them. They will leave the witness's dead bodies in the street and gloat over their deaths. But after 3½ days, they will be resurrected and caught up to heaven, before the whole world.

Revelation 11:7-12 *When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three and a half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Now after the three and a half days the breath (Spirit) of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.*



Tribulation Martyrs

During the time of the great tribulation, there will be a great multitude of believers killed. There will be a global government with a dictator called the Antichrist. He will give a mandate that says no one can buy or sell unless they take his mark or worship his image. All those who disobey the mandate, and refuse the mark, will be killed. (Revelation 13:1-18). A great multitude of believers from all over the world will be faithful to Christ and refuse the mandate. They will be killed, go to heaven, be honored with a crown of life, and will worship before the throne of God.

Revelation 7:9-14 *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, ...*

... clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ... Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So, he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**"

Old Testament Saints

When Christ returns at the second coming, he will resurrect and judge the Old Testament prophets and saints, as we see in the following verses.

Revelation 11:15-18 *The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great and for destroying those who destroy the earth."*

Daniel 12:13 *"But you (Daniel), go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."*

John saw a scene in heaven with martyrs singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. The mention of Moses is a reference to people of Jewish descent being saints and prophets from the Old Testament. Those singing about the Lamb refer to the New Testament believers from Jewish or Gentile backgrounds.

Revelation 15:1-4 *I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues--last, because with them God's wrath is completed. And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They held harps given them by God and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."*

The Church, martyrs, Old Testament prophets, and saints will be part of the first resurrection, and they will not face the second death that is only for sinners.

Revelation 20:4-6 *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

Antichrist & False Prophet

The Antichrist will imitate the actual Christ. He will be more than just demon-possessed; he will be the Devil incarnate. Satan will enter him to unleash Hell on earth. He will demand all the inhabitants of the world to worship him as a god. He has a sidekick, the false prophet, who will bring the world's religions together as one to worship the Antichrist. If anyone refuses to worship the beast or his image or take his mark, the penalty is death.

Revelation 13:7-15 *It was granted to him (antichrist) to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him ... And he (false prophet) deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast (antichrist) who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.*

Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet make an unholy trinity, deceiving by false signs and wonders, the evil trinity will deceive the whole world. At the end of the great tribulation, the Antichrist and the false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire. They will be the first to experience the second death in the resurrection of condemnation.

Revelation 19:19-20 *And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

Lake of Fire

At the end of the millennium Satan is released only to be defeated and sent to the lake of fire. He will be joined later by all sinners, after the white throne judgment when death and Hell get cast into the lake of fire.

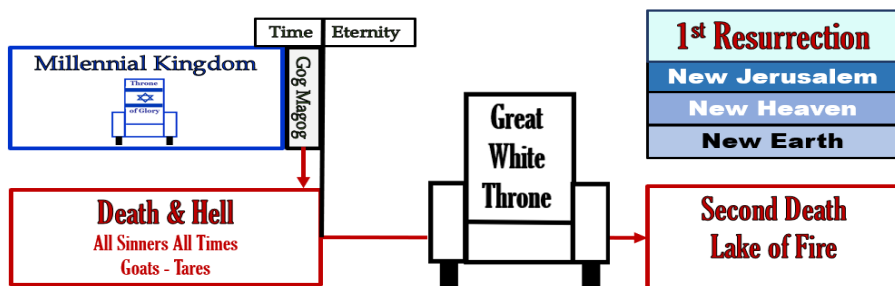
Revelation 20:7-10, 14 *When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth Gog and Magog to gather them for battle. In number, they are like the sand on the seashore...*

... They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. **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 ...**

The Great White Throne

After the second coming, there will be one thousand years of peace, called the millennium. At the end of the millennium, there will be a final war and the physical universe will be destroyed, and time will be no more. Then every sinner who has ever lived will stand before the great white throne for judgment (Saints will not be there). The books will open, and the dead will stand to be judged, out of the books. Those whose names are not in the book of life go to the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:11-15 *Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 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. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. **The lake of fire is the second death.** If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*



Resurrection of Life

Those of us who love God and love His appearing have a blessed hope. We are looking forward to an eternity of bliss in the presence of God. However, we find it hard to comprehend what heaven will be like with our earthly minds. There will be different places, with various glories in Heaven, there will also be differences between each body, based on rewards. The resurrected bodies in Heaven will not be a one-size-fits-all uniform, where everybody is the same. Paul asks and then answers his question, how are the dead raised, and what kind of body will they have?

1 Corinthians 15:35-39 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. ...
... And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of **men**, another flesh of **animals**, another of **fish**, and another of **birds**.

Paul compares the differences in earthly types of bodies to the variations in resurrection bodies. He starts by contrasting the differences between the bodies of **men, animals, fish, birds**. Each of the four categories was designed with a different purpose and function, especially suited for their environment. Birds were designed to soar to clouds, fish to existence underwater, animals to populate the mountains, valleys, and trees. But man was made in God's image to rule over them all.

Paul uses the animal world as an example of God's creativity in designing a vast array of different types of bodies, in showing how each resurrection body could be unique. Just look at how many species and breeds are in God's creation.



With **humans**, there are short, tall, skinny, chubby, brown eyes, blue eyes, different languages, cultures, rich, poor, smart, not smart, etc. With **animals**, there are predators and prey, carnivores and vegetarians, elephants, tigers, hippos, alligators, deer, bears, turtles, sheep, goats, etc. Also, there are variations within one species, like the wolf, Doberman, Shih-Tzu, mastiff, Chihuahua, Great Dane, and many crossbreeds. **Fish** have scales and fins, and there are fresh and saltwater variations like whales, sharks, minnows, goldfish, catfish, trout, tuna, octopus, starfish, sea horses, stingrays, dolphins, etc. **Birds** have wings, feathers, and beaks, and there are eagles, vultures, sparrows, owls, hawks, parrots, ravens, peacocks, turkeys, etc. There are variations of one species like pigeons, or chickens, etc.

With that limited list, you can see how creative God is and imagine how each person will have bodies with boundless capabilities and dwelling places with a beauty beyond human comprehension, and no two are the same.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10 ... "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

Paul spoke about the hope of eternal glory and compared it to the various degrees of glory from star to star. Each star is different, and each person will reflect different levels of God's glory.

*1 Corinthians 15:40-42, There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the **glory** of the heavenly is one, and the **glory** of the earthly is another. There is one **glory** of the sun, and another **glory** of the moon, and another **glory** of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So also, is the resurrection of the dead.*

There are different glories in eternity similar to the sun, moon, and stars. The sun would be a reference to God. You cannot stare at the sun for even a minute without going blind. God's glory will be much more radiant than the sun and will be the only light in eternity.

Revelation 21:23-24 *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.*

The moon has no light of its own but only reflects the light of the sun. The moon refers to those who give witness for the glory of God.

Psalms 89:35-37 *Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness and I will not lie to David that his line will continue forever and his throne endures before me like the sun; **it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky.**"*

The stars are like those who serve God and win souls for Christ.

Daniel 12:3 *Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and **those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.***

When you look up at night and see the billions of stars, each star is unique. That's how it will be in eternity. Star differs from star in glory, each rewarded according to its works. Paul paints another picture of our transformation.

1 Corinthians 15:36-38 *How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, **you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed, he gives its own body.***

Let's say you plant corn, starting with a tiny yellow seed, you plant it in the ground, and it sprouts and becomes a seven-foot-tall green plant with ears growing on its sides. Each ear has a husk outside with rows of little yellow squares inside. What came out of the ground looks nothing like what you planted. At death, we put our bodies in the grave, then what comes up from the grave is the same body, but transformed and different.

We will be recognizable to those who know us, but our resurrected bodies will be eternal without earthly limitations. That body is free from aging, hunger, sickness, and pain, and it will reflect the glory of God. The Apostle Paul endured a tremendous amount of suffering, and he was relentless through the pain by the grace of God because he had a burning vision of his glorious transformation in the resurrection.

***2 Corinthians 4:8-12** We are hard-pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body ...*

***Philippians 3:9-10** ... and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

Paul told the church that if they endured sufferings for Christ, it produces a glory in them that outweighs all their suffering. Paul's scars will shine with the glory of God forever. Nothing we suffer for Christ is in vain because God will reward each one according to the works.

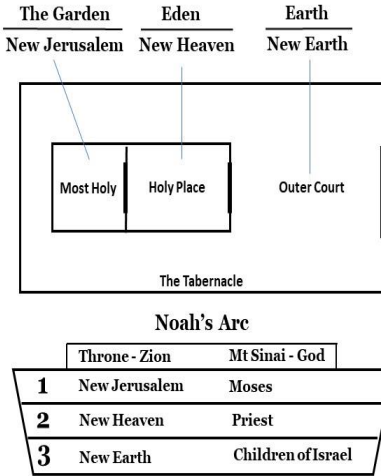
New Jerusalem

Rewards are according to what we have done, so it makes sense that there will be many different places in eternity. If there are millions of people, there could be millions of dwelling places.

Let's use Israel as an example. On planet earth, located between the African, European, and Asian continents, there is a small country called Israel. In Israel, there is a city called Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem is a hill called Zion, and there was (and will be) a Temple there, which is where God's people went to worship.

Heaven

“In my father’s house are many mansions”



Glories

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| Men | Earthly bodies |
| Beast | Heavenly bodies |
| Fish | Sun, Moon, Stars |
| Birds | Stars, each star is different |

Proximity to Jesus

- John the Beloved
- Inner 3 – Peter, James, John
- The 12 Apostles
- The 70 Disciples who were sent out
- The 120 Disciples in the upper room
- 500 Witnesses to the resurrection
- The Multitudes

Proximity to the Beloved

- My Dove (Song of Solomon 6:6-8)
- 60 Queens
- 80 Concubines
- Virgins without number

Proximity to the Throne

- On the Throne
- Round about the Throne
- 24 Little Thrones
- Sea of Glass / Sea of Glass with Fire

The Temple had three different areas inside its walls. The entrance led into a courtyard called the **Outer Court**. Only the 12 tribes of the children of Israel were allowed to enter through the gate into the outer court. All non-Jewish people were forbidden to enter.

Inside the Outer Court, there was a building that had one entrance. It had two rooms. The first room was called the **Holy Place**, and only a priest from one tribe of Israel was allowed to enter and serve in the Holy Place.

From inside the Holy Place was an entrance to the next room, which was the **Most Holy Place**. Only one person, the High Priest, could enter once a year, and he risked his life to do so. Inside the Most Holy Place was the Ark of the Covenant, where God's presence dwelt between two cherubim (angels).

That's how it will be in heaven. There will be different places, different levels of access, with various degrees of glory. There will be a place called the New Earth (*Outer Court*), and place called the New Heaven (*Holy Place*), and a city called the New Jerusalem (*Most Holy Place*), and in that city will be the Throne of God (*Ark of the Covenant*).

*Hebrews 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."*

*Revelation 21:1-2 Now 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. Then I, John, saw the holy city, **New Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a **bride** adorned for her husband.*

*Revelation 21:9-10 ... "Come, I will show you **the bride, the Lamb's wife**." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me **the great city, the holy Jerusalem**, descending out of heaven from God,*

The church is the bride, and she is in New Jerusalem. There will be a New Earth, and it has nations (distinctions between peoples), the kings of the new earth (various levels of authority) will visit the New Jerusalem (with limited access) to bring glory and honor to God (glory and honor as tributes). The New Jerusalem is the throne, and Christ is the temple and its light.

*Revelation 21:22-26 But I saw no temple in it, **for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple**. The city had no need of the sun or 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 (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. **But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.***

The Gospel

The word gospel means good news. Jesus is alive, and if we believe in him, we will live forever. We are saved by faith, not by our good works or church attendance. Salvation is God's gift paid for by the death of Jesus on the cross. Here is the first thing Jesus preached, and this is the first thing we have to do to start and maintain a relationship with God.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "**Repent [change your inner self—your old way of thinking, regret past sins, live your life in a way that proves repentance; seek God's purpose for your life], for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**"

When we give our lives to Christ, it means that we die to our old sinful life so that Jesus can live his life through us.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ [that is, in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.** The life I now live in the body I live by faith [by adhering to, relying on, and completely trusting] in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

When Christ comes into our hearts, everything changes, our lives become so different that we have a new life, we are born again.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ [that is, grafted in, joined to Him by faith in Him as Savior], **he is a new creature** [reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit]; the old things [the previous moral and spiritual condition] have passed away. Behold, new things have come [because spiritual awakening brings a new life]

Think of your family and all the people you know where will they go? If we don't speak to them, who will? We are ambassadors for Christ, and may God give us boldness and wisdom to share with as many as we can while we can!

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ **and gave us the ministry of reconciliation**: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And **he has committed to us the message of reconciliation**. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: **Be reconciled to God.**

Mark 16:15-16 He said to them, "**Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation**. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

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