

Our Eternal Abode

The subject of the Christians eternal home is one of great importance and must be handled carefully according to scripture.

¹⁵Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ¹⁶But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. ¹⁷And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; ¹⁸Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. (2 Timothy 2:15-18)

Paul urged Timothy to handle the word of God correctly and referenced a false teaching concerning the resurrection to prove his point. Paul stated that this false teaching had overthrown the faith of some. Teaching on our eternal home is certainly connected to the resurrection and must be handled carefully.

I want to start with a popular text regarding the return of Christ.

¹⁵For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)

There are a lot of things that will happen when this event takes place. It is our goal to rightly divide the word of God so that we may get a full picture of this event.

The most obvious happening on this day will be the resurrection of the dead.

²⁸Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, ²⁹And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:28, 29)

Both the redeemed and the lost will be raised on this day. This will precede those who live. Once the dead are raised, then those who remain will meet Christ in the air.

I believe that an important point that needs to be made here, is that Christ's return is for the purpose of escorting us somewhere. We are not meeting Him in the air to escort Him back to earth. He is meeting us in the air to escort us somewhere. The place that we are taken will be a result of the final judgment.

³¹When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: ³²And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: ³³And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation

of the world: ⁴¹Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: (Matthew 25:31-34, 41)

The passage says that Christ will sit upon the throne of His glory for this judgment. Where is the throne of Christ located? It is in heaven.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; (Hebrews 8:1)

The throne of Christ is in heaven next to the Father's throne. It is from here that He will judge. The righteous shall enter a kingdom that has been prepared for them and the wicked will enter everlasting fire. It is not our goal to discuss the everlasting fire at this time, so we will continue with the redeemed.

What is this kingdom prepared for the redeemed and where is it located?

²In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John 14:2, 3)

Jesus told his disciples that when He left, He was going to prepare a place for them. He also stated that He would return to receive them that they may be where He is. Jesus went to heaven. The place he prepared is in heaven. When he returns, He will be taking the redeemed to heaven.

This line of thought also fits the type and antitype teachings of the Bible.

¹⁹Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; ²¹And having an high priest over the house of God; ²²Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:19-22)

By His death and ascension, Jesus dedicated for us a new and living way. This way is through the veil. Entering through the veil typified one's entrance into the holy of holies in the tabernacle. This represented heaven, the very throne room of God. Jesus served as a forerunner for us and has made our entrance into heaven possible.

On the day that Jesus returns, time as we know it will end.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (2 Peter 3:10)

Time can be defined as that which has existed since the beginning of the material universe until the return of Christ. At this point human existence will transition from the physical mortal existence to the eternal spiritual existence.

During this time everything designed for this stage of man's existence will be destroyed. The heavens and earth will pass away. It is important to know that there are three heavens mentioned in the Bible.

And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. (Genesis 6:7)

The word air in this passage means heaven in the Hebrew. The first heaven is our atmosphere.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (Matthew 24:29)

The second heaven consists of what we refer to as space, the location of the stars. Then, there is a third heaven.

But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, (Acts 7:55)

This is the third heaven, and it is the dwelling place of God. Only the first two heavens will be destroyed along with the earth. The Bible says that they will "pass away with a great noise." The meaning of these words in the original Greek mean that the physical universe will cease to exist with a great noise. It will be no more.

Our bodies will also go through this transition from the physical to the spiritual.

³⁹All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. ⁴⁰There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. ⁴¹There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. ⁴²So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: ⁴³It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: ⁴⁴It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. (1 Corinthians 15:39-44)

Our old bodies were suited for life in this current state, but that life will not continue. Time will end and existence as we know it will be destroyed. When Christ returns, we will be given a new body that is suited for spiritual life in heaven.

The Bible mentions a new heaven and a new earth.

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (2 Peter 3:13)

The word new in this passage refers to something that has not yet been used. It is not referring to something that has recently been created. The physical existence is no more, now it is time for a spiritual existence in heaven.

This new heaven and earth was seen by the Apostle John.

¹And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. ²And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelation 21:1, 2)

God has made a place for redeemed man within His dimension. A place eternal, not made with hands. A place where we will exist with Him and there will be no pain, death, or sorrow.

Finally, Christ will deliver the kingdom to the Father.

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. ²⁸And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:24, 28)

It is at this time that Jesus returns to the Father that which has been delegated to Him from the Father. This leaves no room for an earthly rule for Jesus. Instead, it is an eternal life in heaven. A transition from this life to the next.