

Heaven: Entering Into Eternity

Hebrews 11, verses 9-10, 13-17, and 23 refer to the New Jerusalem. Abraham and Moses looked for this city. In fact, Abraham lived in a tent as a testimony to others around him that this earth was not his home. Even though the Promised Land had been given to him, he did not claim it as his ultimate home. He looked toward a city whose Builder and Maker was God, a city with permanent foundations. Abraham looked for a city where what was accumulated would be forever, unlike the temporal possessions of this world. Thank God for the car you have, the house you live in, the prosperity you enjoy, and all the other things you may have accumulated, but eventually all of these “things” will be destroyed.

Second Peter told us there will come a day when this whole earth will burn up with fervent heat. When it does, all the elements of this earth are going to be gone and God is going to make a brand new heaven and earth. Until that day, only what is in heaven is eternal. Things on this earth are not. You can dig the foundations of your home on this earth as deep as you want to, but one of these days it will be gone. Don't hang on to the things of this life, but rather embrace and hold on to the promises of God. I don't care what things look like around you. Pull out a promise of God, hold fast to it, embrace it, and God will see to it that it comes to pass.

The Millennium is described from Revelation 20 into Revelation 21:5. Revelation 21:1-8 talks about the eternal state, the eternity of eternities. Revelation 21:9 through Revelation 22:5 describes the actual city of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:1-8:

And 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.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Verses 1 through 7 describe the eternal state of the believer. Verse 8 describes the eternal state of the unbeliever. People often look around and say, “There will always be a tomorrow and there will always be a next year,” but I want you to understand there will be an eternity of eternities. There will be a day when eternity is settled for the believer and eternity is settled for the unbeliever, and the decision you make in this life affects your eternity.

You're in eternity right now. If you have never accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you are in eternity; but eternity can be switched today, and you can change from eternity away from the presence of God into an eternity in the presence of God. The Bible says if you have not accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you are already condemned. Zechariah talks about Joshua, the high priest, being a brand plucked out of the fire. A brand is simply a smoking piece of wood. That's what you looked like. The moment you got born again, you were just a piece of wood snatched out of the fire. In fact, when you got born again, you smelled a little like smoke. God pulled you out of

burning from hell, which is where all of us were when God saved us. We were already in hell as far as God was concerned and He transformed us over into the kingdom of His dear Son.

We're not going to have to wait until we get to heaven to enter eternity; we are already in eternity. The moment you believe on Him, He gives you eternal life.

John 3:16:

For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Your eternity, your everlasting life was given to you the moment you accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. John 10:28 says, *I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.* We entered into eternal life the moment we received Jesus as Lord and Savior, and we have eternal life afterwards. You can spend eternity *with God* or you can spend eternity *away* from the presence of God in the Lake of Fire, which burns with fire and brimstone.

Revelation 21:1:

And 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.

There are three different heavens. The heaven that surrounds the earth is the atmosphere. The next heaven is called outer space, and the third heaven is where God lives. The heaven that will be changed is the heaven surrounding the earth right now — the atmosphere. All of the planets in our galaxy will still exist when the new heaven and the new earth arrive. The Milky Way, along with all the other galaxies, will still exist. Only the sun and the moon will be completely destroyed, but the atmosphere around the earth will be radically changed. It will be necessary for the atmosphere to be changed because it is filled with demons and will be until Jesus returns to rule and reign on earth. Satan is called the Prince of the Power of the Air.

It's interesting to hear the astronauts talk about their first trip into outer space. Once astronauts travel beyond the atmosphere surrounding the earth, they all basically describe a freedom and a release. What they experience is a result of traveling beyond the influence of demonic activity. Those astronauts who traveled to the moon spoke of the awesome presence of God they sensed, even those who didn't know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

I've heard people make comments about oppression coming on them. Because we live in this world, we are surrounded by oppression, but as Christians, we learn to live in victory in the midst of oppression, in the midst of Satan's world. Satan is the god of this world. He's polluted the atmosphere around us. We don't have to look very far to see the earth is in trouble today. One of these days, God is going to totally destroy this earth, destroy the heavens around the earth, and we'll have a new heaven and a new earth!

Revelation 21:2:

And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

John is having a vision of heaven and seeing what's going to happen years down the road, even after the Millennium is over. The heaven where God lives is going to come down and rest over the earth. The earth will have to be changed for that to happen because righteousness cannot come into the presence of unrighteousness, and this earth is filled with unrighteousness. Satan, his demons, and all unbelievers will be cast into the Lake of Fire forever and ever. The earth is going to be renovated, heaven is going to come down and rest over the earth, and the earth will be lit up by the glory of God.

The New Jerusalem, which is the heaven where we live with God and where God lives right now, is fifteen hundred miles wide, fifteen hundred miles deep, and fifteen hundred miles high. The New Jerusalem is also surrounded by walls that are two hundred feet high and made out of every precious gem that you can think of, including diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. The city itself is built out of gold, including the buildings and the streets. Your mansions are going to be made out of gold. Isn't that going to be wonderful? There is so much gold in heaven that homes are built

from it! Earth will not be lit up by the sun or the moon. Both will be gone on that day, and the earth will be lit up by heaven itself. Heaven, which is filled with the glory of God, will light up the whole earth.

Revelation 21:1 told us that the new earth will have no more oceans. Can you imagine a whole earth without oceans? That's because the whole principle of life will be changed. The earth in that day will operate by principles that today's scientists don't know about. Today, the oceans sustain life as we know it and much of our food comes from the ocean. Water evaporates into the air, it's carried back over the land, and it comes back down as rain. The rain falls and causes everything to grow and helps clean up the air. But one day, life will no longer be supported by things around us. Life will be sustained by what is in us — the glory of God.

Every person at that time will have a resurrection body. There have been different times periods. Jesus is the first one.

1 Corinthians 15:23:

But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming.

Christ is called the first fruits here, but notice it says *every man in his own order*. The Greek word for *order* is *tagma* and it means *rank*. This verse is saying, "Every man in his own rank." In fact, the Greek word means a *military rank*. Whether it is a five-star general or a private, everyone has a particular rank in their resurrection. Jesus Christ, our five-star general, was the first one to be resurrected from the dead.

You say "I thought Lazarus was resurrected from the dead. I thought those boys in the Old Testament under Elijah and Elisha were raised from the dead."

They were, but they weren't raised from the dead like Jesus was. He was truly resurrected. Those people who were raised from the dead eventually died again, but Jesus rose from the dead never to die again, because He was given a resurrected body. The great thing is that we're going to have a resurrection body just like Jesus.

The next to be resurrected is the Church. This is found in 1 Corinthians 15:23, and 1 Thessalonians 1:10. That's where Jesus is the first fruit. The Church will be resurrected. First Thessalonians 4:16-18 and Colossians 3:4 also speak of the resurrection of the Church. The resurrection of the Church could happen at any moment.

Stop and think about Jesus' resurrection body. Jesus didn't have to eat, but He did. Food will not keep a resurrection body alive, only the power of God will. We're going to be kept alive by His glory and His power. We'll have a body just like that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament saints and the Tribulation martyrs will be the third group to be resurrected and this will occur at the end of the Tribulation, just as the Millennium begins. (Revelation 20:4, Malachi 3:18, Daniel 12:13) They will receive their resurrection bodies at the end of the Tribulation.

The last to be resurrected and given resurrection bodies are the millennial saints. (Revelation 20:5) At the end of the Millennium, all the saints will be given a resurrection body. At that time, everyone from Adam all the way until the last one born in the Millennium will all have resurrection bodies. Also at that time, all sinners will be brought back to life and will stand before the Great White Throne of Judgment. They will be cast into the Lake of Fire forever and ever.

A resurrection body is so indestructible that Jesus Christ will destroy this earth with fire, but it will not affect us. The Bible says the elements of this earth will burn under fervent heat, but we won't. We'll have a resurrection body just like the Lord Jesus Christ, and the whole earth is going to go through a renovation. We, too, will go through it and come out on the other side to see the new heaven and the new earth. We will stand on this earth and watch heaven come down. At that time the earth will be just as pure as heaven and heaven will rest over it. We'll stand and see what John saw in his vision.

John saw the New Jerusalem descend from heaven. I can't wait for that day. What a day that's going to be to stand on the earth and watch that city, fifteen hundred miles high, wide, and deep, descend from heaven and rest right over the earth. Suddenly the sun and moon will be no more, and the earth will be lit up in every part by the glory of God. Concerned about sleep? We won't need to. We'll have resurrection bodies. Concerned about eating? We

won't need to. We'll have resurrection bodies. There'll be no more need of the oceans or the seas.

1 Corinthians 15:42:

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption.

Your body is corruptible, but it will one day be raised up in incorruption. To sow means to *plant*. In other words, your body will be planted in corruption. It will be raised up in incorruption. Those who have died and gone before us have not really been buried. They've been planted, and they're going to come forth incorruptible. The resurrection body is incorruptible compared to the corruptible body we have now. We walk by faith with the body we have right now. Will we live by faith in heaven? No, we won't need to live by faith in heaven. We live by faith while there are problems around us, when Satan and his demons are around us, while we're in a corruptible body; but there's going to come a time when we stand before God in heaven with an incorruptible body that we received at the rapture of the Church. We will no longer need to walk by faith because then we will see Him face to face.

Until we see Him face to face and will no longer need to walk by faith, we have the promises and power of God. We live in a corruptible body. Why do we need to believe God for health? Because we're susceptible to sickness. Why do we need to believe God for prosperity? Because we're susceptible to poverty. Why do we need to believe Him for divine health? Because our body is deteriorating day by day. The Bible says the outward man is perishing. You once thought you would always have all your hair, keep your figure, and you weren't going to get wrinkles. But the older you become, the more you begin to realize you cannot stop the aging process. However, even though the outward man is perishing, the inward man is renewed day by day.

As you get older, beauty switches from the outward man to the inward man. You should be more beautiful the older you get because your inward beauty comes out and that is the true beauty anyway. As you allow the spirit man to manifest, the real beauty on the inside will be evident. People will be drawn to your spiritual beauty. The inward man is renewed day by day, but the outward man is perishing. Our resurrection body is going to be indestructible compared to this body. We'll have a body that cannot be destroyed.

Galatians 4:26:

But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

The earthly Jerusalem we see today is in bondage because the whole earth is in bondage. The only way to truly be set free is by the Lord Jesus Christ. Every time I have gone to Jerusalem I have sensed the presence of God, but I can also sense that it is surrounded by bondage. The Lord Jesus Christ sets you free. You're not set free because of an earthly city; you are set free because of a heavenly city — the New Jerusalem.

Hebrews 12:22 tells us we don't need to wait until we get to heaven to visit the New Jerusalem; we can visit it every day. The Bible says we have not come to an earthly mountain that cannot be touched, but we have come to the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels. We visit that city whenever we come before the Lord in prayer, in praise, and in worship.

You should pray every day. Pray for the needs of others, lift up the needs of souls and those who need to be healed. The Lord said that daily we should lift up our voices before Him. You should praise the Lord every day. You should pray in tongues every day. Praise and worship is a means of coming into that holy city. I don't want to get there that final day and be shocked when I see the city descending. I want to be able to go to that city every day, and the Bible says we can march right into the throne room of God as we come before Him in prayer and in praise and in worship.

Revelation 21:2:

And I John saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The preparing of the bride for the husband is the adorning with the jewels. The city will be adorned as God wants it to be. I believe it's still being adorned today. Jesus said He's gone there to prepare for us habitations. He's gone to prepare us mansions in heaven and one day that city will be completely prepared and totally adorned for us as the Lord causes it to descend out of heaven. He said it will descend as a bride prepared for her husband. I have

performed many weddings and they usually run late because the bride is not totally adorned yet. She wants to look just right for her husband.

Every day we stop and wonder why the Lord hasn't come. I believe He's getting us, the Church, adorned, but He's also getting that city adorned as a bride prepares for her husband. It will be adorned with gold and jewels and will be so dazzling that when John had a glimpse, he couldn't find the words to describe it!

Revelation 21:3-4:

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

The tabernacle of God is the house of God. Heaven is God's home and He's going to literally bring it into the presence of man. People often say there'll be no tears in heaven. I disagree. God's going to wipe them away, but there will be tears. I think first time people see heaven, they'll think about all the people they knew that aren't going to be there —people they witnessed to that rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible says God will wipe away all tears, and when God wipes away tears, He wipes away the source of tears. He's going to wipe away even the memories of the thing.

The first thing He will wipe away is physical and spiritual death. Verse 8 tells us about the final abolishment of spiritual death where those who are banished into the Lake of Fire will go forever.

God is also going to wipe away mental anguish. The source of real agony always begins in our heart and He's going to wipe that away.

He's going to wipe away crying, which is deep sorrow and mourning. Right now you might be going through times of crying and mourning, but there's going to come a day when it will be totally wiped away.

The fourth thing wiped away will be pain, and this has to do with physical pain. It says the former things are passed away. Aren't you glad the former things will be gone?

I enjoy being born again, but I still face pressures in life. I am glad there is coming a day when those pressures are totally gone. Don't feel badly for people who have died, because they're in that very kingdom right now. We mourn for those who have gone on, but if we could just talk to them do you know what they'd say? Wish you were here! Funerals have to be some of the hardest things I have ever done. I enjoy doing weddings. I don't look forward to funerals, but funerals are inevitable. If the Lord doesn't come, there will be a time when we will die and go on to be with the Lord. Until then, we need to get our eyes off of our situation down here on earth and focus them on what our loved ones are experiencing in heaven!

Death is one of those times when tears have two meanings. Tears can be for sorrow and at the same time be for joy. I believe tears can, in a sense, unite joy and sorrow. It is possible to be shedding tears of joy, mixed with sorrow. You can be sorrowful that a loved one has passed away because you're going to miss them, but filled with joy knowing they've gone on to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. I have no idea what sinners must go through when they see someone die. I'm so glad I know Jesus as Lord and Savior. If He got you born again, delivered you out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son, you can be certain He will take care of you when you die and enter heaven. He will take care of you! You are in His hands! He is watching over you.

Revelation 21:5:

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

The Greek says *I make and keep on making all things new*. People often ask me about heaven, and I think it's probably one of the most interesting topics to discuss. It is fun trying to imagine what it will be like, but you can let your imagination go wild and still never come close to envisioning what heaven will actually be like.

People often ask me about eternity. What will we do for all of eternity? They can understand being there for a year or two and doing some things, but what will we be doing the one thousandth year or the millionth year? We will be doing the same thing we did the first day we arrived in heaven. We will be praising God for all of eternity,

worshipping Him, singing before Him, clapping our hands, and dancing in His presence! Some wonder, "Won't we get bored?" No, it's impossible to get bored because we will have a resurrection body. The former things are passed away. But just to ensure we will never be bored, the Bible says Jesus will continue to make all things new.

Every day will be just like the first day. You will praise the Lord after you've been there for a million years and it will be just like the first day you experienced heaven because He will keep all things new. Glory to God! Remember the first time you heard singing in the Spirit? Imagine being in heaven and every day being just like the first time you experienced it. Heaven will be that wonderful.

Revelation 21:6:

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

In other words, now it's over. We are entering into the eternity of eternities. Sin has been put out of the way. The cross has done its part. Everything that needs to be fulfilled has been fulfilled, everything has been done, and now we enter into the eternity of eternities.

That's why he says in this verse *I am Alpha and Omega*. The Greek here says *I keep on being and continually will be the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end*. Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet; Omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet. This simply means that Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end. He always has been, He always will be, and He's everything in between. When we stand before Him on that day and heaven is descending out of the universe to rest over this earth, we're going to hear that voice say, "I am Alpha and Omega, you saw Me in ages past, you saw My Word come to pass, everything has been done, and now we're about to enter into Omega. We are about to enter in the eternities of eternities. You knew Me from eternities past, now you'll see Me in eternity future, and you'll always be with me.

How do we enter into this kingdom? How are we going to see heaven descending? How are we going to experience the new heaven and a new earth? How do we live in that righteous kingdom with God? It is a free gift! We drink of the waters of life *freely*.

Revelation 21:7:

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

What is an overcomer?

1 John 4:4:

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Them are demons. (1 John 1:3) Satan, the god of this world, and the host of demons that operate around him.

Who is it that lives in you? Jesus Christ lives in you through the presence of the Holy Spirit. When did Jesus come to live in you? At the new birth, the moment you were saved. Therefore, from the moment are saved, you are an overcomer.

The phrase, *...and have overcome them*, is past tense. People often say, "I'm not overcoming in my life." That's because they haven't started living like what they are. You *are* an overcomer. Begin to see yourself as an overcomer. You have overcome the problems that surround you right now through the work of Jesus on the Cross.

1 John 5:4:

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

If you are born of God then you have overcome the world. It doesn't matter if you feel like one or not, this verse says you are. It may seem like the world is overcoming you. This verse says you overcome the world. As a born-again believer, you need to put faith toward your circumstances

1 John 5:5:

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God?

If you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, you are an overcomer! That's what this verse says. God has made you to be an overcomer. You have overcome the world, you have overcome the flesh, and you have overcome the devil.

Revelation 21:7:

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

I want you to understand that right now God is your Father. You are His son; you are His very own daughter. One day we will live with Him forever and forever in His presence, and that all comes because you have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. You have drunk of the waters of life freely. God offers that water to you today, and you can drink of it freely.

Revelation 21:8:

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

The Greek literally says, *but the fearful even the unbelieving, even the abominable, even the murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

The second death is mentioned in this verse because there are two deaths. Jesus told Adam in the Garden of Eden; *in the day that thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die.* (Genesis 3:3) Adam literally died twice. He first died spiritually, and then he died physically. Since then, everyone born into this earth faces two types of death — a physical death first then a spiritual death. If a person dies physically in this earth without ever accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the only eternity he has to look forward to is separation from God, banishment from Him in the Lake of Fire forever and forever. But you have a way out of that. You have been born physically. You wouldn't be here if you weren't born physically. Have you been born twice? If you have been born twice, you'll only die once; but if you've only been born once, you're going to die twice. If you accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, He'll give you the new birth and you will never face the second death.

Drink of the waters of life freely that Jesus offers. Jesus told the woman at the well, "If you'll drink of the water in this well, you'll thirst again; but if you drink of the waters that I'm going to give unto you, you'll never thirst again."

It shall come out of you. It shall be bubbling up in you, a well of water springing up, into everlasting life. I'm so glad that I am never going to face the second death. I'll never be banished from the presence of God into the Lake of Fire which burns because I've accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. The waters of life are offered to you freely and that life is not talking about a physical life; it's talking about an eternal life. You can have God's life today.

If you were to die today, are you sure you would go to heaven? Are you sure you would be in the presence of God? If the answer is 'no', you can change that today. You can enter into your eternal life today and not wait until the day that you die to find out. You can know today, because the Bible says today is the day of salvation. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, but you make the decision before that time because it's appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment. You can make up your mind today and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Today, you can begin to experience eternity.

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