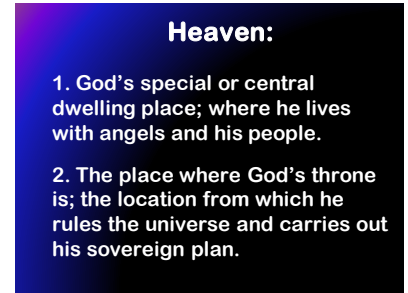


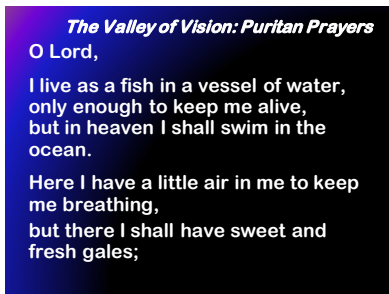
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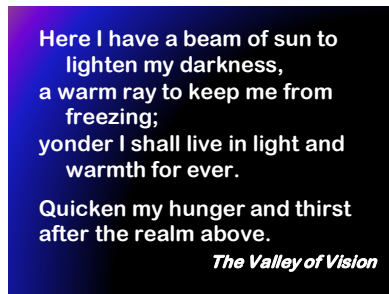
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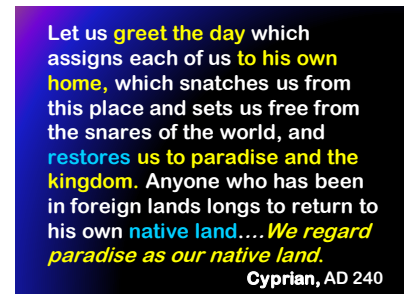
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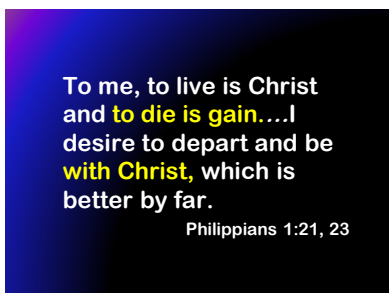
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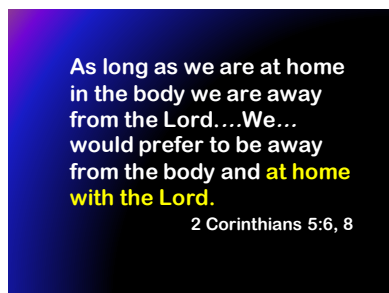
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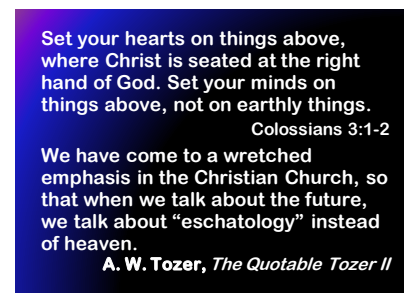
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8



9

At present we are on the outside of the world, **the wrong side of the door**. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendours we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with **the rumour that it will not always be so**. Some day, God willing, we shall get *in*.

C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

10

Hebrews 11:13-16, NLT

All these people died still believing what God had promised them. **They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance** and welcomed it. They agreed that they were foreigners and nomads here on earth.

11

...Obviously people who say such things are looking forward to a country they can call their own. If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back. But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:13-16, NLT

12

Nothing is more often misdiagnosed than our homesickness for Heaven. We think that what we want is sex, drugs, alcohol, a new job, a raise, a doctorate, a spouse, a large-screen television, a new car, a cabin in the woods, a condo in Hawaii. What we really want is the person we were made for, Jesus, and the place we were made for, Heaven. Nothing less can satisfy us.

13

A. J. Conyers,

The Eclipse of Heaven

Even to one without religious commitment and theological convictions, it should be an unsettling thought that this world is attempting to chart its way through some of the most perilous waters in history, having now decided to ignore what was for nearly two millennia its fixed point of reference—its North Star.

14

...The certainty of judgment, the longing for heaven, the dread of hell: these are not prominent considerations in our modern discourse about the important matters of life. But they once were.

A. J. Conyers

15

A. J. Conyers,

The Eclipse of Heaven

As long as people were taught the idea...that our true home is elsewhere, there was a certain satisfaction in the answer itself. For centuries, the idea that this world is not, by itself, our home—emotionally, spiritually, or even socially—was a compelling idea because it was enormously convincing.

16

...It unlocked a secret about human existence that seemed to fit what everyone already sensed about human suffering, human aspiration, and the desire to express life in self-giving love. Neither the flame of persecution nor the ever-present danger of disease or war could extinguish this new lease on life.

17

...Poverty was still painful but not hopeless. Illness might end in death, but death was not the absolute end. Life took on a creative and vibrant energy because it was harnessed to an overall purpose.

A. J. Conyers

18

Joni Eareckson Tada,
Heaven: Your Real Home

When a Christian realizes his citizenship is in heaven, he begins acting as a responsible citizen of earth. He invests wisely in relationships because he knows they're eternal. His conversations, goals, and motives become pure and honest because he realizes these will have a bearing on everlasting reward.

19

...He gives generously of time, money, and talent because he's laying up treasure for eternity. He spreads the good news of Christ because he longs to fill heaven's ranks with his friends and neighbors. All this serves the pilgrim well not only in heaven, but on earth; for it serves everyone around him.

Joni Eareckson Tada

20

C. S. Lewis,
Mere Christianity

Hope is one of the Theological virtues. This means that a continual looking forward to the eternal world is not (as some modern people think) a form of escapism or wishful thinking, but one of the things a Christian is meant to do. It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is.

21

...If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who abolished the Slave Trade, all left their mark on Earth, precisely

22

...because their minds were occupied with Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth "thrown in": aim at earth and you will get neither.

C. S. Lewis

23

The life of a Christian is wondrously ruled in this world, by the consideration and meditation of the life of another world.

Richard Sibbes,
The Pilgrim's Progress & Traditions in Puritan Meditation, AD 1600

24

Only from our anticipation of the new perspective of heaven, from which we, one day, will look back and evaluate what now seems senseless, can we be empowered to endure this world in all its ugliness and moral deformity.

Sam Storms

25

Secular optimists are merely wishful thinkers. Discovering the present payoffs of optimism, they conduct seminars and write books on thinking positively. Sometimes they capitalize on optimism by becoming rich and famous. But then what happens?

26

A.W. Tozer, "The World to Come"

Let no one apologize for the powerful emphasis Christianity lays upon the doctrine of the world to come. Right there lies its immense superiority to everything else within the whole sphere of human thought or experience. When Christ arose from death and ascended into heaven He established forever three important facts;

27

...namely, that this world has been condemned to ultimate dissolution, that the human spirit persists beyond the grave and that there is indeed a world to come.

The church is constantly being tempted to accept this world as her home, and sometimes she has listened to the blandishments of those who would woo her away and use her for their own ends.

28

...But if she is wise she will consider that she stands in the valley between the mountain peaks of eternity past and eternity to come. The past is gone forever and the present is passing as swift as the shadow on the sun dial of Ahaz. Even if the earth should continue a million years, not one of us could stay to enjoy it. We do well to think of the long tomorrow.

A. W. Tozer

29

Heaven in People's Minds v. Heaven in the Bible

30

I've been a Christian since I was five. I'm married to a youth pastor. When I was seven, a teacher at my Christian school told me that when I got to Heaven, I wouldn't know anyone or anything from earth. I was terrified of dying. I was never told any different by anyone....It's been really hard for me to advance in my Christian walk because of **this fear of Heaven and eternal life.**

31

When I was a boy, **the thought of Heaven used to frighten me more than the thought of Hell.** I pictured Heaven as a place where time would be perpetual Sundays, with perpetual services from which there would be no escape.

David Lloyd George

32

John Eldredge,
The Journey of Desire

Nearly every Christian I have spoken with has some idea that eternity is an unending church service....We have settled on an image of the never-ending sing-along in the sky, one great hymn after another, forever and ever, amen. And our heart sinks....

33

...Forever and ever? That's it? That's the good news? And then we sigh and feel guilty that we are not more 'spiritual.' We lose heart, and we turn once more to the present to find what life we can.

John Eldredge

34

[The widow Douglass] went on and told me all about the good place. She said all a body would have to do there was go around all day long with a harp and sing, forever and ever. **So I didn't think much of it....** I asked her if she reckoned Tom Sawyer would go there, and she said, not by a considerable sight. I was glad about that, because I wanted him and me to be together.

Huck Finn

35

I don't believe in an afterlife, so I don't have to spend my whole life fearing hell, or fearing heaven even more. **For whatever the tortures of hell, I think the boredom of heaven would be even worse.**

Isaac Asimov

36

Whenever I think about heaven, it makes me depressed. I'd rather cease to exist when I die. **I can't stand the thought of endless boring tedium. Heaven doesn't sound much better than hell.** I'd rather be annihilated than spend eternity like that.

Evangelical pastor

37

To come to Thee is to come home from exile, to come to land out of the raging storm, to come to rest after long labour, to come to the goal of my desires and the summit of my wishes.

Charles Spurgeon

38

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's **house** are many **rooms**; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a **place** for you. And if I go and prepare a **place** for you, will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be **where** I am.

John 14:1-3

39

Christ chose common, physical terms (*house, rooms, place*) to describe where he was going and what he was preparing for us.

This place is not an ethereal realm of disembodied spirits; human beings are not suited for such a realm.

40

A place is by nature physical, as humans are by nature physical. What we are suited for—what we've been specifically designed for—is a place like the one God made for us: Earth.

We are also spiritual. But a physical realm isn't incompatible with the spiritual.

41

Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly. For all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakable remains.

The Teacher,
in *The Great Divorce*, by C. S. Lewis

42

O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am!

Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you.

Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath!

David, Psalm 39:4-5, ESV

43

Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

Moses, Psalm 90:12, ESV

44

Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

James 4:14

45

...the time has come for my **departure**. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on *that day*.
2 Timothy 4:6-8

46

"the time has come for my **departure**" (*analousis*, to loosen)

1. Loosening ox from yoke or cart.
2. Pulling up tent stakes for travel.
3. Untying ship from dock, to let sail.
4. Unchaining a prisoner.
5. Solving a problem.

47

If any righteous man among the Christians passes from this world, **they rejoice and offer thanks to God**, and they *escort his body with songs and thanksgiving* as if he were **setting out from one place to another nearby**.

Aristides, AD 125

48

I have just heard, to my great surprise, that I have but a few days to live. It may be that before this reaches you, I shall have entered the palace. Don't trouble to write. We shall meet in the morning.

F. B. Meyer,
letter to a friend
a few days before his death

49

Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know **how fleeting is my life**. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. **Each man's life is but a breath**.

Psalm 39:4-5

50

Since the children have flesh and blood, Christ too shared in their humanity so that *by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death*—that is, the devil—and **free those** who all their lives were **held in slavery by their fear of death**.

Hebrews 2:14-15

51

When you know the truth about what happens to you after you die, and you believe it, and you are satisfied with all that God will be for you in the ages to come, **that truth makes you free indeed**. Free from the short, shallow, suicidal pleasures of sin, and free for the sacrifices of mission and ministry that cause people to give glory to our Father in heaven.

John Piper, *Future Grace*

52

God will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; **he will swallow up death forever**. The Sovereign Lord will **wipe away the tears from all faces**; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth.

Isaiah 25:7-8

53

The trumpet will sound, *the dead will be raised imperishable... then* the saying that is written will come true: **"Death has been swallowed up in victory**. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

1 Corinthians 15:55

54

One time when a master died, a slave expressed doubt about the master's heavenly arrival. When asked why, he said, "When Massa go north, or go on a long journey to the springs, he talked about it for a long time and got ready. I never heard him talking about going to heaven. I never saw him get ready to go."

John Gilmore, *Probing Heaven*

55

You won't last long here. Think about what will become of you in another world. You are here today and gone tomorrow; we should plan every word and action as though we were going to die today; the person who thinks about his own death and daily prepares to die will be blessed.

Thomas à Kempis,
The Imitation of Christ, AD 1420

56

Charles Spurgeon,
"Dying Daily," Sermon 828

No man would find it difficult to die who died every day. He would have practiced it so often, that he would only have to die but once more like the singer who has been through his rehearsals, and is perfect in his part, and has but to pour forth the notes once for all, and have done.

57

...Happy are they who every morning go down to Jordan's bank, and wade into the stream in fellowship with Christ, dying in the Lord's death, being crucified on his cross, and raised in his resurrection.

Charles Spurgeon

58

Are You Looking Forward to Heaven?

J. C. Ryle, *Heaven*

The man who is about to sail for Australia or New Zealand as a settler, is naturally anxious to know something about his future home, its climate, its employments, its inhabitants, its ways, its customs. All these are subjects of deep interest to him. You are leaving the land of your nativity, you are going to spend the rest of your life in a new hemisphere....

60

...It would be strange indeed if you did not desire information about your new abode. Now surely, if we hope to dwell for ever in that "better country, even a heavenly one," we ought to seek all the knowledge we can get about it. **Before we go to our eternal home we should try to become acquainted with it.**

J. C. Ryle

61

It becomes us to spend this life only as a journey toward heaven...to which we should subordinate all other concerns of life. **Why should we labor for or set our hearts on anything else, but that which is our proper end and true happiness?**

Jonathan Edwards,
"The Christian Pilgrim"

62

John Baillie, 19

I will not ask how often during the last twenty-five years you and I have listened to an old-style warning against the flames of hell. I will not even ask how many sermons have been preached in our hearing about a future day of reckoning when men shall reap according as they have sown.

63

...It will be enough to ask how many preachers, during these years, have dwelt on the joys of heavenly rest with anything like the old ardent love and impatient longing.

John Baillie

64

Where do we get our misconceptions about heaven?

Jesus said, "When he [Satan] lies he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

John 8:44

65

[The satanic beast] opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander *his name* and *his dwelling place* and *those who live in heaven.*

Revelation 13:6, NIV

66

Satan slanders:

- 1) *God's person*
- 2) *God's people*
- 3) *God's place*

67

Isaiah 14:12-14

How you have fallen from heaven, **O morning star, son of the dawn!** You have been cast down to the earth...**You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God;**

68

...I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

Isaiah 14:12-14

69

You were in Eden, the garden of God... You were anointed as a guardian cherub...**You were on the holy mount of God...** You were blameless in your ways...**till wickedness was found in you.... So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and expelled you, O guardian cherub.**

Ezekiel 28:13-16

70

After being evicted from Heaven, the devil is bitter toward

- 1) God
- 2) man
- 3) heaven, the place that's no longer his.

Satan usurps and corrupts humanity's God-given rulership of earth.

71

Satan whispers lies re: Heaven

- He suppresses the central truth of God's redemptive victory: the resurrection and the New Earth.
- He covers up God's coming reclamation of earth, humanity, nations and culture.
- He labors to hide the promised reversal of the curse and Messiah's and humanity's triumphant reign.

72

Is Heaven Beyond Our Imagination?

73

Alister McGrath,
A Short History of Heaven

To speak of “imagining heaven” does not imply that heaven is fictional, constructed by disregarding the harsher realities of the everyday world. It is to affirm the critical role of the God-given human capacity to construct and enter into

74

mental pictures of divine reality, which are mediated through Scripture and reflection.... We are able to inhabit the mental images we create, and thence anticipate the delight of finally entering the greater reality to which they correspond.

Alister McGrath

75

While reason is the natural organ of truth, imagination is the organ of meaning.
C. S. Lewis

The Christian is the really free man—he is free to have imagination. This too is our heritage. The Christian is the one whose imagination should fly beyond the stars.

Francis Schaeffer

76

Puddleglum,

in The Silver Chair, by C. S. Lewis

Suppose we *have* only dreamed, or made up, all those things—trees and grass and sun and moon and stars and Aslan himself. Suppose we have. Then all I can say is that...the made-up things seem a good deal more important than the real ones. Suppose this black pit of a kingdom of yours *is* the only world.

77

...Well, it strikes me as a pretty poor one. And that's a funny thing, when you come to think of it. We're just babies making up a game, if you're right. But four babies playing a game can make a play-world which licks your real world hollow.

Puddleglum, C. S. Lewis

78

Can You Know You're Going to Heaven?

79

Soon you will read in the newspaper that I am dead. Don't believe it for a moment. I will be more alive than ever before.
D. L. Moody

Earth recedes. . . . Heaven opens before me!

D. L. Moody (*on his deathbed*)

80

*Pause, stranger,
when you pass me by:
As you are now, so once was I.
As I am now, so you will be.
So prepare for death and follow me.*

An unknown passerby scratched these additional words on the tombstone:

*To follow you I'm not content,
Until I know which way you went.
An Indiana cemetery tombstone*

81

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so *that you may know that you have eternal life.*

1 John 5:13

82

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

83

Salvation is found in no one else [but Jesus], for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

Acts 4:12

84

He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities....As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Psalms 103:10-12

85

He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Proverbs 28:13

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

86

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:6

He who is not with me is against me.

Luke 11:23

87

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

88

Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

Matthew 7:21-23

89

He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Revelation 21:7-8

90

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Revelation 22:17

91

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

Isaiah 55:6

92

I am not tired of my work, neither am I tired of the world; yet when Christ calls me home, I shall go with the gladness of a boy bounding away from his school. Perhaps I feel something like the young bride, when she contemplates resigning the pleasant association of her childhood for a yet dearer home—though only a very little like her, for *there is no doubt resting on my future.*

Adoniram Judson, *on death bed*

93

The Present Heaven:
Where God's people go when they die

94

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to **grieve like the rest of men**, who have no hope....God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him....We who are still alive and are left will be caught up **together with them**....And so **we will be with the Lord forever**. Therefore **encourage each other with these words**.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

95

The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Ecclesiastes 12:7

Today you will be with me in paradise.

Luke 23:43

96

J. Sidlow Baxter,
The Other Side of Death
Would Paul ever have said, "to die is gain," if from the moment of his demise he was to lie in the stark oblivion of soul-sleep for an indeterminate duration? What possible "gain" could it have been, to leave his Spirit-filled ministry, his rich communion with Christ, his bringing of thousands to know the Savior, his founding of churches around the world,

97

...his teaching of believers, his inspired letter-writing for the guidance and edification of the Christian assemblies?

As 2 Corinthians 12:1-4 tells us, Paul had been "caught up" by the Holy Spirit and given more than a glimpse of what awaits the Christian on the other side of death; and *that* is what he has in mind when he exults, "To die is *gain!*"

J. Sidlow Baxter

98

Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

Acts 7:55-56

99

Stephen did not see mere symbols of a state of existence. Rather, his eyes were opened to see a spiritual dimension of reality which God has hidden from us in this present age, a dimension which really does exist in our space/time universe, and within which Jesus now lives in his physical resurrected body, waiting for a time when he will return to earth.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*

100

The prophet Elisha asked God to give his servant, Gehazi, a glimpse of the invisible realm. He prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

2 Kings 6:17

101

The Present Heaven and the Eternal Heaven

102

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth....I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God....And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God."

Revelation 21:1-3

103

In Revelation 21:1, the Greek word *kainos*, translated "new" in the term *New Earth*, means new "in the sense that what is old has become obsolete, and should be replaced by what is new. In such a case the new is, as a rule, superior in kind to the old."

Paul uses the same word, *kainos*, when he speaks of a believer in Christ becoming "a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

104

Anthony Hoekema,
"Heaven: Not Just
an Eternal Day Off"

The "new Jerusalem"...does not remain in a "heaven" far off in space, but it comes down to the renewed earth; there the redeemed will spend eternity in resurrection bodies.

105

... So heaven and earth, now separated, will then be not: the new earth will also be heaven, since God will dwell there with his people. Glorified believers, in other words, will continue to be in heaven while they are inhabiting the new earth.

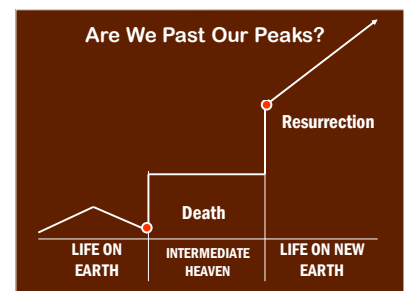
Anthony Hoekema

106

In Revelation 21–22...it is not we who go to heaven, it is heaven that comes to earth; indeed, it is the church itself, the heavenly Jerusalem, that comes down to earth. This is the ultimate rejection of all types of Gnosticism, of every worldview that sees the final goal as the separation of the world from God, of the physical from the spiritual, of earth from heaven.

N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*

107



109

Peter Jackson's
The Return of the King

Pippin: "I didn't think it would end this way..."

Gandalf: "End? No, the journey doesn't end here. Death is just another path...one that we all must take. The grey rain-curtain of this world rolls back, and all change to silver glass...and then you see it..."

110

Pippin: "What? Gandalf? See what?"

Gandalf: "White shores...and beyond. The far green country under a swift sunrise."

Pippin: "Well, that isn't so bad."

Gandalf: "No...no, it isn't."

Peter Jackson's
The Return of the King

111

Christians often talk about living with God "in heaven" forever. But in fact the biblical teaching is richer than that: it tells us that there will be new heavens and a new earth—an entirely renewed creation—and we will live with God there....There will also be a new kind of unification of heaven and earth....There will be a joining of heaven and earth in this new creation.

Wayne Grudem

112

The general tenor of prophecy and the analogy of the divine dealings point unmistakably to this earth purified and renewed, and *not to the heavens* in any ordinary sense of the term, as the eternal habitation of the blessed.

Henry Alford,
Greek New Testament

113

We are earthlings. We were made to live here. This world is our home.

For too long, many evangelical Christians have mistakenly believed that the goal of life is to escape the bounds of earth....

Heaven is merely the first leg of a journey that is roundtrip.

Michael Wittmer,
Heaven Is a Place on Earth

114

My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

John 14:23

115

Lord Digory,
in *The Last Battle*, by C. S. Lewis

When Aslan said you could never go back to Narnia, he meant the Narnia you were thinking of. But that was not the real Narnia. That had a beginning and an end. It was only a shadow or a copy of the real Narnia, which has always been here and always will be here: just as our own world,

116

...England and all, is only a shadow or copy of something in Aslan's real world. All of the old Narnia that mattered, all the dear creatures, have been drawn into the real Narnia through the Door. And of course it is different; as different as a real thing is from a shadow or as waking life is from a dream.

Lord Digory, C. S. Lewis

117

We are not past our peaks. We do not just "go around once" on this earth, so we must grab for all the gusto now while we still can. The best is yet to be. The best *on earth* is yet to be!

118

N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*
 Many mental pictures have grown up around this and are now assumed to be what the Bible teaches or what Christians believe. (A healthy corrective is found in a series of books by Randy Alcorn, principally *Heaven*. Alcorn comes from a tradition that might easily have lapsed

119

...into Shriver-type platitudes ...but his study of Scripture has led him to a far more robust and biblical view—even though he still uses the word *heaven* when what he emphatically talks about throughout is the new heavens and new earth.)

N. T. Wright

120

If “the dwelling of God” will be with his people on the New Earth (Rev. 21:1-3) , and “the throne of God and of the Lamb” will be in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:1), brought down from the present Heaven to the New Earth, then ... **Heaven will be relocated to the New Earth. The New Earth WILL be heaven**, and the new heavens WILL be Heaven’s outskirts.

121

If we want to know what the ultimate Heaven, our eternal home, will be like, the best place to start is by looking around us. We shouldn’t close our eyes and try to imagine the unimaginable. We should open our eyes, because the present Earth is as much a valid reference point for envisioning the New Earth as our present bodies are a valid reference point for envisioning our new bodies.

122

Without understanding that the best is yet to come, we assume people who die young, are handicapped, aren’t healthy, don’t get married, or don’t _____ [fill in the blank] will miss out on the best life has to offer. **But the theology underlying those assumptions is fatally flawed.** We’re presuming that our present Earth, bodies, culture, relationships, and lives are superior to those of the New Earth!

123

Is the Present Heaven a Physical Place?

124

For the entrance of the greater world is wide and sure, and they who see the straitness and the painfulness from which they have been delivered must wonder exceedingly as they are received into those large rooms with joy and immortality.

Amy Carmichael, *Promises of Heaven*

125

Christ went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, **not a part of this creation.**

Hebrews 9:11

Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; **he entered heaven itself.**

Hebrews 9:24

126

The hills and valleys of Heaven will be to those you now experience not as a copy is to an original, nor as a substitute is to the genuine article, but as the flower to the root, or the diamond to the coal.

C. S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm*

127

God drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 3:24, NASB

128

Meanwhile we groan, **longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling**, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, 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.

2 Corinthians 5:2-4

129

I know a man who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. **Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know**—God knows. And I know that this man...was caught up to **paradise**. He heard inexpressible things, that man is not permitted to tell.

2 Corinthians 12:3-4

130

Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

Genesis 5:24, NASB

131

Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha...saw him no more.

2 Kings 2:11-12, NKJV

132

Luke 16:19-31

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

133

...The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire."

134

...But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us."

135

...He answered, "Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment."

Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them."

136

...“No, father Abraham,” he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.”

He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

Luke 16:19-31

137

What Is Life Like in the Intermediate Heaven?

138

Revelation 6:9-11

I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “**How long**, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”

139

...Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to **wait a little longer**, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

Revelation 6:9-11

140

1. When these people died on Earth, they relocated to Heaven (v. 9).

141

2. These people in Heaven were the same ones killed for Christ while on Earth (v. 9). This demonstrates direct **continuity** between our identity on Earth and in Heaven. The martyrs’ personal history extends back to their lives on Earth. Those in the present Heaven aren’t different people; **they are the same people relocated**—“righteous men made perfect” (Hebrews 12:23).

142

3. Earth isn’t forgotten in Heaven. The people there will be remembered for their lives on Earth. These were known and identified as ones slain “because of...the testimony they had maintained” (v. 9).

143

4. “They called out” (v. 10). They are **able to speak**, to express themselves verbally. This could suggest they exist in physical form, with vocal cords or some tangible means to express themselves.

144

5. People in the intermediate Heaven can **raise their voices** (v. 10). This indicates that they are rational, communicative, and emotional—even passionate—beings, like people now living on Earth.

145

6. They called out in “a loud voice,” not “loud voices.” Individuals speaking with one voice indicate that Heaven is a place of **unity and shared perspective**.

146

7. The martyrs are fully **conscious**, not asleep. They are **rational**. They are aware of each other, God, and the situation on Earth.

147

8. **They ask God to intervene on Earth and to act on their behalf**: “How long...until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” (v. 10).

148

9. Those in Heaven are **free and able to ask God questions**. They have an audience with God. **They can learn**, and *need to* (knowledge isn't automatic). In Heaven, **people desire understanding** and pursue it (they speak of people and events currently on earth.)

149

10. People in the present Heaven **know at least some of what's happening on Earth** (v. 10). The martyrs know enough to realize that those who killed them have not yet been judged.

150

11. Heaven dwellers have a deep concern for justice and judgment (v. 10). They **don't have a passive disinterest in what happens on the earth**. Their concerns are if anything more passionate and thirst for justice greater. They will not be satisfied until God's enemies and theirs are judged, their bodies raised, sin and Satan defeated, Earth restored, and Christ exalted over all.

151

12. The martyrs clearly remember their lives on Earth, including at least some of “the bad parts” (v. 10). They even remember that they were *murdered*.

152

13. Martyrs in Heaven pray for judgment on their persecutors who are still hurting others. They are **acting in solidarity with, and in effect interceding for**, the suffering saints on Earth. This suggests that saints in Heaven both see and pray for saints on Earth.

153

14. Those in Heaven see God's attributes (“Sovereign...holy and true”) in a way that makes his judgment of sin more understandable and desirable.

154

15. Those in Heaven are distinct individuals: “Then **each of them** was given a white robe” (v. 11). There isn’t a single merged identity that obliterates uniqueness, but a distinct “each of them.”

155

16. The martyrs’ wearing white robes may suggest actual physical forms (disembodied spirits don’t wear robes). The robes may well have symbolic meaning, but **it doesn’t mean they couldn’t also be physical**. The martyrs appear to have pre-resurrection physical forms that John could actually see.

156

17. **God answers their question** (v. 11), indicating communication and process in Heaven. This demonstrates **we won’t know everything in Heaven**—if we did, we wouldn’t have questions. The martyrs knew more after God answered them than before. There is learning in Heaven.

157

18. God will fulfill the martyrs’ requests, but says they will have to “wait a little longer” (v. 11). Those in the intermediate Heaven live in anticipation of the future fulfillment of God’s promises. Unlike the eternal Heaven—where there will be no more sin, Curse, or suffering (Revelation 21:4)—**inhabitants of the present Heaven coexist with and watch an Earth under sin, the Curse, and suffering**.

158

19. **There is time in the present Heaven** (vv. 10-11). The white-robed martyrs ask God a **time-dependent question**: “How long, Sovereign Lord...until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” (v. 10).

159

...**They are aware of time’s passing** and are eager for the coming day of the Lord’s judgment. God answers that **they must “wait a little longer”** until certain events transpire on Earth. **Waiting requires the passing of time**.

160

20. **The people of God in Heaven have a strong familial connection with those on Earth**, who are called their “fellow servants and brothers” (v. 11). We share the same Father, “from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named” (Ephesians 3:15, ESV).

161

...There is not a wall of separation within the bride of Christ. We are one family with those who’ve gone to Heaven ahead of us. After we go to Heaven, we’ll still be one family with those yet on Earth. These verses demonstrate a vital connection between the events and people in Heaven and the events and people on Earth.

162

21. **Our sovereign God knows down to the last detail all that is happening and will happen on Earth** (v. 11), including every drop of shed blood and every bit of suffering undergone by his children.

163

...Voice of the Martyrs estimates that **more than 150,000 people die for Christ each year**, an average of more than four hundred per day. God knows the name and story of each one. He knows exactly how many martyrs there will be, and **he is prepared to return and set up his Kingdom when the final martyr dies.**

164

Conclusion: Unless there is reason to believe that the realities of this passage apply *only* to one group of martyrs and to no one else in Heaven, then we should assume that *what is true of them is also true of our loved ones already there, and will be true of us when we die.*

165

Do Heaven's Inhabitants Remember Life on Earth?

166

The Revelation 6 martyrs remember some of what happened on Earth, including great suffering. If they remember their martyrdom, there's no reason to assume they would forget other things. In fact, we'll likely remember far more in Heaven than we do now.

167

And we may be able to see how God and angels intervened on our behalf when we didn't realize it. In Heaven, those who endured bad things on Earth are comforted for them (Luke 16:25). This comfort implies memory of what happened. If there is no memory of the bad things, what would be the need for or nature of comfort?

168

After we die, we will give an account of our lives on Earth, down to specific actions and words (2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 12:36). Given our improved minds and clear thinking, our memory should be more—not less—acute concerning our life on Earth.

169

The doctrine of eternal rewards hinges on specific acts of faithfulness done on Earth that survive the believer's judgment and are brought into Heaven with us (1 Corinthians 3:14). In Heaven, the Bride's wedding dress stands for "the righteous acts of the saints" done on Earth (Revelation 19:7-8).

170

Our righteous deeds on Earth will not be forgotten but "will follow" us to Heaven (Revelation 14:13). The positions of authority and treasures we're granted in Heaven will remind us of our life on Earth, since what we did on Earth will earn us those rewards (Matthew 6:19-21; 19:21; Luke 12:33; 19:17, 19; 1 Timothy 6:19; Revelation 2:26-28).

171

God keeps a record in Heaven of what all people do on Earth. That record will outlast our life on Earth—for believers, at least until the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10); for unbelievers, right up until the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-13).

172

For those now in Heaven, records of life on Earth still exist. Malachi 3:16 speaks of the “scroll of remembrance” which is now being written in Heaven concerning those living on Earth.

173

Memory is a basic element of personality. If we are truly *ourselves* in Heaven, there must be continuity of memory from Earth to Heaven. We will not be different people, but the same people marvelously relocated and transformed.

174

Heaven cleanses us but does not revise or extinguish our origins or history. Undoubtedly we will remember God’s works of grace in our lives that comforted, assured, sustained, and empowered us to live for him.

175

Do People in the Present Heaven See What Is Happening on Earth?

176

If the martyrs in Heaven know God hasn’t brought judgment on their persecutors (Rev. 6:9-11), then inhabitants of the intermediate Heaven can see at least some of what’s happening on Earth.

177

When Babylon is brought down, an angel points to events on Earth and says, “Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you” (Rev. 18:20). The angel addresses people living in Heaven, showing they’re aware of events on earth.

178

“...the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: Hallelujah!” praising God for specific events of judgment that have just taken place on Earth (Rev. 19:1-5). Again, saints in Heaven are observing what’s happening on Earth.

179

Heaven’s saints return with Christ to set up his millennial kingdom (Revelation 19:11-14), it seems unthinkable to imagine they would have remained ignorant of the culmination of human history taking place on Earth.

180

Saints in Heaven are not blissfully unaware of what is transpiring on Earth. God and his angels and saints are about to return for the ultimate battle, after which Christ will be crowned king. Those on Earth may be ignorant of Heaven, but those in Heaven are *not* ignorant of Earth.

181

When Saul wrongly appealed to the witch of Endor to call upon Samuel to come back from the afterlife, the medium was terrified that God actually sent Samuel.

182

Samuel remembered what Saul had done before Samuel died, and was aware of what had happened since he died (1 Samuel 28:16-19).

183

When called from Heaven to Earth, Moses and Elijah “appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem” (Luke 9:31).

184

They seemed fully aware of what was currently happening on Earth, and God’s redemptive plan about to be accomplished. (And surely they returned to Heaven remembering what they’d discussed with Jesus.)

185

Hebrews 12:1, “run with perseverance the race marked out for us,” a picture of Greek competitions, watched by throngs of engrossed fans sitting high up in ancient stadiums. The “great cloud of witnesses” refers to saints whose accomplishments on life’s playing field are part of our history.

186

The imagery suggests those saints, the spiritual “athletes” of old, may be watching us and cheering us on from the great stadium of Heaven that looks down on the field of Earth. (The witnesses are said to “surround” us, not merely to have preceded us.)

187

The unfolding drama of redemption is currently staged on Earth. Earth is center court, center stage, awaiting the Christ’s return and his Kingdom. If this drama is the focus of God and angels, why not God’s people, the portion of Christ’s bride with Him? Surely they have interest in what they’ve invested in!

188

In Heaven, Christ watches closely what transpires on Earth, especially in the lives of God’s people (Revelation 2–3). If God’s attention is on Earth, why not that of his children?

189

When a great war is transpiring, are those in the home country uninformed and unaware? When a great drama is taking place, do those who know the writer, producer, and cast—and have vested interests in the outcome—refrain from watching?

190

Angels saw Christ on Earth (1 Tim 3:16). Angels know what's happening on Earth (1 Cor 4:9; 1 Tim 5:21). If angels, why not saints? Wouldn't Christ's body and bride in Heaven be intensely interested in the rest of the body and bride still on Earth?

191

Abraham and Lazarus saw the rich man in Hell (Luke 16:23-26). If it's possible in some cases to look out and see *Hell* from Heaven, why would people be unable to see Earth from Heaven?

192

Christ said, "There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent" (Luke 15:7). Similarly, "there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).

193

Notice it does not speak of rejoicing *by* the angels but *in the presence* of angels. Who is doing this rejoicing in Heaven? I believe it logically includes not only God but also the saints in Heaven, who would so deeply appreciate the wonder of human conversion—especially the conversion of those they knew and loved on Earth.

194

If they rejoice over conversions happening on Earth, then obviously *they must be aware of what is happening on Earth*—and not just generally, but specifically, down to the details of individuals coming to faith in Christ.

195

Do People in Heaven Pray for Those on Earth?

196

Based on the scriptural evidence, I believe that departed saints currently in the intermediate Heaven do intercede in prayer—at least sometimes—for those of us still on Earth.

197

Christ, the God-man, is in Heaven, at the right hand of God, interceding for people on Earth (Romans 8:34). Therefore at least one human being who has died and gone to Heaven is now praying for those on Earth.

198

The martyrs in Heaven also pray to God (Revelation 6:10), asking him to take specific action on Earth. They are praying for God's justice on the earth, which has intercessory implications for Christians now suffering here. The sense of connection and loyalty to the body of Christ—and concern for the saints on Earth—would likely be enhanced, not diminished, by being in Heaven (Ephesians 3:15).

199

In any case, Revelation 6 makes it clear that some who have died and are now in Heaven are praying concerning what's happening on Earth.

200

If prayer is talking to God, won't we pray *more* in Heaven than we do now? Given our righteous state, our prayers will be more effective (James 5:16).

201

Revelation 5:8 speaks of the "prayers of the saints" in a context that may include saints in Heaven, not just on Earth. We are never told to pray *to* the saints, but only to God. Yet the saints may be praying for us.

202

If people in Heaven are allowed to see at least some of what transpires on Earth (and clearly they are, as we've seen), then it would seem strange for them *not* to intercede in prayer.

203

If we believe Heaven is a place of ignorance or disinterest about Earth, we will assume people in Heaven don't pray for people on Earth. If we believe Heaven's citizens are alive, aware and interested, and that they talk to God about his plans, we will assume they *do* pray for people on Earth.

204

Scripture argues for the second assumption, not the first. I believe the burden of proof falls on those who would argue that people in Heaven don't pray for those on Earth. Where is this idea taught in Scripture? Often this deduction is based on a faulty premise—that for people in Heaven to be happy, they can't know what's happening on Earth.

205

Can It Be Heaven If People Are Aware of Anything Bad on Earth?

206

Many books on Heaven maintain that those in Heaven cannot be aware of people and events on Earth because they would be made unhappy by all the suffering and evil; thus, Heaven would not truly be Heaven.

207

God knows exactly what's happening on Earth, yet it doesn't diminish Heaven for him. It's Heaven for the angels, though they know what's happening on Earth. Angels in Heaven see Hell's torments, but it doesn't negate their joy in God's presence (Rev 14:10).

208

It's also possible that though joy would predominate in the present Heaven, there could be periodic sadness because there's still so much evil and pain on Earth. Christ grieved for people when he was on Earth (Matt. 23:37-39; John 11:33-36). Does he no longer grieve because he's in Heaven?

209

Doesn't he still hurt for his people when they suffer? Acts 9:4-5: Jesus said, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" When Saul asked who he was, he replied, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." Doesn't Christ's identification with his bride persecuted on Earth suggest he's currently hurting, while he's yet in Heaven?

210

If Jesus, in Heaven, feels sorrow for his followers, might not others in Heaven grieve? It's one thing to no longer cry because there's nothing left to cry about, which will be true on the New Earth. But should we no longer cry when there's still suffering on Earth? Does going into the presence of Christ make us *less* compassionate? Or more?

211

Revelation 21:4 refers specifically to the eternal Heaven, the New Earth.

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be **no more death or mourning or crying or pain**, for the old order of things has passed away."

212

Christ's promise of no more tears or pain comes *after* the end of the old Earth, after the Great White Throne, after "the old order of things has passed away" and there's no more suffering on Earth.

213

The intermediate Heaven and the eternal Heaven are not the same. We can be assured there will be no sorrow on the New Earth, our eternal home. But though the intermediate Heaven is a far happier place than Earth under the Curse, Scripture doesn't state there can be no sorrow there.

214

People in Heaven are not frail beings whose joy can only be preserved by shielding them from what's really going on. **Heaven's Happiness is not based on ignorance but on perspective.** Those in Christ's presence find joy in seeing God and living as righteous beings in rich fellowship in a sinless environment.

215

God is continuously at work on Earth, so the saints watching from Heaven have a great deal to praise him for, including God's drawing people on Earth to himself (Luke 15:7, 10). But those in the present Heaven are also looking forward to Christ's return, their bodily resurrection, the final judgment, and the New Heavens and Earth.

216

Only then and there, in our eternal home, will all evil and suffering and sorrow be washed away by the hand of God. Only then and there will we experience the fullness of joy intended by God and purchased for us by Christ at an unfathomable cost.

217

Meanwhile, we on this dying Earth can relax and rejoice for our loved ones who are in the presence of Christ. As the apostle Paul tells us, though we naturally grieve at losing loved ones, we are not “to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope” (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

218

Our parting is not the end of our relationship, only an interruption. We have not “lost” them, because we know where they are. They are experiencing the joy of Christ’s presence in a place so wonderful that Christ called it Paradise. And one day, we’re told, in a magnificent reunion, they and we “will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18).

219

Grasping Redemption’s Far Reach

**This World Is Not
Our Home . . .
or Is It?**

220

God will make the new earth his dwelling place....Heaven and earth will then no longer be separated as they are now, but they will be one. But to leave the new earth out of consideration when we think of the final state of believers is greatly to impoverish biblical teaching about the life to come.

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

221

Our destiny is an earthly one: a new earth, an earth redeemed and transfigured. An earth reunited with heaven, but an earth, nevertheless.

Peter Marshall,
Heaven Is Not My Home

222

Everything in the Gospels points to the idea that life in the Kingdom of God in the Age to Come will be life on the earth—life transformed by the Kingdom of God when His people enter in their full blessing (Matthew 19:28).

George Ladd,
A Theology of the New Testament

223

In glorified bodies we will enjoy a restored and improved Eden, a place of pristine beauty and unbroken fellowship....The new heaven and earth will provide an environment conducive to the most precious values we now know—just and loving relationships, fellowship, beauty, and significant activity.

Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest,
Integrative Theology

224

Christianity must yet triumph in a renovated earth, and with the returned Messiah as universal king, or fail. There is no third alternative.

Anthony Buzzard,
*Our Fathers Who Aren’t in
Heaven*

225

It is virtually beyond our power to conceive of a future as consistently delightful as that which Christ is preparing for us. And who is to say what is possible with God?

A. W. Tozer,
Born after Midnight

226

Wherever the inhabitants of that blessed world shall turn their eyes, they shall see nothing but dignity, and beauty, and glory.

And in heaven, shall be all those objects that the saints have set their hearts upon, and which they have loved above all things while in this world.

Jonathan Edwards,
Heaven: A World of Love

227

A sea lion had lost the sea and lived in a desert, dry and dusty. "How the sea lion came to the barren lands, no one could remember. It all seemed so very long ago...it appeared as though he had always been there. Not that he belonged in such an arid place...He was, after all, a sea lion. But...once you have lived so long in a certain spot, no matter how odd, you come to think of it as home."

John Eldredge, *Journey of Desire*

228

Throughout eternity we will live full, truly human lives, exploring and managing God's creation to his glory. Fascinating vistas will unfold before us as we learn to serve God in a renewed universe.

Edward Donnelly,
Biblical Teaching on the Doctrines of Heaven and Hell

229

We do not have [here] an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. Hebrews 13:14

We are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised.

2 Peter 3:13, NLT

230

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

Prophecies of this nature [e.g., Isaiah 35:1; 51:3; 55:13; Ezekiel 36:35] should be understood as descriptions of the new earth, which God will bring into existence after Christ comes again—a new earth which will last, not just for a thousand years, but forever.

231

...Keeping the doctrine of the new earth in mind...will open up the meaning of large portions of Old Testament prophetic literature in surprisingly new ways.

Anthony Hoekema

232

I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

John 14:3

233

Three Eras of Earth and Mankind

Past Genesis 1-2	Present Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future Rev. 21-22
Original mankind	Fallen mankind/ Some believe & are transformed	Resurrected mankind
Original Earth	Fallen Earth, with glimmers of original	New Earth; resurrected on mankind's coat-tails (Rom. 8)

234

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
God delegates reign to innocent mankind	Disputed reign with God, Satan, and fallen mankind	God delegates reign to righteous mankind
Mankind given dominion, with intended stewardship of Earth	Mankind's dominion thwarted, frustrated, & twisted	Mankind's dominion fulfilled; redeemed stewardship of Earth

235

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
God in Heaven, visiting Earth	God in Heaven, separate yet active (<i>indwells believers by his Spirit</i>)	God living forever with mankind on the New Earth
No Curse (<i>universal perfection & blessing</i>)	Sin & Curse (<i>withdrawal of blessing, or blessing selectively given, plus common grace</i>)	No more Curse (<i>greater blessing, deeper perfection, grace unending</i>)

236

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
No Shame	Shame	No Shame or potential for shame
Tree of life in Eden (<i>mankind can eat</i>)	Tree of life in Paradise (<i>mankind cut off from</i>)	Tree of life in New Jerusalem (<i>mankind can eat again forever</i>)
River of life	Rivers & nature, with glimmers of past & future	River of life flows from God's throne

237

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Before redemption	Unfolding drama of redemption	After redemption
Sin unknown	Sin corrupts; its penalty & power assaulted, defeated by Christ	Sin forever removed
No death	Death permeates all	Death forever removed

238

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Mankind created from the earth	Mankind dies, returns to the earth; new life to some	Mankind resurrected from the earth to live on the New Earth
First Adam reigns	First Adam falls; mankind reigns corruptly, with glimpses of good; Second Adam comes	Second Adam reigns as God-man, with mankind as co-heirs & delegated kings

239

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Serpent, Satan, on Earth	Serpent, Satan, judged but still present on Earth	Serpent, Satan, removed from the Earth, thrown into eternal fire
God walks with humans in Garden	Humans cut off from God	God dwells face-to-face with humans

240

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
God's glory evident to all, in all	God's glory obscured, seen in glimpses	God's glory forever manifested in all
Unhindered individual worship	Worship hampered by sin	Unhindered corporate worship

241

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
God's goodness known by all (both)	God's goodness known by some, doubted by others	God's goodness forever celebrated
Creation & mankind perfect	Creation & mankind tainted by sin	Creation & mankind restored to perfection

242

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Mankind names, tends, rules the animals	Animals & mankind hurt each other	Animals & mankind live in complete harmony
Ground fertile, vegetation lush	Ground cursed, vegetation diseased	Ground fertile, vegetation thrives

243

Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Abundant food & water	Hunger & thirst, toil for food & water	Abundant food & water
Restfulness, satisfaction in labor	Restlessness, toil in labor	Enhanced restfulness, joy in labor
Innocence, closeness to God	Sin (<i>alienation from God</i>); declared righteous in Christ	Righteousness (<i>intimacy with God</i>); complete righteousness in Christ

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Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Paradise	Paradise lost, sought; glimmers seen, foretastes	Paradise regained & magnified
Mankind in ideal place	Mankind banished, struggles & wanders in fallen place(s)	Man restored to ideal place

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Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Mankind able to sin or not sin	Mankind enslaved to sin, empowered not to sin	Mankind unable to sin, permanently empowered
Naked in innocence	Clothed due to unrighteousness	Clothed with righteousness
One marriage (Adam & Eve)	Many marriages	One marriage (Christ & church)

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Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Marriage perfect	Marriage flawed by sin, blame	Marriage perfect, unhindered
Beginning of human culture	Contamination & advancement of culture	Purification & eternal cultural expansion
Mankind learns, creates in purity	Mankind learns, creates in impurity (Cain, Babel)	Mankind learns, creates in wisdom & purity

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Past / Genesis 1-2	Present / Gen. 3-Rev. 20	Future / Rev. 21-22
Mankind rules & expands Paradise	Mankind banished from Paradise & longs for return to Paradise	Mankind has unlimited, free access to Paradise
God's plan for mankind & Earth revealed	God's plan delayed & enriched	God's plan for mankind & Earth realized

248

All beauty in the world is either a memory of Paradise or a prophecy of the transfigured world.

Nicholas Berdyaev,
The Divine and the Human

249

If my wedding date is on the calendar, and I'm thinking of the person I'm going to marry, I shouldn't be an easy target for seduction. Likewise, when I've meditated on Heaven, sin is terribly unappealing. It's when my mind drifts from Heaven that sin seems attractive. Thinking of Heaven leads inevitably to pursuing holiness. Our high tolerance for sin testifies of our failure to prepare for Heaven.

250

Heaven should affect our activities and ambitions, our recreation and friendships, and the way we spend our money and time. If I believe I'll spend eternity in a world of unending beauty and adventure, will I be content to spend all my evenings staring at game shows, sitcoms, and ball games? Even if I keep my eyes off of impurities, how much time will I want to invest in what doesn't matter?

To be Heaven-oriented is to be goal-oriented in the best sense.

251

**Earth's Redemption:
Essential to
God's Plan**

252

Otherworldliness is escapism only if there is no other world. If there is, it is worldliness that is escapism.

Peter Kreeft,
Heaven: The Heart's Greatest Longing

253

In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

2 Peter 3:13

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

Revelation 21:1

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Genesis 1:24 ff.

²⁴And God said, "Let the land [earth] produce living creatures according to their kinds"...And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth..."

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²⁷ So God created man in his own image...²⁸ God said to them, Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the earth....³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

256

Genesis 2

⁷ The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground [earth] and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. ⁸ Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹ And the LORD God made all kinds of trees

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...that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life... A river watering the garden flowed from Eden...through the land of Havilah, where there is gold. (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are there.)...The LORD God put man in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

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Revelation 21:24-22:5

The NATIONS will walk by [the Lamb's] light, and the KINGS OF THE EARTH will bring their splendor into [the city]. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut...²⁶ The glory and honor of the NATIONS will be brought into it....^{22:1} the river of the water of life...flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle

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...of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the NATIONS. ³ No longer will there be any curse. [God's] servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face.... ⁵ And they will reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 21:24-22:5

260

Romans 8:19

The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration [curse]...in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay

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...and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.... We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Romans 8:19-23

262

I understand the passage to have this meaning—that there is no element and **no part of the world** which is being touched, as it were, with a sense of its present misery, **that does not intensely hope for a resurrection.**

John Calvin, on Romans 8:19

263

For the passage to be fulfilled, those redeemed and resurrected into the new world **must be the same ones who suffered in the old world.** Otherwise, their longing for redemption would go unmet. Romans 8's emphasis on "the whole creation" would be meaningless if it's only people who benefit from the resurrection.

264

It is quite striking that virtually all of the basic words describing salvation in the Bible imply a return to an originally good state or situation. Redemption is a good example. To redeem is to "buy free," literally to "buy back." ...The point of redemption is to free the prisoner from bondage, to give back the freedom he or she once enjoyed.

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

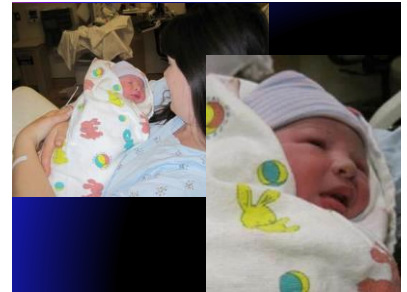
265

God has never given up on his original creation. An entire biblical vocabulary that makes this point clear. **Reconcile. Redeem. Restore. Recover. Return. Renew. Regenerate. Resurrect.** Each of these biblical words begins with the *re-* prefix, suggesting a return to an original condition that was ruined or lost.

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Redemption: buying back what was formerly owned.
Reconciliation: regaining a friend.
Renewal: making new again, restoring to an original state.
Resurrection: becoming physically alive again, after death.
Regeneration: being born again, having a new beginning.
Restoration: bringing back the lost.

274

At the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jesus, Matthew 19:27-28

275

...The teaching of the entire Scripture is to the effect that **God's plans are never defeated, that he does not replace but restore.**

He who made Paradise for Adam will make heaven and earth new, far beyond Paradise, in the consummation.

R. C. H. Lenski

276

New creation is the dominating notion of biblical theology because new creation is the goal or purpose of God's redemptive-historical plan; new creation is the logical main point of Scripture.

Greg Beale,
Eschatological Conception of
N.T. Theology

277

Like Adam, we have all lost Paradise; and yet we carry Paradise around inside of us in the form of a longing for, almost a memory of, a blessedness that is no more, or the dream of blessedness that may someday be again.

Frederick Buechner,
The Magnificent Defeat

278

The sweetest thing in all my life has been the longing...to find the place where all the beauty came from...my country, the place where I ought to have been born. Do you think it all meant nothing, all the longing? The longing for home.

Psyche, in *Till We Have Faces,*
by C. S. Lewis

279

"Ruined sinners to reclaim."

God is a carpenter, and a salvage artist.

God doesn't start over from scratch, he repairs and restores to what He originally made. Stripping old paint off an antique to restore to original.

280

God hangs on to his fallen original creation and salvages it. **He refuses to abandon the work of his hands—in fact, he sacrifices his own Son to save his original project.** Humankind, which has botched its original mandate and the whole creation along with it, is given another chance in Christ; we are reinstated as God's managers on earth. The original good creation is to be restored.

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

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It is striking how many of Jesus' miracles are miracles of *restoration*—restoration to health, restoration to life, restoration to freedom from demonic possession. Jesus' miracles provide us with a sample of **the meaning of redemption: a freeing of creation from the shackles of sin and evil and a reinstatement of creaturely living as intended by God.**

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

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Albert Wolters,
Creation Regained

Redemption is not a matter of an addition of a spiritual or supernatural dimension to creaturely life that was lacking before; rather, it is a matter of bringing new life and vitality to what was there all along.

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...The only thing redemption adds that is not included in the creation is the remedy for sin, and that remedy is brought in solely for the purpose of recovering a sinless creation....Grace *restores* nature, making it whole once more.

Albert Wolters

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For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

1 Corinthians 15:22-25

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Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land [*earth*].

Psalm 85:9

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The nations will fear the name of the Lord, all the **kings of the earth** will revere your glory. For **the Lord will rebuild Zion and appear in his glory.**

Psalm 102:15-16

287

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; **the whole earth is full of his glory.**

Isaiah 6:3

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They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, **for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.** In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; **the nations will rally to him,** and his place of rest will be glorious.

Isaiah 11:9-10

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The oppressor will come to an end, and destruction will cease; the aggressor will vanish from the land. **In love a throne will be established;** in faithfulness **a man will sit on it—one from the house of David**—one who in judging seeks justice and speeds the cause of righteousness.

Isaiah 16:4-5

290

The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and **all mankind together** will see it.

Isaiah 40:5

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Isaiah 60

³Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn...⁵ the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, **to you the riches of the nations will come.** ⁶ Herds of camels will cover your land...And all from Sheba will come, **bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD.**

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...¹¹Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that men may bring you *the wealth of the NATIONS*—their kings led in triumphal procession. ¹³ The glory of Lebanon will come to you, **the pine, the fir and the cypress.**

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...together...¹⁴I will call you **the City of the LORD, Zion** of the Holy One of Israel....¹⁷ I will make **peace** your governor and **righteousness your ruler.** ¹⁸ **No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction** within your borders, but you will call your **walls** Salvation and your **gates** Praise.

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...¹⁹ **The sun will no more be your light by day,** nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, **for the LORD will be your everlasting light,** and your God will be your glory. ²⁰ **Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more;** the LORD will be your everlasting light, and **your days of sorrow will end.**

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...²¹ Then will all your people **be righteous and they will possess the land [erets, the earth] forever.** They are...the work of my hands, for the display of my splendor. ²²...I am the LORD; in its time I will do this swiftly.

Isaiah 60

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Isaiah 65

For the past troubles will be forgotten and hidden from my eyes. ¹⁷ **"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth.** The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for **I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.**

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¹⁹ I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; **the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.** ²⁰ Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth;

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...he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. ²¹ **They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.** ²² No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat.

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...For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands.²³ They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them.

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²⁴ Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.²⁵ The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but *dust will be the serpent's food*. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD.

301

[God's people] are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:14-16

302

Isaiah 66:9-22
"Do I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery?" says the LORD....¹⁰ "Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her.¹¹ For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts; you will drink deeply and

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delight in her overflowing abundance."¹² The LORD says: "I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; your heart will rejoice and you will flourish like grass; the hand of the LORD will be made known to his servants, but his fury will be shown to his foes.¹⁵ See, the LORD is coming with fire...

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¹⁷ "Those who consecrate and purify themselves to go into the gardens....," declares the LORD. ¹⁸ "I...am about to come and gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see my glory.¹⁹ I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations—

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...to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations.²⁰ And they will bring all your brothers, from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD—on horses, in chariots and wagons, and on mules and camels," says the LORD.

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... "They will bring them, as the Israelites bring their grain offerings, to the temple of the LORD in ceremonially clean vessels.²¹ And I will select some of them also to be priests and Levites," says the LORD.²² "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure."
Isaiah 66:9-22

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I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east...and the land [earth] was radiant with his glory.

Ezekiel 43:2

308

This is what the Lord Almighty says: "In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. **I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come,** and I will fill this house with glory," says the Lord Almighty.

Haggai 2:6-7

309

Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

310

A. A. Hodge

Heaven, as the eternal home of the divine Man and the redeemed members of the human race, **must necessarily be thoroughly human in its structure, conditions, and activities.** Its joys and activities must all be rational, moral, emotional, voluntary and active....There must be the exercise of all the faculties, **the gratification of all tastes, the development of all talent capacities, the realization of all ideals.**

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...The reason, the intellectual curiosity, the imagination, the aesthetic instincts, the holy affections, the social affinities, the inexhaustible resources of strength and power native to the human soul **must all find in heaven exercise and satisfaction....**Then there must always be a goal of endeavor before us, ever future....**Heaven will prove the consummate flower and fruit of the whole creation and of all the history of the universe.**

A. A. Hodge, *Evangelical Theology*

312

[The early Christians] believed that God was going to do for the whole cosmos what he had done for Jesus at Easter.

N. T. Wright,
Surprised by Hope

313

If God is going to make for these glorified sons and daughters a "new heaven and a new earth," He obviously expects them to use them.

And this "new heaven and new earth" will not be just planet earth and its telluric atmosphere, but the entire cosmos with all its galactic systems so transformed by God as to fit the final condition of his glorified sons and daughters.

E. J. Fortman, *Everlasting Life after Death*

314

There will be new planets to develop, new principles to discover, new joys to experience. Every moment of eternity will be an adventure of discovery.

Ray C. Stedman,
"The City of Glory"

315

**What Will It Mean
for the Curse to Be
Lifted?**

316

Martyn Lloyd-Jones,
Great Doctrines of the Bible

Everything will be glorified, even nature itself. And that seems to me to be the biblical teaching about the eternal state: that **what we call heaven is life in this perfect world as God intended humanity to live it.**

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...When [God] put Adam in Paradise at the beginning, Adam fell, and all fell with him, but **men and women are meant to live in the body, and will live in a glorified body in a glorified world, and God will be with them.**

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

318

I will put **enmity** between you and the woman, and **between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.**

Genesis 3:15

319

Since one of the results of sin was death, **the promised victory must involve the removal of death.** Since another result was banishment from the Garden of Eden, from which they were supposed to rule the world for God, it would seem that **the victory should also mean man's restoration to a regained paradise, from which he could once again sinlessly rule the earth...** the expectation of a New Earth was already implicit in the promise of Genesis 3:15.

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and The Future

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Charles Spurgeon,
"Creation's Groans and
the Saints' Sighs," Sermon 788

The Earth in ruins reveals a magnificence which shows the sign of a royal founder and an extraordinary purpose. Creation glows with a thousand beauties even in its present fallen condition, yet clearly enough it is not as when it came from the Maker's hand—

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...the slime of the serpent is on it all—this is not the world which God pronounced to be "very good."

...If there were no future to this world as well as to ourselves, we might be glad to escape from it, counting it to be nothing better than a huge penal colony, from which it would be a thousand mercies for both body and soul to be liberated.

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...At this present time, the groaning and anguish which are general throughout creation are deeply felt among the sons of men. There is a general wail among nations and peoples. You can hear it in the streets of the city.

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...These are to us the promises of the coming glory. If you have the Spirit of God in your soul, you may rejoice over it as the pledge and token of the fullness of bliss and perfection that "God has prepared for those who love him."

Charles Spurgeon

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Whatever sin has touched and polluted, God will redeem and cleanse. If redemption does not go as far as the curse of sin, then God has failed. Whatever the extent of the consequences of sin, so must the extent of redemption be.

Steven J. Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*

325

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

Because of man's fall into sin, a curse was pronounced over this creation. God now sent his Son into this world to redeem that creation from the results of sin. The work of Christ, therefore, is not just to save certain individuals, not even to save an innumerable throng of blood-bought people.

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...The total work of Christ is nothing less than to redeem this entire creation from the effects of sin. That purpose will not be accomplished until God has ushered in the new earth, until Paradise Lost has become Paradise Regained.

Anthony Hoekema

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Redemption in Jesus Christ reaches just as far as the fall. The horizon of creation is at the same time the horizon of sin and of salvation. To conceive of either the fall or Christ's deliverance as encompassing less than the whole of creation is to compromise the biblical teaching of the radical nature of the fall and the cosmic scope of redemption.

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

328

The fall affects the whole range of earthly creation....Sin is a parasite on, and not a part of, creation; and...to the degree that it affects the whole earth, sin profanes all things, making them "worldly," "secular," "earthly." Consequently, every area of the created world cries out for redemption and the coming of the kingdom of God.

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

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No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow

Far as the Curse is found.

Isaac Watts,
"Joy to the World," AD 1719

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We've never seen men and women as they were intended to be. We've never seen animals the way they were before the Fall. We see only marred remnants of what once was.

Likewise, we've never seen nature unchained and undiminished. We've only seen it cursed and decaying. Yet even now we see a great deal that pleases and excites us, moving our hearts to worship.

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We need a clear understanding of the doctrine of the new earth, therefore, in order to see God's redemptive program in cosmic dimensions. We need to realize that God will not be satisfied until the entire universe has been purged of all the results of man's fall.

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

332

Earth cannot be delivered from the Curse by being destroyed. It can be delivered only by being *resurrected*.

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Mark Buchanan, *Things Unseen*

Maybe in heaven all our losses are not forgotten. Maybe they're returned. Maybe all the broken and strewn parts of ourselves come back, more alive and connected than they've ever been. But regardless of that, this one thing is true: Heaven is where our inescapable sense of loss and incompleteness is overcome.

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...It is the one thing large enough to answer our deepest longings and console our deepest griefs. Our hunger for perfect justice and perfect mercy and perfect joy and perfect peace—**all is met there.**

Maybe, just maybe, the sorrow is not forgotten, or bathed in the light of perfect understanding. **Maybe all of it, every last shred of it, is redeemed, given back.**

Mark Buchanan, *Things Unseen*

335

Come, you who are blessed by my Father; **take your inheritance**, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.

Matthew 25:34

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Why Is Resurrection So Important?

Of Americans who believe in a resurrection of the dead, two-thirds believe they will not have bodies after the Resurrection.

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Charles Spurgeon

The resurrection of the body is the Christian's brightest hope. Many believers make a mistake when they long to die and long for Heaven. Those things may be desirable, but they are not the ultimate for the saints. The saints in Heaven are perfectly free from sin and, so far as they are capable of it, are perfectly happy.

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...But a disembodied spirit never can be perfect until it is reunited to its body.

God made man not pure spirit but body and spirit, and the spirit alone will never be content until it sees its physical frame raised to its own condition of holiness and glory.

Charles Spurgeon

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We will not be disembodied spirits in the world to come, but redeemed spirits, in redeemed bodies, in a redeemed universe.

R. A. Torrey

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Our happiness is not designed to be complete till the soul and body are united in a state of Perfection and glory: And this happiness was conferred early on those two favourites of heaven [Enoch and Elijah].

Isaac Watts,
The World to Come, 1745

342

As a child, I took it for granted that Easter meant that Jesus literally rose from the dead. I now see Easter very differently. For me, **it is irrelevant whether or not the tomb was empty**. Whether Easter involved something remarkable happening to the physical body of Jesus is irrelevant.

Marcus Borg (and N. T. Wright),
The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions

343

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are **lost**. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, **we are to be pitied more than all men**. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, **the firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep....as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

1 Corinthians 15:16-22

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Make no mistake: **if he rose at all it was as His body**; if the cells' dissolution did not reverse, the molecules reknit, the amino acids rekindle, the Church will fail. **Let us not mock God** with metaphor, analogy, sidestepping transcendence; making of the event a parable, a sign painted in the faded credulity of earlier ages; **let us walk through the door**.

John Updike, "Seven Stanzas at Easter"

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It is *this* (the perishable and mortal) which puts on *that* (the imperishable and immortal). Likewise, it is *we*, the very same people who walk this earth, who will walk the New Earth.

And so *we* [not something which sort of used to be us] will be with the Lord forever.

1 Thessalonians 4:17

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The **self-same bodies** of the dead which were laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls forever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ.

Westminster Larger Catechism, 1647

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All the dead shall be raised up, with the **self-same bodies**, and **none other**, although with different qualities.

The Westminster Confession

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There is a **one-to-one correspondence** between the body of Christ that died and the body that rose.

Hank Hanegraaff,
Resurrection

349

The Lord Jesus Christ... will **transform our lowly bodies** so that **they** will be like his glorious body.

Philippians 3:20-21

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They were startled and frightened and **thought they saw a spirit**. And [Jesus] said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? **See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself**. Touch me, and see. **For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have**." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

Luke 24:37-40

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...The Jesus who says, "Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have" (Luke 24:39); who "showed them his hands and his side" (John 20:20); who said, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side" (John 20:27)—this is the Jesus who draws back the curtain on the heavenly life and shows us what it will be like: embodied!

Bruce Milne

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Christianity is not a platonic religion that regards material things as mere shadows of reality, which will be sloughed off as soon as possible. Not the mere immortality of the soul, but rather the resurrection of the body and the renewal of all creation is the hope of the Christian faith.

John Piper, *Future Grace*

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Resurrected bodies are not intended just to float in space, or to flit from cloud to cloud. They call for a *new earth* on which to live and to work, glorifying God. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body, in fact, makes no sense whatever apart from the doctrine of the new earth.

Anthony Hoekema,
"Heaven: Not Just an Eternal Day Off"

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Thomas Aquinas,
Summa Theologica, AD 1270

It is manifest that the happiness of the saints will increase in extent after the resurrection, because their happiness will then be not only in the soul but also in the body. Moreover, the soul's happiness also will increase in extent, seeing that the soul will rejoice not only in its own good, but also in that of the body. We may also say that the soul's happiness will increase in intensity.

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...If, then, there be removed from the body all those things wherein it hampers the soul's action, the soul will be simply more perfect while existing in such a body than when separated therefrom. Now the more perfect a thing is in being, the more perfectly is it able to operate: wherefore the operation of the soul united to such a body will be more perfect than the operation of the separated soul.

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...But the glorified body will be a body of this description, being altogether subject to the spirit. Therefore, since beatitude consists in an operation, the soul's happiness after its reunion with the body will be more perfect than before. For just as the soul separated from a corruptible body is able to operate more perfectly than when united thereto,

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...so after it has been united to a glorified body, its operation will be more perfect than while it was separated. Now every imperfect thing desires its perfection. Hence the separated soul naturally desires reunion with the body, and on account of this desire which proceeds from the soul's imperfection, its operation whereby it is borne towards God is less intense.

Thomas Aquinas, AD 1270

358

Bruce Milne,
The Message of Heaven and Hell

The physicality of the resurrection is emphasized by Jesus himself in his drawing attention to the wounds still visible in his body and even, in Luke's account, in his sharing a meal with the disciples.

359

...They must grasp that this is not a matter of a "spirit appearance," but the utterly unprecedented, unique, world-transforming, heaven-anticipating, sovereign action of the Creator in the first installment of remaking the world.

Bruce Milne

360

G. K. Chesterton,
The Everlasting Man

On the third day the friends of Christ coming at daybreak to the place found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realized the new wonder; but even they hardly realized that the world had died in the night.

361

...What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but the dawn.

G. K. Chesterton

362

After reading one of my books, a missionary wrote to me, deeply troubled that I thought Heaven might be a physical place. In our correspondence, no matter how many Scripture passages I pointed to, it didn't matter. He'd always been taught that Heaven was "spiritual" and therefore not physical.

363

... To suggest otherwise was, in his mind, to commit heresy. He seemed convinced that if Heaven *were* physical, it would be less sacred and special. He viewed physical and spiritual as opposites. When I asked him to demonstrate from Scripture why Heaven cannot be a physical place, he told me the answer was very simple: because "God is spirit" (John 4:24).

364

...He believed that verse settled the question once and for all.

But saying that God is spirit is very different from saying that Heaven is spirit. Heaven, after all, is not the same as God. God created Heaven; therefore, he did not always dwell there.

365

...If we are to draw inferences about the nature of Heaven, we shouldn't derive them from the nature of God. After all, he is a one-of-a-kind being who is infinite, existing outside of space and time. Rather, we should base our deductions on the nature of humanity.

366

...It's no problem for the infinite God to dwell wherever mankind dwells. The question is whether finite humans can exist as God does—outside of space and time. I'm not certain we can. But I am certain that *if* we can, it is only as a temporary aberration that will be permanently corrected by our bodily resurrection in preparation for life on the New Earth.

367

I don't always take the Bible literally. Scripture contains many figures of speech. But it's incorrect to assume that because some figures of speech are used to describe Heaven, all that the Bible says about Heaven, therefore, is figurative. When we're told we'll have resurrection bodies like Christ's and that he ate in his resurrection body,

368

...why should we assume he was speaking figuratively when he refers to tables, banquets, and eating and drinking in his Kingdom?

...We're commanded, "Glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20, NKJV). What will we do for eternity? Glorify God in our bodies. We're told, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

369

...What will we do for eternity? Eat, drink, and do all to the glory of God.

An evangelical author tells us, "In Heaven, Scripture indicates that we shall neither eat nor drink." But Scripture tells us no such thing. In fact, it couldn't show more clearly that **we will eat and drink on the New Earth.**

370

The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

371

N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*

Paul speaks of two sorts of body, the present one and the future one. He uses two key adjectives to describe these two bodies. Unfortunately, many translations get him radically wrong at this point, leading to the widespread supposition that for Paul the new body would be a spiritual body in the sense of a nonmaterial body,

372

...a body that in Jesus's case wouldn't have left an empty tomb behind it. It can be demonstrated in great detail, philologically and exegetically, that this is precisely not what Paul meant.

373

...The contrast he is making is not between a present physical body and what we would mean by a future spiritual one, but between a present body animated by the normal human soul and a future body animated by God's spirit....And the point about the future body is that it will be incorruptible. The present flesh and blood is corruptible, doomed to decay and die.

374

...That's why Paul says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit God's kingdom." The new body will be incorruptible. The entire chapter [1 Cor 15], one of Paul's longest sustained discussions and the vital climax of the whole letter, is about new creation, about the creator God remaking the creation, not abandoning it as Platonists of all sorts, including Gnostics, would have wanted.

N. T. Wright

375

There must be continuity, for otherwise there would be little point in speaking about a resurrection at all. The calling into existence of a completely new set of people totally different from the present inhabitants of the earth would not be a resurrection.

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and The Future

376

The world into which we shall enter in the Parousia of Jesus Christ is... not another world; it is this world, this heaven, this earth; both, however, passed away and renewed. It is these forests, these fields, these cities, these streets, these people, that will be the scene of redemption.

J. A. Schep,
The Nature of the Resurrection Body

377

Understanding and anticipating the physical nature of the New Earth corrects a multitude of errors. **It frees us to love, without guilt, the world that God has made**, while saying no to that world corrupted by our sin. It reminds us that God himself gave us the earth, gave us a *love* for the earth, and will give us the New Earth.

378

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

Both in 2 Peter 3:13 and in Revelation 21:1 the Greek word used to designate the newness of the new cosmos is not *neos* but *kainos*. The word *neos* means new in time or origin, whereas the word *kainos* means new in nature or in quality.

379

...The expression *ouranon kainon kai gen kainen* ("a new heaven and a new earth," Revelation 21:1) means, therefore, not the emergence of a cosmos totally other than the present one, but the creation of a universe which, though it has been gloriously renewed, stands in continuity with the present one.

Anthony Hoekema

380

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

“I bet there isn’t a country like this anywhere in our world. Look at the colours! You couldn’t get a blue like the blue on those mountains in our world.”

“Is it not Aslan’s country?” said Tirian....

“Those hills,” said Lucy, “the nice woody ones and the blue ones behind—aren’t they very like the southern border of Narnia?”

381

...“Like!” cried Edmund after a moment’s silence. “Why, they’re exactly like...”

“And yet they’re not like,” said Lucy....“They’re more...more...”

“More like the real thing,” said the Lord Digory softly.

C. S. Lewis

382

BODY AS IT NOW IS

Sown a perishable body
Sown in dishonor
Sown in weakness
Sown a natural body

BODY IN RESURRECTION

Raised an imperishable body
Raised in glory
Raised in power
Raised a spiritual body

383

And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, **nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.**

1 Corinthians 15:49-50

384

We **[it will still be us]** will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality **[a clothed body is still a body]**. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”

1 Corinthians 15:52-55

385

C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*

These small and perishable bodies we now have were given to us as ponies are given to schoolboys. We must learn to manage: not that we may some day be free of horses altogether but that some day we may ride bare-back, confident and rejoicing, those greater mounts,

386

...those winged, shining and world-shaking horses which perhaps even now expect us with impatience, pawing and snorting in the King’s stables. Not that the gallop would be of any value unless it were a gallop with the King; but how else—since He has retained His own charger— should we accompany Him?

C. S. Lewis

387

Somewhere in my broken, paralyzed body is the seed of what I shall become. The paralysis makes what I am to become all the more grand when you contrast atrophied, useless legs against splendid resurrected legs. I’m convinced that if there are mirrors in heaven (and why not?), the image I’ll see will be unmistakably “Joni,” although a much better, brighter Joni.

Joni Eareckson Tada,
Heaven: Your Real Home

388

We do not desire to eat gravel. Why? Because God did not design us to eat gravel. Trying to develop an appetite for a disembodied existence in a non-physical Heaven is like trying to develop an appetite for gravel. No matter how sincere we are, and no matter how hard we try, it’s not going to work. Nor should it.

389

...Our desires correspond precisely to God's plans. It's not that we want something, so we engage in wishful thinking that what we want exists. It's the opposite—the reason we want it is precisely because God has planned for it to exist. As we'll see, resurrected people living in a resurrected universe isn't our idea—it's *God's*.

390

God does not want us to pretend there's a Heaven because that would make us feel better. The Bible is not about our feelings. It is about raw, objective truth—reality. We should not believe in Heaven because it gives us hope but only because it is real—as real as the Christ who promises it and has gone before us to prepare it for us.

391

An interpretive approach that makes everything symbolic also makes everything subjective. It will never allow us to break free of our assumptions and see what the Bible really says about Heaven, our bodily resurrection, and life on the New Earth....The river going through the New Jerusalem becomes God's grace, the tree becomes Christ, the city walls become security.

392

...Or the river becomes Christ, the tree God's grace, and the city walls God's omnipotence. But if the text can be said to mean *everything*, it ceases to mean *anything*. One cannot have serious interpretive discussions with those who interpret all references to the New Earth figuratively. Why? Because as soon as you cite a passage depicting anything tangible, they will dismiss it by saying, "You can't take that literally."

393

Why Does All Creation Await Our Resurrection?

394

The kingdom of God...does not mean merely the salvation of certain individuals nor even the salvation of a chosen group of people. It means nothing less than the **complete renewal of the entire cosmos**, culminating in the new heaven and the new earth.

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

395

The redemption in Jesus Christ means **the restoration of an original good creation**.

Albert Wolters,
Creation Regained

396

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding"

397

For by him [Jesus] *all things* were created: *things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible*, whether **thrones or powers or rulers or authorities**; *all things* were created by him and for him. He is before *all things*, and in him *all things* hold together...he is the **head** of the church and **firstborn** from among the dead, so that in *everything* he might have the **supremacy**.

Colossians 1:16-20

398

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself *all things*, whether *things on earth* or *things in heaven*, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:16-20

399

Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.

Martin Luther,
Watchwords for the Warfare of Life

400

Erich Sauer,
The King of the Earth

Even after the fall, the destiny and the redemption of the earth remain indissolubly united with the existence and development of the human race. **The redemption of the earth is, in spite of all, still bound up with man.... *Man* is the instrument for the redemption of the earthly creation.**

401

...And because this remains God's way and goal, there can be a new heaven and a new earth only *after* the great white throne, i.e., after the completion and conclusion of the history of human redemption.

Erich Sauer

402

What happens to our bodies and what happens to the creation go together. And what happens to our bodies is **not annihilation but redemption**....Our bodies will be redeemed, restored, made new, not thrown away. And so it is with the heavens and the earth.

John Piper, *Future Grace*

403

N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*

Creation is to be redeemed; that is, space is to be redeemed, time is to be redeemed, and matter is to be redeemed. God said "very good" over his space-time-and-matter creation, and though the redeeming of this world from its present corruption and decay will mean transformations we cannot imagine,

404

...the one thing we can be sure of is that this redeeming of creation will not mean that God will say, of space, time and matter, "Oh, well, nice try, good while it lasted but obviously gone bad, so let's drop it and go for a nonspatiotemporal, nonmaterial world instead."

N. T. Wright

405

How Far-Reaching Is the Resurrection?

Why does God go to all the trouble to dirty his hands, as it were, with our decaying, sin-stained flesh, in order to reestablish it as a resurrection body and clothe it with immortality? **Because** his Son paid the price so **the Father's purpose for the material universe** would be fulfilled: **that he would be glorified in it**, including in our bodies, forever and ever.

John Piper,
"What Happens When You Die?"

407

406

Therefore [in light of our eventual resurrection], my dear brothers, **stand firm**. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because **you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.**

1 Corinthians 15:58

408

If any man builds on this foundation [Christ] 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 Corinthians 3:12-15

409

Bruce Milne,
*The Message
of Heaven and Hell*

Every kingdom work, public or private, partakes of the kingdom's imperishable character. Every honest intention, every stumbling witness, every resistance of temptation, every repentance, every gesture of concern,

410

...every worship, every struggle to obey, every mumbled prayer, everything, which flows out of our faith-relationship with the Ever-Living One, will find its place in the ever-living heavenly order which will dawn at his coming.

Bruce Milne

411

Man is in no way justified in regarding himself as the *only* goal of the redeeming activity of Christ.

Erich Sauer,
The King of the Earth

412

**Is Heaven Our
Default Destination . . .
or Is Hell?**

413

The entire New Testament is overshadowed by the certainty of a coming day of universal judgment, and by the problem thence arising: how may we sinners get right with God while there is yet time?

J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*

414

It is the presence of God that gives bliss to moral creatures and the absence of God that brings everlasting woe to moral creatures.

A. W. Tozer,
The Attributes of God

415

What will Hell be like?

1. Jesus spoke of Hell as a literal place, describing it in graphic terms:

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matt. 10:28)

416

2. Hell is as eternal as Heaven:

Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life. (Matt. 25:46)

3. Hell is a place of punishment designed for Satan and fallen angels:

Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' (Matt. 25:41)

417

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 for ever and ever.

Revelation 20:10

418

4. Hell will also be inhabited by people who do not trust Christ:

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....If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:12-15)

419

5. Hell is a horrible place of suffering and everlasting destruction:

The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt. 13:41,42)

420

They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord.

2 Thessalonians
1:9

421

The moral dissimilarity creates hell. For those beings who are morally dissimilar to God, hell is their final place. For those creatures who are morally similar to God, with some likeness to God, heaven is their place because their nature belongs there.

A. W. Tozer, *The Attributes of God*

422

[In hell] sinners go on sinning and receiving the recompense of their sin, refusing, always refusing, to bend the knee.

D. A. Carson,
How Long, O Lord?

423

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Christianity asserts that every individual human being is going to live for ever, and this must be either true or false. Now there are a good many things which would not be worth bothering about if I were going to live only seventy years, but which I had better bother about very seriously if I am going to live for ever.

424

...Perhaps my bad temper or my jealousy are gradually getting worse—so gradually that the increase in seventy years will not be very noticeable. But it might be absolute hell in a million years; in fact, if Christianity is true, Hell is the precisely correct technical term for what it would be.

C. S. Lewis

425

Imaginary evil is romantic and varied; real evil is gloomy, monotonous, barren, boring. Imaginary good is boring; real good is always new, marvelous, intoxicating.

Simone Weil,
Gravity and Grace

426

The best of life on Earth is a glimpse of Heaven; the worst of life is a glimpse of Hell. For Christians, this present life is the closest they will come to Hell. For unbelievers, it is the closest they will come to Heaven.

427

The safest road to hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.

C. S. Lewis

428

Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Matthew 7:13-14

429

A staggering number of people have been taught that a select few Christians will spend forever in a peaceful, joyous place called heaven while the rest of humanity spends forever in torment and punishment in hell with no chance for anything better....This is misguided, toxic, and ultimately subverts the contagious spread of Jesus' message of love, peace, forgiveness and joy that our world desperately needs to hear.

Rob Bell, *Love Wins*

430

Beginning with the early church, there is a long tradition of Christians who believe that God will ultimately restore everything and everybody, because Jesus says in Matthew 19 that there will be a "renewal of all things," Peter says in Acts 3 that Jesus will "restore everything," and Paul says in Colossians 1 that through Christ "God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Rob Bell, *Love Wins*

431

Until the nineteenth century almost all Christian theologians taught the reality of eternal torment in hell. Here and there, outside the theological mainstream, were some who believed that the wicked would be finally annihilated....Eternal punishment was firmly asserted in official creeds and confessions of the churches.

Richard Bauckham

432

Rob Bell, *Love Wins*

Millions have been taught that if they don't believe, if they don't accept in the right way according to the person telling them the gospel, and they were hit by a car and died later that same day, God would have no choice but to punish them forever in conscious torment in hell.

433

...God would, in essence, become a **fundamentally different being** to them in that moment of death, a different being to them *forever*. A loving heavenly father who will go to extraordinary lengths to have a relationship with them would, in the blink of an eye, become a cruel, mean, vicious tormenter

434

...who would insure that they would have no escape from an endless future of agony. If there was an earthly father who was like that, we would call the authorities. Loving one moment, vicious the next. Kind and compassionate, only to become cruel and relentless in the blink of an eye.

435

...Does God become somebody totally different the moment you die? That kind of God is simply devastating. Psychologically crushing. We can't bear it. No one can. ...That God is terrifying and traumatizing and unbearable.

Rob Bell

436

His wrath is not an impetuous and changeable passion, but an eternal and unchangeable principle.

A. T. Pierson,
Many Infallible Proofs

437

I consider the concept of hell as endless torment in body and mind an outrageous doctrine....How can Christians possibly project a deity of such cruelty and vindictiveness whose ways include inflicting everlasting torture upon his creatures, however sinful they may have been? Surely a God who would do such a thing is more nearly like Satan than like God.

Clark Pinnock

438

Will everybody be saved, or will some perish apart from God forever because of their choices? Those are questions, or more accurately, those are tensions we are free to leave fully intact. We don't need to resolve them or answer them because we can't, and so we simply respect them, creating space for the freedom that love requires.

Rob Bell, *Love Wins*

439

There are questions, and then there are questions...for some, these questions arise out of a trusting faith. For others, they arise out of a desire to have God prove himself on human terms.

Mark Galli, *God Wins*

God is love, but he also defines what love is.

Francis Chan, *Erasing Hell*

440

The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions. It hushes their fears and allows them to practice all pleasant forms of iniquity while death draws every day nearer and the command to repent goes unheeded.

A. W. Tozer,
The Knowledge of the Holy

441

The doctrine of Christ's vicarious atonement logically stands or falls with that of eternal punishment.

William G. T. Shedd

442

I have met no people who fully disbelieved in Hell and also had a living and life-giving belief in Heaven.

C. S. Lewis,
Letters to Malcolm

443

There seems to be a kind of conspiracy...to forget, or to conceal, where the doctrine of hell comes from. The doctrine of hell is not "mediaeval priestcraft" for frightening people into giving money to the church: it is Christ's deliberate judgment on sin.... We cannot repudiate Hell without altogether repudiating Christ.

Dorothy Sayers,
Introductory Papers on Dante

444

There is no doctrine which I would more willingly remove from Christianity than this, if it lay in my power. But it has the full support of Scripture and, specially, of our Lord's own words; it has always been held by Christendom; and it has the support of reason.

C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

445

Peter Kreeft,

*Everything You Ever
Wanted to Know about Heaven*

It is Heaven and Hell that put bite into the Christian vision of life on earth, just as playing for high stakes puts bite into a game or a war or a courtship. Hell is part of the vision too: the height of the mountain is appreciated from the depth of the valley, and for winning to be high drama, losing must be possible.

446

For salvation to be "good news," there must be "bad news" to be saved from. If all of life's roads lead to the same place, it makes no ultimate difference which road we choose. But if they lead to opposite places, to infinite bliss or infinite misery, unimaginable glory or unimaginable tragedy then life is a life-or-death affair, a razor's edge, and our choice of roads is infinitely important.

Peter Kreeft

447

Think lightly of hell, and you will think lightly of the cross. Think little of the sufferings of lost souls, and you will soon think little of the Savior who delivers you from them.

Charles Spurgeon,
"Future Punishment a Fearful Thing,"
Sermon 682

448

Charles Spurgeon,

"The Way of Wisdom," Sermon 2862

Some have staggered over the doctrine of eternal punishment, because they could not see how that could be consistent with God's goodness. I have only one question to ask concerning that: Does God reveal it in the Scriptures? Then I believe it, and leave to him the vindication of his own consistency.

449

...I am sure that he will not inflict a pain upon any creature which that creature does not deserve, that he will never cause any sorrow or misery which is not absolutely necessary, and that he will glorify himself by doing the right, the loving, the kind thing, in the end. If we do not see it to be so, it will be nonetheless so because we are blind.

Charles Spurgeon

450

Teresa of Avila,
The Life of Teresa of Jesus

I was terrified by all this, and, though it happened nearly six years ago, I still am as I write: even as I sit here, fear seems to be depriving my body of its natural warmth.

451

...It has been of the greatest benefit to me, both in taking from me all fear of the tribulations and disappointments of this life and also in strengthening me to suffer them and to give thanks to the Lord, Who, as I now believe, has delivered me from such terrible and never-ending torments.

Teresa of Avila

452

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Mark 8:36-37

453

Will Heaven Be Boring?

Our belief that Heaven will be boring betrays a heresy—that *God* is boring. There's no greater nonsense. What's true is that our desires for pleasure and the experience of joy come directly from God's hand. God designed and gave us our taste buds, adrenaline, sex drives, and the nerve endings that convey pleasure to our brains.

454

455

Likewise, our imaginations and our capacity for joy and exhilaration were *made by the very God we accuse of being boring!* Do we imagine that we ourselves came up with the idea of fun?

456

A reason people assume Heaven is boring is that their Christian lives are boring. That's not God's fault; it's their own. God calls us to follow him in an adventure that should put us on life's edge. He's infinite in creativity, goodness, beauty, and power.

457

If we're experiencing the invigorating stirrings of God's Spirit, trusting him to fill our lives with divine appointments, experiencing the childlike delights of his gracious daily kindnesses, then we'll know God is exciting and Heaven is exhilarating. People who love God crave his companionship. To be in his presence will be the very opposite of boredom.

458

We think of ourselves as fun-loving, and of God as a humorless killjoy. But we've got it backward. It's not God who's boring; it's us. Did we invent wit, humor, and laughter? No. God did. We'll never begin to exhaust God's sense of humor and his love for adventure. The real question is this: How could God not be bored with *us*?

459

Satan need not convince us that Heaven doesn't exist. He need convince us only that Heaven is boring and unearthly. If we believe that lie, we'll be robbed of joy and anticipation, we'll set our minds on this life and not the next, and we won't be motivated to share our faith. Why should we share the "good news" that people can spend eternity in a boring, ghostly place *we're* not looking forward to?

460

Most of us would love to spend the evening with a great musician, artist, author, or head of state. God is the master artist who created the universe, the inventor of music, the author and main character of the drama of redemption. Head of state? He's king of the entire universe. Yet if someone says, "I want to go to Heaven to be with God forever," others wonder, *Wouldn't that be boring? What are we thinking?*

461

In Heaven, we'll be at home with the God we love and who loves us wholeheartedly. Lovers don't bore each other. People who love God could never be bored in his presence.

462

Where and When Will Our Deliverance Come?

463

There is not one inch in the entire area of our human life about which Christ, who is Sovereign of all, does not cry out, "Mine!"

*Abraham Kuyper,
Abraham Kuyper:
A Centennial Reader*

464

But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy....**The earth will give birth to her dead.**

Isaiah 26:19

465

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

*An Angel,
Daniel 12:2, ESV*

466

The Messiah "will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom... **Forever.**"

Isaiah 9:7

467

As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you....You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth....Pass through, **pass through the gates!** Prepare the way for the people....**Raise a banner for the nations.**

Isaiah 62:5-7, 10

468

The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and **he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.**

Luke 1:32-33

469

He [Son of Man, Messiah] was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is *an everlasting dominion that will not pass away*, and his kingdom is one that will *never be destroyed*.

Daniel 7:14

470

I am about to come and gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see my glory.

Isaiah 66:18

471

Will the Old Earth Be Permanently Destroyed...or Resurrected?

472

In his redemptive activity, God does not destroy the works of his hands, but **cleanses them from sin and perfects them**, so that they may finally reach the goal for which he created them....this means that **the new earth to which we look forward will not be totally different from the present one**, but will be a **renewal and glorification of the earth on which we now live.**

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

473

In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will **perish**, but you remain; **they will all wear out** like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be **discarded.**

Psalms 102:25-26

474

[Jesus said,] "Heaven and earth will **pass away**, but my words will never pass away."

Luke 21:33

475

At the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jesus, Matthew 19:27-28

476

[Christ] must remain in heaven until **the time comes for God to restore everything**, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Acts 3:21

477

God promises that **the glory of his people will demand a glorious creation to live in**. So the fallen creation will obtain the very freedom from futility and evil and pain that the church is given. So when God makes all things new, he makes us new spiritually and morally, he makes us new physically, and then **he makes the whole creation new so that our environment fits our perfected spirits and bodies.**

John Piper,
"Behold, I Make All Things New"

478

The day of the Lord will come like a thief. **The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire**, and the earth and everything in it will be **laid bare.**

2 Peter 3:10

479

Cornelius Venema,
The Promise of the Future

The word used in the older and better manuscripts conveys the idea of a **process that does not so much destroy or burn up, but uncovers or lays open for discovery the creation**, now in a renewed state of pristine purity.

480

...It will **involve the renewal of all things, not the creation of all new things...**[and] it follows that the life to come in the new creation will be as rich and full of activity in the service of the Lord as was intended at the beginning.

Cornelius Venema

481

What Peter may well mean is that at the end of this age there will be cataclysmic events that **bring this world to an end as we know it—not putting it out of existence, but wiping out all that is evil and cleansing it by fire and fitting it for an age of glory and righteousness and peace that will never end.**

John Piper, *Future Grace*

482

Neither is the substance nor the essence of the creation annihilated (for faithful and true is he who has established it), but “the form of the world passes away” [1 Corinthians 7:31]; that is, those things among which transgression has occurred, because man has grown old in them.

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, AD 180

483

If the form of the world passes away, it is **by no means an annihilation or destruction of their material substance** that is shown to take place, but a kind of change of quality and a transformation of appearance.

Origen, *First Principles*, AD 220

484

Methodius, AD 290

The Discourse on the Resurrection

It is not satisfactory to say that the universe will be utterly destroyed, and sea and air and sky will be no longer. For the whole world will be deluged with fire from heaven, and **burnt for the purpose of purification and renewal; it will not, however, come to complete ruin** and corruption. For if it were better for the world not to be than to be, why did God, in making the world, take the worse course?

485

...“Thus saith the Lord that created the heaven, it is He who prepared the earth and created it, He determined it; He created it not in vain, but formed it to be inhabited.” For in reality God did not establish the universe in vain, or to no purpose but destruction, as those weak-minded men say, but to exist, and be inhabited, and continue. **Wherefore the earth and the heaven must exist again after the conflagration and shaking of all things.**

Methodius, AD 290

486

We believe that the present physical mass of the universe is to be **changed anew into something better.** We believe that this will not come to pass until the number of elect humans has reached its final total, and the blessed city . . . has been brought to completion; also that, **after the completion of the city, the renewal will follow without delay.**

Anselm, *Why God Became Man*, AD 1080

487

The dwelling should befit the dweller. **But the world was made to be man's dwelling; therefore, it should be fitting for man. Now, man will be renewed; therefore, the world will be likewise...**Now man has some likeness to the universe by which he is called “a little world.” Thus, man loves the whole world naturally and consequently desires its good. Therefore, so that man's desire is satisfied, the universe must also be made better.

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1270

488

Of the elements of the world I shall only say this one thing, that they are to be consumed, only that they may be renovated, their substance remaining the same, as it may be easily gathered from Romans 8:21, and from other passages.

John Calvin, 1550
Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles

489

The elements will not be removed but changed. For we expect not other heavens and another earth, but new heavens and a new earth.

William Ames (Amesius),
Medullas Theologiae, AD 1600

490

Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*
The destruction here foretold is not annihilation. (a.) The world is to be burned up; but combustion is not a destruction of substance. It is merely a change of state or condition. (b.) The destruction of the world by water and its destruction by fire are analogous events; the former was not annihilation, therefore, the second is not.

491

...(c.) The destruction spoken of is elsewhere called a regeneration (Matthew 19:28) a restoration (Acts 3:21); a deliverance from the bondage of corruption (Romans 8:21). (d.) There is no evidence either from Scripture or experience, that any substance has ever been annihilated.

492

...If force is motion, it may cease; but cessation of motion is not annihilation, and the common idea in our day, among scientists, is that no force is ever lost; it is, as they say, only transformed.

Charles Hodge, 1860

493

Herman Bavinck,
The Last Things

According to Scripture the present world will neither continue forever nor will it be destroyed and replaced by a totally new one. Instead it will be cleansed of sin and re-created, reborn, renewed, made whole. While the kingdom of God is first planted spiritually in human hearts, the future blessedness is not to be spiritualized.

494

...Biblical hope, rooted in incarnation and resurrection, is creational, this-worldly, visible, physical, bodily hope. The rebirth of human beings is completed in the glorious rebirth of all creation, the New Jerusalem whose architect and builder is God himself.

Herman Bavinck

495

Ezekiel 36:33-36

This is what the Sovereign Lord says: On the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will resettle your towns, and the ruins will be rebuilt. The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass through it. They will say, "This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden;

496

...the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited." Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the Lord have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it.

Ezekiel 36:33-36

497

The glory of the
LORD fills the whole
earth.

Numbers 14:21

498

When Revelation 21:1 and 2 Peter 3:10 say that the present earth and heavens will 'pass away,' it does not have to mean that they go out of existence, but may mean that **there will be such a change in them that their present condition passes away....**We might say, **'The caterpillar passes away, and the butterfly emerges.'** There is a real passing away, and **there is a real continuity**, a real connection.

John Piper, *Future Grace*

499

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

If God would have to annihilate the present cosmos, **Satan would have won a great victory....**Satan would have succeeded in so devastatingly corrupting the present cosmos and the present earth that God could do nothing with it but to blot it totally out of existence. But **Satan did not win such victory.**

500

...On the contrary, Satan has been decisively defeated. **God will reveal the full dimensions of that defeat when he shall renew this very earth on which Satan deceived mankind** and finally banish from it all the results of Satan's evil machinations.

Anthony Hoekema

501

Redemption means *restoration*—that is, **the return to the goodness of an originally unscathed creation** and not merely the addition of something supracreational....This restoration affects the *whole* of creational life and not merely some limited area within it.

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

502

Those purified works on the earth, must surely include the products of human culture. **There is no reason to doubt that they will be transfigured and transformed** by their liberation from the curse, but they will be in essential continuity with our experience now—just as our resurrected bodies, though glorified, will still be bodies.

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

503

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

The new Narnia was a deeper country; every rock and flower and blade of grass looked as if it meant more. I can't describe it any better than that; if you ever get there, you will know what I mean.

It was the Unicorn who summed up what everyone was feeling. He stamped his right forefoot on the ground and neighed and then cried,

504

...“I have come home at last! This is my real country! I belong here. This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now. The reason why we loved the old Narnia is that it sometimes looked a little like this....Come further up, come further in!”

C. S. Lewis

505

C. S. Lewis,
The Last Battle

“Why!” exclaimed Peter. “It's England. And that's the house itself—Professor Kirke's old home in the country where all our adventures began!”

“I thought that house had been destroyed,” said Edmund.

506

...“So it was,” said the Faun.
“But you are now looking at the
England within England, the
real England just as this is the
real Narnia. And in that inner
England no good thing is
destroyed.”

C. S. Lewis

507

Sam Storms,
“Heaven: The Eternal Increase of Joy”

Your capacity for happiness in
heaven is shaped by the development
and refinement and depth of your
capacity on earth. **What we do now is
not discarded once we enter eternity.
What we learn now is not erased in
heaven.** Nothing in Scripture leads us
to believe that everyone will be
instantaneously, equally, and

508

...exhaustively educated at the
inauguration of our heavenly
existence....What we experience
in joy and understanding and
insight now is not destroyed, but
is the foundation on which all our
eternal experience and growth is
based.

Sam Storms

509

Greg Beale, *“The Eschatological
Conception of
New Testament Theology”*

The Bible begins with original
creation which is corrupted, and
the rest of the Old Testament is a
redemptive-historical process
working toward **a restoration of
the fallen creation in a new
creation.**

510

...The New Testament then sees
these hopes beginning fulfillment
and prophesies a future time of
fulfillment in a consummated new
creation, which Revelation 21:1–
22:5 portrays.... **New creation** is
the New Testament’s
hermeneutical and eschatological
centre of gravity.

Greg Beale

511

Greg Beale,
Eschatology in Bible and Theology

All of the Old Testament works toward
the goal of new creation, and the New
Testament begins to fulfill that primary
goal....Redemption is always
subordinate to creation in that it is the
means of reintroducing the conditions
of the new creation. **All events since
the fall are to be seen as a process
leading to the reintroduction of the
original creation.**

512

...[William] Dumbrell is correct
in understanding **new creation**
**as the dominating notion of
biblical theology** because new
creation is the goal or purpose
of God’s redemptive-historical
plan; **new creation is the
logical main point of Scripture.**

Greg Beale

513

**Will the New Earth
Be Familiar ...
like Home?**

514

The life we now have as
the persons we now are
will continue in the
universe in which we
now exist.

Dallas Willard

515

René Pache, *The Future Life*
 The emphasis on the present heaven is clearly rest, cessation from earth's battles and comforts from earth's sufferings. **The future heaven is centered more on activity and expansion, serving Christ and reigning with Him. The scope is much larger,** the great city with its twelve gates, people coming and going, nations to rule....

516

...In other words, the emphasis in the present heaven is on **the absence of earth's negatives,** while in the future heaven it is the **presence of earth's positives,** magnified many times through the power and glory of resurrected bodies on a resurrected Earth, free at last from sin and shame and all that would hinder both joy and achievement.
René Pache

517

What We Assume About Heaven	What the Bible Says About Heaven
Non-Earth	New Earth
Unfamiliar; unearthly	Familiar; earthly
Ghostly (Disembodied)	Resurrected (Embodied)

518

What We Assume About Heaven	What the Bible Says About Heaven
Foreign (<i>won't feel like home, utterly different</i>)	Home (<i>all the comforts of home with many innovations</i>)
Leaving favorite things behind	Retaining the good; finding the best ahead
No time & space	Time & Space

519

What We Assume About Heaven	What the Bible Says About Heaven
Nothing to do but float on clouds, strum harps; no memory or continuity of relationships, no learning	Our God to worship and serve; friends to enjoy and meet; a universe to rule and explore; forever learning

520

What We Assume About Heaven	What the Bible Says About Heaven
Static	<i>Dynamic</i>
No art, culture, progress	Art, culture and progress
Neither old (<i>like Eden</i>) nor new and earthly; just strange and unknown	Both old and new, familiar and innovative; nostalgia and adventure

521

What We Assume About Heaven	What the Bible Says About Heaven
No learning or discovery; total knowledge, no curiosity	An eternity of exciting learning and discovery
Boring	Fascinating
Inhuman; no individuality; loss of desires	Fully human individuals; desires continuously fulfilled

522

What We Assume About Heaven	What the Bible Says About Heaven
Absence of the terrible (<i>but presence of little we desire</i>)	Presence of the wonderful (<i>everything we desire and nothing we don't</i>)
Story over	Story Just Beginning

523

What we need is not to be rescued from the world, not to cease being human, not to stop caring for the world, not to stop shaping human culture. What we need is the power to do these things according to the will of God. **We, as well as the rest of creation, need to be redeemed.**
Paul Marshall,
Heaven Is Not My Home

524

If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.

C. S. Lewis,
Mere Christianity

525

I am groaning with inexpressible groaning on my wanderer's path, and remembering Jerusalem with my heart lifted up towards it—Jerusalem my homeland, Jerusalem my mother.

Augustine,
Confessions, AD 397

526

C. S. Lewis,
The Problem of Pain

The settled happiness and security which we all desire, God withholds from us by the very nature of the world: but joy, pleasure, and merriment He has scattered broadcast.

527

...We are never safe, but we have plenty of fun, and some ecstasy. It is not hard to see why. The security we crave would teach us to rest our hearts in this world and oppose an obstacle to our return to God.

C. S. Lewis

528

The modern philosopher had told me again and again that I was in the right place, and I had still felt depressed even in acquiescence....When I heard that I was in the wrong place...my soul sang for joy, like a bird in spring. I knew now...why I could feel homesick at home.

G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*

529

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

"This is it...the country for which I was made!"

"At last, the real world!"

"I've been born. All my life on Earth was but a series of labor pains preparing me for this."

530

... "This is joy itself. Every foretaste of joy in the Shadowlands was but the stab, the pang, the inconsolable longing for this place!"

"How could anyone be satisfied with less than this?"

C. S. Lewis

531

What Will It Mean to See God?

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after:

that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

David, Psalm 27:4, ESV

533

532

I shall rise from the dead....I shall see the Son of God, the Sun of Glory, and shine myself as that sun shines. I shall be united to the Ancient of Days, to God Himself, who had no morning, never began....No man ever saw God and lived. **And yet, I shall not live till I see God; and when I have seen him, I shall never die.**

John Donne, AD 1600

534

O God, you are my God,
earnestly I seek you;
**my soul thirsts for you,
my body longs for you,**
in a dry and weary land
where there is no water.

Psalm 63:1

535

Moses to God: "Show me your glory."

God to Moses: "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you.... But you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.... When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

Exodus 33:18-23

536

God "lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see."

1 Timothy 6:16

Without holiness no one will see the Lord.

Hebrews 12:14

537

Ancient theologians spoke of the "beatific vision." The term comes from three Latin words that together mean "a happy-making sight."

538

He who did not spare his own Son, but **gave him up for us all**—how **will** he not also, **along with him**, graciously **give us all things?**

Romans 8:32

- > Primary Joy (Source)
- > Secondary Joys (Derivatives)

539

In Your presence is fullness of joy;
At Your right hand are pleasures
forevermore.

David,
Psalm 16:11, NKJV

540

We have confidence to enter
the Most Holy Place by the
blood of Jesus.

Hebrews 10:19

Let us then with confidence
draw near to the throne of
grace.

Hebrews 4:16, ESV

541

One thing I ask of the Lord,
this is what I seek: that I
may dwell in the house of
the Lord all the days of my
life, **to gaze upon the
beauty of the Lord and to
seek him** in his temple.

Psalm 27:4

542

God with us.

Matthew 1:23

Anyone who has seen me
has seen the Father.

John 14:9

Blessed are the pure in
heart, for **they will see God.**

Matthew 5:8

543

Jesus Christ is the same
yesterday [when he lived on
Earth] and **today** [when he
lives in the intermediate
Heaven] and **forever** [when
he will live on the New Earth,
in the eternal Heaven].

Hebrews 13:8

544

By incarnation the Son became
more than he was before, and a
human element became integral
to the ongoing life of the Triune
God.... Christ's glorified
humanity, which is the template
and link for the glorification that
is ours, must go on forever.

J. I. Packer, "Incarnate Forever"

545

I know that my Redeemer
lives, and that in the end he
will stand upon the earth. And
**after my skin has been
destroyed, yet in my flesh I
will see God;** I myself will see
him with my own eyes—I, and
not another. How my heart
yearns within me!

Job 19:25-27

546

Nick Seagrave,
Edge of Eternity

The King stepped from the
great city, just outside the
gate, and put his hand on my
shoulder. I was aware of no
one and nothing but him. I
saw before me an aged,
weathered King, thoughtful
guardian of an empire.

547

...But I also saw a virile
Warrior-Prince primed for
battle, eager to mount his
steed and march in conquest.
...His eyes were keen as
sharpened swords yet deep as
wells, full of the memories of
the old and the dreams of the
young.

Nick Seagrave

548

And we all, with unveiled
face, **beholding the glory
of the Lord,** are being
transformed into the
same image from one
degree of glory to
another.

2 Corinthians 3:18, ESV

549

God's throne, God's river, God's
tree, God's service, God's face,
God's seal, God's reign: such are the
features of the life of the people of
God in the coming Holy City....It is
life totally centered on God. That is
the deepest and most glorious
prospect imaginable, for **there is no
reality comparable to the triune God.**

Bruce Milne,
The Message of Heaven and Hell

550

What is the essence of
eternal life?

That they may know you, the
only true God, and Jesus
Christ, whom you have sent.

John 17:3

551

Jonathan Edwards,
The Sermons of Jonathan Edwards

God himself is the great good which they are brought to the possession and enjoyment of by redemption. He is the highest good, and the sum of all that good which Christ purchased.

552

...The redeemed will indeed **enjoy other things**...but that which they shall enjoy in the angels, or each other, or in anything else whatsoever, that will yield them delight and happiness, will be **what will be seen of God in them.**

Jonathan Edwards, AD 1750

553

Asaph says, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you."

Psalm 73:25

Augustine called God "the end of our desires." He prayed, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

554

No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

Jeremiah 31:34

555

Sam Storms,

"Heaven: The Eternal Increase of Joy"

We will constantly be more amazed with God, more in love with God, and thus ever more relishing his presence and our relationship with him. Our experience of God will never reach its consummation.

556

...We will never finally arrive, as if upon reaching a peak we discover there is nothing beyond. Our experience of God will never become stale. It will deepen and develop, intensify and amplify, unfold and increase, broaden and balloon.

Sam Storms

557

Charles Spurgeon,
"The Heaven of Heaven,"
Sermon 824

The glorified see God's face more clearly because there are no idols to stand between him and them. Our idolatrous love of worldly things is a chief cause of our knowing so little of spiritual things.

558

...One cannot fill his life cup from the pools of Earth and yet have room in it for the crystal streams of Heaven. But they have no idols there in Heaven—nothing to occupy the heart, no rival for the Lord Jesus. He reigns supreme within their spirits, and therefore they see his face.

Charles Spurgeon

559

To regain her lost power, the church must see Heaven opened and have a transforming vision of God. Not the utilitarian God who is having a run of popularity today, whose chief claim to men's attention is His ability to bring them success in their various undertakings.

...The God we must learn to know is the Majesty in the heavens.

A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*

560

We shall in the future world see the material forms of the new heavens and the new earth in such a way that we shall most distinctly recognize God everywhere present and governing all things, material as well as spiritual.

Augustine, The City of God

561

God's shekinah glory returned in Christ, who *tabernacled* among us (took up temporary residence); "We have seen his glory."

John 1:14

Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears **we shall be like him**, for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:2, RSV

562

How great shall be that felicity, which shall be tainted with no evil, which shall lack no good...God himself, who is the Author of virtue, shall be our reward. As there is nothing greater or better than God himself, God has promised us himself. God shall be the end of all our desires, who will be seen without end, loved without cloy, and praised without weariness.

Augustine, The City of God

563

God wants to please you. He is pleased when you are His child, when you're surrendered, when your will is His will and His will is yours, when you are not in rebellion and not seeking your own will. God loves to please His people.

Did you ever see a father bringing gifts to his children? Did you ever see a lover bringing gifts to his bride? He wants to please the people He loves, and the people that love Him.

A. W. Tozer, The Attributes of God

564

No one can live without delight, and that is why a man deprived of spiritual joy goes over to carnal pleasures.

Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, AD 1250

565

Father J. Boudreau,
The Happiness of Heaven, 1871

I will not attempt to describe the joys that will overwhelm the soul of this fortunate young man when he first sees that king, of whose manly beauty, goodness, power, and magnificence he has heard so much. Nor will I attempt to describe the other joys which fill his soul when he beholds his own personal beauty,

566

...and the magnificence of his princely garments whereof he had also heard so much heretofore. Much less will I attempt to picture his exquisite and unspeakable happiness when he sees himself adopted into the royal family, honored and loved by all, together with all the pleasures of life within his reach.

567

All this taken together is a beatific vision for him....**The vision of God has a transforming power.** Thus the soul, because she only sees God as He is, is filled to overflowing with all knowledge; she becomes beautiful with the beauty of God, rich with His wealth, holy with His holiness, and happy with His unutterable happiness.

Father J. Boudreau, The Happiness of Heaven, 1871

568

God will be so known by us, and shall be so much before us, that we shall see Him by the spirit in ourselves, in one another, in Himself, in the new heavens and the new earth, in every created thing which shall then exist; and also by the body we shall see Him in every body which the keen vision of the eye of the spiritual body shall reach.

Augustine, The City of God

569

The saints are like so many vessels of different sizes cast into a sea of happiness where every vessel is full: this is eternal life, for a man ever to have his capacity filled. But after all 'tis left to God's sovereign pleasure, 'tis his prerogative to determine the largeness of the vessel.

Jonathan Edwards,
Jonathan Edwards on Heaven and Hell

570

If the goodness, beauty, and wonder of creatures are so delightful to the human mind, the fountainhead of God's own goodness (compared with the trickles of goodness found in creatures) will draw excited human minds entirely to itself.

Thomas Aquinas,
Summa Contra Gentiles

571

I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.

Leviticus 26:11-12

572

My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Ezekiel 37:27

I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.

2 Corinthians 6:16

573

Dallas Willard,
The Divine Conspiracy

We can be sure that heaven in the sense of our afterlife is just our future in this universe. There is not another universe besides this one. God created the heavens and the earth. That's it.

574

...And much of the difficulty in having a believable picture of heaven and hell today comes from the centuries-long tendency to "locate" them in "another reality" outside the created universe. ...When we pass through what we call death, we do not lose the world. Indeed, we see it for the first time as it really is.

575

...Time is within eternity, not outside it. The created universe is within the kingdom of God, not outside it. And if there is anything we know now about the "physical" universe, it surely is that it would be quite adequate to eternal purposes. And given that it has been produced...all that one might require of an utterly realistic future for humanity in it is surely possible.

Dallas Willard

576

God's glory will fill and permeate the entire new Heaven, not just one centralized place. Thus, wherever we go in Heaven, we will be in the immediate presence of the full glory of God. Wherever we go, we will enjoy the complete manifestation of God's presence. Throughout all eternity, we will never be separated from direct, unhindered fellowship with God.

Steven J. Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*

577

The beatitude of Heaven consists essentially in the vision, love, and enjoyment of God himself.

Father J. Boudreau,
The Happiness of Heaven, 1871

578

Jonathan Edwards,
"The Christian Pilgrim"

God is the highest good of the reasonable creature, and the enjoyment of him is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives,

579

...children, or the company of earthly friends, are but shadows....But the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams, but God is the sun. These are but streams, but God is the fountain. These are but drops, but God is the ocean.

Jonathan Edwards

580

Wherever God is, there is Heaven.

Teresa of Avila

Corollary: Wherever God is not, there is Hell.

Thy presence makes our Paradise, and where Thou art is Heaven.

John Milton

581

I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

John 14:3

I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.

Philippians 1:23

582

O my Lord Jesus Christ, if I could be in heaven without thee, it would be a hell; and if I could be in hell, and have thee still, it would be a heaven to me, for thou art all the heaven I want.

Samuel Rutherford,
quoted in Morning and Evening

583

I had rather be in hell with Christ, than be in heaven without him.

Martin Luther,
quoted in We Shall See God

584

Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and *to see my glory*, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

John 17:24, *emphasis added*

585

God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.

John Piper,
Desiring God

586

It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, he will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.

Luke 12:37

587

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and *your life is now hidden with Christ in God*. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3:1-4

588

You have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.

Hebrews 12:22-23

589

How Will We Worship God?

590

E. J. Fortman,
Everlasting Life after Death

What is the essence of heaven?... [It is the] beatific vision, love, and enjoyment of the triune God. For the three divine persons have an infinitely perfect vision and love and enjoyment of the divine essence and of one another.

591

...And in this infinite knowing, loving and enjoying lies the very life of the triune God, the very essence of their endless and infinite happiness. If the blessed are to be endlessly and supremely happy, then, they must share in the very life of the triune God, in the divine life that makes Them endlessly and infinitely happy.

E. J. Fortman

592

Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

Revelation 21:3

As eternity unfolds, the thrill of knowing Him will grow.

John G. Elliot

593

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:19-20

594

Without holiness on earth, we shall never be prepared to enjoy heaven. Heaven is a holy place, the Lord of heaven is a holy being, the angels are holy creatures. Holiness is written on everything in heaven....How shall we ever be at home and happy in heaven if we die unholy?

J. C. Ryle, Holiness, AD 1880

595

As [people in heaven] increase in the knowledge of God and of the works of God, the more they will see of his excellency; and the more they see of his excellency...the more will they love him; and the more they love God, the more delight and happiness...will they have in him.

Jonathan Edwards,
The Miscellanies

596

The people of God will not be absorbed into or partake in an immediate way of the being of God. His people will see him without any of the sinful limitations of the present. No sin-induced stupor, no failure of hearing, no blindness of vision will obscure the beauty of God from their knowledge.

Cornelius Venema,
Promise of the Future

597

Ruling On the New Earth

Why do we not know the country whose citizens we are? Because we have wandered so far away that we have forgotten it. But the Lord Christ, the king of the land, came down to us, and drove forgetfulness from our heart. God took to Himself our flesh so that He might be our way back.

Augustine, *AD 290*

598

599

My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest...But now my kingdom is from another place....You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world.

John 18:36-37

600

I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed.'

Revelation 5:4-5

601

Revelation 5:6-10

"He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.

602

...He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb....And they sang a new song:

603

...'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.

Revelation 5:6-10

604

For the upright will live in the land [earth], and the blameless will remain in it; but the wicked will be cut off from the land [earth].

Proverbs 2:21-22

605

The righteous will never be uprooted, but the wicked will not remain in the land [earth].

Proverbs 10:30

606

I will write on him [who overcomes] the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven [to earth] from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.

Revelation 3:12

607

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

Psalm 24:1

If the righteous will be recompensed on the earth, how much more the ungodly and the sinner.

Proverbs 11:31, NKJV

608

For evildoers shall be cut off; but those who wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth....The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace....For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, but those cursed by Him shall be cut off.

Psalm 37:9, 11, 22, NKJV

609

How awesome is the Lord Most High, the great King over all the earth!

Psalm 47:2

The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of all the earth.

Psalm 97:5

610

I will preserve You and give You as a covenant to the people, to restore the earth, to cause them to inherit the desolate heritages.

Isaiah 49:8, NKJV

The man who makes me his refuge will inherit the land [earth] and possess my holy mountain.

Isaiah 57:13

611

If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:29

You will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.

Daniel 12:13

612

We cannot understand biblical revelation, human history, or the events of our own lives if we don't grasp God's plan for the new heavens and New Earth. [Christ's] redemption acquires the significance of an all-inclusive divine drama, of a cosmic struggle...the goal of which is to bring back the entire created cosmos under God's dominion and rule.

Herman Ridderbos, *Paul and Jesus*

613

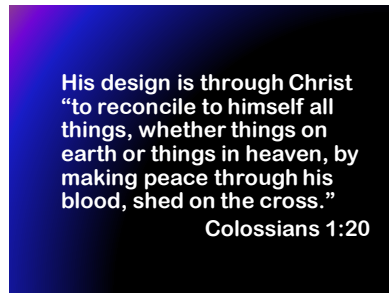
He made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring *all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.*

Ephesians 1:10

614



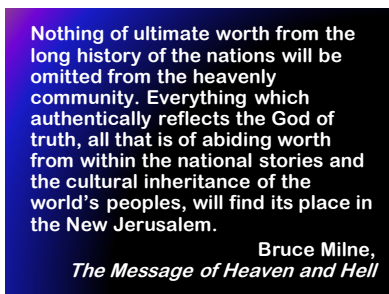
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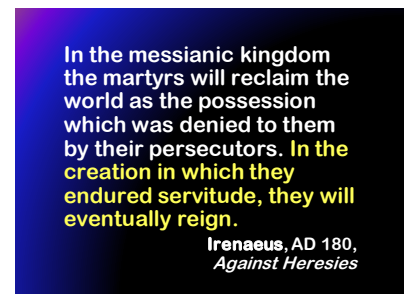
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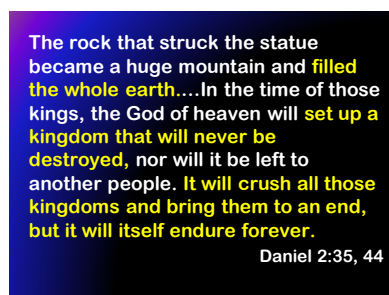
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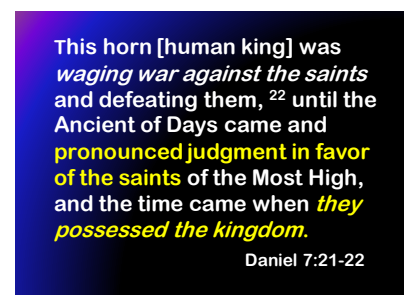
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621



622



623

Daniel 7:23-27

²³The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear **on earth**. It will...devour **the whole earth**, trampling it down and crushing it. ...²⁴another king will arise.... ²⁵ He will speak against the Most High [the true King] and oppress his saints.... The saints will be **handed over** to him for a time.

624

...²⁶ But the court [of God] will sit, and his [demonic earthly leader's] power will be taken away and **completely destroyed forever**. ²⁷ Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be **handed over to the saints**, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an **everlasting kingdom**, and all rulers will worship and obey him.

Daniel 7:23-27

625

Rejoice greatly.... See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.... He will proclaim peace to the nations. **His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

Zechariah 9:9-10

626

Do you not know that **the saints will judge [rule] the world?**... Do you not know that we will judge angels?

1 Corinthians 6:2-3

627

If we endure, we will also **reign with him**.

2 Timothy 2:12

Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. **Rule over** the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and **over every living creature that moves on the ground**.

Genesis 1:28

628

You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things.

Psalm 8:6, NLT

Be faithful, even to the point of death, and **I will give you the crown of life**.

Revelation 2:10

629

To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, **I will give authority over the nations**.

Revelation 2:26

I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take **your crown**.

Revelation 3:11

630

To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit **with me on my throne**, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Revelation 3:21

The twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne. ... They **lay their crowns before the throne**.

Revelation 4:10

631

When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Peter, 1 Peter 5:4

632

[You] have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have **made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.**

Revelation 5:9-10, NKJV

633

Of the increase of [Messiah's] government and peace there will be no end.

God, Isaiah 9:7

634

You gave them charge of everything you made, putting all things under their authority.

David,
Psalm 8:6, NLT

635

Humankind's job description is clearly stated. We were *not* designed just to live in mystic communion with our Maker, as is so often suggested. Rather, we were created *to govern the earth* with all living things—and to that specific end we were made in the divine likeness.

Dallas Willard,
The Spirit of the Disciplines

636

Wayne Grudem,
Systematic Theology

When the author of Hebrews says that we do 'not yet' see everything in subjection to man (Hebrews 2:8), he implies that **all things will eventually be subject to us, under the kingship of the man Jesus.**

637

...This will fulfill God's original plan to have everything in the world **subject to the human beings** that he had made. In this sense, then, we will 'inherit the earth' (Matthew 5:5) and **reign over it as God originally intended.**

Wayne Grudem

638

If an endless field of human knowledge and ability is now being formed by all that takes place in order to make the visible world and nature subject to us, and if we know that this dominion over nature will be complete in eternity, we may conclude that **the knowledge and dominion we have gained over nature here can and will be of continued significance, even in the Kingdom.**

Abraham Kuyper, *De Gemeene Gratie*

639

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then **we are heirs**—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings **in order that we may also share in his glory.**

Romans 8:16-17

640

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against **the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world** and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:12

641

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and **he who humbles himself will be exalted.**

Luke 14:11

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be **trusted with much.**

Luke 16:10

642

Luke 16:9-12

Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

One who is **faithful in a very little is also faithful in much**, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.

643

...If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, **who will entrust to you the true riches?** And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you **that which is your own?**

Luke 16:9-12

644

Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; **I will set you over much.** Enter into the joy of your master.

Matthew 25:23, ESV

645

That 'joy' is, of course, the creation and care of what is good, in all its dimensions. **A place in God's creative order has been reserved for each one of us from before the beginnings of cosmic existence.** His plan is for us to develop, as **apprentices to Jesus**, to the point where we can take our place in the ongoing creativity of the universe.

Dallas Willard

646

How Will We Rule God's Kingdom?

647

Our liveliness in all duties, our enduring of tribulation, our honoring of God, the vigor of our love, thankfulness, and all our graces, yea, the very being of our religion and Christianity, **depend on the believing, serious thoughts of [heaven].**

Richard Baxter,
The Saints' Everlasting Rest, 1650

648

Genesis 1:26-28 NKJV

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them....

649

...Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 1:26-28, NKJV

650

Eric Sauer,
The King of the Earth

These words [Genesis 1] plainly declare the vocation of the human race to rule. They also call him to progressive growth in culture. Far from being something in conflict with God, *cultural achievements are an essential attribute of the nobility of man as he possessed it in Paradise.*

651

...Inventions and discoveries, the sciences and arts, refinement and ennobling, in short, the advance of the human mind, are throughout the will of God. **They are the taking possession of the earth by the royal human race** (Genesis 1:28)... the performance of a commission, imposed by the Creator, by God's ennobled servants, a God-appointed ruler's service for the blessing of this earthly realm.
Eric Sauer

652

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

653

Jonathan Edwards,
*"The End for Which
God Created the World"*

God has a disposition to communicate himself, to spread abroad his own fullness. **His purpose was for his goodness to over-spill his own Being**, as it were. He chose to create the heavens and the earth so that his glory could come pouring out from himself in abundance....

654

...**He brought a physical reality into existence in order that it might experience his glory** and be filled with it and reflect it—every atom, every second, every part and moment of creation. He made human beings in his own image to reflect his glory, and **he placed them in a perfect environment which also reflected it.**

Jonathan Edwards

655

Friendship with the world [*as it is now, under the Curse*] is hatred toward God.

James 4:4

Do not be conformed to this world [*as it is now, under the Curse*].

Romans 12:2, NKJV

656

The wisdom of this world [*as it is now, under the Curse*] is foolishness with God.

1 Corinthians 3:19, NKJV

657

Paul encourages us not to become engrossed in the world as it is because **"this world in its present form is passing away."**

1 Corinthians 7:31

658

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.

Daniel 7:2

659

The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth. But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.

Daniel 7:18

660

The basic undertone of all that is revealed in the Apocalypse concerning the activities of heaven may be summed up in this one word *throne*.

Wilbur Smith,
The Biblical Doctrine of Heaven

661

Tragically, **humanity failed to fulfill its calling as God's vice-regents**. Instead we have tumbled down to the dust from which we were taken and groveled on the earth instead of reaching to the skies.

Bruce Milne,
The Message of Heaven and Hell

662

Man endures "the miseries of a **dethroned monarch**."

What can this incessant craving, and this impotence of attainment mean, unless there was once a happiness belonging to man, of which only the faintest traces remain, in that void which he attempts to fill with everything within his reach?

Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, 1670

663

Do not be afraid, little flock, for **your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom**.

Luke 12:32

664

And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, **you shall have authority over ten cities**.' And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' And he said to him, 'And **you are to be over five cities**.'

Luke 19:17-19

665

Perhaps it would be a good exercise for each of us to ask ourselves: Really, **how many cities could I now govern under God?** If, for example, Baltimore or Liverpool were turned over to me, with power to do what I want with it, how would things turn out? **An honest answer to this question might do much to prepare us for our eternal future in this universe.**

Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*

666

Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and **I will give to everyone according to what he has done**.

Revelation 22:12

667

Rejoice and be glad, because **great is your reward in heaven**.

Matthew 5:12

The Lord will reward everyone for he does, whether he is slave or free.

Ephesians 6:8

668

See, your Savior comes!
See, **his reward is with him**, and his recompense accompanies him.

Isaiah 62:11

669

He himself shall dwell in prosperity, and his descendants shall inherit the earth.

David,
Psalm 25:13, NKJV

670

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, **that he may lift you up in due time.**

1 Peter 5:5-6

671

Paul Helm, *The Last Things*

Some have been so impressed by the testimony of the Protestant Reformation to salvation by divine grace through faith alone that they have difficulty in making room for any idea of reward. To their way of thinking "reward" suggests "merit" and, as they quite correctly insist, the very idea of personal merit is excluded from heaven.

672

...But the works of the saints do not merit the reward. For the holiness of the saints is itself the product of the work of Christ and of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit. So the believer cannot boast of himself (Romans 3:27) only of Christ (Galatians 6:14). For he does not have anything that he has not received (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Paul Helm

673

Prosperity theology gets it right that God rewards faithfulness but gets it wrong concerning the location and timing of rewards. It assumes rewards are here and now, while Scripture teaches us that the greatest rewards will be not here and now but then and there.

674

Whenever we speak of rewards, particularly because we speak of them so rarely, it's easy to confuse God's work and man's. Many believe that heaven is our reward for doing good things. This is absolutely not the case. Our presence in heaven is in no sense a reward for our works, but a gift freely given by God in response to faith, which is itself God's gift (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

675

If we do a compassionate act that goes unrewarded by others in this life, God will pay us back in the next life. This gives us an extra incentive to help the helpless. Not only do they need our help, not only does it please God, but he is eager to reward us for it!

676

Why does God reward us? Because he is pleased by what we've done. A child who wants to be rewarded by his parents realizes they will be pleased by his good deeds. Hence, his desire for reward is not mercenary—it is inseparable from his love for his parents and his desire for their approval.

677

Selfishness is when we pursue gain at the expense of others. But God doesn't have a limited number of treasures to distribute. When you store up treasures for yourself in heaven, it doesn't reduce the treasures available to others. In fact, it's by serving God and others that we store up heavenly treasures. This is God's law of rewards. Everyone gains; no one loses.

678

The doctrine of rewards and punishments after the resurrection, seems to carry such superior force in it, especially upon those who believe the gospel, that it is no wonder the New Testament more frequently refers to this great day of resurrection, and the Apostle derives the chief part of his consolations or terrors from it.
Isaac Watts, *The World to Come*, 1745

679

The world is poor because her fortune is buried in the sky and all her treasure maps are of earth.

**Calvin Miller,
*The Finale***

680

Will the New Earth Be an Edenic Paradise?

681

Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. ***It will produce thorns and thistles for you,*** and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food.

Genesis 3:16-19

682

Pagan fables of paradise were dim and distorted recollections of Eden.

**Alister McGrath,
*A Brief History of Heaven***

683

The idea of a walled garden, enclosing a carefully cultivated area of exquisite plants and animals, was the most powerful symbol of paradise for the human imagination, mingling the images of the beauty of nature with the orderliness of human construction. The whole of human history is thus enfolded in the subtle interplay of sorrow over a lost paradise, and the hope of its final restoration.

Alister McGrath, *A Brief History of Heaven*

684

Indeed, the Lord will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places. **And her wilderness He will make like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord;** joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and sound of a melody.

Isaiah 51:3, NASB

685

They will say, **"This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden;** and the waste, desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited."

Ezekiel 36:35, NASB

686

The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and **the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.**

Isaiah 35:1, NKJV

687

Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, and ***instead of the brier*** shall come up the myrtle tree.

Isaiah 55:13, NKJV

688

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*
By analogy, salvation in Jesus Christ, conceived in the broad creational sense, means a restoration of culture and society in their present stage of development....That restoration will not necessarily oppose literacy or urbanization or industrialization or the internal combustion engine although these historical developments have led to their own distortions or evils.

689

...Instead, the coming of the kingdom of God demands that these developments be reformed, that they be made answerable to their creational structure, and that they be subjected to the ordinances of the Creator.

Albert Wolters

690

Biblical religion is historically progressive, not reactionary. It views the whole course of history as a movement from a garden to a city, and it fundamentally affirms that movement. Once again, the kingdom of God claims *all* of creation, not only in all its departments, but also in all its stages of development.

Albert Wolters,
Creation Regained

691

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*
Life in the new creation will not be a repristination of all things—a going back to the way things were at the beginning. Rather, life in the new creation will be a restoration of all things— involving the removal of every sinful impurity and the retaining of all that is holy and good.

692

...Were the new creation to exclude the diversity of the nations and the glory of the kings of the earth, it would be impoverished rather than enriched, historically regressive and reactionary rather than progressive....

693

...To express the point in the form of a question: is it likely that the music of Bach and Mozart, the painting of Rembrandt, the writing of Shakespeare, the discoveries of science, etc., will be altogether lost upon life in the new creation?

Albert Wolters

694

We want something else which can hardly be put into words—to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it.

C. S. Lewis,
The Weight of Glory

695

What Will the Great City Be Like?

696

Revelation 21:13,15-19

There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west....The angel had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide.

697

...He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. The angel measured the wall using human Measurement....The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

698

...The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The city's exact dimensions are measured by an angel and reported to be 12,000 stadia, the equivalent of 1,400 miles or 2,200 kilometers, in length, width, and height.

Revelation 21:13, 15-19

699

Heaven's capital city's visual magnificence: "It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal."

Revelation 21:11

700

The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

Revelation 21:21

701

On no day will [the New Jerusalem's] gates ever be shut.

Revelation 21:25

702

These descriptions, of course, are not meant to be taken literally. They are vivid poetic metaphors for a reality which is indestructible, gleaming, incalculably precious... If invited for a walk, most of us would prefer a leafy country lane to a street paved with gold. One is natural and instantly appealing; the other seems lifeless and manufactured.

Edward Donnelly,
*Biblical Teaching on the
Doctrines of Heaven and Hell*

703

The river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city.

Revelation 22:1-2

704

On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 22:2

705

Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

Ezekiel 47:12

706

William Hendriksen,
More Than Conquerors

The term 'tree of life' is collective, just like 'avenue' and 'river.' The idea is not that there is just one single tree. No, there is an entire park: whole rows of trees alongside the river; hence, between the river and the avenue. And this is true with respect to all the avenues of the city.

707

...Hence, the city is just full of parks, cf. Rev. 2:7. Observe, therefore, this wonderful truth: the city is full of rivers of life. It is also full of parks containing trees of life. These trees, moreover, are full of fruit.

William Hendriksen

708

Will There Be Space and Time?

709

Heaven is a mode of existence where space and time are meaningless concepts.

David Winter,

Hereafter: What Happens After Death?

What a relief and what joy to know that in heaven there will be no more time.

René Pache, *The Future Life*

Heaven will be a place where time will stand still.

Salem Kirban,

What Is Heaven Like?

710

I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away....I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

Revelation 21:1-2

711

Heaven's inhabitants track with events happening in time, right down to rejoicing the moment a sinner on Earth repents.

Luke 15:7

712

Paul spoke of Heaven in terms of "the comings" (Ephesians 2:7). He speaks not just of a future age but of ages (plural).

713

God's people in Heaven "serve him day and night in his temple."

Revelation 7:15

714

The tree of life on the New Earth will be "yielding its fruit every month."

Revelation 22:2

715

The new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me.... From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me.

Isaiah 66:22-23

716

Summer and winter, day and night will never cease.

Genesis 8:22

There was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

Revelation 8:1

717

The descriptions of worship include successive actions, such as falling down at God's throne and casting crowns before him (Revelation 4:10). There's a sequence of events; things occur one after another, not all at once. The inhabitants of Heaven sing and play instruments (Revelation 5:9-12). **Music requires time**—beginning, middle, end, notes held.

718

The end of the world is the end of time. Time will cease to exist. Time is a mark of the fallen state of the world.

N. A. Berdyaev,
Dream and Reality

719

Since we are finite creatures, we might also expect that we will always live in a succession of moments. Just as we will never attain to God's omniscience or omnipresence, so we shall never attain to God's eternity in the sense of seeing all time equally vividly and not living in a succession of moments or being limited by time. As finite creatures, we will rather live in a succession of moments that will never end.

Wayne Grudem

720

Henry Berkhof,

Christ the Meaning of History

Time is the mould of our created human existence. Sin led to the fact that we have no time, and that we spend a hurried existence between past and future. But the consummation as the glorification of existence will not mean that we are taken out of time and delivered from time, but that time will also be fulfilled and glorified.

721

...Consummation means to live again in the succession of past, present, and future, but in such a way that the past moves along with us as a blessing and the future radiates through the present so we strive without restlessness and rest without idleness, and so, though always progressing, we are always at our destination.

Henry Berkhof

722

Want to see the crossing of the Red Sea? Want to be there when Daniel's three friends emerge from the fiery furnace? It would be simple for God to open the door to the past.

Because God is not limited by time, he may choose to show us past events as if they were presently happening. We may be able to study history from a front-row seat.

723

Ray C. Stedman,
Authentic Christianity

To those in eternity, time may be like a book on our library bookshelf. If we choose, we can pick up and browse through it at random. We can enter the time sequence found in the book at any place we desire, follow it through for as long as we like, and then lay it down to reenter (in consciousness) the time sequence in which we normally live.

724

...In similar fashion those in eternity may select some period of history which they would like to live through and step back into that time, living out its events, though invisibly. This, of course, is pure speculation.

Ray C. Stedman

725

Will the New Earth Have Oceans, Sun and Moon?

726

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and *there was no longer any sea.*

Revelation 21:1

727

Charles Spurgeon

There must be a spiritual meaning here. In the new dispensation there will be no division—the sea separates nations and separates peoples from each other. To John in Patmos the deep waters were like prison walls, shutting him out from his brethren and his work; there shall be no such barriers in the world to come.

728

...Leagues of rolling waves lie between us and many a kinsman whom tonight we prayerfully remember, but in the bright world to which we go, there shall be unbroken fellowship for all the redeemed family. In this sense there shall be no more sea.

Charles Spurgeon

729

Steven Lawson,
Heaven Help Us!

To the ancient peoples, the sea was frightful and fearsome, an awesome monster, a watery grave. They had no compass to guide them in the open sea. On a cloudy day, their ships were lost without the stars or the sun to guide them.

730

...Their frail ships were at the mercy of the ocean's fearsome, angry storms. The loss of human life in the sea was beyond calculation. So the sea represented a vast barrier for nations, continents, and people groups.

Steven Lawson

731

Steven Lawson
Heaven Help Us!

Many scientists who are Christians believe that before the great flood of Noah's day, there was no sea. But in the Flood, the bottoms of the deep were opened up, allowing the release of great bodies of water, and the world was flooded.

732

...The oceans were then formed between the overturned land masses and the seas became a barrier separating what we now know to be continents, further dividing the human race. On the new earth, it appears there will be no sea because the earth will be restored to its original splendor.

Steven Lawson

733

Ezekiel 47

'I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple...³ As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand⁶ He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river.⁷ When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river.

734

...[The river] goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Sea. When it empties into the Sea, the water there becomes fresh.⁹ Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.

Ezekiel 47

735

C. S. Lewis,

Voyage of the Dawn Treader

Where sky and water meet,
Where the waves grow sweet,
Doubt not, Reepicheep,
To find all you seek,
There is the utter East.

736

"I tell you the water's sweet," said the Mouse. "Sweet, fresh. It isn't salt." ...The King raised it to his lips, sipped, then drank deeply and raised his head.... "Yes," he said, "it is sweet...it's like light more than anything else."

"That is what it is," said Reepicheep. "Drinkable light. We must be very near the end of the world now."
C. S. Lewis

737

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.

Revelation 21:23

738

There will be no more night.
They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light.

Revelation 22:5

Is "no more night" like "no more sea"? Night as crime, sin, danger, uncertainty and vulnerability?

739

Isaiah 60:19-21

The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

740

...Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the Lord will be your everlasting light, and **your days of sorrow will end.** Then will all your people be righteous and they will possess the land forever.

Isaiah 60:19-21

741

Will We Be Ourselves?

And after **my** skin has been destroyed, yet **in my flesh** I will see God; ...**I, and not another.**

Job 19:26-27

The risen Christ said, "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.**"

Luke 24:39

743

C. S. Lewis,
The Problem of Pain

If He had no use for all these differences, I do not see why He should have created more souls than one....Your soul has a curious shape because it is a hollow made to fit a particular swelling in the infinite contours of the divine substance, or a key to unlock one of the doors in the house with many mansions.

744

...For it is not humanity in the abstract that is to be saved, but you—you, the individual reader, John Stubbs or Janet Smith.... Your place in heaven will seem to be made for you and you alone, because you were made for it—made for it stitch by stitch as a glove is made for a hand.

C. S. Lewis

745

He will wipe away **every** tear from their eyes; and there will **no longer** be **any** death; there will **no longer** be **any** mourning, or crying, or pain.

Revelation 21:4, NASB

746

Bruce Milne,
The Message of Heaven and Hell

We can banish all fear of being absorbed into the "All" which Buddhism holds before us, or reincarnated in some other life form as in the post-mortem prospect of Hinduism.

747

...The self with which we were endowed by the Creator in his gift of life to us, the self whose worth was secured forever in the self-substitution of God for us on the cross, **that self will endure into eternity.** Death cannot destroy us.

Bruce Milne

748

Charles Spurgeon,
"Fallen Asleep," Sermon 2659

As for those who have fallen asleep in Jesus, we need not fret or trouble ourselves about them. When children go upstairs to bed, do their elder brothers and sisters, who sit up later, gather together, and cry because the other children have fallen asleep? Ah, no!

749

...They feel that they have not lost them, and they expect to meet again in the morning; and so do we!

Therefore, let us not weep and lament to excess concerning the dear ones who are fallen asleep in Christ, for all is well with them. They are at rest: shall we weep about that? They are enjoying their eternal triumph: shall we weep about that?

750

...They are as full of bliss as they can possibly be: shall we weep about that? If any of your sons and daughters were taken away from you to be made into kings and queens in a foreign land, you might shed a tear or two at parting, but you would say, "It is for their good; let them go."

Charles Spurgeon

751

/ will not drink of **this** fruit of the vine from now on until that day when / drink **it** anew with **you** in my Father's kingdom.

Matthew 26:29

752

C. S. Lewis,
Mere Christianity

Until you have given up your self to Him you will not have a real self. Sameness is to be found most among the most 'natural' men, not among those who surrender to Christ. How monotonously alike all the great tyrants and conquerors have been: how gloriously different are the saints.

753

...Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and **with Him everything else thrown in.**

C. S. Lewis

754

**What Will
Our Bodies
Be Like?**

755

[The body] shall be of that size which it either had attained or should have attained in the flower of its youth, and shall enjoy the beauty that arises from preserving symmetry and proportion in all its members....overgrown and emaciated persons need not fear that they shall be in heaven of such a figure as they would not be even in this world if they could help it.

Augustine, *The City of God*

756

When I play a game well, I have for that limited period of time an experience of the body's resurrection. For there is no hint of a dualism between mind and body with either of them trying to oppress or bully the other. I bring to the game my total undivided self.

H. A. Williams, *True Resurrection*

757

The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Matthew 13:43

Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

Daniel 12:3, NASB

758

God is the original; we are the organic image, the living copy. We do not rightly speak of God as King by projecting onto him regal imagery because we think it is fitting for God. Rather, bowing before God who has dominion is proper, for man as king over creation, is the image of kingship; God, the true king, is the reality that casts the image of the earthly king.

A. B. Caneday, *"Veiled Glory"*

759

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

2 Corinthians 4:17

760

Joni Eareckson Tada,
Heaven: Your Real Home

I still can hardly believe it. I, with shriveled, bent fingers, atrophied muscles, gnarled knees, and no feeling from the shoulders down, will one day have a new body, light, bright, and clothed in righteousness—powerful and dazzling. Can you imagine the hope this gives someone spinal-cord injured like me?

761

...Or someone who is cerebral palsied, brain-injured, or who has multiple sclerosis? Imagine the hope this gives someone who is manic-depressive. No other religion, no other philosophy promises new bodies, hearts, and minds. Only in the Gospel of Christ do hurting people find such incredible hope.

Joni Eareckson Tada

762

This issue [How old will be in the resurrection] caused the spilling of much theological ink, especially during the Middle Ages...By the late thirteenth century, the church's emerging consensus was this: "As each person reaches their peak of perfection around the age of 30, they will be resurrected, as they would have appeared at that time—even if they never lived to reach that age."

Allister McGrath,
A Brief History of Heaven

763

A boy who dies immediately after being born will be resurrected in that form which he would have had if he had lived to the age of thirty. The New Jerusalem will thus be populated by men and women as they would appear at the age of 30 ...but with every blemish removed.

Peter Lombard, AD 1150,
As quoted in A Brief History of Heaven

764

Thomas Aquinas, AD 1270,
Summa Theologica

Human nature is deficient in a twofold manner: in one way because it has not yet obtained its ultimate perfection, and in a second way, because it has already receded from its ultimate perfection. Human nature is deficient in the first way in children, and in the second way in the aged.

765

...And therefore in each of these, human nature will be brought back by the resurrection of the state of its ultimate perfection, which is in the state of youth, toward which the movement of growth is terminated, and from which the movement of degeneration begins.

Thomas Aquinas

766

Our DNA is programmed in so that at a particular point, we reach optimal functional development [in our 20's?] ...If the blueprints for our glorified bodies are in the DNA, then it stands to reason that our bodies will be resurrected at the optimal stage of development determined by our DNA.

Hank Hanegraaff, *Resurrection*

767

In heaven 'tis the directly
reverse of what 'tis on
earth; for there, by length of
time things become more
and more youthful, that is,
more vigorous, active,
tender, and beautiful.

Jonathan Edwards,
The Miscellanies

768

No one in that company
struck me as being of any
particular age. One gets
glimpses, even in our country,
of that which is ageless—
heavy thought in the face of
an infant, and frolic childhood
in that of a very old man.

C. S. Lewis,
The Great Divorce

769

Will We Eat and Drink on the New Earth?

770

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.

Two Men on the Emmaus Road,
Luke 24:40-43

771

I confer on you a
kingdom, just as my
Father conferred one on
me, so that you may eat
and drink at my table in
my kingdom.

Luke 22:29-30

772

I tell you I will not drink
again of the fruit of the
vine until the kingdom of
God comes.

Luke 22:18

773

The kingdom of God is
not a matter of eating
and drinking, but of
righteousness, peace
and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:17

774

Many will come from the
east and the west, and
will take their places at
the feast with Abraham,
Isaac and Jacob in the
kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 8:11

775

Blessed are those
who are invited to
the wedding supper
of the Lamb!

Revelation 19:9

776

When you give a luncheon or dinner...invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.

Luke 14:12-14

777

Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.

Luke 14:15

778

Strangely...many people...believe we won't eat or drink in the eternal Heaven. They assume the biblical language about eating and drinking and banquets is figurative and that we will eat only "in a spiritual sense." But how does one eat in a spiritual sense? And why is there a need to look for a spiritual sense when resurrected people in actual bodies will live on a resurrected Earth?

779

When we think of Heaven as unearthly, our present lives seem unspiritual, like they don't matter. When we grasp the reality of the New Earth, our present, earthly lives suddenly matter. Conversations with loved ones matter. The taste of food matters. Work, leisure, creativity, and intellectual stimulation matter.

780

...Rivers and trees and flowers matter. Laughter matters. Service matters. Why? *Because they are eternal.*

Life on Earth matters not because it's the only life we have, but precisely because it isn't—it's the beginning of a life that will continue without end. It's the precursor of life on the New Earth.

781

...Eternal life doesn't begin when we die—it has already begun. Life is not, as Macbeth supposed, "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Informed by the doctrines of creation, redemption, resurrection, and the New Earth, our present lives take on greater importance, infusing us with purpose.

782

...As Christians, we should indeed eat, drink, and be merry—and also sacrifice, suffer, and die—all to the glory of God. In doing so, we're preparing for an eternal life in which we will eat, drink, and be merry, but never again die.

This present life, then, is not our last chance to eat, drink, and be merry—rather, it is the last time our eating, drinking, and merrymaking can be corrupted by sin, death, and the Curse.

783

What a privilege it *would* be to *have a share* in the Kingdom of God!

Luke 14:15, NLT

What a blessing it *will* be to *attend a banquet*^[a] in the Kingdom of God!

^aGreek *to eat bread*.

Luke 14:15, revised NLT

784

There is no strong reason to say these expressions are merely symbolic, without any literal reference. Are symbolic banquets and symbolic wine and symbolic rivers and trees somehow superior to *real* banquets and *real* wine and *real* rivers and trees in God's eternal plan? These are just some of the excellent features of the perfection and final goodness of the physical creation that God has made.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*

785

Glorify God in your body.
1 Corinthians 6:20, NKJV

Whether you eat or drink
or whatever you do, do it
all for the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31

786

Never again will they
hunger; never again will
they thirst.

Revelation 7:16

For the Lamb at the center
of the throne will be their
shepherd; he will lead them
to springs of living water.

Revelation 7:17

787

You say, "Food is for the
stomach, and the
stomach is for food." This
is true, though someday
God will do away with
both of them.

1 Corinthians 6:13, NLT

788

If we consider to what end God
created foods, we shall find that he
wished not only to provide for our
necessities, but also for our pleasure
and recreation...With herbs, trees
and fruits, besides the various uses
he gives us of them, it was his will to
rejoice our sight by their beauty, and
to give us yet another pleasure in
their odors.

John Calvin,
Institutes of the Christian Religion

789

Everything that lives
and moves will be food
for you. Just as I gave
you the green plants, I
now give you
everything.

Genesis 9:3

790

For everything God
created is good, and
nothing is to be rejected if
it is received with
thanksgiving, because it is
consecrated by the word
of God and prayer.

1 Timothy 4:4-5

791

On this mountain the
Lord Almighty will
prepare a feast of rich
food...**the best of meats**
and the finest of wines.

Isaiah 25:6

792

The wolf and the lamb
will feed together, and
the lion will eat straw
like the ox...**They will
neither harm nor
destroy.**

Isaiah 65:25

793

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

And they all began to eat. What
was the fruit like? Unfortunately no
one can describe a taste. All I can
say is that, compared with those
fruits, the freshest grapefruit
you've ever eaten was dull, and the
juiciest orange was dry, and the
most melting pear was hard and
woody, and the sweetest wild
strawberry was sour.

794

...If you had once eaten that fruit, all the nicest things in this world would taste like medicines after it. But I can't describe it. You can't find out what it is like unless you can get to that country and taste it for yourself.

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

795

Will We Be Capable of Sinning?

The wages of sin is death.

Romans 6:23

There will be *no more death* or mourning or crying or *pain*, for the old order of things has passed *away...no longer will there be any more curse.*

Revelation 21:4; 22:3

797

For by a single offering he [Christ] has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Hebrews 10:14, ESV

798

Nothing impure will *ever* enter it [the New Jerusalem], nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 21:27

799

Romans 6:6-11

We know that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for *he who has died is freed from sin*. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ,

800

...having been raised from the dead, is *never to die again*; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, *He died to sin once for all*; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be *dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 6:6-11

801

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so *also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

Romans 5:19

802

The freedom of heaven, then, is the *freedom from sin*; not that the believer just happens to be free from sin, but that he is so constituted or reconstituted that he *cannot* sin. *He doesn't want to sin, and he does not want to want to sin.*

Paul Helm,
The Last Things

803

Everyone raised his hand to pick the fruit he best liked the look of, and then everyone paused for a second. This fruit was so beautiful that each felt, "It can't be meant for me...surely we're not allowed to pluck it."

"It's all right," said Peter. "I've a feeling we've got to the country where everything is allowed."

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

804

Even the very best of men, are, on earth, imperfect. But it is not so in heaven. **There shall be no pollution or deformity or offensive defect of any kind, seen in any person or thing; but every one shall be perfectly pure, and perfectly lovely in heaven.**

Jonathan Edwards,
Heaven: A World of Love

805

Frederick Buechner,
quoted in A Little Bit of Heaven

Everything is gone that ever made Jerusalem, like all cities, torn apart, dangerous, heartbreaking, seamy. You walk the streets in peace now. Small children play unattended in the parks. No stranger goes by whom you can't imagine a fast friend.

806

...The city has become what those who loved it always dreamed and what in their dreams she always was. The new Jerusalem. That seems to be the secret of Heaven. The new Chicago, Leningrad, Hiroshima, Beirut. The new bus driver, hot-dog man, seamstress, hairdresser. The new you, me, everybody.

Frederick Buechner

807

The inability to sin doesn't inherently violate free will. My inability to be God, an angel, a rabbit, or a flower is not a violation of my free will. It's the simple reality of my nature. The new nature that'll be ours in Heaven—the righteousness of Christ—is a nature that cannot sin, any more than a diamond can be soft or blue can be red. God cannot sin, yet no being has greater free choice than God does.

808

We won't sin in Heaven for the same reason God doesn't: He cannot sin. Our eternal inability to sin has been purchased by Christ's blood. Our Savior purchased our perfection *for all time*.

809

Someone once asked me, "If we're sinless, will we still be human?" Although sin is part of us now, it's not essential to our humanity. In fact, it's *foreign* to it. It's what twists us and keeps us from being what we once were—and what we one day will be.

810

Our greatest deliverance in Heaven will be from ourselves. Our deceit, corruption, self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, hypocrisy—all will be gone forever. And we will never stop praising God for the miracle of his grace!

811

"Won't it be boring to be good all the time?" someone asked. Note the assumption: sin is exciting and righteousness is boring. We've fallen for the devil's lie. His most basic strategy, the same one he employed with Adam and Eve, is to make us believe that sin brings fulfillment.

812

In reality, sin robs us of fulfillment. Sin doesn't make life interesting; it makes life empty. Sin doesn't create adventure; it blunts it. Sin doesn't expand life; it shrinks it. Sin's emptiness inevitably leads to boredom. When there's fulfillment, when there's beauty, when we see God as he truly is—an endless reservoir of fascination—boredom becomes impossible.

813

Will we be tempted to turn our backs on Christ? No. What would tempt us? Innocence is the absence of something (sin), while righteousness is the presence of something (God's holiness). God will never withdraw from us his holiness; therefore we cannot sin.

814

We'll never forget the ugliness of sin. People who've experienced severe burns aren't tempted to walk into a bonfire. Having known death and life, we who will experience life will never want to go back to death. We'll never be deceived into thinking God is withholding something good from us or that sin is in our best interests.

815

What Will We Know and Learn?

816

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

Peter, 2 Peter 3:18

817

Growing and learning cannot be bad; the sinless Son of God experienced them. They are simply part of being human.

Unless we cease to be human after our resurrection, we will go on growing and learning.

818

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now **we see only a reflection as in a mirror**; then we shall see **face to face**. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

1 Corinthians 13:11-12

819

1 Corinthians 13:12 does not say that we will be omniscient or know everything (Paul could have said we will know all things, *ta panta*, if he had wished to do so), but, rightly translated, simply says that we will know in a fuller or more intensive way, 'even as we have been known,' that is, without any error or misconceptions in our knowledge.

Wayne Grudem,
Systematic Theology

820

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order **that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace**, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:6-7

821

"Show to us the riches of his grace"... Rom. 9:17, show God's power; Rom. 9:21, show God's wrath **"in the ages to come"**:

implying one age supervening upon another like successive waves of the sea, as far into the future as thought can reach.

O'Brien, P. T. *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*

822

The saints will be progressive in knowledge to all eternity....The number of ideas of the saints shall increase to eternity.

Jonathan Edwards,
The Works of Jonathan Edwards

823

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Shakespeare,
Hamlet, Act I, Scene V

824

Philip Melancthon's

memorial address about his departed friend Martin Luther, 1546

We remember the great delight with which he [Martin Luther] recounted the course, the counsels, the perils and escapes of the prophets, and the learning with which he discoursed on all the ages of the Church, thereby showing that he was inflamed by no ordinary passion for these wonderful men.

825

...Now he embraces them and rejoices to hear them speak and to speak to them in turn. Now they hail him gladly as a companion, and thank God with him for having gathered and preserved the Church.

Philip Melancthon

826

Jonathan Edwards,

quoted in Jonathan Edwards on Heaven and Hell

How soon do earthly lovers come to an end of their discoveries of each other's beauty; how soon do they see all there is to be seen! But in Heaven there is eternal progress with new beauties always being discovered.

827

...Happiness of heaven is progressive and has various periods in which it has a new and glorious advancement and consists very much in beholding the manifestations that God makes of himself in the work of redemption.

Jonathan Edwards

828

Knowledge is a source of the most exquisite pleasures.

If it is so in this world, where the curse of sin has darkened the mind, and where knowledge is so limited, and so mingled with error and doubt, what shall we say of those pleasures in Heaven? There the intellect of man receives a supernatural light; it is elevated far above itself by the light of glory.

Father J. Boudreau,
The Happiness of Heaven

829

Father Boudreau,

The Happiness of Heaven

The life of Heaven is one of intellectual pleasure....There the intellect of man receives a supernatural light....It is purified, strengthened, enlarged, and enabled to see God as He is in His very essence. It is enabled to contemplate, face to face, Him who is the first essential Truth.

830

...It gazes undazzled upon the first infinite beauty, wisdom, and goodness, from whom flow all limited wisdom, beauty, and goodness found in creatures. Who can fathom the exquisite pleasures of the human intellect when it thus sees all truth as it is in itself!

Father Boudreau, 1871

831

Wayne Grudem,
Systematic Theology

Since God is infinite and we can never exhaust his greatness (Psalm 145:3), and since we are finite creatures who will never equal God's knowledge or be omniscient, we may expect that for all eternity we will be able to go on learning more about God and about his relationship to his creation.

832

...In this way we will continue the process of learning that was begun in this life, in which a life "fully pleasing to him" is one that includes continually "increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:10).

Wayne Grudem

833

Dark providences, never understood before, will then be clearly seen, and all that puzzles us now will become plain to us in the light of the Lamb....Oh! what a manifestation! All this proceeds from the exalted Lamb. Whatever there may be of effulgent splendour, Jesus shall be the centre and soul of it all. Oh! to be present and to see Him in His own light, the King of kings, and Lord of lords!

Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*

834

Malachi 3:16-18

Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name. "They will be mine," says the Lord Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession.

835

...I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.

Malachi 3:16-18

836

E. J. Fortman,
Everlasting Life after Death

They could have Halls of Science, of Art, of Literature, Mathematics, where all man's achievements of the past would be on record, where they could study these, absorb them, and be drawn to expand them further and further in innumerable directions.

837

...They could have Halls of Music where they could see and study all the great achievements men have made in composition, in instrumentation, in orchestration, in singing...and be drawn to expand these, one in this way, another in that way.

E. J. Fortman

838

I beg you, my dearest brother, to live among these books to meditate on them, to know nothing else, to seek nothing else. Does not this seem to you to be a little bit of heaven here on earth?...Let us learn upon earth that knowledge which will continue with us in Heaven.

Jerome, AD 390

839

C. S. Lewis,
God in the Dock

My friend said, “I don’t see why there shouldn’t be books in Heaven. But you will find that your library in Heaven contains only some of the books you had on earth.” “Which?” I asked. “The ones you gave away or lent.” “I hope the lent ones won’t still have all the borrowers’ dirty thumb marks,” said I.

840

...“Oh yes they will,” said he. “But just as the wounds of the martyrs will have turned into beauties, so you will find that the thumb-marks have turned into beautiful illuminated capitals or exquisite marginal woodcuts.”

C. S. Lewis

841

Think of what it will be like to discuss science with Isaac Newton, Michael Faraday, and Thomas Edison or to discuss mathematics with Pascal. Imagine long talks with Malcolm Muggeridge or Francis Schaeffer. Think of reading and discussing the writings of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, G. K. Chesterton, or Dorothy Sayers with the authors themselves.

842

...How would you like to talk about the power of fiction at a roundtable with John Milton, Daniel Defoe, Victor Hugo, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Leo Tolstoy, and Flannery O’Connor?

How about discussing God’s attributes with Stephen Charnock, A. W. Pink, A. W. Tozer, and J. I. Packer? Or talking theology with Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, and Luther?

843

Then, when differences arise, why not invite Jesus in to clear things up?...

We’ll contemplate God’s person and works, talking long over dinner and tea, on walks and in living rooms, by rivers and fires. Intellectual curiosity isn’t part of the Curse—it is God’s blessing on his image-bearers.

844

He made us with fertile, curious minds so that we might seek truth and find him, our greatest source of pleasure. In Heaven our intellectual curiosity will surely surface—and be satisfied—only to surface and be satisfied again and again.

845

What Will Our Daily Lives Be Like?

846

My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.

John 5:17

847

“My food,” Jesus said, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

John 4:34

848

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.”

Revelation 14:13

849

Father Boudreau,

The Happiness of Heaven, 1871

We are active by nature. Action, therefore, both of mind and body, is a law of our being, which cannot be changed without radically changing, or rather destroying, our whole nature. Instead of destroying it, it follows that in Heaven we shall be far more active than we can possibly be here below.

850

...The soul of Jesus Christ enjoyed the Beatific Vision, even while here on earth in mortal flesh. Was He, on that account, prevented from doing anything except contemplating the divine essence? He certainly was not. He labored and preached; He also drank and slept; He visited His friends and did a thousand other things.

Father Boudreau

851

See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord.

Colossians 4:17

He will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

2 Timothy 2:21

852

Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless.

Titus 1:7

Obey [your leaders] so that their work will be a joy.

Hebrews 13:17

853

You call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially.

1 Peter 1:17

I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance.

Revelation 2:2

854

D. A. Carson,
The Gospel According to John

Since heaven is here pictured as the Father's house, it is more natural to think of 'dwelling-places' within a house as rooms or suites....The simplest explanation is best: my Father's house refers to heaven, and in heaven are many rooms, many dwelling-places.

855

...The point is not the lavishness of each apartment, but the fact that such ample provision has been made that there is more than enough space for every one of Jesus' disciples to join him in his Father's home.

D. A. Carson

856

Will We Desire Relationships with Anyone Except God?

857

The Venerable Bede, 700 A. D.,
All Saints Day sermon

A great multitude of dear ones is there expecting us; a vast and mighty crowd of parents, brothers, and children, secure now of their own safety, anxious yet for our salvation, long that we may come to their right and embrace them,

858

...to that joy which will be common to us and to them to that pleasure expected by our fellow servants as well as ourselves, to that full and perpetual felicity. ...If it be a pleasure to go to them, let us eagerly and covetously hasten on our way, that we may soon be with them, and soon be with Christ.

The Venerable Bede

859

Jonathan Edwards,
Heaven: A World of Love

Every Christian friend that goes before us from this world is a ransomed spirit **waiting to welcome us in heaven**. There will be **the infant** of days that we have lost below, through grace to be found above.... There the Christian **father, and mother, and wife, and child, and friend**, with whom we shall renew the holy fellowship of the saints,

860

...which was **interrupted by death** here, but shall be **commenced again** in the upper sanctuary, and then **shall never end**.

...There we shall have **companionship with the patriarchs and fathers and saints of the Old and New Testaments**, and those of whom the world was not worthy. And there, above all, we shall **enjoy and dwell with God the Father**,

861

...whom we have loved with all our hearts on earth; and with **Jesus Christ** our beloved Savior, who has always been to us the chief among ten thousands, and altogether lovely; and with **the Holy Spirit**, our Sanctifier, and Guide, and Comforter; and shall be **filled with all the fullness of the Godhead forever!**

Jonathan Edwards

862

Luke 16:9

Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails **they may receive you into the eternal dwellings**. ESV
...so that when it is gone, **you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings**. NIV

...when your earthly possessions are gone, they will welcome you **to an eternal home**. NLT

863

Those whom you laid in the grave with many tears are in good keeping: you will yet see them again with joy. Believe it, think it, rest on it. It is all true.

J. C. Ryle (AD 1816-1900),
Heaven

864

What is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

Paul, 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

865

You **long to see us**, just as we also **long to see you**....How can we thank God enough for you in return for all **the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?** Night and day we **pray most earnestly that we may see you again**.

1 Thessalonians 3:6, 9-10

866

I know that Christ is all in all; and that it is the presence of God that makes Heaven to be heaven. But yet it much sweetens the thoughts of that place to me that there are there such a multitude of my most dear and precious friends in Christ.

Richard Baxter, 1652,
The Practical Works of Richard Baxter

867

So that he who blesses himself in the land [earth] shall bless himself by the God of truth...**because the former troubles are forgotten and are hidden from my eyes.** For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the **former things shall not be remembered** or come into mind.

Isaiah 65:16-17

868

The sins which so often made us tremble, are washed away in the blood of Jesus, and are, therefore, no longer a source of trouble. The remembrance of them [in Heaven] rather intensifies our love for the God of mercy, and therefore increases our happiness.

Father Boudreau,
The Happiness of Heaven, 1871

869

“Woman...why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?”

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher).

John 20:15-16

870

As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; **but they were kept from recognizing him....Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him,** and he disappeared from their sight.

Luke 24:15-16, 31

871

There would be **no point in these words of consolation if they did not imply the mutual recognition of saints.** The hope with which he cheers wearied Christians is **the hope of meeting their beloved friends again...**But in the moment that we who are saved shall meet our friends in heaven, we shall at once know them, and they will at once know us.

J. C. Ryle, Heaven

872

Amy Carmichael,
Thou Givest...They Gather

Shall we know one another in Heaven? Shall we love and remember? I do not think anyone need wonder about this or doubt for a single moment. We are never told we shall, because, I expect, it was not necessary to say anything about this which our own hearts tell us. We do not need words.

873

...For if we think for a minute, we know. Would you be yourself if you did not love and remember?...We are told that we shall be like our Lord Jesus. Surely this does not mean in holiness only, but in everything; and does not He know and love and remember? He would not be Himself if He did not, and we should not be ourselves if we did not.

Amy Carmichael

874

Charles Spurgeon,
“Heaven and Hell,” Sermons 39, 40
We shall recognize our friends: husband, you will know your wife again. Mother, you will know those dear babes of yours—you marked their features when they lay panting and gasping for breath. You know how you hung over their graves when the cold sod was sprinkled over them, and it was said,

875

...“Earth to earth. Dust to dust, and ashes to ashes.” But you shall hear those beloved voices again: you shall hear those sweet voices once more; you shall yet know that those whom you loved have been loved by God.

Charles Spurgeon

876

Jonathan Edwards,
Heaven: A World of Love

There shall be no wall of separation in heaven to keep the saints divided, nor shall they be hindered from the full and complete enjoyment of each other's love by distance of habitation; for they shall all be together, as one family, in their heavenly Father's house.

877

...Nor shall there be any lack of full acquaintance to hinder the greatest possible intimacy; and much less shall there be any misunderstanding between them, or misinterpreting things that are said or done by each other. There shall be no disharmony through difference of disposition, or manners, or circumstances, or from various opinions, interests, feelings or alliances.

878

...But all shall be united in the same interest, and all alike allied to the same Savior, and all employed in the same business, serving and glorifying the same God.

And in heaven all shall not only be related one to another, but they shall be each other's, and belong to each other.

Jonathan Edwards

879

The joys we find in companionship of noble, unselfish, thoughtful people here give only the faintest conception of the joys of heaven's companionships.

R. A. Torrey,
Heaven or Hell

880

Will There Be Marriage, Families, and Friendships?

881

“Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?” ...

Christ replied, “At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.”

Matthew 22:28, 30

882

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:31-32

883

The Bible does *not* teach there will be no marriage in Heaven. In fact, it makes it clear there *will* be marriage in Heaven. What it says, in Ephesians 5:31-32, is that there will be *one* marriage, between Christ and his bride—and we'll all be part of it.

884

C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*

Our present outlook might be like that of a small boy who, told that the sexual act was the highest bodily pleasure should ask whether you ate chocolates at the same time....On receiving the answer "No," he might regard absence of chocolates as the chief characteristic of sexuality.

885

...In vain would you tell him that the reason why lovers in their carnal raptures don't bother about chocolates is that they have something better to think of.

The boy knows chocolate: he does not know the positive thing that excludes it. We are in the same position. We know the sexual life; we do not know, except in glimpses, the other thing which, in Heaven, will leave no room for it.

C. S. Lewis

886

In the city of God there will be no special friendships....All special attachments will be absorbed into one comprehensive and undifferentiated community of love....The universalized love of heaven permits no exclusive, restricted circles of friends.

Augustine, AD 290

887

Some ground the idea of the eternal blessedness of the infant upon its *innocence*. We do no such thing. We believe that the infant fell in the first Adam "for in Adam all died."...If infants be saved it is not because of any natural innocence. They enter heaven by the very same way that we do: they are received in the name of Christ.

Charles Spurgeon,
"Infant Salvation," Sermon 411

888

J. Vernon McGee,
Death of a Little Child

We sometimes feel that a life which was so brief was in vain, and that God has mocked us by giving us the little one and then by taking it away immediately. The child had no opportunity to perform a work, nor was there any time given to develop character.

889

...Let us remember, first of all, that the little one had an eternal spirit, and that it has gone into the presence of God where there will be an eternity to perform works and develop character...A brief life is not an incomplete life.

J. Vernon McGee

890

J. Vernon McGee, *Death of a Little Child*

Will our children be as we last saw them? I do not know nor can I prove it from Scripture (for Scripture is silent at this point), but I believe with all my heart that God will raise the little ones as such, and that the mother's arms that have ached for them will have the opportunity of holding them.

891

...The father's hand that never held the little hand will be given that privilege. I believe that the little ones will grow up in heaven in the care of their earthly parents... there are no children in hell.... Referring to children Christ said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

J. Vernon McGee

892

We have not lost our dear ones who have departed from this life, but have merely sent them ahead of us. We also shall depart and come to that life where they will be more than ever dear. They will be better known to us, and we shall love them without fear of parting.

Augustine, *letter to Lady Italica*

All of us who enjoy God are also enjoying each other in Him.

Augustine, *On the Christian Doctrine*

893

How could those in Heaven live with the knowledge that people, including their loved ones, are in Hell?

Note Luke 16, rich man and Lazarus. *Hell does not trump Heaven or strip it of joy.*

894

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great. ...for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes. Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done...give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself.

Revelation 18:1, 5-7

895

They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: 'Woe! Woe, O great city.... Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you.

Revelation 18:19-20

896

Revelation 19:1-7

I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "**Hallelujah!** Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for **true and just are his judgments.** He has *condemned* the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has *avenged* on her the blood of his servants." And again they shouted:

897

..."**Hallelujah!** *The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.*" The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried:

"Amen, Hallelujah!" Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "**Praise our God, all you his servants,** you who fear him, both small and great!"

898

...Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "**Hallelujah!** *For our Lord God Almighty reigns.* Let us **rejoice and be glad and give him glory!** For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and *his bride has made herself ready.* Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

Revelation 19:1-7

899

J. I. Packer,
"Hell's Final Enigma"

God the Father (who now pleads with mankind to accept the reconciliation that Christ's death secured for all) and God the Son (our appointed Judge, who wept over Jerusalem) will in a final judgment express wrath and administer justice against rebellious humans.

900

...God's holy righteousness will hereby be revealed; God will be doing the right thing, vindicating himself at last against all who have defied him....(Read through Matt. 25; John 5:22-29; Rom. 2:5-16, 12:19; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 18:1-19:3, 20:11-35, and you will see that clearly.)

901

...God will judge justly, and all angels, saints, and martyrs will praise him for it. So it seems inescapable that we shall, with them, approve the judgment of persons—rebels—whom we have known and loved.

J. I. Packer

902

When the saints in glory shall see the doleful state of the damned, this will heighten their sense of the blessedness of their own state, so exceedingly different from it. They shall see the dreadful miseries of the damned, and consider that they deserved the same misery, and that it was *sovereign grace*, and nothing else, which made them so much to differ from the damned.

Jonathan Edwards, "The End of the Wicked Contemplated by the Righteous"

903

In a sense, none of our loved ones will be in Hell—only some whom we *once* loved. Our love for our companions in Heaven will be directly linked to God, the central object of our love. We will see him in them. We will not love those in Hell because when we see Jesus as he is, we will love only—and will only want to love—whoever and whatever pleases and glorifies and reflects him.

904

...What we loved in those who died without Christ was God's beauty we once saw in them. When God forever withdraws from them, I think it's likely they'll no longer bear his image and no longer reflect his beauty. Without God, they'll be stripped of all the qualities we loved. Therefore, paradoxically, they will not truly be the people we loved. I can't prove biblically what I've just stated, but it rings true, even if the thought now seems horrifying.

905

How Will We Relate to Each Other?

Jonathan Edwards,
Heaven: A World of Love

No inhabitants of that blessed world will ever be grieved with the thought that they are slighted by those that they love, or that their love is not fully and fondly returned...There shall be no such thing as flattery or insincerity in heaven, but there perfect sincerity shall reign through all in all.

...*Everyone will be just what he seems to be*, and will really have all the love that he seems to have. It will not be as in this world, where comparatively few things are what they seem to be, and where professions are often made lightly and without meaning. But there, *every expression of love shall come from the bottom of the heart*, and all that is professed shall be really and truly felt.

Jonathan Edwards

906

907

908

To his servants he will give another name.

Isaiah 65:15

I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

Revelation 2:17

909

What can be more a man's own than this new name which even in eternity remains a secret between God and him? And what shall we take this secrecy to mean? Surely, that each of the redeemed shall forever know and praise some one aspect of the divine beauty better than any other creature. Why else were individuals created but that God, loving all infinitely, should love each differently?

C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

910

In Heaven there is no ownership. If any there took upon him to call anything his own, he would straightway be thrust out into hell and become an evil spirit.

Theologica Germanica, 1340

911

Speaking of the New Earth, Christ says, "He who overcomes will inherit all this."

Revelation 21:7

912

If you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you **property of your own**?

Luke 16:12

Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

Matthew 6:20

913

[Of the characters gathered at the Great Reunion, after death, and on the New Narnia:] There was greeting and kissing and handshaking and old jokes revived (you've no idea how good an old joke sounds after you take it out again after a rest of five or six hundred years).

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

914

A. W. Tozer,
Who Put Jesus on the Cross?

Ah, the people of God ought to be the happiest people in all the wide world! People should be coming to us constantly and asking the source of our joy and delight—redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, our yesterdays behind us, our sin under the blood forever and a day, to be remembered against us no more forever.

915

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

Jim Elliot

916

What Will New Earth Society Be Like?

917

The fact that not only kings but nations are mentioned implies that the various cultural contributions of different ethnic groups will then **no longer be in competition** with each other, but will harmoniously enrich life in the Holy City. Christ, who is the lamp of that city, will then **draw all these cultural products into his service**, for the glory of his Father.

Anthony Hoekema,
"Heaven: Not Just an Eternal Day Off"

918

You are worthy....Your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. And you have caused them to become God's Kingdom and his priests. And **they will reign on the earth.**

Revelation 5:9-10, NLT

919

All those nations—each in accordance with its own distinct national character—bring into the new Jerusalem all they have received from God in the way of glory and honor.

Herman Bavinck,
The Last Things

920

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech....Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves."...The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them."

Genesis 11:1, 4, 6

921

For [Christ] himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility....His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

Ephesians 2:14-16

922

Nothing of the diversity of the nations and peoples, their cultural products, languages, arts, sciences, literature, and technology—so far as these are good and excellent—will be lost upon life in the new creation.

Cornelius Venema,
The Promise of the Future

923

From one man **he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth;** and he determined the **times** set for them and the exact **places** where they should live.

Acts 17:26

924

Anthony Hoekema,
"Heaven: Not Just an Eternal Day Off"

Kings in those days were more than political rulers; they were the representatives and bearers of the cultures of the nations over which they ruled. John is here speaking about the cultural and artistic contributions of various national groups which shall then have made their home in the new Jerusalem.

925

...In the life to come various types of people will retain their unique gifts. These gifts will develop and mature in a sinless way, and will be used to produce new cultural products to the everlasting glory of God's name.

Anthony Hoekema

926

He [the "Son of Man," Messiah] was **given authority, honor, and royal power over all the nations of the world,** so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him.

Daniel 7:14, NLT

927

Continuity from the Old Earth to the New Earth

928

The New Earth will be just as much Earth as the new us will still be us. Our resurrection bodies will have our eyes, ears, mouth, and nose. Like Christ's body, ours will maintain their distinguishing features. If our new bodies will so closely correspond to the present ones, won't the New Earth closely correspond to the present one?

929

...Will there be a New Mount Saint Helens and New Himalayas and a New Alaska under the new northern lights? Will there be a New Bermuda, a New Canada, a New Australia?...

The kings of the nations will bring their tribute, splendor, and glory into the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:24, 26). Are these resurrected nations with resurrected cultures?

930

...There will be not one nation but many. This reference gives us biblical basis to suppose that the best culture, history, art, music, and the languages of the old Earth will be redeemed, purified, and carried over to the New Earth.

Surely these kings and cultures who bring their “splendor” and “glory” into the new world won’t start from scratch.

931

...Might they bring into the new earth a national and personal history, an ethnic identity, and a wealth of customs, art forms, and knowledge? All purified, with room for distinctive cultural celebrations, holidays, meals, sports, customs and languages.

932

“Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints” (Daniel 7:27).

Can the greatness of the nations that will be handed over to God’s people be restricted only to those nations existing at Christ’s return? Most of the nations Daniel speaks of—including Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Rome—faded away long ago.

933

Is any nation, past or present, excluded from Heaven’s inhabitants from “every tribe and language and people and nation”? (Revelation 7:9). Will there be a resurrected ancient Egypt, Rome, India, and China? Will we be able to see the splendors of the nations and in doing so glorify the King of Kings?

934

Christ will draw all of the goods, artifacts, and instruments of culture to himself; the kings of the earth will return their authority and power to the Lamb who sits upon the throne; Jesus is the one whose blood has purchased a multi-national community, composed of people from every tribe and tongue and nation. The Lamb’s redemptive ministry is cosmic in scope. **Richard Mouw**

935

Will Animals Inhabit the New Earth?

And God said, Let the waters **teem with living creatures** [nephesh]. So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing [nephesh] with which the water teems.

Genesis 1:20-21

936

And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures [nephesh] according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals...”

Genesis 1:24

938

And to all the beasts of the earth and **all the birds** of the air and **all the creatures** that move on the ground—**everything that has the breath of life** [nephesh] in it—I give every green plant for food.
Genesis 1:30

939

Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils **the breath of life**, and the man became a living creature [nephesh].
Genesis 2:7, ESV

940

Now the Lord God had **formed out of the ground** [earth] all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air.
Genesis 2:19

941

You are to bring into the ark two of **all living creatures**, male and female, **to keep them alive with you**. Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive.
Genesis 6:19-20

942

Genesis 9:9-17

God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant **with you and with your descendants** after you and **with every living creature** that was with you—*the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals*, **all** those that came out of the ark **with you—every living creature** on earth....

943

...Never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and **every living creature** with you, a covenant for all generations to come.

944

...I will remember my covenant between **me and you** and **all living creatures of every kind**...Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and **all living creatures of every kind on the earth**."

945

...So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established **between me and all life on the earth**."
Genesis 9:9-17

946

Do not let any **man or beast, herd or flock**, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But **let man and beast be covered with sackcloth**. Let **everyone** call urgently on God.
Jonah 3:7-8

947

And should I not have concern for the great city Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and **also many animals?**

Jonah 4:11

948

Six days a week are set apart for your daily duties and regular work, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day **no one in your household may do any kind of work.** This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, **your livestock,** and any foreigners living among you.

Exodus 20:9-10, NLT

949

You made [mankind] ruler over the works of your hands; **you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds,** and the **beasts** of the field, the **birds** of the air, and the **fish** of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

Psalms 8:6-8

950

The godly are concerned for the welfare of their animals.

Proverbs 12:10, NLT

951

For **all the animals** of the forest are mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills. **Every bird** of the mountains and **all the animals** of the field belong to me.

Psalms 50:10-11, NLT

952

Wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth, young men and maidens, old men and children. **Let them praise the name of the Lord,** for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.

Psalms 148:10-13

953

Then I heard every **creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea,** and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

Revelation 5:13

954

Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." ... **The living creatures** give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne.

Revelation 4:8-9

955

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and **divine nature**—have been clearly seen, **being understood from what has been made.**

Romans 1:20

956

Do you give the horse his strength...? Do you make him leap like a locust...? He paws fiercely, rejoicing in his strength....He laughs at fear, afraid of nothing. In frenzied excitement he eats up the ground; he cannot stand still when the trumpet sounds.

Job 39:19-22, 24

957

Here is the sea, great and wide, which teems with creatures innumerable, living things both small and great. There go the ships, and Leviathan, which you formed to play in it.

Psalm 104:25-26, ESV

958

Isaiah 11:6-9

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

959

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:6-9

960

Will Animals, Including Our Pets, Live Again?

As mankind goes, so go the animals. If we take to its logical conclusion the parallel that Paul makes between humans and animals groaning, then *at least some of those animals who suffered on the old Earth must be made whole on the New Earth.*

962

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level...*And all flesh will see the salvation of God.*

Luke 3:6, ESV

963

...God established a covenant with Noah and the animals. He promised never to destroy man and the animals in a flood again. In Genesis Chapter 9, God repeatedly states that the covenant includes every fowl, the cattle, and every living creature. Why were the animals included in the covenant? Because Man's Fate Determines the Animals' Fate.

Niki Behrikis Shanahan

964

Man suffers justly, the creatures unjustly. Our restoration is pure grace, that of the creature world is simple justice.

R. C. H. Lenski,
*The Interpretation of
St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*

965

It wasn't until the advent of seventeenth-century Enlightenment ...that the existence of animal souls was even questioned in Western civilization. Throughout the history of the church, the classic understanding of living things has included the doctrine that animals, as well as humans, have souls.

Gary Habermas and J. P. Moreland,
Beyond Death

966

Certain animals may have an immortality, not in themselves, but in the immortality of their masters.... Very few animals indeed, in their wild state, attain to a 'self' or ego. But if any do, and if it is agreeable to the goodness of God that they should live again, their immortality would also be related to man—not, this time, to individual masters, but to humanity.

C. S. Lewis,
The Problem of Pain

967

The prophet Nathan spoke to King David of the poor man who had a little lamb "who shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him" (2 Samuel 12:3). There's no suggestion this man's affection for his pet was inappropriate. David, unaware the story was told to expose his own sin, angrily responded that the man who stole that precious pet deserved to die.

968

Joni Eareckson Tada

If God brings our pets back to life, it wouldn't surprise me. It would be just like Him. It would be totally in keeping with His generous character.... Exorbitant. Excessive. Extravagant in grace after grace...Of all the dazzling discoveries and ecstatic pleasures heaven will hold for us, the potential of seeing Scrappy would be pure whimsy—utterly, joyfully, surprisingly superfluous.

969

...Heaven is going to be a place that will refract and reflect in as many ways as possible the goodness and joy of our great God, who delights in lavishing love on His children.

Joni Eareckson Tada

970

And as I knelt beside the brook
To drink eternal life, I took
A glance across the golden grass,
And saw my dog, old Blackie, fast
As she could come.
She leaped the stream—
Almost—and what a happy gleam
Was in her eye. I knelt to drink,
And knew that I was on the brink
Of endless joy. And everywhere
I turned I saw a wonder there.

John Piper, *Future Grace*

971

The burden of proof falls not on the assumption that animals *will* be part of God's New Earth, but on the assumption that they *won't*. Would God withhold from us on the New Earth what he gave to Adam and Eve in Eden for delight, companionship, and help? Would he revoke his decision to put animals on Earth with people, placing them under our care and rule? Or will he follow through on his original design?

972

...Who created animals in the first place? Who designed their beauty, and made their unique and endearing and sometimes spectacular qualities? Who created us to appreciate and be delighted by those qualities? The connection between people and animals is God-designed. It existed before sin and will presumably outlast sin.

973

John Wesley,
The General Deliverance, Sermon 60
Man was **God's vicegerent upon earth**, the prince and governor of this lower world; and all the blessings of God flowed through him to the inferior creatures. **Man was the channel of conveyance between his Creator and the whole brute creation**...so when man made himself incapable of transmitting those blessings, that communication was necessarily cut off.

974

...How beautiful many of them were, we may conjecture from that which still remains....It is probable they sustained much loss...their vigour, strength, and swiftness. But **undoubtedly they suffered far more in their understanding....**As man is deprived of *his* perfection, his loving obedience to God; so **brutes are deprived of their perfection,** their loving obedience to man.

975

...But will the creature always remain in this deplorable condition? God forbid that we should affirm this; or even entertain such a thought!...**The whole brute creation will then, undoubtedly, be restored,** not only to the vigour, strength, and swiftness which they had at their creation, but **to a far higher degree** of each than they ever enjoyed.

976

...They will be restored, not only to that measure of understanding which they had in paradise, but **to a degree of it much higher than that....**Whatever affections they had in the garden of God, will be **restored with vast increase;** being exalted and refined in a manner which we ourselves are not now able to comprehend.

977

And with their beauty **their happiness will return....**In the new earth, as well as in the new heavens, there will be nothing to give pain, but **everything that the wisdom and goodness of God can create to give happiness.** As a recompense for what they [animals] once suffered...**they shall enjoy happiness suited to their state,** without alloy, without interruption, and without end.

978

...What, if it should then please the all-wise, the all-gracious Creator **to raise them higher in the scale of beings?** What, if it should please him...to make them...capable of knowing and loving and enjoying the Author of their being?

John Wesley

979

The Teacher and the Traveler,
in *The Great Divorce*, by C. S. Lewis
[Upon seeing in heaven a woman of unbearable beauty:]

“Is it?...Is it?” I whispered to my guide.

“Not at all,” said he. “It’s someone ye’ll never have heard of. Her name on earth was Sarah Smith.”...

“She seems to be...well, a person of particular importance?”

980

...“Aye. She is one of the great ones. Ye have heard that fame in this country and fame on earth are two quite different things.”...

But Hullo! What are all these animals? A cat—two cats—dozens of cats. And all those dogs...why, I can’t count them. And the birds. And the Horses.”

“They are her beasts.”

981

...“Did she keep a sort of zoo? I mean this is a bit too much.”

“Every beast or bird that came near her had a place in her love. In her they became themselves. And now the abundance of life she has in Christ from the Father flows over into them.”

The Teacher and the Traveler,
by C. S. Lewis

982

Now the serpent was **more crafty** than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He **said** to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

Genesis 3:1

983

Will Heaven Ever Be Boring?

984

Mark Buchanan, *Things Unseen*

Why won't we be bored in heaven? Because it's the one place where both impulses—to go beyond, to go home—are perfectly joined and totally satisfied. It's the one place where we're constantly discovering—where everything is always fresh and the possessing of a thing is as good as the pursuing of it—and yet where we are fully at home—

985

...where everything is as it ought to be and where we find, undiminished, that mysterious something we never found down here. And this lifelong melancholy that hangs on us, this wishing we were someone else somewhere else, vanishes too. Our craving to go beyond is always and fully realized. Our yearning for home is once and for all fulfilled. The *ahh!* of deep satisfaction and the *aha!* of delighted surprise meet, and they kiss.

Mark Buchanan

986

The work on the other side, whatever be its character, will be adapted to each one's special aptitude and powers. It will be the work he can do best; the work that will give the fullest play to all that is within him.

James Campbell,
Heaven Opened

987

What Will We Do?

988

Exodus 31:1-6

Then the Lord said to Moses, "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri...and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship.

989

...Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given skill to all the craftsmen to make everything I have commanded you."

Exodus 31:1-6

990

He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as craftsmen, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them master craftsmen and designers.

Exodus 35:35

991

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Colossians 3:23-24

992

Victor Hugo, "The Future Life"

I feel within me that future life. I am like a forest that has been razed; the new shoots are stronger and brighter. I shall most certainly rise toward the heavens the nearer my approach to the end, the plainer is the sound of immortal symphonies of worlds which invite me....For half a century I have been translating my thoughts into prose and verse: history, drama,

993

...philosophy, romance, tradition, satire, ode, and song; all of these I have tried. But I feel I haven't given utterance to the thousandth part of what lies within me...When I go to the grave I can say, as others have said, "My day's work is done." But I cannot say, "My life is done." My work will recommence the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes upon the twilight, but opens upon the dawn.

Victor Hugo

994

In heaven we will be permitted to finish many of those worthy tasks which we had dreamed to do while on earth but which **neither time nor strength nor ability allowed us to achieve.**

Wilber Smith, *The Biblical Doctrine of Heaven*

995

James Campbell,
Heaven Opened

This throws some measure of relieving light upon the painful mystery of a life brought to a sudden close in the fullness of its power. In the presence of such a tragedy we instinctively ask, Why this waste?...Is all the training, discipline, and culture of this choice spirit to be lost?

996

...It cannot be; for in God's universe nothing is ever lost. No preparation is ever in vain. There is need up there for clear heads, warm hearts, and skilled hands....If some kinds of work are over, others will begin; if some duties are laid down, others will be taken up.

997

...And any regret for labour missed down here, will be swallowed up in the joyful anticipation of the higher service that awaits every prepared and willing worker in the upper kingdom of the Father....He will allow no heaven-born hope to be put to shame, but will bring to realization life's brightest visions.

James Campbell

998

In the beginning man was given the so-called cultural mandate—the command **to rule over the earth and to develop a God-glorifying culture.** Because of man's fall into sin, that cultural mandate has **never been carried out** in the way God intended. **Only on the new earth will it be perfectly and sinlessly fulfilled.** Only then shall we be able to rule the earth properly.

Anthony Hoekema,
"Heaven: Not Just an Eternal Day Off"

999

Every legitimate and excellent fruit of human culture will be carried into and contribute to the splendour of life in the new creation. Rather than the new creation being a radically new beginning, in which the excellent and noble fruits of humankind's fulfillment of the cultural mandate are wholly discarded—the **new creation will benefit from, and be immensely enriched by, its receiving of these fruits.**

Cornelius Venema,
The Promise of the Future

1000

Bruce Milne,

The Message of Heaven and Hell

The one who is Lord of the whole of life was never going to bring us at the end into an eternal existence of **mental constriction, or of emotional and creative impoverishment.** Creativity will surely be valued, for such an anticipation must be in keeping with the nature of him who set the morning stars a-singing...

1001

...when he created them at the beginning, and whose joyful, uninhibited cry echoes across the battlements of the new creation. 'See, I am making everything new!'...**What creative possibilities await us** in the unfolding of the eternal ages no present imagination can begin to unravel.

Bruce Milne

1002

Paul Marshall,
Heaven Is Not My Home

It is as if the creation were the *Titanic*, and now that we've hit the iceberg of sin, there's nothing left for us to do but get ourselves into lifeboats. The ship is sinking rapidly, God has given up on it and is concerned only with the survival of his people.

1003

...Any effort we make to salvage God's creation amounts to rearranging the deck chairs. Instead, some say, our sole task is to get into the lifeboats, to keep them afloat, to pluck drowning victims out of the water, and to sail on until we get to heaven where all will be well.

1004

...Noah's ark saved not only people, but it preserved God's other creatures as well. The ark looked not to flee but to return to the land and begin again. Once the flood subsided, *everyone and everything was intended to return again to restore the earth.*

Paul Marshall

1005

To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:7

1006

Anthony Hoekema,
"Heaven: Not Just an Eternal Day Off"

The possibilities that now rise before us boggle the mind. Will there be 'better Beethovens' on the new earth?...better Rembrandts, better Raphaels? Shall we read better poetry, better drama, and better prose?...Will scientists continue to advance in technological achievement,

1007

...will geologists continue to dig out the treasures of the earth, and will architects continue to build imposing and attractive structures? Will there be exciting new adventures in space travel? ...Our culture will glorify God in ways that surpass our most fantastic dreams.

Anthony Hoekema

1008

Paul Marshall,
Heaven Is Not My Home

We have a creative task in the world. We must shape things in ways for which there is sometimes no clear direction. This is why imagination is not just a feature of the arts; it is a feature of human life itself. Without imagination, without experimentation, without openness to new questions and new possibilities, there can be no science and no technology.

1009

...We are not challenging God when we do this, at least not when we do it in humility and faith. We are not stealing fire from the gods. We are taking up our responsibility before God to shape what he has placed in our hands.

Paul Marshall

1010

Arthur Roberts, *Exploring Heaven*

The city of man has had intimations of a coming splendor. Civilization has brought health and safety. It has brought freedom from toil and provided creative enjoyment to millions of persons...How much more, freed from the curse of sin, will civilization flourish! Heaven will provide for urban as well as pastoral living.

1011

...Already the city of man is probing the galaxies. Already it has catalogued the human genome. With the curse of sin gone, apocalypses past, surely human beings in heaven will become active stewards of the Lord in completing or extending the universe of things and ideas. The whole creation groans, said Paul, awaiting human redemption. Civilization is not old; it has barely begun!

Arthur Roberts

1012

Will There Be Arts, Entertainment, and Sports?

1013

I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

Psalms 104:33

We will sing with stringed instruments all the days of our lives in the temple of the Lord.

Isaiah 38:20

1014

Those who have reason to be thankful should continually sing praises to the Lord.

James 5:13, NLT

1015

I will build you up again and you will be rebuilt, O Virgin Israel. Again you will take up your tambourines and go out to dance with the joyful. Again you will plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria; the farmers will plant them and enjoy their fruit.

Jeremiah 31:4-5

1016

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

John 21:25

1017

When you painted on earth...it was because you caught glimpses of Heaven in the earthly landscape.

C. S. Lewis,
The Great Divorce

1018

Arthur Roberts, *Exploring Heaven*

Some people may find it difficult to envision drama or literature without plots involving villainy, deceit, violence, or adultery.... Such fears are understandable, because it is difficult to see beyond the horizon of our experience. These questions reflect an inadequate vision of resurrected life.

1019

...Do our aesthetic adventures depend upon sin for flavor? I think not. In heaven, as on earth, effective drama portrays a triumph of good over evil. I daresay the vastness and the openness of the renewed cosmos offers adventures adequate for epic tales, just as it provides raw material for the visual arts, for painting, for sculpture, for architecture.

Arthur Roberts

1020

Paul, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 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.

1021

...Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Paul, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

1022

God plays. God creates playing. And man should play if he is to live as humanly as possible and to know reality, since it is created by God's playfulness.

Thomas Aquinas,
Summa Theologica

1023

Arthur Roberts,
Exploring Heaven

Absent the misery of poverty or wealth, freed from infirmity, restricted from petty jealousies and sinful pride, and with lots of time on our hands, why shouldn't heaven be a wonderful place to play? As children of God, guilt-free persons take each day as a gift. They are playful in the best sense of that word.

1024

With resurrection bodies, a renewed cosmos and a society free from sin, enjoyment won't fade. It's the weight of sin that jades the spirit and wears the body. Heaven, as Paul said, is "an eternal weight of glory." We won't get bored there! The line between work and play is blurred whenever, and wherever, the burden of sin has been lifted.

Arthur Roberts

1025

Paul Marshall,
Heaven Is Not My Home

Play is one of our highest callings as Christians. So much else in our lives is properly taken in doing *things—things we do to change things, things we do in order that something else may happen.* But in play we are not seeking to change anything, nor are we seeking something beyond.

1026

...We are simply being at home in the world and at peace with God.

It's not the activity itself that makes the difference between work and play, or even rest. It's the spirit in which we engage in them.

Paul Marshall

1027

[Liddell explaining to his sister that God had called him to missions work in China, but also to compete in the Olympics:]

God made me fast, and when I run I feel His pleasure....To give up running would be to hold Him in contempt.

Eric Liddell,
in Chariots of Fire

1028

In this world everything is upside down. That which, if it could be prolonged here, would be a truancy, is likeliest that which in a better country is the End of ends. Joy is the serious business of Heaven.

C. S. Lewis,
The Joyful Christian

1029

Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.

Luke 6:25

1030

Will Our Dreams Be Fulfilled and Missed Opportunities Regained?

1031

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Matthew 5:3-5

1032

I haven't been cheated out of being a complete person—I'm just going through a forty-year delay, and God is with me even through that. Being 'glorified'—I know the meaning of that now. It's the time, after my death here, when I'll be on my feet dancing.

Joni Eareckson Tada,

1033

Peter Toon, *Heaven and Hell: A Biblical Theological Overview*

The most tragic strain in human existence lies in the fact that the pleasure which we find in the things of this life, however good that pleasure may be in itself, is always taken away from us.... The things for which men strive hardly ever turn out to be as satisfying as they expected, and in the rare cases in which they do, sooner or later they are snatched away.

1034

...For the Christian, all those partial, broken and fleeting perfections which he glimpses in the world around him, which wither in his grasp and he snatches away from him even while they wither, are found again, perfect, complete and lasting in the absolute beauty of God.

Peter Toon

1035

Dallas Willard,
The Divine Conspiracy

I meet many faithful Christians who, in spite of their faith, are **deeply disappointed in how their lives have turned out.** Sometimes it is simply a matter of how they experience aging, which **they take to mean they no longer have a future....** But often, due to circumstances or wrongful decisions and actions by others,

1036

...what they had hoped to accomplish in life they did not. They painfully puzzle over what they may have done wrong, or over whether God has really been with them... Much of the distress of these good people comes from **a failure to realize that their life lies before them.**

1037

...That they are coming to the end of their present life, life "in the flesh," is of little significance....**What is of significance is the kind of person they have become.** Circumstances and other people are not in control of an individual's character or of **the life that lies endlessly before us in the kingdom of God.**

Dallas Willard

1038

Will We Design Crafts, Technology, and New Modes of Travel?

The Bible never condemns technology itself....It does not make the modern distinction between what is 'natural' and what is 'artificial.' **Both are seen merely as aspects of what is 'creational,'** a category that includes both the human and the non-human world in relation to each other.

Paul Marshall,
Heaven Is Not My Home

1039

1040

If mankind had never sinned, would we have invented the wheel and created machinery? On the New Earth, shouldn't we expect machinery and technology made for the good of mankind and the glory of God? Will the new planets be mere ornaments, or does God intend

1041

for us to reach them one day? Even under the Curse, we've been able to explore the moon. We have the technology to land on Mars. What will we be able to accomplish for God's glory when we have resurrected minds, unlimited resources, complete scientific cooperation, and no more death?

1042

As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you.

Daniel 9:23

1043

God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God.

Romans 8:28, NASB

1044

C. S. Lewis,
Letters to Malcolm

Don't run away with the idea that when I speak of the resurrection of the body I mean merely that the blessed dead will have excellent memories of their sensuous experiences on earth. I mean it the other way round; that memory as we know it is a dim foretaste, a mirage even, of a power which the soul,

1045

...or rather Christ in the soul...of a power which the soul, or rather Christ in the soul...will exercise hereafter. It need no longer...be private to the soul in which it occurs. I can now communicate to you the fields of my boyhood—they are building-estates today—only imperfectly, by words. Perhaps the day is coming when I can take you for a walk through them.

C. S. Lewis

1046

Edge of Eternity

I saw a dying cosmos hold out its weak right arm, longing for a transfusion, a cure for its cancerous chasm. I saw the Woodsman, holding what appeared to be a tiny lump of coal, the same size as the blue-green marble he'd held before. The Woodsman squeezed his hand and the world around me darkened.

1047

...Just as I felt I would scream from unbearable pressure, the crushed world emerged from his grip a diamond. I gasped air in relief. I saw a new world, once more a life-filled blue-green, the old black coal delivered from its curse and pain and shame, wondrously remade....It looked so easy for the Woodsman to shape all this with his hands. But then I saw his scars...and remembered it was not.

1048

Reorienting Ourselves to Heaven as Our Home

1049

I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country, which I shall not find till after death; I must never let it get snowed under or turned aside; I must make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others to do the same.

C. S. Lewis,
Mere Christianity

1050

Our greatest affliction is not anxiety, or even guilt, but rather homesickness—a nostalgia or ineradicable yearning to be at home with God.

Donald Bloesch,
Theological Notebook

1051

Our Father refreshes us on the journey with some pleasant inns, but will not encourage us to mistake them for home.

C. S. Lewis,
The Problem of Pain

1052

Future existence is not a purely spiritual existence; it demands a life in a body, and in a material universe.

Graham Scroggie,
What about Heaven?

1053

In nature, everything moves in the direction of its hungers. In the spiritual world it is not otherwise. We gravitate toward our inward longing, provided of course that those longings are strong enough to move us.

A. W. Tozer,
The Size of the Soul

1054

Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you....Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven.

Luke 6:22-23

1055

I rejoice in my sufferings.
Colossians 1:24, NASB

Consider it pure joy, my
brothers, whenever you
face trials of many kinds.
James 1:2

1056

Rejoice that your names are
written in heaven.

Luke 10:20

Rejoice that you participate
in the sufferings of Christ,
so that you may be
overjoyed when his glory is
revealed.

1 Peter 4:13

1057

*Give me to know that heaven
is all joy,
the end of believing,
fasting, praying,
mourning, humbling,
watching, fearing, repining;
And lead me to it soon.
The Valley of Vision*

1058

I'm standing on the seashore. A
ship at my side spreads her
white sails to the morning
breeze and starts for the blue
ocean. She's an object of beauty
and strength and I stand and
watch her until, at length, she
hangs like a speck of white
cloud just where the sea and the
sky come down to mingle with
each other.

1059

...And then I hear someone at my
side saying, "There, she's gone."
Gone where? Gone from my sight,
that is all. She is just as large in
mast and hull and spar as she
was when she left my side. And
just as able to bear her load of
living freight to the place of
destination. Her diminished size
is in *me*, not in her.

1060

...And just at the moment
when someone at my side
says, "There, she's gone,"
there are other eyes watching
her coming, and there are
other voices ready to take up
the glad shout, "Here she
comes!"
And that is dying.

1061

C. S. Lewis,
Letters to an American Lady
Five months before he died, C. S.
Lewis wrote to a woman who feared
that her own death was imminent.
"Can you not see death as a friend
and deliverer?...What is there to be
afraid of?...Your sins are confessed.
...Has this world been so kind to you
that you should leave with regret?
There are better things ahead than
any we leave behind.

1062

Our Lord says to you, 'Peace, child,
peace. Relax. Let go. I will catch you.
Do you trust me so little?'

Of course, this may not be the end.
Then make it a good rehearsal.

*Yours (and like you,
a tired traveler,
near the journey's end).*

C. S. Lewis

1063

Calvin Miller,
The Divine Symphony
I once scorned ev'ry fearful
thought of death,
When it was but the end of pulse
and breath,
But now my eyes have seen that
past the pain
There is a world that's waiting to
be claimed.

1064

Earthmaker, Holy, let me now
depart,
For living's such a temporary
art.
And dying is but getting dressed
for God,
Our graves are merely
doorways cut in sod.

Calvin Miller

1065

Anticipating the Great Adventure

Can you hear the sighing in the
wind? Can you feel the heavy
silence in the mountains? Can
you sense the restless longing
in the sea? Can you see it in the
woeful eyes of an animal?
Something's coming...
something better.

Joni Eareckson Tada,
Heaven: Your Real Home

1066

1067

*Oh, God, this is the
end; but for me it is
just the beginning.*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's
last words, 1945

1068

For [Christ] must reign
until he has put all his
enemies under his feet.
The last enemy to be
destroyed is death.

1 Corinthians 15:25-26

1069

[God] will destroy the
shroud that enfolds all
peoples, the sheet that
covers all nations; he will
swallow up death forever.
The Sovereign Lord will
wipe away the tears from
all faces.

Isaiah 25:7-8

1070

Who shall separate us from the
love of Christ?...Neither death
nor life, neither angels nor
demons, neither the present nor
the future, nor any powers,
neither height nor depth, nor
anything else in all creation, will
be able to separate us from the
love of God that is in Christ
Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35, 38-39

1071

Only one life,
'twill soon be past;
only what's done
for Christ will last.

C. T. Studd

1072

Questions to Reflect On:

Do I daily reflect on my own
mortality?

Do I daily realize there are
only two destinations—Heaven
or Hell—and that I and every
person I know will go to one or
the other?

1073

Do I daily remind myself that this world is not my home and that everything in it will burn, leaving behind only what's eternal?

Do I daily recognize that my choices and actions have a direct influence on the world to come?

1074

Do I daily realize that my life is being examined by God, the Audience of One, and that the only appraisal of my life that will ultimately matter is his?

1075

Do I daily reflect on the fact that my ultimate home will be the New Earth, where I will **see God and serve him** as a resurrected being in a resurrected human society, where I will **overflow with joy** and delight in drawing nearer to God by studying him and his creation, and where I will, to God's glory, **exercise dominion** over his creation?

1076

The goal and end of a person's calling does not terminate in this life, but **it makes sense only in the light of the life to come....** The basic fact about the present life is that it is important and valuable in all its aspects **because** it leads to the world to come.

Paul Helm,
The Last Things

1077

You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God....In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. **So then**, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, **make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.**

2 Peter 3:11-14

1078

Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him **purifies himself**, just as He is pure.

1 John 3:3, NASB

1079

But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, **I press on toward the goal to win the prize** for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14

1080

C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

Aslan turned to them and said, "You do not yet look so happy as I mean you to be."

Lucy said, "We're so afraid of being sent away, Aslan. And you have sent us back into our own world so often."

"No fear of that," said Aslan. "Have you not guessed?" Their hearts leaped and a wild hope rose within them.

1081

"There was a *real* railway accident," said Aslan softly. "Your father and mother and all of you are—as you used to call it in the Shadow Lands—dead. The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning."

And as he spoke he no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them.

1082

...And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page; now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth has read; which goes on forever; in which every chapter is better than the one before.

C. S. Lewis

1083

Christian, meditate much on heaven, it will help thee to press on, and to forget the toil of the way. This vale of tears is but the pathway to the better country: this world of woe is but the stepping-stone to a world of bliss. And, after death, what cometh? What wonder-world will open upon our astonished sight?

Charles Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening*

1084

Christoplatonism's False Assumptions

1085

Only our redeemed spirits can live in a spiritual realm like heaven. Therefore, the life we know now as spiritual reality will continue in heaven, but we shall not need or desire the things associated with our present physical bodies, simply because we shall not possess physical bodies in heaven.

Arthur E. Travis,
Where on Earth Is Heaven?

1086

The demon Wormwood, in *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis

Never forget that when we are dealing with any pleasure in its healthy and normal and satisfying form, we are, in a sense, on the Enemy's ground. I know we have won many a soul through pleasure. All the same, it is His invention, not ours.

1087

Pleasure is the Enemy's invention, not ours....He made the pleasures: all our research so far has not enabled us to produce one. All we can do is to encourage the humans to take the pleasures which our Enemy has produced, at times, or in ways, or in degrees, which He has forbidden.

1088

...Hence we always try to work away from the natural condition of any pleasure to that in which it is least natural, least redolent of its Maker, and least pleasurable. An ever increasing craving for an ever diminishing pleasure is the formula.

C. S. Lewis

1089

Sin does not create things. It has no originality, no creativity, no being in itself. Sin lives off that which is good. It is a parasite, feeding greedily on the goodness of what God has made.

Paul Marshall,
Heaven Is Not My Home

1090

**Anthony Hoekema,
*The Bible and the Future***

If the resurrection body were non-material or non-physical, the devil would have won a great victory, since God would then have been compelled to change human beings with physical bodies such as he had created into creatures of a different sort, without physical bodies (like the angels)....Then it would indeed seem that matter had become intrinsically evil so that it had to be banished.

1091

...And then the Greek philosophers would have been proved right. But matter is not evil; it is part of God's good creation. Therefore the goal of God's redemption is the resurrection of the physical body, and the creation of a new earth on which his redeemed people can live and serve God forever with glorified bodies. Thus the universe will not be destroyed but renewed, and God will win the victory.

Anthony Hoekema

1092

Wayne Grudem,
Systematic Theology

God will not completely destroy the physical world (which would be an acknowledgment that sin had frustrated and defeated God's purposes), but rather he will perfect the entire creation and bring it into harmony with the purposes for which he originally created it.

1093

...Therefore we can expect that in the new heavens and new earth there will be a fully perfect earth that is once again 'very good.' And we can expect that we will have physical bodies that will once again be 'very good' in God's sight, and will function to fulfill the purposes for which he first placed man on the earth.

Wayne Grudem

1094

God made Adam and Eve to be spiritual *and* physical—they were not human until they were both.

God often took on human form in Old Testament times. He was also likely in human form as he walked in Eden.

God took on a human body, becoming a man in Christ, not just temporarily but forever.

1095

God raised Christ in a human body with physical properties, a body that walked, talked, ate, and could be touched. He explicitly stated he wasn't a ghost.

God made mankind in his image. Because humans are physical beings—though God is spirit—there must be something in our human bodies that reflects God's identity.

1096

God's Holy Spirit indwells human bodies and calls them his holy temples.

God will raise people with eternal physical-spiritual bodies, then come down to inhabit the New Earth with them.

1097