

Temporary Versus Eternal Heaven and Bodies

A Biblical Perspective

Present:

“Temporary” Earth and “Temporary” Earthly Bodies

“Temporary” Heaven and “Temporary” Heavenly Bodies

What happens when Christians die? *Not soul sleep* (no consciousness), but a *conscious existence* in the temporary (aka intermediate) Heaven – *our soul and some form of body*. Supporting scriptures:

Luke 23:43 Jesus promised thief on cross he would be in Paradise/Heaven that day

2 Cor 5:6-8 absent from body, present with the Lord

Luke 9:28-33 & Mat 17:1-4 & Mark 9:2-5 Elijah and Moses had visible “bodies” at transfiguration of Jesus

John 11:25 Jesus “He who believes in me will live, even though he dies”

Luke 16:19-31 Lazarus and rich man

Phil 1:23 Paul – better to depart and be with Jesus

2 Cor 12:1-4 Paul visioned/visited existing Heaven

Acts 7:54-59 martyr Stephen saw Jesus and while dying said “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit”

Hebrews 12:1 refers to being surrounded by a cloud of witnesses – departed saints

Gen 5:24 & 2 Kings 2:11-12 Enoch and Elijah appear to have been taken to Heaven in their physical bodies

Far less reliably, Don Piper – “90 Minutes in Heaven” and Colton Burpo “Heaven is for Real” saw people in bodies in their alleged visits to the temporary/intermediate Heaven. John Burke in his book “Imagine Heaven” summarizes the common experiences of hundreds of people with near death experiences/visits to temporary Heaven who likewise saw people in bodies.

Future:

Eternal New Heaven & Earth

Someday there will be an eternal New Earth and the New Heaven will be co-located on it. The existing old earth will be renewed/restored, and the intermediate Heaven will come down and become part of the New Earth and New Heaven, and will be under Christ’s rule (Revelation 21& 22; Daniel 7:13-14; Luke 1:32-33; Eph 1:9-10; Col 1:20; Acts 3:21; Matthew 19:27-28; Rev 11:15; Is 66:12,18,22-23; Zech 9:10). A great reference on the eternal New Heaven and New Earth is Randy Alcorn’s book “Heaven”.

Resurrected Eternal Bodies (like Jesus)

(Phil 3:20-21; I John 3:1-3; Romans 8:18-23, 29; I Cor 15)

*** See Wes’s Heavenly Resurrected Bodies Handout for more details *****