

Capturing the reality of Heaven and Hell

Right now, we are alive on this planet, but the life that we were given will end at some point.

James 4:14 whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

1. AFTERLIFE IS A REALITY

Hebrews 9:27

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

Hebrews 6:1-2

6 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

The Bible is quite clear that after we die there is an afterlife and everyone will come before God, the Creator. The authority for what we need to understand regarding the topic of Heaven and Hell rests on the Bible.

2. THERE ARE TWO DESTINATIONS

I'm going to talk about the purpose, location and description of these two destinations.

HELL'S PURPOSE

Before I speak about the purpose of Hell, I want to make this point clear from scripture. God does not want anyone to go to hell.

2 Peter 3:9

⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward ^[a]us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Ezekiel 18:32

³² For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord God. "Therefore turn and live!"

Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord God, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.

What's the purpose of Hell?

Hell was originally intended for Satan and the angels who joined him in rebellion against God.

Jesus said in Matthew 25:41

⁴¹ "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Revelation 20:10

¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where^[a] the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

What that means for people though, is that those who rebel against God and reject Jesus as Saviour, will likewise experience the same end.

Jesus said in John 12:48

He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

John 3:16-18¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

We need to understand that Hell is a place of judgement and a place where God does not want anyone to go, that’s why He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for us and rescue us, so we don’t have to go there.

Jesus talked about hell more than any other person in the Bible, and He warned people about it. Even if I don’t understand everything about Hell, I trust what Jesus said.

There are two false teachings about eternal Judgment which are quite popular nowadays: universalism and annihilation.

HELL’S LOCATION

The Bible seems to indicate that the place where Hell is located is in the centre of the earth. It may be in a different dimension and not in a physical sense, we don’t know for sure.

Ephesians 4:9

Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

In Matthew 12:40 Jesus compared His own death to that of Jonah.

40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

HELL’S DESCRIPTION

. It’s a place of eternal fire but there’s no light and is non consuming.

Mark 9:48: where ‘Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’

. Complete darkness and loneliness, torment and misery.

Matthew 8:12

But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

. A conscious awareness that something out there is better, but unattainable.

Luke 6:19-31

. The realization of the separation from God’s presence.

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

WHAT IS HEAVEN’S PURPOSE?

Psalm 103:19

**The Lord has established His throne in heaven,
And His kingdom rules over all.**

Heaven is the Habitation of God and the eternal home for those who have trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

2 Corinthians 5:8,

⁸ We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

HEAVEN’S LOCATION

Deuteronomy 4:39

³⁹Therefore know this day, and consider *it* in your heart, that the Lord Himself *is* God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; *there is* no other.

2 Corinthians 12:1-2 “I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven.

Paul talks about being transported to what he calls the third Heaven.

First Heaven is the earth’s atmosphere, the second heaven is what we would call outer space, the third Heaven is where God dwells.

This may also mean that the second and third Heaven may be in a different dimension. The Bible does not give specific details.

HEAVEN’S DESCRIPTION

The truth is that no one knows exactly what Heaven really looks like.

There is a difference between Heaven presently and what the Bible describes in the book of Revelation as a new Heaven and a new earth.

Revelation 21:1-2

21 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, ^[a]John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

We read in **Revelation 21:18;21:**

18 The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. **21** The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

It’s just a spectacular site to behold, beautiful beyond description.

Revelation 21:23

²³The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light.

Do you know what my favourite part about Heaven is? **Heaven is a place of “no mores”.**

Revelation 21:4 ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

. It’s a place of reunion with loved ones and friends whose names are written in the book of life, they knew Christ as Saviour.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

¹⁶For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord.

Followers of Jesus will not face God’s Judgment when they pass away.

Romans 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

All believers will come before God to give an account of what they’ve done with their lives, but not to be judged unto condemnation, Jesus took care of it.

3. CHOOSE HEAVEN’S CITIZENSHIP

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

You can choose your eternal destination right now while you are alive on this planet. No one will be given a second opportunity to choose, once you pass on to eternity, your afterlife begins.

