

Gospel and Heaven

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1. Resurrected Bodies in Heaven

The gospel is that Jesus died for our sins and rose from the dead; thus, all who believe in Him will be raised from the dead. The Bible teaches us that God will give us a resurrected body similar to Jesus'.

1 Cor 15:2-4, 20, 49 By this **gospel** you are **saved**, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, **the first fruits** of those who have fallen asleep... ⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.

a. Our resurrected bodies will be like Jesus' glorious resurrected body. The first fruits is like a guaranteed prototype of what follows. Therefore, God will give us a resurrected body like the glory of Jesus' resurrected body.

Phil 3:21 And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will **transform** our lowly bodies so that they will be **like his glorious body**.

Jesus' resurrected body radiates glory (Matt 17:2, Rev 1:16).

Matt 17:2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.

Rev 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

Our resurrected bodies will radiate glory (Dan. 12:3; Mt. 13:43).

Dan 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Matt 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

Let us examine what the Bible tells us about Jesus' Resurrected body

Jesus could veil His glory—fully or partially. At times, Jesus was not recognised as He veiled His resurrection glory (Lk. 24:16, 31). He could suddenly appear or vanish from sight. Jesus' resurrected body has "supernatural flesh" with bones and the capacity to eat food.

Luke 24:15-43 [On the road to Emmaus] As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶but they were kept from recognising him...³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight...³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem...³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognised by them when he broke the bread. ³⁶While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸He said to them...³⁹ 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."⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate it in their presence.

b. Five qualities of our resurrected physical body that will affect all of our abilities. There is a connection between our earthly physical body that dies and our resurrected physical body. The resurrected physical body will have each person's unique personality and appearance brought to complete perfection.

*1 Cor 15:42-53 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable; it is raised **imperishable**; ⁴³it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in **glory**; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in **power**; ⁴⁴it is sown a natural body, it is raised a **spiritual body**...⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with **immortality**.*

- i. Perishable, but raised in imperishable:** Vitality and strength replace sickness and decay.
- ii. Dishonor, but raised in glory:** Purity and honour replace failure, shame, and dishonour.
- iii. Weakness, but raised in power:** Safety and strength replace pain, vulnerability, and addiction.
- iv. Natural body, but raised a spiritual body:** Supernatural capacities replace natural limitations.
- v. Mortality puts on immortality:** Unending life and love replace physical death and loss.

This means we will have bodies that are recognisably ours but unimaginably better than we always wished we had on Earth.

c. Each believer will receive a different measure of glory in their resurrected body.

1 Cor 3:10-15 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. ¹¹For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³his 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. ¹⁴If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

1 Cor 15:41-42 1 The sun has one kind of splendour, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendour. ⁴²So will it be with the resurrection of the dead.

Matt 5:19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same

will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

2. Life in Heaven

a. God's eternal purpose is for heaven to join earth.

Heaven is the supernatural realm where God's presence is openly manifested. **Earth** is the physical realm where natural processes, human emotion, and physical sensation reach full expression. Jesus will return to establish His kingdom rule over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms.

God's purpose has always been to live with His people *face-to-face*. The New Jerusalem will descend to Earth and be our dwelling place (Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10). Jesus and His people will rule the Earth with *the natural processes, not suspended, but enhanced supernaturally* by the Holy Spirit — as when Jesus appeared after His resurrection (Jn. 20-21).

Rev 21:1-2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them..."¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. (also Rev 3:12)

Eph 1:9-10 He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

b. Inside the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21-22).

The New Jerusalem is the ultimate *Garden of Eden*. It described its beauty (21:22-27) and close communion with Jesus (22:1-5), who illuminates the City (21:23; 22:5). This city of splendour (21:9-11) is almost 2200 kilometres in length, height, and width with walls about 65 meters or 200 feet thick (21:15- 17) that are made of precious stones (21:18-20).

Rev 21:9-27 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. ¹³ There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. ¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. ¹⁶ The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. 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. ¹⁷ The angel measured the wall using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits thick. ¹⁸ The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass. ²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ 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. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

c. Life inside the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:1-5)i

There will be the *river of life* (22:1) and the *tree of life* (22:2), and face-to-face communion with God (22:4) that points back to life in the Garden of Eden.

Rev 22:1-5 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle 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. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ 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. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Believers will enjoy eating and drinking with Jesus in the New Jerusalem. *Luke 22:15-30 And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not **eat** it again **until** it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." ... ¹⁸ For I tell you I will not **drink** again of the fruit of the vine **until** the kingdom of God comes."...²⁹ **And I confer on you a kingdom**, just as my Father conferred one on me, ³⁰ **so that you may eat and drink** at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

With joy, we will remember our relationships with people

1Thess 2:19 What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?