

The Present Heaven  
Part 1

A timeline of Heaven

4/11/2010

“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.”

1 Thess 4:13

### 1. Heaven - Past

“Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob...the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them.” Psalm 145:5-6

The Bible tells us that Heaven was created or made by God. It has not always been in existence. Only God is eternal. Heaven is a place that He made and chooses to live there but there was a time when the Present Heaven did not exist.

“The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.” Psalm 14:2

### 2. Heaven - Present

When a believer dies they go to the present Heaven.

“I ...would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 5:8

“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.” Phil 1:21-23

The Bryan Day paraphrased version reads: “If I am going to live another day it will be for Christ and His glory and if I die, well, I will finally get paid. It is more advantageous to me to die. But if I keep on living and serving Christ it will only result in my bank account in heaven getting larger and larger. I have got enough rewards in Heaven already, I would rather die now and be with Christ. This is the best possible scenario.”

“Resolved, to endeavor to obtain for myself as much happiness, in the other world, as I can.” Jonathan Edwards

Most people I know have exactly the opposite view and have: resolved to find as much happiness for themselves in this world as they possibly can.

- The present Heaven is not where we will spend eternity.  
Everyone in the Present Heaven is looking forward to:

A. The rapture of the church, when they will receive their “resurrected body”.

All of your family and friends who are in the Present Heaven right now have some type of physical body but they are looking forward to having their “old” body back. After the resurrection of the dead and the rapture of the Church we will return to the present Heaven for a period of seven years.

The resurrection of the dead and the rapture of the church will officially begin what is know as the Tribulation here on Earth.

I believe that our resurrected bodies, both in the Present and Eternal Heaven, will reveal primarily what my character was like here on earth. Can you imagine how beautiful the Christians who suffered from Down’s Syndrome will appear in heaven? Their childlike innocence and faith, their wonder of life itself will produce for them a body that reflects their faith in Christ.

We get to choose what kind of mansion we will have in Heaven. We also get to choose what kind of body we will have in Heaven. We choose everyday, when we decide to live for Christ or not.

Right now, our physical bodies totally hid our character. You cannot see my character inside my body but a day is coming when my character will be what my body looks like.

Movie: Shallow Hal was hypnotized so allowing him to see woman physically in accordance with their inner character. A drop dead beautiful woman appears to Shallow Hal as disgusting, ugly, yucky and nasty and conversely some ugly woman, as she appears to most men, turns into a golden haired bombshell.

Sometimes we get a glimpse of someone's character via their eyes. "The eyes are the window to the soul."  
"Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and my body with grief." Ps 131:9

"According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever." 1 Th. 4:15-17

B. When Christ will return to the Earth, at His second coming, we will join Him here for His 1,000 year reign on Earth.

"Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a

thousand years." Rev 20:6

The 1,000 reign occurs after God pours out His 21 judgments on the earth mentioned in the book of revelation.

### **3. Heaven - Future**

At the end of the 1,000 year reign, God will create a new Heaven and a new Earth.

Eg. Recently we traveled from DEN to SYD but what we did not tell everyone is that we first went to LAX. Even though we were LAX dwellers for a few hours, DEN was not the focus of our journey. We headed to SYD. Likewise, the focus of our journey is not the Present heaven, where we will reside for a period of time, but rather the New Heaven and the New Earth.

This illustration might be better statement if we understood that we were traveling from DEN, with a brief layover in LAX and the returning back to DEN. Only to a DEN we have never known. A DEN without crime, sicknesses, problems, pollution, corruption, etc. etc.

"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. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 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." Rev 21:1-3

The climax of the 1,000 reign will be when God makes everything new. The devil will be disposed of, once and for all and even Hell itself will be tossed into the lake of fire. There will be no more sin, and no more curse and once again, God Himself, the Father, will be free to "walk in the garden with His people during the cool of the day."

At this time, we will have come full circle, and we witness the completion of the redemptive work of Emmanuel – God, with us.

God's Children are destined for life in a resurrected body on a resurrected Earth, with our resurrected Savior.

- This will be our eternal home.