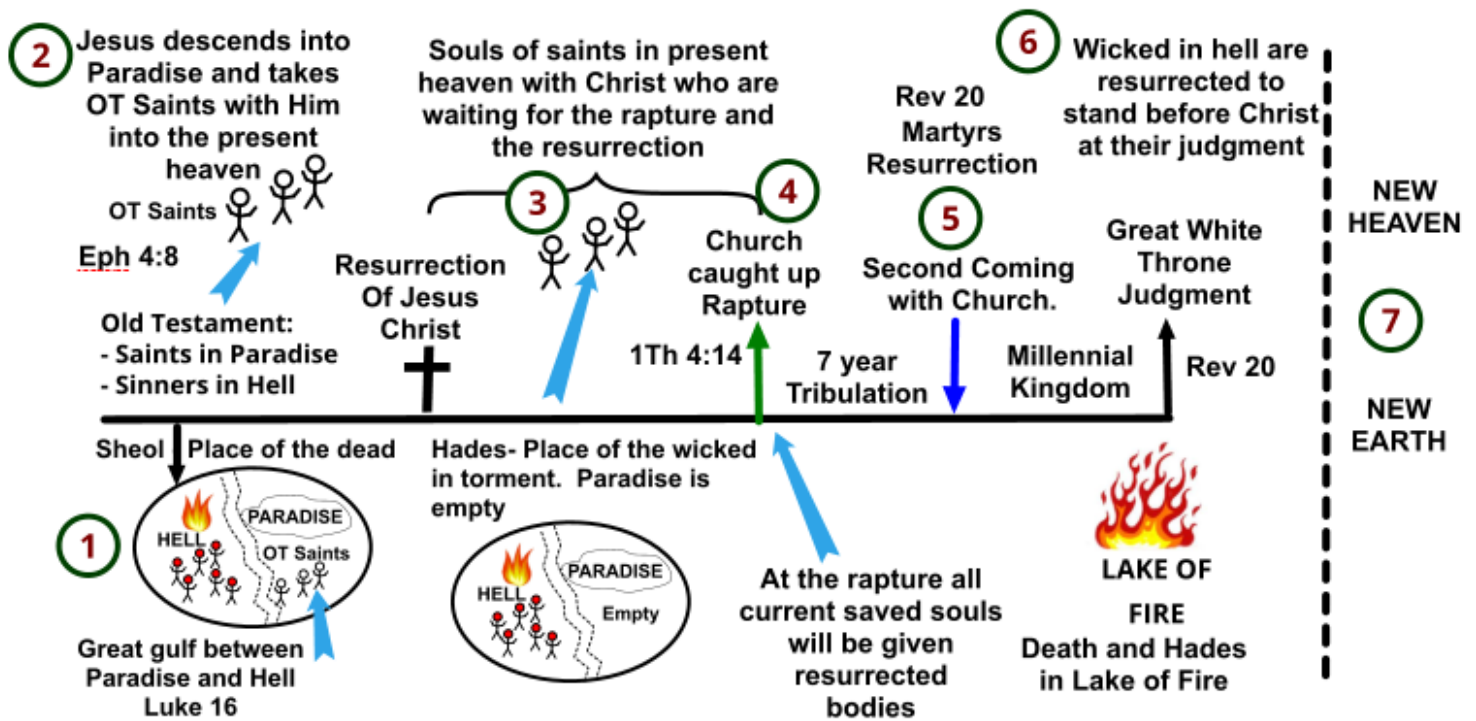


UMC Heaven Study

Session 2 – The Present/Intermediate Heaven



(1) In the video introduction according to the interviewees, what do people say they have to do to get into heaven? Were you surprised at their answers? Did you once believe that too?

(2) According to scripture where is Paradise right now?

- 2Co 12:2-4 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. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

(3) Where will the present heaven finally be located?

- Rev 21:1-3 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. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

(4) Are the heaven saints aware of what is happening on earth right now?

- Heb 12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so **great a cloud of witnesses**, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
- Luk 15:10 Likewise, I say to you, there is **joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.**"

(5) Do the scriptures say anything about a believer seeing Jesus when they die?

It was at least Paul's desire to die so he could be in Christ's presence. Job 19:26-27

- Act 7:56 and said, "Look! **I see the heavens opened** and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" Before Stephen died, and he saw Jesus in heaven.
- 2Co 5:8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be **absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.**
- Php 1:23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, **having a desire to depart and be with Christ**, which is far better.
- 1Jn_3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, **we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**

(6) Once in Heaven, will people know and recognize those they knew on Earth?

- Our memories will not only be intact but will be photographic. No more senior moments trying to recall past events.
- Although the scriptures don't explicitly say that we will recognize and converse with our family and friends. It would seem contrary to the nature of God's plan to deny the ability for His saints to recognize and interact each other.
- Read the account in Mat 17:2-3 about the transfiguration and **explain** how Peter knew the two were Moses and Elijah, It could be that we will recognize people we haven't met.
- 1Sa 28:13 -14 And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth. So he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "An **old man is coming up**, and he is **covered with a mantle.**" And **Saul perceived that it was Samuel**, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down.

(7) Do those saints in heaven and sinners in hell have conversations about what they struggle with? Is it reasonable to assume that we when we also die will be able to think and reason in the present heaven?

- Saints - Rev 6:9 - 10 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they **cried with a loud voice**, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and **avenge our blood** on those who dwell on the earth?"
- Sinners - Luk 16:24 "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'

(8) What things are going on the intermediate heaven that directly affect every believer?

Judgement seat of Christ and the examination of our works for rewards

- 2Co 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, **according** to what he has done, whether good or bad.
- 1Co 3:11 - 13 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the **Day** will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.