



“Heavenly Thoughts”

“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Philippians 3:20

A. We are all terminal...

“just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,”
Hebrews 9:27

1. Death is the end of life in our physical body.
“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” *Matthew 10:28*
2. Death is the separation of body (temporal) and soul (eternal).
“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.”
James 2:26

3. Death is not an end but a transition.
“To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.” *Romans 2:7,8*
“He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of His power...” *2 Thessalonians 1:8,9*

4. Born once, die twice; born twice, die once! Second death is eternal separation from God.
“But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.” *Revelation 21:8*
“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.”
Revelations 20:6

B. When we die, we go to a literal place...

1. The intermediate heaven was viewed by Gehazi in the Old Testament time period.
“And Elisha prayed, ‘O LORD, open his eyes so he may see.’ Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”
2 Kings 6:17
2. The intermediate heaven was viewed by Stephen when he was being stoned.
“But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.’” *Acts 7:55,56*

3. The intermediate heaven was viewed by Paul when he looked into the third heaven.
“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.” *2 Corinthians 12:2-4*
4. The intermediate heaven was viewed by John when he was given the revelation!
“The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place...” *Revelation 1:1*

C. Scripture seems to indicate a number of things about this intermediate place and its inhabitants...

1. This crowd of witnesses can see what is happening on earth.
“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses...” *Hebrews 12:1*
“Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about His departure, which He was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.” *Luke 9:31*
2. This crowd of witnesses seem to be a part of the rejoicing in heaven.
“I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.” *Luke 15:7*
“In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” *Luke 15:10*

3. This crowd of witnesses seem to be cheering and encouraging all of us.
“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses...” *Hebrews 12:1*
4. This crowd of witnesses seem to be a part of those who are interceding.
“Who is He that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.” *Romans 8:34*
“Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints” *Revelation 5:8b*

D. Revelation 6 gives further thought as to our intermediate heavenly life... (Randy Alcorn writes in his book “Heaven”)

- “When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, ‘How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?’ Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.”* *Revelation 6:9-11*
1. Those in heaven have an audience with God as they ask questions.
“How long, Sovereign Lord...”
 2. Those in heaven seem to have a deep concern for justice and retribution.
“How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until You judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”
 3. Those in heaven seem to be learning as God answers their questions.
“...they were told to wait a little longer...”
 4. Those in heaven seem to have a sense of time.
“How long...”

E. Our hope of heaven is a longing we all naturally share...

“The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”

Romans 8:19-23

1. All of creation has been equipped with a longing for the return of Christ.

“We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.”

2. Our ability to understand all of this at present is limited.

“Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.” 1 Corinthians 13:12

3. As our hearts draw near to God, we develop a longing for Him.

“Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.” Hebrews 11:16

“Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling,” 2 Corinthians 5:2

“Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”

2 Timothy 4:8

4. The first two chapters of Genesis deal with the creation of the heaven and earth; and the last two chapters of Revelation deal with the re-creation of heaven and earth.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Genesis 1:1

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...” Revelation 21:1

To begin a relationship with Jesus...

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