



Heaven

What our eternal existence will be like

Note: Scripture used in this Bible Study is from the New King James Version.

What is the value in studying about heaven? Wouldn't our time be better spent studying things the pertain to the here and now?

- Know the wonderful future God has in store for us helps us endure the adversity we have in the here-and-now.
- Studying about heaven helps us to have the kind of eternal perspective that God has which helps us see the value in making decisions in the here-and-now which have implications in the here-after.

What is heaven?

It is where God is...

Ps 113:5 - Who is like the LORD our God, who dwells on high

What is the common view of what heaven is like?

Most have a concept of heaven as that of a spirit world where the saved spend eternity as disembodied spirits, floating around on clouds, playing harps.

Where do the harps come from?

Harps in heaven come from the symbolism of creative artistic expression...

Rev 5:8 - Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Rev 14:2 - And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

Rev 15:2 - And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.

How is the Bible's view different from this?

The book of Revelation explains that our eternal home is a re-created earth. Since God will live with us here, heaven comes to earth...

Revelation 21:1-7

1 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.

2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 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 "And 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."

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Where does the wrong world view about heaven as only a spirit world come from?

Greek mythology...

The Gnostic Heresy

When the first Gentiles were converted to the Gospel, their Greek-mind set immediately collided with some of the fundamental teachings of Christianity. For example, they wondered:

- How could Jesus have come in the flesh if He was God? God is holy.
- How can He who is holy be encased in a body which is evil?"

In short, because they viewed the material universe as evil, they could not accept the Bible's teaching that God became incarnate in the flesh.

So if the Gnostics could not accept that Jesus took on a human body, what would they have to believe about Him?

They believed that Jesus was a spirit being or phantom who never took on the flesh and therefore never experienced physical death.

What does Scripture have to say about this view?

This heresy is denounced strongly in Scripture...

1 John 4:1-2 - Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

How is the creation account of Genesis diametrically opposed to the Greek belief that the material universe, including the human body, is evil?

The world was created good...

Genesis 1:31 - Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

What happened to the goodness of creation?

The goodness of the creation was corrupted by the sin of man...

Isaiah 24:5-6 - The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate.

Did all the goodness of creation disappear as a result of man's sin?

No the creation still reflects to some degree the glory of God...

Psalms 19:1 - The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.

Romans 1:20 - For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse

What does the future have in store for the creation as it now exists?

The creation as it now exists will someday be redeemed by God...

Romans 8:21 - the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The Augustinian Corruption

About 400 A.D. a theologian named St. Augustine attempted to Hellenize (rationalize with Greek philosophy) what the Scriptures taught about end time events and life after death. His views were adopted by the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. and have remained Catholic dogma to this day.

As the Gnostics, Augustine also believed that the material world was evil... So how do you think he dealt with

Scripture that says the saints will spend eternity in glorified bodies on a New Earth (Revelation 21:1-7)?

He reasoned that the material world must cease to exist when the Lord returns. Augustine solved the problem by spiritualizing what the Bible said arguing that the "new earth" of Revelation 21 is just symbolic language for heaven.

How do most professing Christians view heaven today?

Augustine's views are held by most professing Christians today, both Catholic and Protestant. That means that most of Christianity today teaches Greek philosophy rather than the Word of God regarding life after death.

Does the Bible have a lot to say about heaven?

It has a lot to say about having a relationship with God and if the Holy Spirit resides in you, you can have heaven on earth but the Bible does not have much to say about the eternal state. The Bible does give some very good clues about heaven however...

Where does God give us an idea of what we can expect heaven to be like?

- Every age that the Bible describes has some elements of foreshadowing what heaven will be like...
- Garden of Eden – paradise, innocence, walking with God; Law – knowing God and His ways; Grace – having a personal relationship with our Creator; millennial Kingdom – God's direct rule, partial redemption of nature.
- We can expect the good things of this world to also be present in heaven but much greater than our wildest expectations. Indeed...

James 1:17 - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Why doesn't the Bible have more to say about our eternal state? (After all, there is so much more time associated with the eternal state than this current age.)

For one thing, we don't need to know all the details yet...

2 Cor 5:7 - For we walk by faith, not by sight.

It is more important to focus on the work God has called us to for today. As Jesus could only perform His calling while he was in the world, we too have a limited time to perform the mission for which God saved us...

John 9:4 – "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work."

It is beyond our comprehension in these mortal bodies...

2 Cor 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.

I also heard a preacher say, if we knew what heaven was really like, we wouldn't want to spend another minute in this world.

Phil 1:21-24 - For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.

Let's first take a look at what happens to a person when they die. What happens to a person's soul when they die? Do their souls go to sleep until the resurrection?

The concept of soul sleep is unbiblical. It is true that when we die, our bodies "sleep" metaphorically, but the spirits of the dead never lose their consciousness.

How do we know that our souls never lose consciousness?

Jesus clearly taught this in His story about the rich man and Lazarus. When they died, their spirits went to Hades...

Luke 16:19-31

19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.

20 "But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,

21 "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

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.'

25 "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.

26 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house,

28 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'

29 "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'

30 "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

Where did the rich man's spirit go?

The rich man's spirit went to a compartment called "Torments."

Where did Lazarus go?

The spirit of Lazarus went to a compartment referred to as "Abraham's bosom." On the Cross, Jesus called this compartment "Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

What separated the two compartments?

The two compartments were separated by a "great chasm" which could not be crossed.

In 2 Corinthians 5:8, Paul wrote that he would prefer to be "*absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.*"

- He repeated this sentiment in his Philippian letter where he wrote "*to live is Christ, and to die is gain*" (Philippians 1:21).
- He elaborated on the meaning of this statement by adding that his desire was "*to depart and be with Christ*" (Philippians 1:23).

Does this mean that the dead in Christ receive their glorified eternal resurrected bodies when they die?

No, this occurs when Christ returns for the Church at the rapture...

1Thes 4:16-17 - For 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. Then 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.

What do you think it will be like between death and the resurrection of our bodies? Will our souls be in some kind of an ethereal existence as disembodied spirits?

I believe that at death we receive an intermediate spirit body because people are comprised of body, soul and spirit...

1Thes 5:23 - Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

How about those who are not saved, will they have bodies?

Yes, note that the rich man in torments who had eyes and a tongue, Luke 16.

Where are the Old Testament saints today?

The Bible indicates that after the death of Jesus on the Cross, He descended into Hades and declared to all the spirits there His triumph over Satan...

1 Peter 3:18-20 - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

By the way, what do you think Jesus preached to the spirits in prison?

He probably preached victory over Satan.

The Bible also indicates that after His resurrection, when He ascended into Heaven, Jesus took Paradise with Him, transferring the spirits of dead saints from Hades to Heaven...

Ephesians 4:8-9 - Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended"-- what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

Paul referred to being caught up to paradise in heaven (2 Corinthians 12:1-4) and the spirits of dead saints are thereafter pictured as being in Heaven before the throne of God (See Revelation 6:9 and 7:9).

Why couldn't the spirits of the righteous dead go directly to Heaven before the Cross?

Because their sins were not forgiven. Instead, their sins were merely covered by their faith. The forgiveness of their sins had to await the shedding of the blood of Christ...

Hebrews 9:22 - And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

So, what happens when people die today?

- If you are a child of God, your spirit is immediately ushered into the bosom of Jesus by His holy angels. Your spirit remains in Heaven, in the presence of God, until the time of the Rapture. When Jesus comes for His Church, He brings your spirit with Him, resurrects and glorifies your body, making it eternal in nature (1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4).
- if you are not a child of God, then your spirit goes to Hades at your death. This is a place of torments where your spirit is held until the resurrection of the unrighteous which takes place at the end of the millennial reign of Jesus. At that resurrection you are taken before the Great White Throne of God where you are judged by your works and then condemned to the "second death," which is the "lake of fire" or Hell (Revelation 20:11-15).

What happens when believers are resurrected?

For the answer, see:

1Thes 4:13-18

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

16 For 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.

17 Then 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.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

- In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 we are told that when Jesus returns, He will bring with Him the spirits of those who have died in Christ. Their bodies will be resurrected in a great miracle of re-creation; their spirits will be reunited with their bodies; and their bodies will then be glorified.
- Those who are alive in Christ will be translated to meet the Lord in the air. Their bodies will be glorified on the way up, without experiencing death.

What will these glorified bodies be like? Let's take a look at some passages which address this...

1 Corinthians 15:39-44

39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fish, and another of birds.

40 There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41 There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

In verses 40-41, what is the point that is being made about there being different kind of celestial bodies?

Not all of creation has the same glory. Some shine brighter than others, there is a diversity of colors, size, frequency, distance, position.

How are celestial bodies likened to the resurrection of the dead?

God has created us with one type of glory for life in the world and there will be another, more glorious body for eternal life.

How are our current bodies contrasted with our resurrected bodies in verses 42-44? What does this mean?

- sown in corruption, raised in incorruption – born with a sin nature, resurrected without any sin nature
- sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory – born in a body that will die, resurrected in a body that is everlasting
- sown in weakness, it is raised in power – born in body with very limited abilities, resurrected in a body that God has blessed with supernatural capabilities
- sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body - born in body subject to this fallen world that will grow old like a garment, resurrected in a body that is not confined to the limited context of this world

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed--

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

What is the mystery that this passage reveals?

Not all Christians will die, those living at Christ's return will be translated into their resurrected bodies directly

What is the sleep to which this verse is refers?

For those who die, their bodies lie in the grave as if asleep. At the resurrection, God will make use of this raw material of our sleeping bodies to give us an incorruptible, glorified body.

What about cases where the body has been vaporized by a nuclear bomb, or burned up through cremation or buried at sea to be eaten by crabs and scattered?

God is in control of even the smallest things and knows where to find what He needs to resurrect the dead.

Col 1:17 - And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

What can we learn about our future glorified bodies from this passage?

- We will be raised incorruptible, unable to wear out, grow old, rust, or under go any other change.
- We will become immortal, no longer subject to death living in a body that we'll keep into eternity future.

Philippians 3:20-21

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

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

What does it mean our citizenship is in heaven?

- Home is where we spend the most time. In the context of eternity, home is clearly heaven (where God is).
- Even more important, our relationship to God makes us more aligned with heaven than with those who will never be able to go to heaven.
Heb 11:13 - These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

What do we wait for? Why?

We wait for Jesus to return because when He comes, that is when He will resurrect us.

What can we learn about our future glorified bodies from Philippians 3:20-21?

That our bodies will be like the glorious body Jesus was resurrected into. Jesus is still 100% human as well as 100% God and we will some day see Him as He is...

I Jn 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.

Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection...

1 Cor 15:20-23 - But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

So what do we know about Jesus' resurrected body? Let's look at some passages which will help us begin to understand...

Luke 24:13-43

13 Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.

16 But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

17 And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

18 Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

19 And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,

20 "and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.

21 "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

22 "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us.

23 "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.

24 "And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26 "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"

27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

28 Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther.

29 But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.

30 Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

32 And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,

34 saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"

35 And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."

37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.

43 And He took it and ate in their presence.

How long of a hike was Cleopas and his friend on?

It was 7 miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus, about a two and a half hour hike.

Why do you think Jesus came to these two men?

According to verse 15, they were confused by the events that had taken place but were open to the truth.

Why didn't they recognize Jesus when He walked with them?

Per verse 16, God restrained them from recognizing Him.

Why would God restrain the men from recognizing Jesus?

Because (1) Jesus wanted them to see Him as an ordinary person first rather than jump to conclusions about His resurrected body, (2) This timing allowed Jesus to properly prepare them for the truth with a Bible lesson, (3) It helped them see the impact they as common men could have on the lives of others.

Were these men saved when Jesus caught up to them on the road?

No, in verse 19 they described Jesus as a mere prophet and in verse 21 they doubted that He was the Messiah. In verse 25, Jesus said they were slow to believe.

At what point were the two men saved?

The men were saved when they recognized the resurrected Jesus, when "*they knew Him*" in verse 31.

How did the men come to know who Jesus was?

Their eyes were opened by God.

How did Jesus prepare the men for salvation by their conversation on the road?

He pointed out some key Messianic passages of Scripture, possibly Psalm 22:1-31 or Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

What action triggered the men's recognition of Jesus?

When Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them (verse 30).

Why do you think they recognized Him at that point?

The breaking of bread was one of the symbolic elements of the Lord's Supper (see also verse 35).

What happened as soon as the men recognized Jesus?

He vanished.

Why did Jesus vanish when the men recognized Him?

He had accomplished His purpose to show Himself as a person with a body that looked like any other person in the world and that He wasn't like another person in the world, He was the resurrected Jesus.

What did His vanishing demonstrate?

That Jesus' glorified body was not confined to this world as we know it.

What did the men do when they realized the resurrected Jesus had walked and talked with them?

They recounted their conversation with Him, how He helped them to understand the Scriptures (verse 32), then abandoned their plans to go to Emmaus and went back to Jerusalem to report their experience to Jesus' disciples.

What happened as they gave their report?

Jesus materialized in the midst of them and said, "Peace to you."

How do we know that Jesus instantly appeared instead of just stealthily slipping into the room while the disciples were engrossed in conversation?

1. The disciple's reaction.
2. Other accounts which make it clear Jesus didn't just sneak into their midst...

John 20:26 - And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

How did the disciples react to seeing Jesus?

They were terrified and frightened

Why were they terrified and frightened?

They supposed they had seen a spirit... since they are not used to seeing bodies just materialize they assumed they were seeing an apparition which had no substance (they hadn't seen any Star Trek episodes).

What did Jesus do to set their minds at ease?

- Tried to reason with them (verse 38)... logic is a gift from God.

- Suggested that they touch Him to verify He was Jesus due to His crucifixion scars and to know that His body was flesh and blood.

How did the disciples respond to the revelation that Jesus' body was flesh and blood? Why?

They still could not believe their own senses. It was too marvelous to comprehend. (verse 41)

What did Jesus do next to reinforce the revelation of His body being flesh and blood?

He ate a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb.

What did Jesus eating reveal about His glorified body?

That there will be food in heaven. That we can look forward to a physical existence like we have today.

- Jesus' resurrected body is a super-set of ours in that it can do what we currently do plus has supernatural characteristics such as being able to appear and disappear at will.

Will those married on earth be married in heaven?

If your spouse is a believer, you will certainly have fellowship with them but marriage is an institution that God made for this world only...

Matthew 22:30 - "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven."

It is safe to assume that because of the very nature of heaven, the quality of the relationship between a man and a woman will be better in heaven than it was on earth, even if they are no longer husband and wife.

- Certainly the joys of heaven will far exceed the pleasures of marital intimacy.
- Scripture leads us to believe that we will enjoy such a state of wonderful intimacy with our glorified brothers and sisters in Christ that there will no longer be a need for the exclusive relationships that protect us from loneliness and despair in a fallen world.

So to summarize, how would you describe what our glorified bodies will be like after we are resurrected?

- The redeemed are promised glorified bodies that will be tangible, recognizable, and immortal.
- Further, the implication of a "glorified" body is that it will be perfected. The blind will see; the deaf will hear; the lame will walk; and the mentally impaired will have their minds healed. There will no longer be any pain or death...

Revelation 21:4 - "And 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."

Our First Day in Heaven

What happens on our first day in heaven?

Jesus takes us in our glorified, resurrected bodies to Heaven where we are judged for our works...

2 Corinthians 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.

What is the purpose of this judgment?

To determine our degrees of rewards...

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 - 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. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

I recently read a book called "Tabernacle Gifts" by Michael Zarlengo which was given out at TEACH 2001 by 2nd Baptist Church and the College of Biblical Studies. This book proposes that the ceremony conducted by the Tabernacle priests on the Day of Atonement is a picture of what our first day of Heaven will be like. The High Priest bringing the bull's blood before the mercy seat was a picture of Jesus bringing the saints with Him as gifts to the Father. Likewise, as the assistant priests bring the goats to the Tabernacle, this represents our bringing gifts to God.

What kind of gifts do we bring to God?

Things of eternal value.

How might our gifts relate to our judgment?

- Things that pass judgment are gifts to God.
- If something has no eternal value, it will not stand before God. Things that are not done with a pure heart will stand before God... they will be burned up.

For what will we be judged?

Christians will be judged for our works and obedience to God. Note that this will have no bearing on our salvation since this matter was settled at the cross.

What is the greatest commandment?

Love God with all your heart...

Mark 12:30 - 'And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

What will God judge us on regarding this commandment?

He will judge matters of the heart... our motivations. He will weigh our sincerity of heart and why we said and did what we said and did.

The book on Tabernacle Gifts suggested that there are seven categories of gifts that we bring with us to God, let's look at them... **What gifts do we bring to God that are described in the following verses?**

Eph 5:18b-20 – be filled with the Spirit speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your **heart** to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

What are we doing in our hearts?

- The gift of worship & prayer:

Col 3:23 - And whatever you do, do it **heartily**, as to the Lord and not to men,

What are we to do heartily?

- The gift of works & sharing

2 Cor 9:7 - So let each one give as he purposes in his **heart**, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

What should we purpose in our heart?

- The gift of financial giving

1 Pet 1:22 - Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure **heart**,

What should we do with a pure heart?

- The gift of love

Col 2:2 - that their **hearts** may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,

What should we do for the hearts of others?

- The gift of fellowship & encouragement

Luke 8:15 - "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good **heart**, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

What do the seeds represent here?

God's Word

What should a good and noble heart result in?

- The gift of studying and sharing God's Word

Eph 6:5-7 - Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of **heart**, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God

from the heart, with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,

What are we to do from the heart?

- The gift of obedience... obeying the authorities God has placed in our lives.

What happens next, after our judgment/gift giving is completed?

We participate in a glorious wedding feast to celebrate the union of Jesus and His Bride, the Church...

Rev 19:7-9 - "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

What will we get to do with Jesus at the marriage supper of the Lamb that He has not done since the night they took Him away to be crucified?

Drink the fruit of the vine...

Matthew 26:26-29 - And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

Activities

One of the great promises Jesus gave us about where we'll be after we are resurrected is in John 14:2-3. Lets take a look at this...

John 14:2-3 - "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

When Jesus left us after He was resurrected, what did He go to do?

Prepare a place for us. The word translated "mansion may also be translated "abode" which means a place where one dwells permanently

What else did Jesus promise us?

That He would return and receive us to Himself so that we may be where He is.

Where will Jesus be?

In heaven and he will be returning to earth to reign forever...

Dan 2:44 - "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

What will we be doing when the Lord returns to earth to set up His Kingdom?

We will be returning with Him just as He on white horses...

Rev 19:14 - And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

Who are these armies in heaven clothed in fine linen white and clean?

- A few verses earlier make it clear that it is the church who receives this fine white linen...
Rev 19:7-8 - Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.
- Also, recall Jesus promise in John 14: where Jesus is, there we will be!
- Just as in old westerns where the cavalry comes on horses at a full gallop to rescue people hiding behind wagons under siege by Indians, we will be that cavalry following behind the Commander of the heavenly host.

What will we be doing as Jesus reigns forever?

Reigning with Him...

Rev 5:9-10 - And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

What is the significance of every tribe and tongue in this passage?

This is talking about redeemed Gentiles in heaven, this is a reference to the church!

How will the Lord begin His eternal reign?

By reigning on earth for 1000 years...

Rev 20:4 - And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their

foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

We are going to have the blessing of seeing this old sin-sick world flooded with peace, righteousness and justice as the waters cover the seas.

From where will Jesus reign when He establishes His Kingdom on earth?

From Jerusalem...

Isaiah 2:2-4

2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.

3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; he will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4 He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

How do we know Isaiah 2:2-4 refers to the millennial reign of Christ and not the eternal state?

Since it uses the term "in the latter days in verse 2 and verse 4 refers to the Lord judging between the nations as an on-going kind of thing. The fact that many people will need to be rebuked shows that this could not be talking about the eternal state.

Why do we refer to the initial reign of Jesus on earth as a Millennial reign?

Because it will be for 1000 years as it says in Scripture:

Rev 20:6 - Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

What does it mean that the mountain of the LORD's house will be established on the top of the mountains?

That the governing authority of the Lord will be over all the authorities in the world... Jesus is "*King of kings and Lord of lords*" (Rev 19:16)

What are the nations and the people referred to here?

They are those who populate the earth during the millennial reign of Christ.

What will the people do during the millennial reign of Christ?

Give honor to the Lord, obey Him, turn weapons into tools that benefit mankind, and finally have peace between nations.

Will there be any unsaved people at the beginning of the Millennial reign of Christ?

No, per the sheep and goat judgment of Matthew 25...

- Verse 31 sets the time-frame of this judgment: "*when the Son of Man comes in His glory*"
- Verse 41 says what happens to the unsaved: "*depart from Me you cursed*"
- This passage may be harmonized with Revelation 19:2: "*and the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from Him who sat on the horse*"

Millennial Reign of Christ

Why is there a millennial reign of Christ? Why doesn't the Lord just usher in the eternal state when He returns?

Due to mankind's propensity to blame his environment on his condition. The devil and his demons will not even be around to tempt people away from God. It will be obvious that for those who chose to stay separated from God, they have no one to blame but themselves. The Millennial reign of Christ also literally fulfills promises made to the nation of Israel.

What is the value in looking at passages pertaining to the millennial reign of Christ in learning about what life will be like during the eternal state?

- Because the millennial reign of Christ on earth foreshadows what the eternal state will be like.
- God mostly restores nature to the perfection that existed when He first created the world.

Let's look at some classic passages that will help us see what the world will be like during the millennial reign of Christ...

Isa 11:6-9

6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

How do we know that Isaiah 11:6-9 refers to the millennial reign of Christ and not the eternal state?

- Verse 9 refers to the waters covering the sea. The new earth during the eternal state has “no more sea” (Revelation 21:1).
- Also this is in context of the last days when Israel is regathered from the “four corners of the earth” (verses 11-12).

What does Isaiah 11:6-9 say that things will be like during the millennial reign of Christ?

- Carnivorous animals will become herbivorous (vs. 6-7).
- Dangerous animals will cease to be dangerous (vs. 8-9).
- Note: Dave Regan told of his wife correcting him after a sermon where he said there would be no more chiggers during the millennial kingdom. She said Scripture doesn't say there would be no more chiggers, it says that you would lie down with them.

What are the implications of Isaiah 11:6-9?

What will nature be like?

That creation will be redeemed to the point where creation will no longer be characterized by death.

Rom 8:19-21 - For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Since Isaiah 11:6-9 says that carnivores will become herbivores, does this mean that people will all be vegetarians during the millennial reign of Christ?

Possibly, but not necessarily. God created animals for a purpose just as plants and in some cases that purpose is to serve as food. Note that pre-flood people were probably vegetarians...

Gen 9:3 - Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.

How do we know that Adam and Eve were vegetarians prior to their fall into sin?

There was no death. Prior to the fall, creation was “very good” but death became a consequence of man's fall into sin.

Why would God ordain that people should begin eating animals after the flood?

In the fallen world, the nutritional value of plants had become depleted (and is getting more-so). It had become necessary to eat meat to receive the proper nutrition.

Isa 65:17-25

17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

20 "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.

21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

22 They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

24 "It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

Isaiah 65:17-25 speaks of a new heavens and a new earth but why can't this refer to the eternal state?

Because it is in context with verse 20 which refers to people being subject to death (the curse of sin is not fully removed). Per Revelation 21:4, “*there shall be no more death*” in the eternal state.

What does it mean in verse 17 that “the former shall not be remembered or come to mind”?

The fallen condition of this world as we know it today will be forgotten.

What are the implications of this for the eternal state?

Since the new heavens and new earth of the millennial reign of Christ foreshadows the eternal state, we can expect that we too will not remember the trials and tribulations of this life. Per Revelation 21:4, “*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.*”

What does verse 19 tell us about the millennial reign?

That conditions on earth will be more like they were in the Garden of Eden than they are now.

Why will things be so much better during the millennial reign of Christ?

Because the Lord has at least partially redeemed creation (v. 17) and is personally ruling the nations.

v20 – How long will people live during the millennial reign of Christ?

At least 100 years, there will be no children dying.

V22 It says that the time of God’s people will be as that of a tree, what does this mean?

That people will live as long as a tree.

How long does a tree live?

Some will live a thousand years, during the entire time of the millennial reign of the Lord.

What does it mean in verse 20 that “the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed”?

I take it that people will be given about 100 years to receive the King of kings in their hearts as their Savior. If they do not by this time, they are never going to so they subject to death.

Does this idea reinforce the age of accountability doctrine?

Maybe for some but it is more a manifestation of God’s grace and long-suffering rather than proof of it being a specific age where people are held accountable.

What does verses 21-22 tell us about the millennial reign?

People will enjoy the fruit of their labors. This is more proof that much of the curse will be removed...

Gen 3:17-18 - Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.

What part of the consequences of the fall of man does verse 23 address?

The pain of child birth...

Gen 3:16 - To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

What implications do you think the removal of laboring in vain and the pain of child birth will have on the population?

The earth will be re-populated very fast. Note that the pain of child birth may imply more than the physical pain of giving birth.

What does verse 24 have to say about what kind of a relationship people will have with the Lord during His millennial reign?

It will be intimate and personal like we have now with Him during the Age of Grace. I am reminded of Adam’s relationship with God prior to the fall...

Gen 3:8 - And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day

How can we tell from verse 25 that this passage is referring to the millennial reign of Christ?

Besides its context, it is parallel to Isaiah 11:6-9 which we already established was referring to the partial redemption of creation during the millennial reign of Christ.

So how does all this understanding of the millennial reign of Christ help us better understand the eternal state?

Where the new earth of the millennial reign has mostly had the curse removed, we can see that:

There will be work to do during the eternal state & we will have a closer relationship with God, and we will live in a tangible physical world where there will be no sorrow.

Here's another passage which addresses the millennial reign of Christ...

Micah 4:1-7

1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it.

2 Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; he will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

3 He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

4 But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

5 For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

6 "In that day," says the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted;

7 I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation; so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever.

How do we know that Micah 4:1-7 refers to the millennial reign of Christ?

Because of the reference to "latter days" and we know that it could not be the eternal state because nations will need to be rebuked per verse 3. The nations go to Jerusalem to honor the Lord and to learn His ways. What other time could this be?

What does Micah 4:3 have to say about the relationship between nations during the millennial reign of Christ?

There will be peace, weapons will be turned into tools for improving the human condition, and nations will not even study war.

What does Micah 4:4 have to say about life during the millennial reign of Christ?

This parallels Isaiah 65:22, people will enjoy the fruit of their labor due to the curse being mostly removed. People will also own property, and the Lord will insure that justice reigns.

What does it mean in Micah 4:5 that "all people walk each in the name of his god"?

People will be free to worship what ever god they want to.

Why would this be the case if the Lord Himself is reigning physically on earth?

People still need to receive Jesus on their own for them to be saved. There will be many people born during the millennial kingdom who will reject Jesus out of unbelief. I was amazed that the Israelites could worship a golden calf while Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving the 10 commandments after they had witnessed so many powerful miracles.

Who is the lame and outcast in Micah 4:6-7?

The people of Israel. The Lord will make Israel the most important, prominent nation on earth. I expect that they will also have the highest number of saved people who are born during the millennial reign of the Lord.

Recall that the Bible says that the saints will reign with Christ...

Rev 5:9-10 - And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

Rev 20:4 - And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus

and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

What will it mean to reign with Christ during the millennial Kingdom?

I believe every person on earth who is in a position of governing authority will be a glorified Saint. Some of us will be in administrative positions, sharing in Jesus' reign as presidents, governors, mayors, corporate executives...

Luke 19:12-17 - Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' ...And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'

What did the nobleman ask his servants to do while he was away?

Do business with the resources the nobleman had given them until he returned.

What does the ten-fold increase of the first servant represent?

This increase is an expansion of the nobleman's kingdom.

How would you characterize the first servant?

The first servant was a good steward and faithful to the nobleman.

What was the reward of the first servant?

He received authority over ten cities.

Why did the first servant receive more authority?

Because of his faithfulness, he had proven that he was worthy to take on more responsibility.

So what application does this parable have in our day?

We should be diligent to make good use of our time in working to expand the Kingdom of the Lord because there will come a day when there will be an accounting. How we spend our time has eternal ramifications in that it has a great impact on what we will be doing in eternity.

Note that some saints will serve as judges...

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 - Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you

not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

How will saints be in a position to judge the world?

Saints will judge the world as part of reigning with Christ.

How will saints be in a position to judge angels?

- While man was created a little lower than the angels, through redemption, man will be lifted into a place of fellowship with God, a position above angels.
- Those fallen angels who were free to deceive the nations will be round up and thrown into prison as was Satan (Revelation 20:1-3). Since we will be with the Lord at that time, perhaps we have a role in that.

Note that most saints will serve as "shepherds," or teachers, trying to bring those who are born during the Millennium to faith in Jesus...

Isaiah 66:18-21

18 "For I know their works and their thoughts. It shall be that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory.

19 "I will set a sign among them; and those among them who escape I will send to the nations: to Tarshish and Pul and Lud, who draw the bow, and Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands afar off who have not heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles.

20 "Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the LORD out of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem," says the LORD, "as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.

21 "And I will also take some of them for priests and Levites," says the LORD.

How do we know Isaiah 66:18-21 refers to the millennial reign of Jesus?

We know this is not talking about the eternal state because there will be people who need God's glory declared to them per verse 19b. Also, the nations shall come to Jerusalem where Jesus reigns to see God's glory (v18).

Who are those who escape and what do they escape?

These are the raptured saints who escape God's wrath during the tribulation. We know it is referring to the time of the tribulation from the context (verse 15).

How does Isaiah 66:18-21 show that saints will serve as shepherds during the millennial reign of Jesus?

Those who escape (rapture) will be sent to the nations to declare God's glory among the Gentiles (v19).

What will the saints do during this time?

- The saints will declare God's glory among the Gentiles.
- The saints will also take pilgrims to Jerusalem to see the Lord.

Who will be taken as priests and Levites?

Some of the Gentiles who are brought to Jerusalem by the resurrected saints will be taken as priests and Levites. The term "your brethren" refers to Gentiles who are believers (spiritual descendants of Abraham who are saved by faith).

Jeremiah 3:14-17 is a similar passage which indicates that saints will serve as shepherds during the millennial reign of Christ...

Jer 3:14-17

14 "Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

15 "And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

16 "Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days," says the LORD, "that they will say no more, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore.

17 "At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts.

How do we know Jeremiah 3:14-17 refers to the millennial reign of Jesus?

- It refers to a time after Israel returns to the land (v14).
- Jerusalem will be called the Throne of the Lord, all the nations will recognize God's throne, no more will the nations follow the dictates of evil hearts (v17).
- This can not be a reference to the eternal state because of the reference to "evil hearts" in verse 17.

How does Isaiah 66:18-21 show that saints will serve as shepherds during the millennial reign of Jesus?

Israel will be given shepherds with the heart of God, who will feed them with knowledge and understanding (verse 15).

How can we see this giving of shepherds applying to all nations?

All nations will be gathered to the Throne of the Lord (verse 17).

Why will it be that during the millennial reign of Christ, "they will say no more, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore" (v16)?

The ark of the covenant is only a symbol of God's presence. A symbol will not be necessary with the Lord Himself being present.

The Eternal State

The eternal state is ushered in after Jesus puts down the final rebellion of man at the end of His millennial reign, when He re-creates heaven and earth, the dead are resurrected and judged at the great white throne...

Rev 21:1-22:5

1 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.
2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
3 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 "And 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."
5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."
6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.
7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.
8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."
10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,
11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.
12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:
13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.

16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.

17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

18 The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,

20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

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.

22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

23 The 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.

24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.

25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.

27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.

4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

Where will the redeemed spend eternity?

The Bible never promises that the Redeemed will spend eternity in Heaven. Instead, the Bible says that the eternal

abode of the Redeemed will be in a new Jerusalem located on a new earth (Revelation 21).

What is this new heaven and earth in Revelation 22:1?

It is the current heaven and earth renovated by fire. This must be the case since Scripture says that heaven and earth are eternal...

Psalm 78:69 - And He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He has established forever.

Psalm 148:4-6 - Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, and you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the LORD, for He commanded and they were created. He also established them forever and ever; he made a decree which shall not pass away.

2 Peter 3:10, 13 - But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up... Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Where will God be during the eternal state?

Instead of our going up to Heaven to live eternally with God, the Bible says He will come to earth to live with us (Revelation 21:3). Since Heaven is located wherever God resides, Heaven will come to earth, and in that sense only will we reside forever in Heaven.

Why will God renovate His creation instead of destroying it as some expect?

- God loves His creation, and He intends to redeem it all of it and not destroy it with some mythical "big bang." He is going to restore it to its original perfection when He created it.
- Jesus died on the Cross not only to redeem Mankind but also to redeem the creation. That's the reason the High Priest in Old Testament times sprinkled the blood not only on the mercy seat but also on the ground (Leviticus 16:15)
- God gives us a preview of the renovation of creation during the millennial kingdom:
Isa 11:6-9 - The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

- Certainly all of creation looks forward to God taking action to cleanse the impact of sin from the universe...
Romans 8:19-22 - For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

What will the new, re-created earth be like (v1)?

No more sea, it will be a completely different world.

What comes down to earth out of heaven (v2-3)?

The holy city, New Jerusalem, and the tabernacle of God. (God Himself will be with us in the New Jerusalem).

What will there not be during the eternal state (v4)?

No more death, sorrow, crying, or pain.

Why will there be no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain (v4-5)?

The former things have passed away. God will make all things new.

How Is the New Jerusalem described (v10...)?

v11 Giving off light was like a most precious stone, clear as crystal.

v12-13 Having a great and high wall with 3 gates on each of the 4 sides, with an angels at each gate, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel

Why does New Jerusalem need a wall?

It is certainly symbolic, walled cities are secure cities. This wall is representative of the security we have in Christ.

What are the purpose of the angels at the gates?

v25 Its gates shall be open all the time & the saved from all races will be free to come and go through the gates (v26). The angels will prevent any of the unsaved from entering New Jerusalem (it will be a secure gated community, v27).

Now wait a minute, how can there be anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or lie around if there is no sorrow or crying or pain in the eternal state?

This is one of the mysteries of heaven. This may just be hypothetical with the angles posted there on guard as a reminder of who may enter New Jerusalem. Or there may be some program that God has in store for another group of people in the distant future.

Why are the names of the tribes of Israel written on the gates of New Jerusalem?

As a reminder of Israel's role in bringing mankind into a relationship with God: the Scriptures & the Messiah

What will support the wall of New Jerusalem?

Twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Will Paul's name be on one of the foundations?

I expect it will be. The apostles chose Matthias to replace Judas...

Acts 1:26 - And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

But Jesus chose Paul, He told Ananias regarding Paul...

Acts 9:15 - "he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel."

Paul certainly demonstrated that He was an apostle by what he did...

2 Cor 12:12 - Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Why are the names of the apostles written on the foundations of New Jerusalem's wall?

The security we have in Christ is built on the foundation He laid with the 12 apostles.

How large will New Jerusalem be (v16)?

1500 miles wide, by 1500 miles long by 1500 miles high.

What do we know about the wall around New Jerusalem?

It will be over 200 feet high (v17), made of jasper (v18), and the wall's 12 foundations will be adorned with a different precious stone for each (v19-20).

What was the city itself made out of ?

Pure gold like clear glass (v18) including the street (v21). This will be a bright, shiny place.

What are the gates made out of?

A huge pearl for each gate (v21).

Why will there be no temple in the New Jerusalem?

God the Father and God the Son will be there (v22). There will no longer be a need for atonement.

Where will the Holy Spirit be?

In us...

John 14:16 - And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- Also, see Rev 22:1, He is represented by the River of Life.

From where will New Jerusalem get its light (v23)?

Not from where, from Whom... Jesus Himself will be the New Jerusalem Light & Power company.

What will the throne of God look like?

We'll see God the Father and God the Son together with God the Holy Spirit flowing out from the throne as a pure river of water of life.

What will main street in New Jerusalem look like?

It will have the river from God's throne flowing down the middle of it and the tree of life growing on both sides of the river.

What kind of trees are the tree of life?

It bears a new crop of fruit each month, 12 a year. It's leaves will be for the healing of the nations (races).

What is the significance of there being 12 different crops of fruit?

It is symbolic of God's provision to enable mankind to have a relationship with Him. The number 12 reminds us of both the 12 tribes of Israel who gave us the Scriptures and the Messiah, as well as the 12 apostles who helped us to understand God's new covenant of grace.

What does the fruit bearing tell us about the eternal state?

We will be aware of the passage of time in heaven. Just as we will have material bodies and there will be physical space that is similar to our current world, likewise, time will be part of our experience in the eternal state.

God Himself is outside the confines of time, why would He provide a measure of the passage of time for us in the eternal state?

We too will be outside the confines of time but awareness of the passage of time is part of our being better able to appreciate what God has done for us for eternity.

Why do we need leaves for the healing of the nations?

The nations are races, The leaves are one more symbolic aspect of God's provision for healing what ails us. In context, the removal of the curse...

What does it mean in Revelation 22:3 that there will be no more curse?

There would be no sin and thus no consequences for sin. The fallen world will be no more during the eternal state.

What does Revelation 22:3 say that we will be doing during the eternal state?

- I'm sure it will be a meaningful and fulfilling service. I would imagine that, for one thing, our gifts and talents will be magnified and that we will use them to glorify

the Lord. Thus, a singer will be able to sing with a perfection never before achieved, and a painter will be able to paint with a glory never imagined.

- I also expect we will be spending a great deal of time getting to know God.

Will we ever exhaust what my be learned about God?

No, we will spend eternity getting to know Him and there will always be something new to know...

Ps 145:3 - Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.

What does Psalm 145:3 mean when it says God's greatness is unsearchable?

That we will never reach the point where there is nothing more we can learn about Him...

Rom 11:33 - Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

What is the great blessing in Revelation 22:4?

We will see God face-to-face

What does it mean that God's name will be on our foreheads?

There will be no question that we are His. Our every thought will be about Him.

What does Revelation 22:5 say that we will be doing during the eternal state?

The inhabitants of New Jerusalem will be reigning with the Lord forever and ever.

What will we be reigning over?

God's creation. This was the plan in the perfect world before the fall of man and I expect this is what God intends for us during the eternal state...

Genesis 2:15 - Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.