

Where Do We Go From Here?

It is likely that nearly everyone at some point in their lives wonders what happens at the moment of death. Satan has been responsible for the concocting of many false belief systems that are believed in by a great majority of the world population. Tragically none leads to salvation but only to eternal suffering. True Christianity on the other hand is a numerically shrinking group as time closes in on the last days of this earth as we know it. It appears that only Bible believing redeemed Christians know this and take it seriously. The rest of the world's people continue going on as they always have and as Jesus said they would, as written in Luke 17:26. They reject the Scripture and therefore will not know when the end has come until it is too late. That's enough of this. To continue in this vane, would turn this short essay into a book.

The purpose of this paper is to simply explain from Scripture, what happens when a redeemed Christian soul/spirit leaves his or her body. Have you thought of the traumatic stress it might be where the soul / spirit suddenly find itself no longer in the body, the only home it has ever had? The soul/spirit knows that it is destined for heaven, but where is heaven, and how can it get there? Not to fear! Jesus makes it clear that each redeemed soul/spirit will be greeted by angels who will be waiting at the moment of physical death to transport the soul/spirit swiftly to the heavenly place where God and His heavenly beings all live as spirits. We learn this from Jesus as He showed us Sheol, or Hell. In Luke 16:19-31. Scripture speaks of angles escorting Lazarus. How many we are not told. "Angels" indicates more than one. It is likely to be two. It was two simply because, more than two would seem unnecessary, unless the assignment is too complicated, which seems quite unlikely. Because, in this case, Jesus had not yet suffered and died for our sins, all saved souls waited in Sheol for His removal of their sins which in the past, had only been covered. Since His resurrection, all saved souls / spirits are delivered to heaven. Is it assuming too much when that because God assigned, angels to accompany the Old Testament saints to Sheol, that He now does the same for New Testament saints that go directly to heaven? Given that Jesus Himself would soon

be in heaven along with the Old Testament saints, to whom would He have been seeking to inform? It was recorded for us! It was to give us a glimpse of the actual spirit world and a tiny bit of how it works. His mentioning of the angels accompanying saved souls/spirits, applied to all of those who would be His from whatever dispensation they would come. Now I believe that we can be comforted by the fact that our removal from our bodies and into heaven will not be traumatic, but instead a glorious experience.

Then what happens? Those who die in these late end times will not be long in heaven in their bodiless state. The Rapture that will come anytime. It will come in but a very few years. It will bring about the restoration of everyone's body, which will be the same in appearance as it was, except it will then be eternal and incorruptible. Then what? Again, because we are in the end of the end times, we won't spend much time in heaven even in that state. The Rapture will cause an additional amount of turmoil here on earth. However, because by that time, the number of redeemed will be proportionally quite small, it will pale in comparison to the other Satan orchestrated troubles, such as wars, economic and moral collapse, plagues, and starvation. These are already visible on the horizon. While there are great numbers of people who call themselves Christians, they are not part of the small remnant of the redeemed who will be raptured.

Only a comparatively short time will elapse before the man who will be Antichrist will quickly restore a semblance of order on the world. He will be revered for his great multiplicity of remarkable skills, just as was Hitler for how he restored Germany from a very similar catastrophe collapse. This will not take long. Because of his accomplishments, he will attain dictatorial power and be revered (as was Hitler) over nearly all of the world. It will be so great even the harassed Jews will believe. Then he will be able to ratify a 7 year covenant of peace to the Jews. This covenant will then trigger the seventieth week of Daniel. He will honor it for 3.5 years after which he will desecrate the Jewish Temple and declare himself God. This will trigger the 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation after which Jesus will return to end it, and to send Satan into the bottomless pit.

After Jesus has disposed of the scoundrels, He will replenish the earth and re-establish David's throne on which He will rule for a thousand years. Scripture tells us that saved souls will be there serving as kings and priests throughout the millennium (Revelation 1:16) Over whom will they be kings, and for whom will they be priests? We are told that by the end of the Great Tribulation, half of the world's population will have died. If we assume it will be then as it is now, there will have been seven billion people of which half, or three and a half billion, will survive the Tribulation. Some who survived will have already been redeemed, but the majority will not.

With such a large remaining world-wide population, initially consisting mostly of the unsaved, there will be need for many leaders, or "kings" under Jesus to set up government structures all over the world in order to maintain order and a stable society. Who better for these positions than the redeemed soul/spirits again functioning in their eternal bodies? Also who better qualified to become the priests and pastors preaching and teaching the Gospel as the way to salvation? Never fear, if you participate in the Rapture, there is a major and challenging job waiting for you for the whole of that one thousand years. Obviously this is not the end of the story. So what is next?

In Revelation 21:1 John saw, "*a new heaven and new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away...*" Peter was given the same insight as written in 2 Peter 3:10-13. Therefore, as soon as the Great White Throne judgment takes place at the end of the millennium, God will replace the earth. He will completely obliterate this citadel of tragic memories and sufferings, and where evil had prevailed almost from the day of its creation. All who remain alive here on earth at the end of the millennium give thanks to our Lord's kindness and mercy which He will provide them through the kings and priests with whom they will have been blessed. The redeemed people will be raptured directly to the new earth while those who are alive at that moment will be delivered there, thus leaving this earth void of human life as it had been at the end of the first day of creation. What's next?

Our next stop after leaving this earth will be our last stop. It will be the eternal home of all who have ever been redeemed as well as the eternal home of Jesus, the Triune Godhead and all of the heavenly beings, that is the angels as well as the Cherubim and Seraphim. All that was evil will have been cast into the Lake of Fire. Therefore absolutely no evil will ever again exist anywhere in the universe, including on this new heaven and earth. There God will bring forth a New Jerusalem. It will be a cube of 1700 miles wide, long and high. It will have twelve gates that will never be closed. The city will be perpetually lighted by the presence of Christ Jesus. Because of this, we are told that the city will need no other light such as the sun or the moon. However, while the city will have no need of this light, there is no reason given to believe that there won't be a need for these illuminators on all the other parts of the earth. So where will we be, and what will be our assignments? There are no direct answers given in Scripture. However, there is enough information given for us to draw some logical conclusions. Some conclusions we may find satisfactory are as follows:

1. The New Jerusalem will be the permanent earthly home of the Triune Godhead, Jesus and all of the heavenly hosts.
2. Whether any of humanity will live there is unlikely given the always open gates which suggest 24-7 accessibility but not prolong occupancy.
3. Therefore, the entire mass of redeemed humanity will live throughout the other parts of the new earth. These will not be scattered randomly. There will be a social structure and governance by "kings" over all of the people. There will be a need for a universal cadre of priests who will officiate over worship of the Lord. That worship will be a major part of everyone's life.
4. The city limits within the walls will encompass over two million square miles. It will be that big in order to accommodate the billions who will periodically come there to worship and honor the Lord. With the gates never closed, this may be a near continuous procession of people coming and going from all over the world.
5. Will our roles as kings and priests continue on the new earth, or will we simply join all of the rest? It seems that there will continue to be such a need so that perhaps we will continue in those vocations throughout eternity.

Is it all truth? Is it the way it will be for us when we move on? Who but God knows? The fundamentals as described are scripturally based. The “fillins” that are provided are what we can reasonably infer, based on what is implied in most instances. I pray that this brief study will be a blessing for those who have not read or not understood what the last verses of Revelation tell us. I also pray that you will be like the Berean’s who read all that they received, and then checked the Scripture to see if it was true.