

Heaven

What do we know about it from

the Bible?

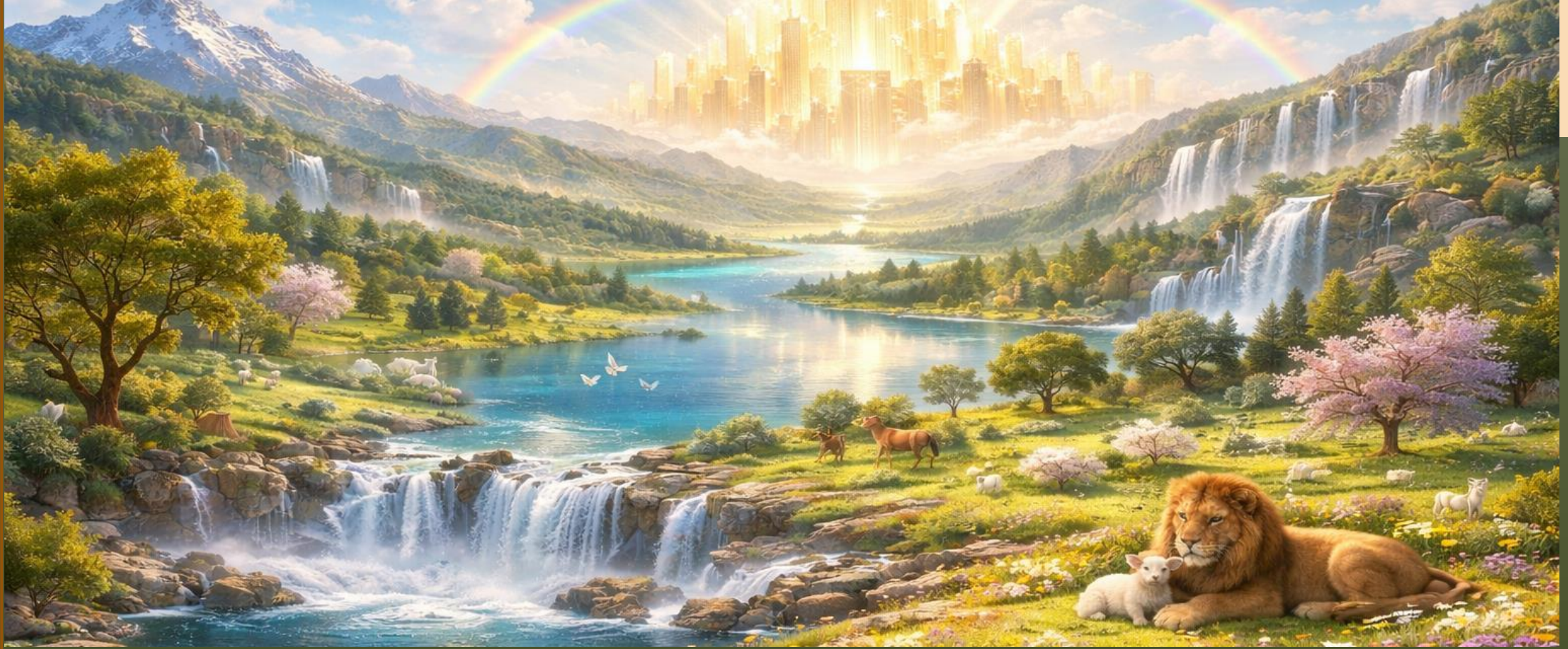
What will Heaven be like for us?

Focused on the evangelical pre-tribulation viewpoint

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August 9, 2026

Sayre Woods Bible Church



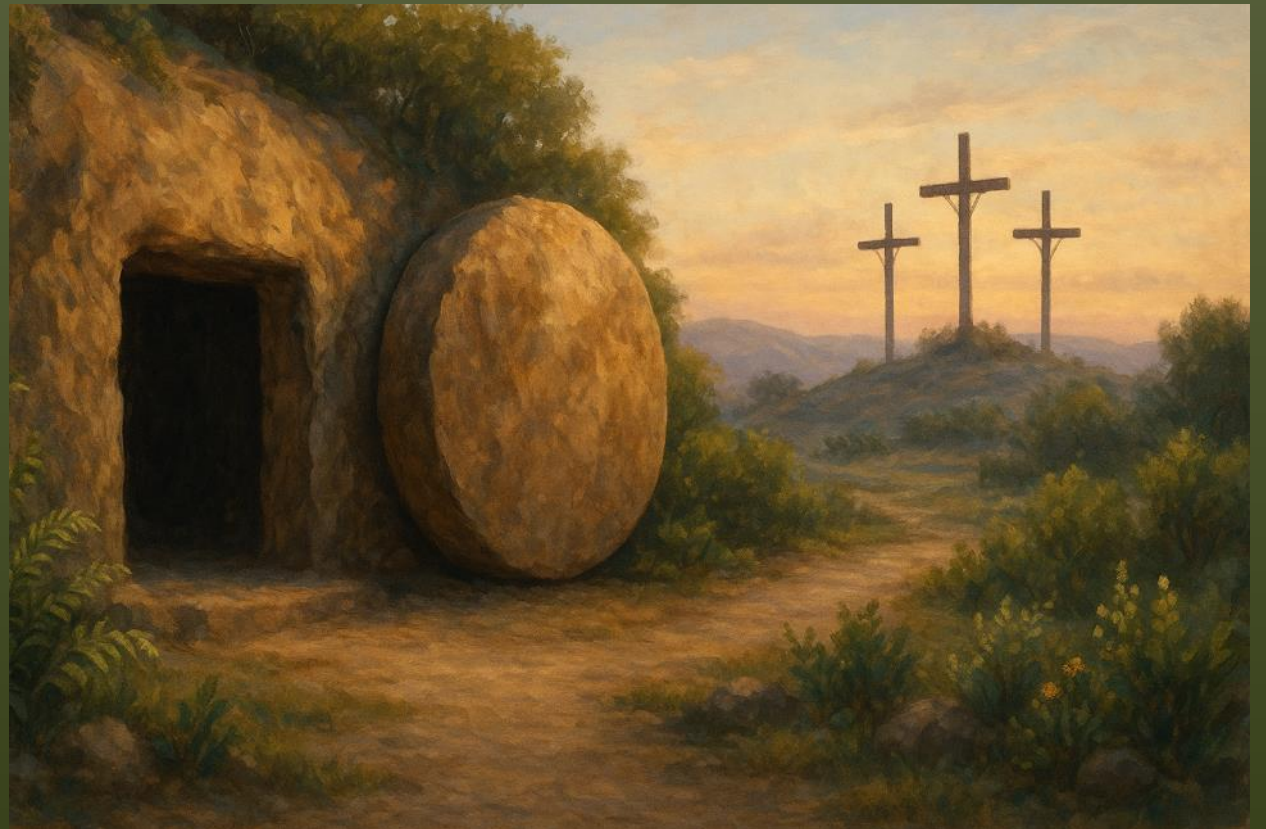
The final home of believers – the new (restored) Earth

The importance of life after death

This life is just a blink of an eye compared to the infinite timeline of eternity

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

- The Apostle Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:13-14



We have an eternal soul!

“The dust returns to the earth... and the spirit returns to God.” (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

We are: Body + Soul/Spirit

The soul is our personal inner life, including our mind, emotions, even our seeing, hearing and speaking!

Souls do not pre-exist independently but are given by God at conception

The soul denied!

Denied by secularists/materialists/evolutionists

The mind is the brain

Consciousness and free will are just illusions

But science/logic shows the mind/soul is more than just the brain:

Consciousness (the “hard problem”)

Reasoning, logic, mathematics are abstract non-physical concepts

Love, emotions, morality are not properties of matter

Three “Heavens” (realms) of creation

The First Heaven: sky, atmosphere

“the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops” (James 5:18b)

The Second Heaven: outer space, the cosmos

“The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psalm 19:1)

The Third Heaven: God’s dwelling place

“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven... was caught up to paradise” (2 Corinthians 12:2)

This is an INTERMEDIATE STATE, NOT THE FINAL STATE

It is where believer’s today go after death

DEFINITIONS: TODAY (Temporary)

Paradise Abraham's Bosom	Where the saved dead existed prior to Christ's resurrection
Intermediate State Present Heaven	Where the saved dead exist today (soul only, disembodied)
Hades (Greek) Sheol (Hebrew)	Where the unsaved dead exist today (soul only) (Prior to Christ Paradise was a section of Hades / Sheol)
Abyss Bottomless pit Tartarus	A place of evil spirits. A special compartment of the underworld where the fallen angels who produced the Nephilim have been chained awaiting final judgment.
Gehenna (Jewish view)	A place of (temporary 12 months) punishment after death

FUTURE FINAL STATE (Permanent)

New Heaven and New Earth	Final destination of the saved, good angels, the Trinity. The three heavens become essentially merged.
Hell Lake of fire Outer Darkness	Final destination for the unsaved dead and evil spirits



Premillennial view – held by Evangelicals

Eclipsed by Amillennialism when the Roman Empire became Christianized

Later re-introduced by John Nelson Darby (1830s, England)

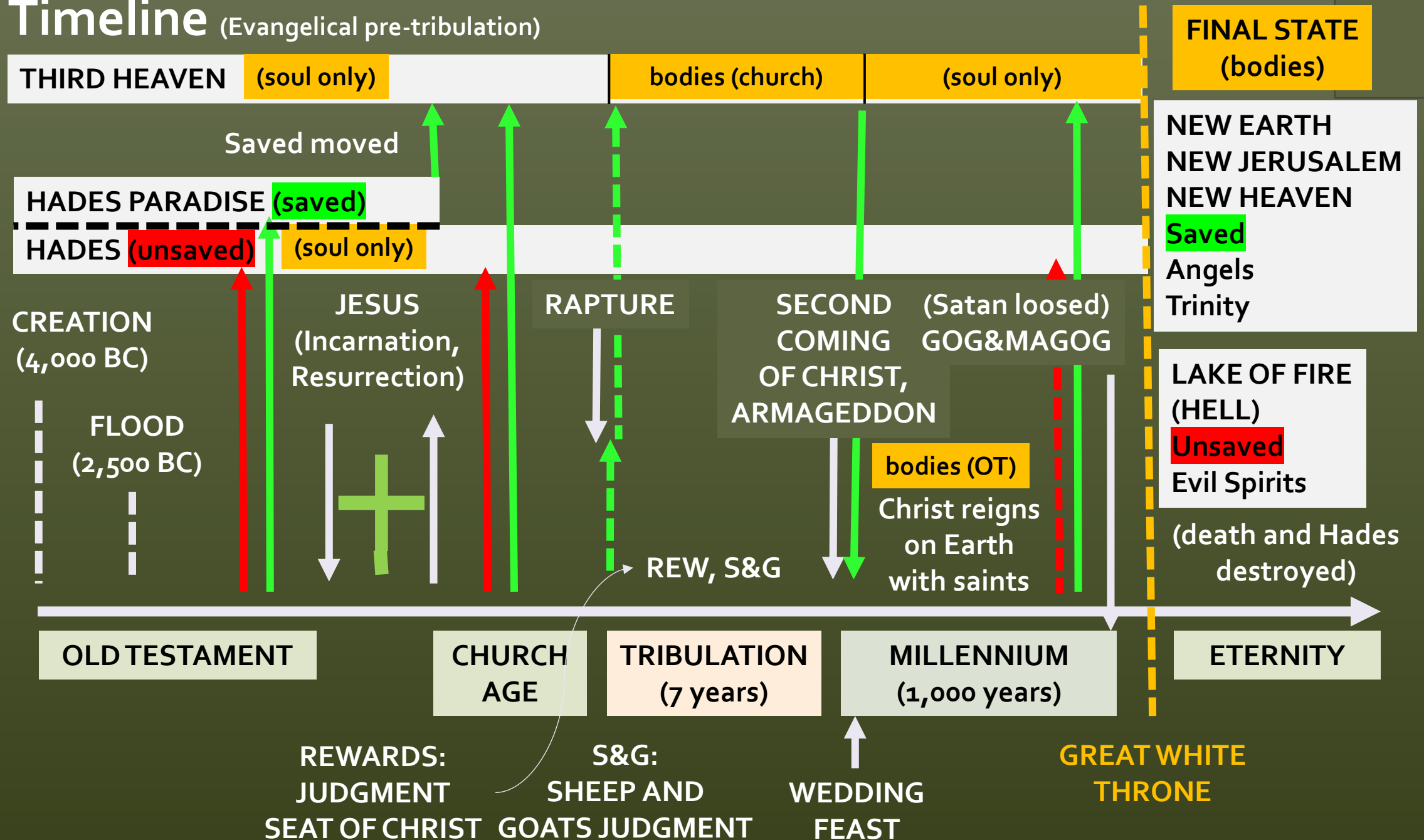
Spread by Schofield Reference Bible, Bible Institutes (Moody, Dallas), Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye (*Left Behind*)

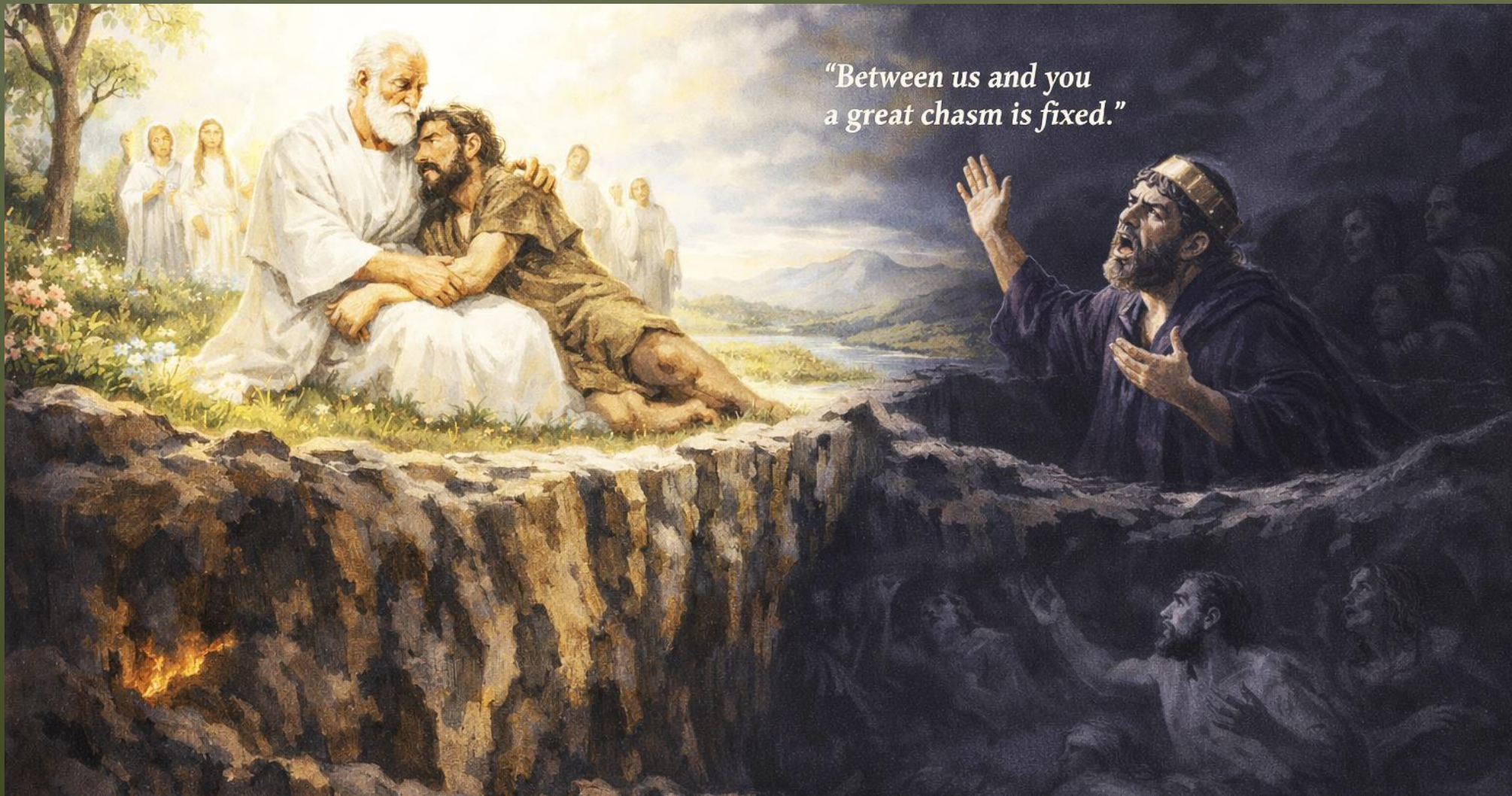
The Amillennial Timeline



Held by: Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, most Reformed / Presbyterian, many Lutherans, (Luther, Calvin)

Timeline (Evangelical pre-tribulation)





Paradise and Hades

(Parable of the rich man and Lazarus showing Paradise as the comfort side of Hades)



Rapture

(Believers who died since the resurrection of Christ, living believers)

KEY VERSE

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”

- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17



Tribulation

(7 years of worldwide distress, the antichrist, the “mark of the beast”)

KEY VERSE

“For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.”

- Matthew 24:21



The Second Coming of Christ

(Which ends the battle of Armageddon and the Tribulation)

Second Coming of Christ

KEY VERSES

“Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.” (Revelation 16:16)

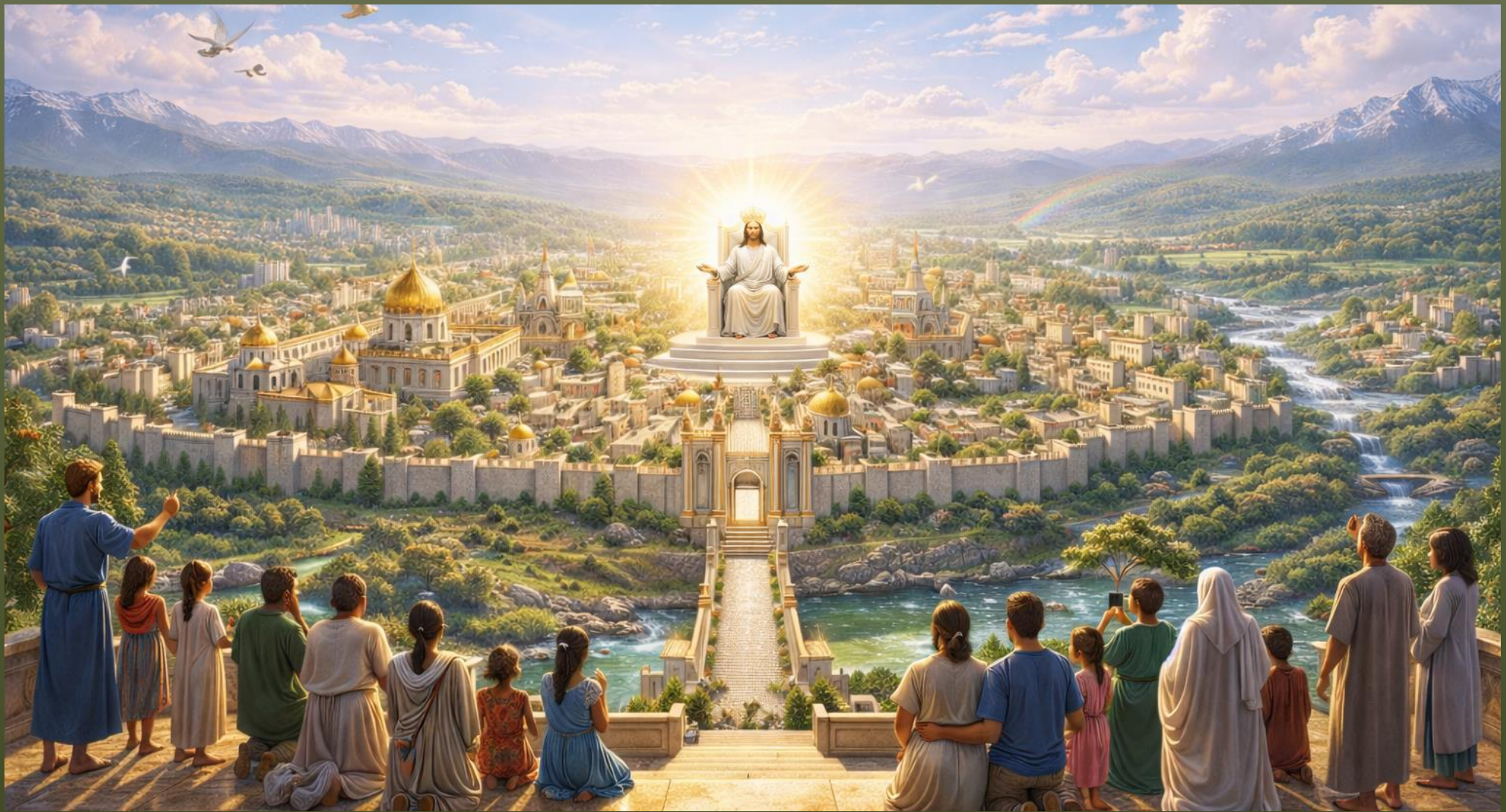
“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war.”
(Revelation 19:11)

Christ’s authority is publicly and universally displayed

The church and angels accompany Christ

Armageddon is interrupted by the Second Coming. Jesus does not arrive after a long war – He arrives and ends it immediately!

Old Testament and Tribulation saints will receive their glorified bodies at this time (in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom)



Millennium

(1,000-year period of great peace on the earth)

What life is like during the Millenium?

What is restored:

- Peace among nations (Isaiah 2:2–4)
- Animals living peacefully (Isaiah 11:6–9)
- Long life spans (Isaiah 65:20–23)
- Agriculture flourishes (Isaiah 35)
- Jerusalem exalted (Zechariah 14)
- Justice from Christ's rule

What is *not* fully restored yet:

- Death still exists (Isaiah 65:20)
- Sin still exists (Revelation 20:7–9 rebellion after 1,000 years)
- The curse is reduced but not removed
- Satan will be released briefly

So the Earth is healed, stabilized, and greatly improved — but not yet perfected



Great White Throne judgment

(The end of history on the current earth – for unbelievers only)

KEY VERSE

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

- Revelation 20:11-15



New (restored) Earth
(Our home for eternity!)

KEY VERSE

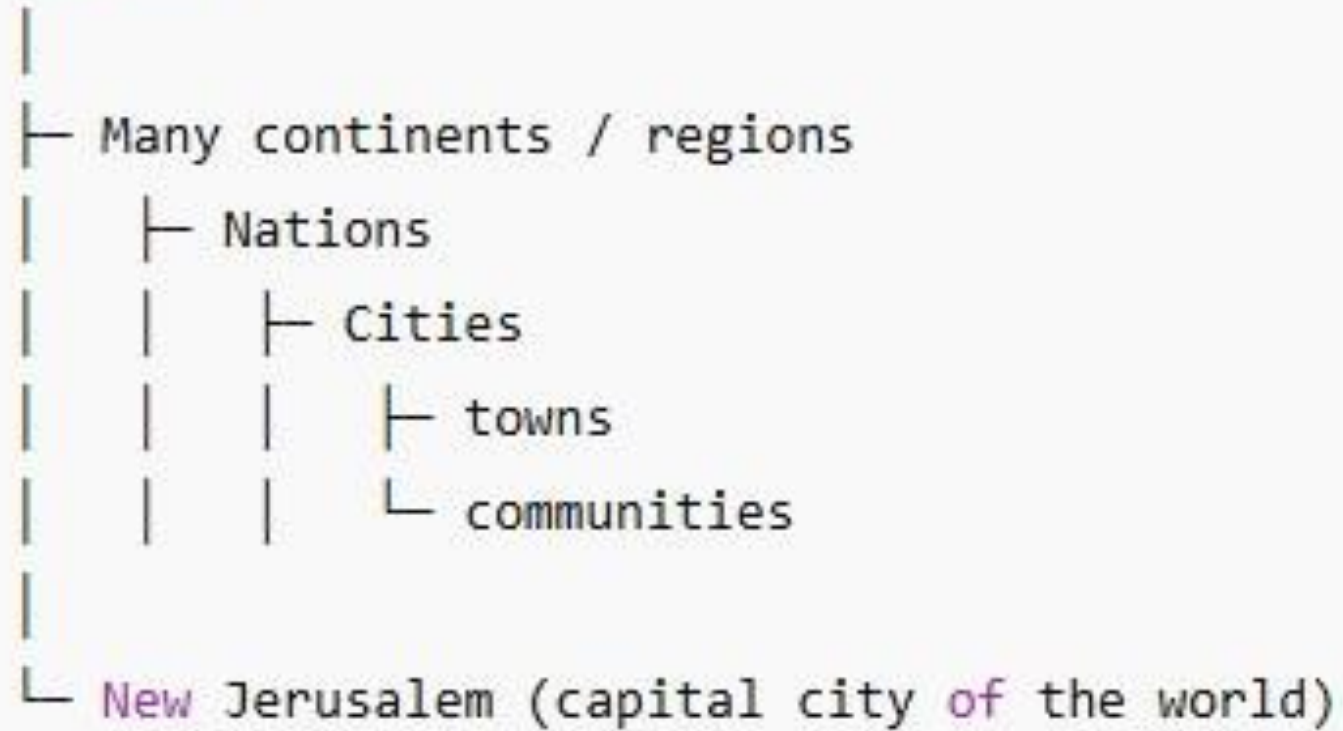
Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!”

- Revelation 21:1-5

New Earth organization

New Earth





New Jerusalem

(Cube-shaped 1,380 miles in length, width and height; Earth's diameter is 8,000 miles)

KEY VERSE (excerpts)

He showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp

- Revelation 21:10, 22-23

Who will be saved to live on the New Earth?

Believers in Jesus

Admit they are a sinner and repent (Romans 5:8)
Believe that Jesus died for their sins (John 1:12)
Confess that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:9)

Infants and children

Prior to their age of accountability (~age 7-13)

Miscarried and aborted babies

Souls are created at conception

The mentally disabled

God judges people according to their understanding

The good angels

Remain as immortal and fellow servants of God
(we outrank angels in authority)

The righteous who lived before Jesus came to Earth

By God's grace through faith. The cross worked backward in time. "Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6)

Questions about life on the New Earth - 1

Will we have bodies?	Yes	We will NOT be spirits floating in clouds! "Touch me [resurrected Jesus] and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." (Luke 24:39)
Will we have wings? Be able to fly? Travel quickly from place to place?	Wings - No Fly - Probably Travel - Yes	Hints of advanced mobility. John 20:19 (Jesus appeared in locked room), Luke 24:31 (disappeared from sight). Jesus ascended. Maybe even explore the universe.
Will we recognize each other?	Yes	Jesus was recognized after resurrection. The rich man recognized Lazarus.
Is there marriage?	No	"At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30)
Will we remember our former life?	Yes	Memories are not erased but their sting is gone (Isaiah 65:17). We will be overwhelmed by the glory of our new life. Memories fade.

Questions about life on the New Earth - 2

Will there be animals?	Yes	"The wolf will dwell with the lamb... the lion will eat straw like the ox." (Isaiah 11:6–9)
What about my pets?	Maybe?	Animals do not have eternal souls, but some hold out hope for beloved pets. Acts 3:21 "[God will] restore everything"
Will there be time?	Yes	It will be like an "eternal present". Music requires time. Events still are sequenced. No need for sleep.
Can we hurt ourselves?	No	Our new bodies will not allow it. We are living eternally.
Will there still be nations?	Yes	God loves diversity. Purifies our human culture. But we will be able to understand each other.
Will we eat and drink?	Yes	"They gave him [resurrected Jesus] a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence" (Luke 24:42-43)
Will there be humor?	Yes	Humor is an "image of God" trait (e.g. Job 41:5)
Can we sin?	No	We still have free will, but no desire to sin. Like a cured drug addict.

What will we do on the New Earth?

Experience the Trinity directly	Jesus face to face (Revelation 22:3-4), but the Father and the Holy Spirit do not have bodies.
Worship God	But not endless worship services
Sing praises to God	"They sang a new song" (Revelation 5:9)
Enjoy fellowship	Yes, getting to know perhaps billions of people
Have meals	Yes, for enjoyment/fellowship not sustenance
Travel	Travel will be faster/effortless. Physics altered.
Explore the universe	Probably. It is not just "decoration".
Learn new things	We will not become omniscient. "Now I know in part; then I shall know more fully." (1 Corinthians 13:12)



New Heaven

(A restored not replaced universe)

New Heaven aspects

The entire universe is renewed not replaced

“the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay”

(Romans 8:21)

- No cosmic disasters (asteroids, meteors, supernova, etc.)
- No aging stars burning out
- Black holes no longer exist or will be transformed to be non-destructive

What about the sun and the moon? Still exist (part of the “very good” creation) but not needed for light (at least in the New Jerusalem)

“There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light.” (Romans 22:5)



Hell

(Showing a view of eternal separation from God, with misery)



Lake of fire

(Metaphorical biblical imagery where fire = divine judgment)

KEY VERSES

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matthew 25:41)

“And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur.” (Revelation 20:10)

“death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.”
(Revelation 20:14-15)

Lake of Fire aspects

Separation from God, eternal punishment and torment for:

The Devil

The Beast

The False Prophet

Bad angels, including those previously chained in the Abyss

Those whose names are not in the Book of Life

Views of the final state of unbelievers

Eternal Torment (Traditional view):

The lost are punished forever (Matthew 25:46)

Annihilationism (increasingly popular view):

The lost are punished, then permanently destroyed

Immortality is a gift only for the saved

“Eternal punishment” = permanent death, not endless suffering

SUMMARY: What will happen to me when I die

- 1) An angel will escort me to (the Third) Heaven where I will be received by Jesus. I am a spirit, but still experience consciousness, thinking/mind, seeing, hearing, speaking as these are capabilities of the soul not the body.
- 2) At the rapture, before the Tribulation, I will be given a resurrected/glorified body
- 3) I will remain in Heaven, with a body, until the end of the Tribulation
- 4) While in Heaven I will take part in the Judgment Seat of Christ and be given rewards based on my service to the Lord during my time on earth
- 5) I will return to earth along with Jesus at the Second Coming
- 6) I will live on earth during the 1,000 year Millennium with a position of some authority based on my rewards. I will experience the Wedding Feast.
- 7) I will not be judged at the Great White Throne judgment at the end of history
- 8) The earth and universe will be renewed and restored as the New Earth (with a New Jerusalem) and the New Heavens
- 9) I will live on the New Earth forever, in the New Jerusalem if I choose that

Final thoughts

“What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” — the things God has prepared for those who love him

- 1 Corinthians 2:9

Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation

- 2 Corinthians 6:2b

There's no guarantee of what tomorrow holds, making today the crucial moment to respond to God's call!

How to become a Christian

- **A = Admit** (I am a sinner)
 - God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)
- **B = Believe** (that Jesus died for your sins – He is the Savior)
 - To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)
- **C = Confess** (that Jesus is Lord)
 - If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

For an expanded version of this study go to:

NJBibleScience.org

Type “heaven” in the search box

You can also separately download the Timeline chart and/or the “What will happen to me when I die” slide.

The screenshot shows the homepage of NJBibleScience.org. The header features the logo "NJBibleScience.org" with the tagline "Connecting the Bible and Science". A navigation bar includes links for Home, Who We Are, Meetings, FAQ, and Resources. A search bar is located on the right side of the navigation bar, containing the text "heaven" and a red "SEARCH" button. Below the navigation bar, there is a large section titled "Monarch Butterfly Life Cycle" with an illustration of a monarch butterfly. To the right of this section, there is a sidebar with a "Created" section and a "Learn More" button. The search results for "heaven" are displayed on the right side of the page, showing a link to "Heaven - what do we know about it? (PDF)" and a brief description of the content.

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Welcome to NJBibleScience.org!

Our goal is to connect the Bible with science through education.

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Monarch Butterfly Life Cycle

Created
The Monarch defies an evolution

Learn More

Heaven - what do we know about it? (PDF)
An overview of the biblical history timeline through the end times, including what **Heaven** will be like for us (focused on the evangelical pre-trib viewpoint). There is a lot of...

REFERENCES

