

LIFE AFTER DEATH



As near as I have been able to tell, the common Christian doctrine implies that when we die, we are then consigned to our final destination, **heaven or hell**. This concept, I submit is not supported in the scriptures. Yes, there are verses that imply such, but a careful study will show that the final judgement will occur after the resurrection. Passages we have previously quoted do not support this concept such

To repeat the passages, mention above showing that **paradise is not heaven** is made clear as on the morning of the resurrection when Jesus met Mary Magdalene near his tomb:

*Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for **I am not yet ascended to my Father**: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. (John 20:17)*

Where was Jesus between his death and resurrection?

*18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, **being put to death in the flesh, but quickened [taken] by the Spirit**:*

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; (1 Peter 3:18 - 19)

Resurrection and Final Judgment

We have already covered the resurrection of Christ which opened the door for all to be also raised from the dead and overcome physical death. As near as I can tell, most Christian professors believe in and teach the resurrection as it is very clearly taught in the Bible. What seems to be unclear are their teachings relating to the state of the spirits of the departed before the resurrection and judgment. My question to them is, **“If we go to either heaven or hell at the time we die and that is our final destiny, how do they explain the resurrection and judgment which follows?”**

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

*13 **And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.** (Revelation 20:4 - 6; 12 - 13)*

I will add a couple of passages here from The Book of Mormon that really helps clarify this doctrine:

11 Now, concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection—Behold, it has been made known unto me by an angel, that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life.

12 And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow.

13 And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of the wicked, yea, who are evil—for behold, they have no part nor portion of the Spirit of the Lord; for behold, they chose evil works rather than good; therefore the spirit of the devil did enter into them, and take possession of their house—and these shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and this because of their own iniquity, being led captive by the will of the devil.

14 Now this is the state of the souls of the wicked, yea, in darkness, and a state of awful, fearful looking for the fiery indignation of the wrath of God upon them; thus they remain in this state, as well as the righteous in paradise, until the time of their resurrection. (Book of Mormon | Alma 40:11 - 14)

I guess I will add one more Book of Mormon passage that deals with the transition between the spirit world and the resurrection:

10 O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster; yea, that monster, death and hell, which I call the death of the body, and also the death of the spirit.

11 And because of the way of deliverance of our God, the Holy One of Israel, this death, of which I have spoken, which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave.

12 And this death of which I have spoken, which is the spiritual death, shall deliver up its dead; which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel.

13 O how great the plan of our God! For on the other hand, the paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit

and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge like unto us in the flesh, save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect.

14 Wherefore, we shall have a perfect knowledge of all our guilt, and our uncleanness, and our nakedness; and the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment, and their righteousness, being clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness.

15 And it shall come to pass that when all men shall have passed from this first death unto life, insomuch as they have become immortal, they must appear before the judgment-seat of the Holy One of Israel; and then cometh the judgment, and then must they be judged according to the holy judgment of God.

16 And assuredly, as the Lord liveth, for the Lord God hath spoken it, and it is his eternal word, which cannot pass away, that they who are righteous shall be righteous still, and they who are filthy shall be filthy still; wherefore, they who are filthy are the devil and his angels; and they shall go away into everlasting fire, prepared for them; and their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever and has no end.

17 O the greatness and the justice of our God! For he executeth all his words, and they have gone forth out of his mouth, and his law must be fulfilled.

18 But, behold, the righteous, the saints of the Holy One of Israel, they who have believed in the Holy One of Israel, they who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it, they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever. (Book of Mormon | 2 Nephi 9:10 - 18)

Then, here is where the understanding of our eternal futures separate from that of the mainstream Christian professors. Paul, in writing about the resurrection refers to three different degrees of glory:

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

41 There is **one glory of the sun**, and another **glory of the moon**, and another **glory of the stars**: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; 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. (1 Corinthians 15:40 - 44)

Degrees of Glory

“...heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also **glorified together**.”
Romans 8:17

“There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.”

“There is one glory of the **sun**, and another glory of the **moon**, and another glory of the **stars**: for one star differeth from another star in glory.” 1 Corinthians 15:40-41

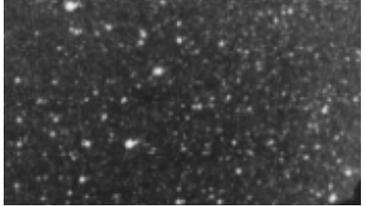
Celestial



Terrestrial



Telestial



To my knowledge, no mainstream Christian professor teaches that the final state of the resurrected souls will be in one of these “degrees of glory”.

Modern revelation names the glory compared to the stars in glory as the **telestial glory** in which the wicked will dwell having been resurrected with telestial bodies. The restored gospel clarifies that the **terrestrial glory**, relatively compared to the moon, is reserved for the good and honorable of the earth who did not accept and follow the fullness of the true gospel of Jesus Christ and the **celestial glory** compared to the sun is the dwelling place of Christ and Heavenly Father. The scriptures refer to this eternal destination as Heaven or The Kingdom of God, which they have promised to those who have enough **faith to repent, be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands** by someone with the true priesthood and **endure to the end** in righteousness as outlined in the part on the Atonement of Jesus Christ. This is the Kingdom of God and Jesus makes it clear that even not all who use his name will inherit that Kingdom:

4 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life (eternal life with God and Christ), and few there be that find it.

21 *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 7:14 ; 21)*

5 *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)*

The point of all this is that after the time in the spirit world, where all will suffer for the sins for which they have not truly repented, every son and daughter of our Heavenly Father, except those who have become disciples of Satan, will face an eternity in some degree of glory as **provided through the atonement of Jesus Christ**. Isn't this more in keeping with a plan of salvation of a loving Father? Is it reasonable to believe that every last human would qualify for either heaven or hell? It should be noted, however that only those who make the effort to learn and learn to live by the truth enjoy the full effects of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and will become heirs of God and dwell in his Kingdom in Celestial Glory:

16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ [...whom he hath appointed heir of all things... (Hebrews 1:2)]; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

(Romans 8:16 - 17)

In summary:

Hell - A state of darkness and suffering for the wicked in the world of spirits prior to the resurrection and final judgement but also the final destination for Satan and his followers who were cast out of heaven and have fought against the "blood of the Lamb" (see the 12th chapter of Revelation).

Paradise - A state of light, peace and rest for the righteous leading up to the resurrection and final judgement.

Prison - A state of ignorance of the true gospel in the spirit world which can be remedied as the gospel is taught there. This, in reality, includes most who have and do live upon this earth.

Heaven - The kingdom where God and Christ dwell and in which those who seek to learn and live by the truth may dwell after the resurrection and final judgement.

Celestial Kingdom - The eternal destination, Paul compares to the Sun in glory, of those who have sought, accepted and followed the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

Terrestrial Kingdom - The eternal abode, compared to the moon, of those who are good but failed to seek and follow the fullness of the truth.

Telestial Kingdom - A glory compared to the stars, even for the wicked children of our Heavenly Father who have sorely suffered in a hell during their lengthened time in the world of spirits.