
What Does the Bible Say About Heaven? (#3): Our Body in Heaven Before the Rapture

2 Corinthians 5:1-5

¹ For we know that if our earthly **house**, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a **building** from God, a **house** not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our **habitation** which is from heaven,

³ if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked.

⁴ For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

⁵ Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

¹ Οἴδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν **οἶκία** τοῦ σκήνου καταλυθῆ, **οἰκοδομήν** ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχομεν, **οἶκίαν** ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

² καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ στενάζομεν τὸ **οἰκητήριον** ἡμῶν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες,

³ εἴ γε καὶ ἐκδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὐρεθισόμεθα.

⁴ καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκηνῇ στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς.

⁵ ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός, ὁ δὸς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος.

What Are We Like If We Die Before the Rapture? Do We Have a Body?

Three Possibilities:

- 1. We Receive Our New Body Right Away**
- 2. We Exist Without a Body Until the Rapture (Just our Spirit)**
- 3. We Are Given a Temporary Body of Some Kind**
 - a. Scripture indicates that we receive our new, glorified bodies at the Rapture (not before)**

1 Thes 4:16 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.

1 Cor 15:50-53 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 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.

Northridge Baptist Church – Pastor Kevin Subra – September 28, 2014

Phil 3:20-21 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.

1 John 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.

b. Scripture indicates that God gives us some type of body to complete us until we are resurrected & given new bodies:

- Lazarus (Luke 16:19-25)
- Moses & Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:1-3)

Key Thoughts from This Passage:

5:1a – Our present body is an earthly tent which can be destroyed

5:1b – God will give us an eternal body like permanent building

5:2 – Knowing about the new body, we groan to be “upgraded”

5:3 – If unclothed (at death), we will have an in-between body

- Some Greek texts: “unclothed”
- If so, it is speaking about our earthly body being destroyed (v.1)

5:4 – We don’t want to be unclothed, but eternally clothed

5:5 – God Who prepared this for us has given us a Guarantee.

2 Cor 1:22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Eph 1:14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

3. AN INTERMEDIATE BODY. A declaration is made in 2 Corinthians 5:1–5 that, should this “earthly house of this tabernacle” be dissolved, “we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” and that the human spirit earnestly desires not to be unclothed or disembodied but to be clothed upon; and to this end a body “from heaven,” eternal—with respect to its qualities as any body from heaven must be—awaits the believer who dies. He will thus not be unclothed or bodiless between death and the resurrection of that original body which will be from the grave. The body “from heaven” could not be the body which is from the grave, nor could the body from the grave serve as an intermediate body before the resurrection. Apart from the divine provision of an intermediate body, the believer’s desire that he should not be unclothed or bodiless could not be satisfied. Chafer, L. S. (1993). *Systematic theology* (Vol. 4, pp. 414–415).