

What is life like in the present heaven?

Revelation 6:9-11

“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony of which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long O’ Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? Then a white robe was given to each of them, and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were was completed.”

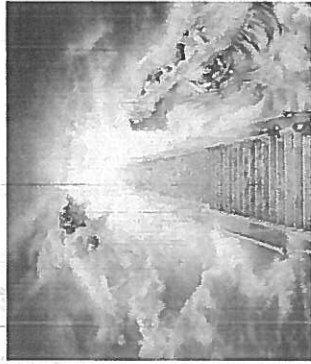
Some Observations:

1. When these people died on earth they relocated to heaven (9)
2. These people in heaven were the same people killed for Christ on the earth (9).
3. People in heaven will be remembered for their lives on earth.
4. They “called out” (10) means they are able to express themselves audibly.
5. People in the present heaven can raise their voices (10). This indicates they are rational, communicative, and emotional – even passionate beings like those on the earth.
6. They cried out with “a loud voice” not “loud voices”. Individuals speaking with one voice indicate that heaven is a place of unity and shared perspective.
7. The martyrs are fully conscious, rational, and aware of each other, God, and the situation on earth.
8. They ask God to intervene on earth and act on their behalf.
9. Those in heaven are free to ask God questions, which means they have an audience with God. It also means they need to learn. In heaven people desire understanding and pursue it.
10. People in the present heaven know what is happening on earth (10).
11. Those in heaven have a deep concern for justice and retribution (10).
12. The martyrs clearly remember their life on earth (10).
13. The martyrs in heaven pray for judgment on their persecutors who are still at work hurting others.
14. Those in heaven see God’s attributes in a way that makes His judgment of sin more understandable.
15. Those in heaven are distinct individuals: “Then each of them was given a white robe” (11).
16. The martyrs’ wearing white robes suggests the possibility of actual physical forms, because disembodied spirits presumably don’t wear robes.
17. God answers their question (11), indicating communication and process in heaven. It also demonstrates that we won’t know everything in heaven.
18. God promises to fulfill the martyrs’ requests, but says they will have to “wait a little longer” (11).
19. There is time in the present heaven (10-11).
20. The people of God in heaven have a strong familial connection with those on earth, who are called their “fellow servants and brothers (11).
21. Our sovereign God knows down to the last detail all that is happening and will happen on earth (11), including every drop of blood shed and every bit of suffering undergone by his children.

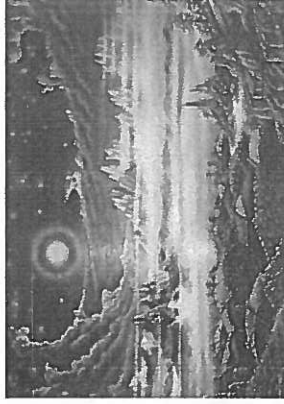
Theology of Heaven II



Earth



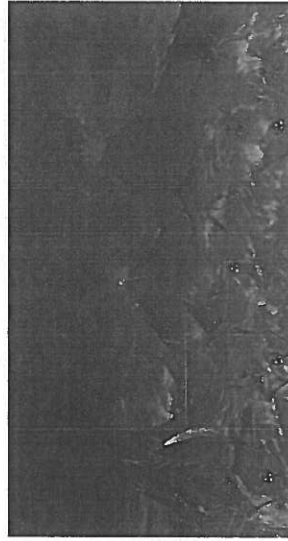
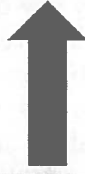
Present
Intermediate
Heaven



New Earth /
New Heaven
Revelation 21:1-4



Hell



Lake of Fire
Revelation 20:11-15