

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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Will We Know Each Other in Heaven? - Part 2

Introduction

I am aware that there are many hymns based on human emotion instead of biblical teaching, indeed, there are hymns which are quite contrary to Biblical teaching. Examples of such lines are: "His precious blood is sprinkled there before and on the Throne", "Over the river, faces I see, fair as the morning, looking for me". A good principle for Christian music is that "good hymnology is based on right theology".

When we then consider:

- a) "Will we know each other in Heaven?" Yes!
- b) "Will we have the same relationships as on earth?" No!

While I am not aware of any verse which specifically says this in so many words, yet the tenor of the scriptures strongly teach it.

In life we use words which convey Biblical teachings, yet the words themselves are never found in the scriptures! Nowhere in them do we find the word "omniscience", and yet, who would say that God does not know everything? What of the words "omnipresent", rapture, or trinity? Yet these are biblical truths. At times God gives the evidences for such truths, for it would be very hard to deny the omnipresence of God when it is plainly taught in Psalm 139:7-10.

Associated Questions

The question, "Will we know each other in Heaven?" is not an easy question to answer for it involves the knowledge we shall then have with our changed bodies and spirit state. Associated questions are:

1) What we shall not know

- a) We shall not know some of the normal happenings of earth. Samuel did not know why Saul had him brought up (1 Sam. 28:15-19). Yet, he did know the judgment of God that was about to fall on Saul, his family, and the nation (v. 16-17), and when Saul and his sons would die (v. 19).
- b) The fulness of Christ for He said: "No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father" (Lk. 10:22).

2) What we shall know

- a) We shall know the activity of the Lord's judgment on the people of the earth (Rev. 6:2, 4, 6, 8; ch. 8:5, 7, 8-9, etc).
- b) We shall know the triumphant results of the executing of God's judgment on the earth (Rev. 19:1-4).

3) **What we shall not see**

- a) The Person of God in His fulness. “No man hath seen God at any time” (1 Jn. 4:12) is a statement of fact, for it is, and forever will be, impossible for the mind and heart to comprehend the fulness of the glories of God. Yet, we shall see the Throne Sitter (Rev. 4:2) for John says: “Looked” (Rev. 4:1); “behold” (Rev. 4:2); “and I saw” (Rev. 4:4). Furthermore, we shall see Him as the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9, 13, 22). Note carefully, despite what commentators write and is taught, THIS IS NOT THE LORD JESUS, this is God, and the Lord as the Lion and the Lamb is brought to the Throne Sitter (Dan. 7:13), or as Revelation states: “He came” (Rev. 5:7). This activity would be impossible if Christ was already on the Throne. The question then would be, “Who is brought to Him and given the title deeds for the execution of judgment, and is given such acclamations?” (Rev. 5:7-14)

4) **Will there be an increasing capacity for learning?**

- a) While in the Spirit John hears a cry: “Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” (Rev. 5:2). He is aware that no man is able (Rev. 4:3-4) and then he is given information and a sight that would cause all tears to cease” (Rev. 4:5).
- b) John was asked: “What are these which are arrayed in white robes?” The answer from John is: “Sir, thou knowest” (Rev. 7:13-14). In both cases John’s knowledge is increased.

5) **Will earthly relationships be the same?**

- a) In the present world level Jean is my physical wife, but in the spiritual realm she is a sister in the Lord. Rowan is my son in the physical level, but in the spiritual realm he is my brother. The same goes for my daughters. When we are released from this physical earth born sphere we shall see others in their relationship to the Lord. We will see them as recipients of Divine grace and worthy to sing praise to the Lamb, as is taught in Ephesians (Eph. 1:6, 12, 14). Furthermore, as we look on those in Heaven there will be no remembrance of what they did or acted toward us while on earth.
- b) Seeing others from God’s perspective will be a blessing for I had an aunt who died a rebellious sinner. How shall I see her at the Great White Throne? I shall not see her as my aunt, neither will my dad see her as his sister, but we shall see her from the divine perspective, for we will be changed. Therefore, she shall be seen as a woman who rebelled against God all her life and God’s judgment is just. There will be no tears of grief for her being banished from God eternally.

6) **What about little children and individuals damaged by sin?**

- a) As I look on this world I learn of millions of little babies slaughtered in the name of abortion. Will they be in Heaven?
- i) The answer is: “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Gen. 18:25) and His judgments are “true and righteous” (Psa. 19:9; Rev. 16:7; 19:2). When the Lord said: “Suffer the little children to come unto me” (Mk. 10:14) and, “It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish” (Matt. 18:14); will He then, because they “died” yet unborn or without understanding, banish them to Hell? Would that be righteous? I do not speak of those who could make decisions and search out truth.
- b) What about those individuals who, due to the damage of sin, have a decreased ability to understand such things as sin, salvation, redemption, and substitution. Will they be in Heaven? I have a mother whose body is wasted away as is her mind, is that how she will be in Heaven? What about saints with deformed bodies, or ones damaged due to heart attacks and liver failures, what will they be like in Heaven?
- i) The answer is that when the Lord comes we will be changed and given bodies “like unto His glorious body” (Phil. 3:21). However, there will be a distinct difference between His body and ours. His will forever have the marks of Calvary, we will never have the marks we received on earth. His will be the only woundings of earth that will be seen in glory, as the Lamb “as it had been slain” (Rev. 5:6).

7) **Will we know each other?**

- a) I am quite confident that we shall know each other and all the saints in glory for the following reasons:
- i) The only time celestial beings revealed who they were was to humans: “Michael”, one of the chief princes (Dan. 10:13; Jude 1:9; Rev. 12:7); “I am Gabriel” (Lk. 1:19), but humans never had to reveal who they were to other humans.

- ii) It is irrelevant whether we take the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus as a real incident or a parable, several truths are clear. Individuals in Hell have a memory of once human relationships and of the life they lived. Both the rich man and Lazarus knew about each other, and the rich man knew he had brothers (Lk. 16:4-31).
- iii) The Lord informed His listeners that the Gentiles are going to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. 8:11). This piece of information lets me know that there will be retention of identity, for Abraham will still be Abraham, Isaac will still be Isaac, and Paul will still be Paul. Recognition of them is vital else how would they know if it was Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Would it not be an absurd situation if we Gentiles will recognize Abraham as Abraham and not mistake him as Jonah, and yet not recognize loved ones we have known on earth?
- iv) With Abraham, etc., they were spoken of by their first names, both pre-conversion and post-conversion. Abraham's pre-conversion name was Abram and then changed to Abraham. Jacob was called Jacob in pre-conversion but Israel afterward. God speaks of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob but never Abram, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 3:15). He will also speak of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (2 Chron. 30:6). Thus, maybe we will be known by our pre-conversion or post-conversion name. This leads to the question, will Saul be known as Saul and Paul, or Simon known as Peter? Another point of interest is that there are never surnames given, even among angelic beings, thus indicating that a person will be known only by their first name.

Concluding Thoughts

Death comes in many ways to the people of God. Some simply sleep into Heaven, others are persecuted to death and with much agony enter the land of rest. For some it is a very prolonged deteriorating existence until void of any awareness of the spirit leaving the body. For others it is an unexpected instant exiting of life, and sadly for some it is by their own hand. However, there are those and for them nearing the point of death a spiritual happening when they may sit up, as if to move toward another, or stretch out their arms and hands, or suddenly the appearance of the face changes for they begin to see the glories of the Lord as Stephen did (Acts 7:55). Personal friends of mine had an only son, and within a 40 hour period he went from being a big healthy man to an unconscious body lying on a hospital bed. His mother went over to him and to her amazement she informed me, "His face changed". It was still him, but there was a beauty of face that was not normal. His eyes, they looked at her with love and compassion such as she had never seen before, speaking comfort to her soul. The time was 4:00 AM. Some 30 miles away her husband was at home asleep when he suddenly awoke, and the scripture was brought to him: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23). The father knew at that instant his son had died, the time being, 4:00 AM. These people are not given to wild flights of emotion, but experiences which God gave to each for peace and rest.

While I am quite sure we shall know each other, that will not be the focus of attention, and neither will the re-meeting of loved ones. Surely, if our focus on earth is "Looking unto Jesus", will that be lessened in Heaven? Note the building up of ultimately that which lies ahead:

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling" (Heb. 12:22-24).

Christ will be the focus of our attention, and it is being with Him in unsullied light and perfection that will make Heaven, Heaven. The following is the background to the lovely hymn by Fanny Crosby, the blind hymnodist.

It was nearing the end of the day when Fanny Crosby was sitting with John R. Sweney. Taking a rest, John asked her, "Do you think we'll recognize our friends in heaven?" She answered, "You wonder how an old lady who has been blind all her life could even recognize one person, let alone her Lord and Savior?" By the next morning she had written that comforting, but focused hymn: "When my life's work is ended"

When my life work is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,
 When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;
 I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,
 And His smile will be the first to welcome me.

Refrain:

*I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
And redeemed by His side I shall stand,
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
By the print of the nails in His hand.*

Oh, the soul thrilling rapture when I view His blessed face,
And the luster of His kindly beaming eye;
How my full heart will praise Him for the mercy, love, and grace,
That prepared for me a mansion in the sky.

Thro' the gates of the city in a robe of spotless white,
He will lead me where no tears will ever fall;
In the glad song of ages I shall mingle with delight;
But I long to meet my Saviour first of all.

I do not know about you the reader but my heart just about bursts with joyous anticipation for that experience, and all I can now say is: “**That will be glory for me**”.

. . . . Rowan Jennings

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