

**This Bible Study is a reprint of the paperback book *Glorified!*
which is currently out of print. It will make an ideal Bible study course!**

Christians know of the joys that await them in heaven. Death, judgment, resurrection, and eternal life are well taught from little on. One of the first prayers many children learn to pray is, "If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." Yet many Christians are still filled with questions and concerns about the future they know so little about.

God in his mercy has given us many thoughts and insights into what death, resurrection, the judgment, and eternal life will be like. In fact, he has disclosed just enough information in his Word to make us continue to want that future for ourselves, our loved ones, and everyone else.

The object of this study is twofold. First, we wanted to cover the entire spectrum of the last days and the end times as thoroughly as possible. The over two-hundred selected Scripture passages are well-known to most, yet they take on a far greater significance once they are laid side by side. Second, we felt that since the Bible contains such a wealth of evidence, we would let Scripture tell the story. Thus we kept our comments to a minimum and recorded as much of Scripture as possible. Even then, many important references were not included because of space.

Our prayer is that these pages will offer comfort, hope, and assurance to all believers. What a joy it is to share the truth that we know that our Redeemer lives and that one day we will see him in person, face-to-face! Yes, we too will be truly GLORIFIED!

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*Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll,
that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever!
I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth.
And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God:
I myself will see him with my own eyes - I, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!
Job*

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12: They will see God.

Matthew 5:8

THE FACE OF GOD

Perhaps the most precious blessing we will have in heaven is called the beatific vision.

*O home of fadeless splendor, of flowers that bear no thorn,
Where they shall dwell as children who here as exiles mourn.
Midst power that knows no limit, where knowledge has no bound,
The beatific vision shall glad the saints around.*

(From the hymn "The World Is Very Evil")

At this blessed time in our lives, we shall see with our own eyes the majesty and splendor of God—face-to-face—the beatific vision.

- *Job 19:27 "I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"*
- *Psalms 17:15 "And I—in righteousness I will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness."*
- *Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."*
- *1 Corinthians 13:12 "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face."*
- *Revelation 22:4 "They will see his face."*

Presently God permits us to see him through his Word and in his works. In the Old Testament, God revealed himself through the patriarchs and prophets, today through his Word and sacraments. The sight we have now is but a dim form of what the true God will look like face-to-face. Even Moses, who stood directly in the presence of God, was not allowed to see God's unveiled glory.

- *Exodus 33:18-20 "Then Moses said, 'Now show me your glory.' And the Lord said, 'I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you. . . . But, you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.'"*

We can view this joy of seeing the face of God in another way. We will also see Jesus for the very first time. What a thrilling experience that will be. Finally, we will have the opportunity to talk with Jesus and to thank him for his love for us.

- *John 17:24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."*
- *2 Thessalonians 1:10 ". . . on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you."*

IN HEAVEN THERE WILL BE NO MORE . . .

We will experience our joy in heaven in many different ways. In painting a picture of heaven for our limited minds, God often speaks in the negative, describing to us not what heaven is, but what heaven is not. At the fall of Adam and Eve, God placed a curse upon all people.

- *Genesis 3:16-19 "To the woman he said, 'I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing. . . .' To Adam he said, 'Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it. . . . It will produce thorns and thistles for you. . . . By the sweat of your brow you will eat . . . and to dust you will return.'"*

We cannot easily comprehend living in harmony with God and being completely free of sin and the curse it brings. We cannot begin to envision a life free from pains and heartaches, sorrows and tears. Our lives are greatly influenced by the curse of sin. We see it in our homes, our workplaces, our schools, our hospitals, our newspapers, and our prisons. Our daily toil and sweat are a result of sin's curse, not to mention angry words, jealousy, lies, lust, laziness, inclement weather, stress, anxiety, and bodily imperfections. In heaven we will be free from all those things.

- *Isaiah 25:8* “The Sovereign Lord will **wipe away the tears** from all faces.”
- *Isaiah 35:10* “. . . **sorrow and sighing will flee away.**”
- *Isaiah 49:10* “They will **neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat upon them.**”
- *Isaiah 65:19* “The **sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.**”
- *Isaiah 65:20* “Never again will there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; **he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth.**”
- *Revelation 7:16,17* “**Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. . . . And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**”

Whether we wish to admit it or not, the thought of death frequently occupies our minds. We think about it in regard to ourselves and our loved ones. We cannot help but connect it with thoughts of illness, accident, or mass tragedy. Another heavenly blessing God's people will experience is that death and the fear of death will be gone—forever!

- *John 11:25,26* “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and **whoever lives and believes in me will never die.** Do you believe this?”
- *1 Corinthians 15:26* “**The last enemy to be destroyed is death.**”
- *Revelation 21:4* “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.” Memories! Our lives are often filled with bad memories that we try to erase. We often are haunted with the memories of harsh words, shameful actions, painful moments, and lonely days. One thing is certain. In heaven there will be no more bad memories.
- *Isaiah 65:17* “Behold I will create new heavens and a new earth. **The former things will not be remembered.**”

A PLACE OF REWARD

It seems improper to think of heaven as a place for rewarding God's people, but Scripture clearly teaches this is the case. We must however be careful not to mistakenly think that our works will determine our place in heaven. The Bible clearly teaches that heaven is an inheritance, not something that we earn.

- *Revelation 21:7* “He who overcomes **will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.**”

The Lord does promise that he will remember even the smallest of good works that we have done in our lives out of love for him.

- *Matthew 10:42* “If anyone gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, **he will certainly not lose his reward.**”
- *Revelation 14:13* “‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘they will rest from their labor, for **their deeds will follow them.**’”
- *Revelation 22:12* “Behold, I am coming soon! **My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.**”

This again brings up the teaching of degrees in heaven, a difficult concept for our limited minds to grasp. Scripture shows there will be degrees in heaven just as in hell. There will not and cannot be degrees

of bliss because all who are in heaven will receive unsurpassable bliss and joy. There will however be degrees of glory. These distinctions will not incite envy or jealousy, because those are sins. Rather, we will rejoice with our fellow believers in their and our dwelling place in heaven.

- *2 Corinthians 9:6* “Remember this: **Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.**”

- *Daniel 12:3* “Those who are wise will **shine like the brightness of the heavens**, and those who lead many to righteousness, **like the stars for ever and ever.**”

Regardless of the degrees of glory, we rejoice that all believers will be given the same reward.

- *1 Corinthians 9:25* “Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get **a crown that will last forever.**”

- *2 Timothy 4:8* “There is in store for me **the crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”

- *James 1:12* “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, **he will receive the crown of life** that God has promised to those who love him.”

- *1 Peter 5:4* “When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will **receive the crown of glory** that will never fade away.”

- *Revelation 2:10* “Be faithful, even to the point of death, and **I will give you the crown of life.**”

WHAT WILL WE DO IN HEAVEN?

Ask children what they think life will be like in heaven, and you’ll probably hear several who will answer, “Boring!” We can speculate all we wish, but we are only given a few glimpses of our life and activity in heaven. Boring, however, it will not be! What God has in mind for us will be far beyond our grandest dreams.

- *1 Corinthians 2:9,11* “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, **no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.** . . . No one knows the thoughts of God.”

We do know we will spend much time in joyful adoration and worship of our loving God. This praise fest will be far beyond anything we might imagine.

- *Revelation 5:8,9* “Each one had a **harp** and they were holding golden bowls full of incense . . . **and they sang a new song.**”

- *Revelation 5:13* “Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and **all that is in them, singing.**”

- *Revelation 7:9,10* “After this I looked and there before me was **a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne** and in front of the Lamb. **They were wearing white robes** and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’”

- *Revelation 19:5* “Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, **all you his servants**, you who fear him, both small and great!’”

There is more to that glorious sight:

- *Revelation 7:11,12* “**All the angels** were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: ‘Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!’”

In addition to the wonderful worship and praise in which we will participate, we will also have the glorious task of serving our Lord and Savior.

- *Revelation 22:3* “**The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.**”

But we will not be the only ones serving. Our Lord has promised he will likewise serve us. What an experience that will be!

- *Luke 12:37* “**It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.**”

Life in heaven will be a glorious gathering that will last forever. Scripture says it will be a time of feasting and a time of rest. That celebration amid a peaceful atmosphere will be far more than we can imagine here on this sin-filled earth.

- *Matthew 8:11* “**I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.**”
- *Hebrews 4:9* “**There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his.**”
- *Revelation 14:13* “**‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘they will rest from their labor.’**”

*When the pearly gates are opened
To a sinner “saved by grace,”
When thro’ everlasting mercy,
I behold my Savior’s face,
When I enter in the mansions
Of the city bright and fair,
I shall have a royal welcome,
For I’ll be no stranger there.*

(Eliza E. Hewitt, 1851 - 1920)