

What happens after we die?

Philippians 1:21

Introduction: Last week we looked at a message from Zechariah.

Zechariah 10:3-4

³ *Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.*

⁴ *Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.*

Here in verse 4, we looked at Jesus Christ as our Corner Stone which means He is our foundation for life. Any life that is built on any other foundation is built on sinking sand. We also looked at Him as the Nail or the Tent Peg that gives to us stability in our lives amid a world that is very unstable. Then we looked at Him as our Battle Bow and the Suppressor of the wicked which means He is our Spiritual Protector. All of this refers to our lives right now if you know Jesus Christ as your Savior.

Today I want to consider what to expect in death when we know Jesus Christ as our Savior. In other words, I want to consider what happens after we die.

Notice Philippians 1:21-23

Paul tells us here that his desire is to depart and be with Jesus and he also says that to die is GAIN. First of all, I want you to understand that Paul knew things which we do not know.

2 Corinthians 12:1-4

It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

² *I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.*

³ *And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)*

⁴ *How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

Paul speaks of himself in the third person here and he is talking about being caught up to the third heaven which is the abode of God. When he was there, he witnessed things that were unspeakable and he heard Words that not lawful for him to speak. I believe this was the reason why Paul had a desire to depart and be with the Lord. He did not die but he experienced what the believer will experience when they die. Let us now consider a few of the GAINS of death.

1. Present with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

⁶ *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

⁷ *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

⁸ *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

When we die our body and soul get separated. We do not cease to exist. Our body goes back to the dust and our soul enters immediately into the presence of the Lord. There is no place known as purgatory where a person waits to get into heaven. It is either heaven or hell immediately. The moment that we die our soul is immediately in the presence of the Lord. Our FAITH becomes sight instantly. In that moment we will be in His presence and will never leave His presence.

It will be at this time that we shall know His love in the fullest sense. Let us notice what Paul prayed for the Ephesians.

Ephesians 3:14-19

¹⁴ *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

¹⁵ *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,*

¹⁶ *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;*

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

¹⁸ May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height:

¹⁹ And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

The love of Jesus Christ for us will be fully known the moment we step into His presence and we see His face.

2. The Ultimate Freedom.

2 Corinthians 5:8

⁸ We are confident, I say, and **willing** rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

When we die, we will be free from these bodies of sin. The sufferings of this life will be over. The concerns of this life will be over. The struggles with sin will be over.

Romans 7:18a

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:

This body that has within it the sin nature will die and we shall be free from it once and for all. Let me just say that the sense of freedom when we get to heaven will be bliss. We have never known freedom like that which awaits us. Let us consider some of the freedom we will experience.

- a. Free from temptation.
- b. Free from the presence of sin.
- c. Free from worry and anxiety.
- d. Free from sickness and disease.
- e. Free from stress.
- f. Free from deadlines.
- g. Free from pain.
- h. Free from the curse.
- i. Free from this world over which Satan is the god.
- j. Free from family conflicts.

If we sat down and we considered our freedoms we could go on with this list for a long time.

3. Fellowship with the saints who are in heaven.

Revelation 7:9, 13-17

⁹ *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;*

¹³ *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*

¹⁴ *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

¹⁵ *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*

¹⁶ *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*

¹⁷ *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

This is a passage that pictures those who will die in the Great tribulation and when they die, they are found surrounding the throne experiencing the comfort of the Lamb. They are also involved in serving in the Heavenly Temple. We too will be there. We will be serving and fellowshiping with all saints. Someone would ask, "How can we be sure?"

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

¹⁶ *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

¹⁷ *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

This is referring to the Rapture and this happens before Revelation 7 so if we shall forever be with the Lord then we are certainly in the scene of Revelation 7. There will be

those from the Old Testament, those of the New Testament/church age, as well as those who die in the Great Tribulation.

People often ask me if we will know people in heaven. Yes, we will!

Matthew 17:1-4

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

² And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

³ And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

⁴ Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

The Mount of Transfiguration is a preview of the Kingdom and I want you to see that the disciples knew Moses and Elijah with no introduction. So, "YES" we will know one another when we go to heaven.

4. A home built by our Lord.

We have our homes here on earth but these homes are only temporary. They will eventually go to someone else and then one day they will be destroyed.

2 Peter 3:10-13

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

¹¹ Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

But there is a place for us in heaven that is being prepared by the Lord Himself.

John 14:1-3

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

² *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

³ *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

This passage refers to Jesus returning in the Rapture for His bride. Until then, He is preparing a place for His bride/the church to dwell when He returns for her. So, what happens to us if we die before the Rapture? I can assure you that we will not be homeless in heaven. There are no tents on the streets. Possibly our part of the dwelling place will be complete. We can be sure that we will have a dwelling place in heaven and it will be a place that has been prepared by our loving Lord. We cannot even begin to imagine what our dwelling place will be like in heaven. It will never need cleaned and it will never need to be remodeled.

5. Our eternal inheritance.

I have watched people work in this life and they store their finances in a bank or some financial institution or at home, and they rarely take time to enjoy what they had and when they die it all stays here. I have watched 1 Timothy 6 lived out.

1 Timothy 6:6-11

⁶ *But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

⁷ *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

⁸ *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

⁹ *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

¹⁰ *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

¹¹ *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

All we have here will stay here when we die. But there is an eternal inheritance that we shall never lose.

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

⁴ *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.*

⁵ *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Peter does not tell us what our inheritance is but instead He just makes it clear that it is secure. It cannot be corrupted; it cannot be defiled and it will never fade which means it will never grow old.

Conclusion:

Heaven is just a temporary place where we will live. After the Great Tribulation we will come back to earth and rule with our Lord for 1000 years. After the Kingdom we will see the creation of a new heaven and a new earth and that is where we will spend eternity. That is the eternal state. ONLY BELIEVERS HAVE THIS HOPE!!!