

"Will We Know Each Other in Heaven?"
Special thanks to Mark A. Copeland

INTRODUCTION

- A. How many times have we sung songs about being reunited in heaven with loved ones? "Will the circle be unbroken?" "I will meet you in the morning" etc.
- B. How many times have we heard preachers and others speak words of comfort at the passing of a loved one?
- C. Guy N. Woods said, "The unspeakable thrilling expectation of a glad reunion with loved ones on golden shores; the prospect of seeing, and knowing all of the illustrious characters of the ages and of sitting at the feet of Peter and Paul and the Lord; and, the glorious privilege of endless association with the dear departed dead in their immortal state, no longer weary and sad and worn and sick, but arrayed in that imperishable splendor which shall ever characterize the good, the pure and the blessed, excites the heart as no other matter does".
- D. But will we really know each other in heaven? Or is this just wishful thinking?
- E. What does the Bible reveal about this question?

BODY

I. SCRIPTURES WHICH SUGGEST RECOGNITION AFTER DEATH.

- A. ISAIAH 14:3-4, 9-11,16 This passage refers to the king of Babylon Who is recognize by those in Hades upon his death. 3-4 It shall come to pass in the day the Lord gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve, that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: "How the oppressor has ceased, The golden city ceased! 9-11 "Hell from beneath is excited about you, To meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead for you, All the chief ones of the earth; It has raised up from their thrones All the kings of the nations. They all shall speak and say to you: `Have you also become as weak as we? Have you become like us? Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.' 15 -16 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: `Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms,
- B. EZEKIEL 32:17-32 This passage speaks of Pharaoh and his army who is recognized by others in Hades - 21. Who in turn recognizes those of Assyria, Elam, Edom, etc. - 22-31
- C. Rev. 6:9-11. These people had consciousness of their surroundings. They knew why they were there and were aware that those who had murdered them had not yet been

punished. **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 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.**

D. 2 Sam. 12:33 **"But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."**

E. LUKE 16:19-31.

1. This is the familiar story of Lazarus and the rich man.
2. In which the rich man recognizes both Lazarus and Abraham 16: 22-24 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'

F. 1 THESSALONIANS 2:19-20; For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:14 knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.

1. Both of these passages reveal Paul's expectation of being with His converts at Christ's coming.
2. Recognizing them would be a source of great joy for Paul.
3. I am going to be me and you are going to be you! Right?

G. MATTHEW 8:11-12 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

1. Reference is made to Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.
2. The recognition of which would increase the joys of those present (and the dismay of those "cast out into outer darkness").

H. Examples of people being recognized after their death.

1. Samuel (who after his death was recognized by Saul) - 1 Sam 28:3-19

1Sam 28:3 (NKJV) Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented for him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. And Saul had put the mediums and the spiritists out of the land. Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at Shunem. So Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped at Gilboa. When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets. Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor." So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "Please conduct a seance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you." Then the woman said to him, "Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, "As the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing." Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul!" And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth." So he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle." And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down. Now Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do." Then Samuel said: "Why then do you ask me, seeing the Lord has departed from you and has become your enemy? "And the Lord has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. "Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the Lord has done this thing to you this day. Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

2. Moses and Elijah (recognized on the Mount of Transfiguration) - Matt. 17:1-5 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud

overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

I. These and other verses clearly indicate that we will know one another after death!

II. SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

A. OBJECTION #1. If we can actually recognize one another, then we can miss those not there. (If mom or Dad or husband or wife or son or daughter is not there I don't want to go there either.)

1. This would mean that there would be unhappiness in heaven.

2. Rev. 21:4-5 **"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."**

3. The pains and trials of this life will not be experienced in heaven.

4. Perhaps the answer to this question lies in the following direction:

a. That when we die, all earthly ties that were not in Christ (including family ties) will lose their meaning!

b. Do not passages that point in that direction:

(1) Matt. 12:46-50 While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! "For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

(2) Matt. 10:37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me

c. Also consider Matt 22:23-33. God has the power to make the necessary changes in our mind to alleviate all concern on our part. **The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no**

offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her." Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, `I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

B. OBJECTION #2 According to Matt. 22:23-33, all earthly ties will lose their meaning Hence, any recognition of those whom we have known on earth would be meaningless.

1. The passage simply teaches that there will be no "marriage" relationships in the resurrection
2. In this sense, we will be like the angels in heaven.
3. This does NOT say "all" relationships will be abolished!

CONCLUSION

1. When we talk about things such as this we can never be sure.
2. We are given at best a glimpse of what heaven and hell will be like.
3. Mere words and descriptions of heaven will never compare with the real thing.
4. I believe there is good reason, therefore, to believe that we shall know one another after this life.
5. That then serves as a powerful motive.
 - a. To live our lives pleasing in the sight of God.
 - b. To try and take those we love with us by encouraging them to live likewise!
6. 2 Sam. 12:33 **"But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."**