

THE CROWNS – AN INTRODUCTION FROM REV. 4:10

There is a hymn in *Redemption Songs* that begins, “I shall wear a golden crown When I get home ... Clad in robes of glory, I shall sing the story, Of the Lord Who bought me, When I get home”. What does the Bible teach about the crowns that await the saints?

The first mention of the crown in Scripture was in relation to Jacob’s blessing upon Joseph, Gen. 49:26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and *on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren*. ... This ‘crown’ on the head of Joseph set him apart from his brethren ... and they clearly understood what it meant, Gen. 37:8 his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us?

There are, of course, many mentions of the crown in the Old Testament. There was the ‘holy crown’ of the High Priest in Ex. 28:36-38 and in 39:30 And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. It was a beautiful crown, symbolic of the authority God had given to the high priest of Israel.

The king also wore a different type of crown, - for example, Saul’s crown (II Sam. 1:10), David’s crown that weighed a talent of gold with the precious stones (II Sam. 12:30), and Esther’s crown (2:17 the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head).

On the state openings of the Westminster Parliament, the Queen is seated on her throne ... her husband beside her. All the lords and ladies dressed in their regalia are seated in their various places, the Members of Parliament gather at the door of the House of Lords ... and they all look to the front ... to the only one who is *crowned* and the one to whom each of them pays allegiance.

Paul wrote to Timothy about the allegiance we are honoured as believers to pay to the King of kings, I Tim. 6:14 our Lord Jesus Christ ... 15 ... who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, ... 16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

In Rev. 19 John the apostle sees in his vision Jesus Christ, Who is there described as the Word of God, entering into this world for the final time, v.14 clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. ...

Again, in Rev. 17:14 the great whore that sits on the seven hills rises up against the Lamb, These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. These same saints are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17), ... Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever (Rev. 1:5).

The Bible teaches that through saving grace you and I are privileged children who belong to the King of kings! We have been *born again* into His Heavenly royal family, - we are royal children! Paul tells us in Christ we have a new and an eternal inheritance, Eph. 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory. ... Heb. 9:15 he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, ... they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. It is an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you (I Pet. 1:4).

There are two Greek words in the New Testament that we translate as the 'crown', - στεφάνος and διάδημα. The διάδημα is the exclusively crown worn by kings and emperors. ... The στεφάνος, on the other hand, has two meanings. Firstly, it was the victor's crown, the crown of the winning athlete at the Greek games. It was the symbol of triumph, the reward and the prize. To win the στεφάνος was the peak of the athlete's ambition. Its second meaning was the crown with which the guests were adorned when, - in the midst of great joy and celebration, - they sat at the banqueting table.

Let's consider the crowns mentioned in Rev. 4:10, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne. First of all, they were ...

HEAVENLY CROWNS

- * These are the στεφάνος ... the crown worn by the victors and those who were privileged to be invited to sit at the King's table.
- * They were obviously special crowns that were presented to them for the faithfulness of their labours.
- * These are a special people with a special invitation into the innermost and intimate company of God in Heaven.
- * Did they achieve anything in particular to give them the privilege of this high status in Heaven? ... Who are these twenty-four elders? ... Who do they represent? ... Who will be in Heaven?
- * In Heaven there is God, there are the angels who remained faithful to Him during the conflict in Heaven (12:7), and there are also these twenty-four elders (πρεσβύτεροι).
- * The twenty-four elders is a collective title given to all the people of God in Heaven, from the very beginning of time, throughout every era of history from the Old Testament into the New and continuing until Jesus returns to earth.
- * The twenty-four elders is the Church in Heaven, God's redeemed, those whom He has called unto Himself and welcomed into Glory.
- * To each of them He has given the crown of sonship and of ruling as princes with Him.
- * Why use the title of the 'twenty-four elders'? Very simply because it embodies the whole Church throughout every generation, - the true believers in the Old and New Testaments, and in every period since and before the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- * The 'twenty-four elders' is the Heavenly term that speaks of God's steadfast people in the twelve tribes of the Old Testament Church and the faithful believers in the New Testament era and beyond who have since continued in the legacy handed down to [earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints \(Jude 3\)](#).
- * The Heavenly crowns belong to the Redeemed, our Kingship is in Christ, and we are children of the most High God.
- * As sinners we were born corrupt into this imperfect and fallen world, but through the work of sovereign grace He [hath made us kings and priests unto God \(Rev. 1:6\)](#).
- * And yes, He has an exact number, ... known only to Him for He has every name written in His vast scroll in the library of eternity.

- * He knows each and every one of them, for He has a living and personal relationship with them all which He confirmed at Calvary.
- * The **heavenly crowns** are the privilege of God's people in Heaven. ... None of the angels wear these crowns. Christ never died to save the angels, but He died to save you and me ... and, as His children, He has a crown waiting for you when He welcomes you into Glory.

COSTLY CROWNS

- * How much did they cost? How much are they worth?
- * Made of the purest metal, they are to the higher than highest standard.
- * No earthly goldsmith can match the intricacy of how God moulded each of the crowns He has for His children.
- * The cost of these crowns is not measured even in the purity of Heaven's gold, the cost is measured in the perfect and spotless blood of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who left Heaven's glory to come to Calvary and to die there for each one of His beloved.
- * You cannot measure His love. It is "so high you can't get over it, so low you can't get under it, so wide you can't get round it". It loves the most evil and wicked of people. It loves the unloveable. ... *It costs to love the way God loves!*
- * It is not a natural love, ... try as hard as we can, there are sometimes some people who are so difficult to love ... and there are also aspects of our own nature that disgust us ... but God's love is such that He is *not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance* (II Pet. 3:9).
- * Such a depth of love cost Him the death of His Son. For His children to be 'crowned' His only-begotten Son had to lay aside *His* crown and He *made Himself of no reputation ... He humbled Himself* (Phil. 2:7,8).
- * He left His crown in Heaven. He suffered the jeers and the mockeries. He wept as a Man rejected by His friends. He set aside the crown and was nailed to the cross.
- * Every Heavenly crown that belongs to every child of God was purchased at such highest of costs. Each of them was paid by the suffering and the dying and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- * There is no word in any language, and there is no amount in any currency that could even begin to estimate the cost of the sacrifice He paid to make us kings unto God (Rev. 1:6). **Heavenly crowns , costly crowns ... and**

GLORY CROWNS

* How am I so privileged that one day God will grant me a **heavenly crown**? There is only one means by which you and I are counted worthy ... and it is only through grace.

* Through sovereign grace God has saved us. Through sovereign grace He has kept us, is keeping us and will keep us. Through sovereign grace He will welcome each one of His children through the gate of Heaven, *not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but ... holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27)*. All He gives to us is because of grace, and all to His glory.

* The ultimate purpose for which He saved me is His glory. When He welcomes me into Heaven it will all be to His glory. When He sees me walking down the street of Heaven He will have a smile on His face because He delights in the fact that it is all because of Him I am there.

* I'm probably not putting this the right way but ... immeasurable as my pleasure will be in glory, even greater will His pleasure be that He has me and every other of His blood-bought children with Him there.

* You see, we'll be there to His glory. The crowns He gives us will all be to His glory.

* The hymn writer tried to see the picture too, "I want to scale the utmost height, And catch a gleam of glory bright; But still I'll pray till Heaven I've found, 'Lord, lead me on to higher ground'".

CONCLUSION

* Like Abraham we are looking *for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:10)*.

* We began our study with the opening verse of the hymn ... In its final verse it says, "I shall see my Saviour's face, When I get home; Sing again of saving grace, When I get home; I shall stand before Him; Gladly I'll adore Him, Ever to be with Him, When I get home".

* It is a **Heavenly crown** we shall be given, and it was a **costly crown** ... and we shall wear it not for anything we have done but the **glory crown** will speak of all He has done for us ...

* "For all the Lord has done for me, I never will cease to praise Him; And for His grace so rich and free, I never will cease to praise Him. ... My Saviour! My Saviour! ... He's done so much for me."