

November 14th, 2021 "Revelation- The Unveiling #11"

Partners in Prayer

Dear Partners in Prayer Team,

"And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?' ...So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it."

Revelation 5:1-4 (NKJV)

"He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. All of that has gone forever."

Revelation 21:4 (TLBP)

"Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.' Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders."

Revelation 5:5-6 (NIV)



Dear John the Revelator,

I've been thinking a lot about heaven and the picture you showed us of your vision of heaven in Revelation Chapters 4 and 5 of has brought me to tears. The thought of the worship, the thought of being in God's presence has so overwhelmed me. I often play favorite songs of heaven, and I can't help but cry when I think of my loved ones who are waiting there. As I was sharing my sorrow with others, a Christian sister rebuked me and said, "Where is your faith? You shouldn't sorrow or grieve about your loved ones this long, remember you will not shed tears in heaven." In fact, she then quoted Scripture from Revelation 21:4 which says: "He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. All of that has gone forever." That sister made me feel it is wrong to cry and shed tears when we sorrow. So, my question is, "Is it true, we will not shed tears in heaven?" It makes me feel that showing emotion is wrong. My grief and sorrow aren't wrong, are they? People keep telling me I'm not getting over my grief, and that I'm not growing in faith because I am not getting over the sorrow I still feel. The comment from my friend has made me wonder, when we get to heaven, does God change us so that our emotions will be "turned off"? Will we not sorrow over those who don't make it to heaven? What if my children don't make it to heaven, am I supposed to be happy? I can't believe

that we will be emotionless 'robots' in glory. Can you answer or clarify any of this for me and show me why we will not "cry" in glory? My friends have created in me a desire to not go to heaven, if I can't sorrow for my lost loved ones.

Signed, "Can't turn Off the Water Works!"

Dear 'Can't!'

How sorry I am that people have made your tenderness and sorrow a test of faith and not understood the "tears" that are in heaven. Yes, there will be tears in heaven. In fact, just read chapter five verse four and you will see me weeping in heaven: "...So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it." Revelation 5:1-4 (NKJV) I am not a weak a Christian just because I cried seeing my heavenly vision before the throne and seeing Jesus, the Lion and the Lamb. When you've been through the loss of a spouse, child, or someone close to you, the experience can be heartrending.

A friend stood at the grave of his recently deceased wife grappling with the idea of never seeing her alive on this side of Heaven.

That feeling of finality could be like an emotional straight jacket. The lifesaver is the knowledge that as believers we can be reunited in Heaven where we are told tears will be wiped away. Maybe we need to remember that isn't the non-existence of tears, but the existence of what caused the tears won't exist. God doesn't have signs all through heaven saying: "Stop, No crying in Heaven! You're Not Babies in A Nursery Here!" The things in life that bother us most because of sin – death, sorrow, or pain will not be present with believers in Heaven.



And let me counsel and assure you that tears for loved ones are never ever wrong, and we should not feel that when we stop shedding tears, we have somehow become stronger in God. In the ministry, I find myself staring death in the face far too often. Most of the time it is someone who has lived a long, fulfilling life and is ready to go home to see Jesus. On occasion, I find myself thrust into the past when dealing with a family who has lost a child. The natural progression of life leads us to believe that parents are not supposed to bury their children. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Sometimes you never get over it. The best you can hope for is to learn to live with it to the point of being able to survive and be reminded that "Jesus will wipe away the tears." You must be in glory for that to happen.

I think that person has taken the text of Revelation and interpreted it to mean that no one “ever cries” in heaven anymore. That is so wrong, because there will be many kinds of “tears” and crying in heaven. So let me give you the kind of tears we may face when we get to heaven.

1. There will be tears in this life all the way to heaven!

A pastor friend taught me at a funeral once that we will shed tears for our loved ones as much as we have loved them. That when we stop crying, we will somehow have arrived at a spiritual height. Just look at Jesus’ love for His friend Lazarus. “On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home” (John 11:17-20).

The story continues, and we don’t see the Lord rebuking Mary, “‘Lord,’ Martha said to Jesus, ‘if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ Martha answered, ‘I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day’” (John 11:21-24). Jesus brings comfort when tears fall. Yes, He is the Christ who can do miracles, and yes Jesus was about to do the greatest miracle because He was God’s Son over the power of death. “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?’” (John 11:25-26). We know that Mary did believe. But then we see Jesus do something which is known as the shortest verse in the Bible, “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). Why? Because Jesus was human and loved Mary and He loved Lazarus. Even the people around Jesus understood, “Then the Jews said, ‘See how He loved him!’” (vs. 36). It is not a weakness nor is it wrong to never get over the death and have tears for our loved ones. Of course, we don’t want to grieve like those who have no hope (1 Thes. 4:13). I believe some people have used that verse and equated tears with having no hope. This isn’t true. We will have tears for our loved ones as much as we loved them. Our capacity for tears will continue as much as our capacity for our loved ones who have died. Never tell a person that they “need to get over the death and stop crying.”

2. There will be many tears of regret and sorrow in heaven!

Notice John is relaying this amazing vision of heaven, and when he learned that the Book of the Scroll with seven seals couldn’t be opened he cried in verse 5. Why was John crying? Because of the truth that none of us is worthy. Only the Jesus, the Lion and the Lamb, is worthy. Speaking of songs, this description of Jesus here in chapter five is where the song “Lion and the Lamb” comes from.

But the point is clear! There are tears in heaven. We will feel shame in glory

for things. Scripture says: “And now, dear children, continue in Him, so that when He appears we may be confident and unashamed before Him at His coming” (1 John 2:28). There will be tears in heaven. They will be tears of knowing what we don’t deserve and that Jesus alone is worthy. We as saints will not be judged for our sins, but we will give account of our deeds and rewards (2 Cor. 5:9-10).

We will have tears until we get to glory. “If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire” (1 Cor. 3:15). God keeps track of our tears, “You have taken account of my wanderings; put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book? (Psalm 56:8).

I love to think of Heaven’s songs which always bring us to tears. What songs of heaven do you know that always bring you to tears? One of many favorites is a song by the Southern Gospel group The Talleys called “Thinkin’ About Home.” The words by Alee Speer go like this:

Verse 1

“A penny for your thoughts, I said to the old man
As He sat there on the park bench all alone
With silver hair and wrinkled brow
Eyes gleaming He smiled and said
Just thinkin' 'bout my home

Verse 2

I sat down and we shared some laughs together
And the cinema of remembrance, it did roll
We talked about life's gains and its losses
But mostly He just talked about His home

Chorus 1

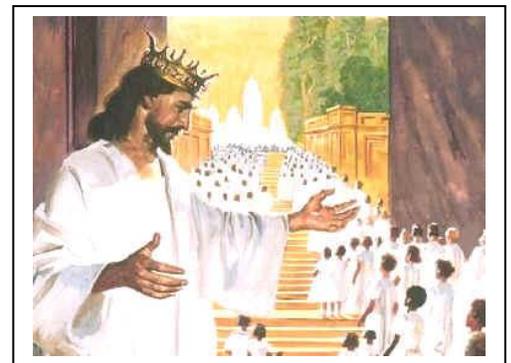
He said I'm thinking 'bout home, Thinkin' 'bout going home
Dreamin' 'bout leaving here, I'm ready to be movin' on
It won't be long before the sun will set and I'll be gone
But until then, I'll be thinkin' 'bout Him

Verse 3

I said, tell me old man, where's your home, and what's it like
He said oh ain't nothin' round here can compare
You see a King had it built and gave the deed to me
And all my fam'ly's already there

Repeat chorus

It won't be long before the sun will set and I'll be gone
But until then, I'll be thinkin' 'bout Him”



3. There will be tears of worship and joy in heaven!

The reason John was told not to weep is because the One who is worthy is Jesus. Then in chapter five all the praise and glory break out. There are three

songs which are recorded for us in the throne room of heaven and trust me, they bring tears as we sing them.

A. The first song is by the throne attendees (Rev. 5:8-10). They sing: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slain, and with Your blood You purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." (vs. 10)
I am sure the voices of such a choir will bring tears of joy as never before.

B. The second song is from the angels of heaven (Rev. 5:11-12). "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying: 'Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!'" (vs. 10-11).

I've recently heard a preacher say that angels never "sing" in the Bible; that they only "say." I don't know if that is true. I always thought angels sing. I remember the angels announcing the birth of Christ (Luke 2:14). Jesus also said when a sinner comes to salvation there is a party of joy by the angels rejoicing (Luke 15:7) but Scripture doesn't say they don't sing. Some suggest it is because they have experienced neither the depths of sin, (the minor chords in the musical scales) nor the heights of joy of redemption (the major chords in the musical scale). Only those who know sin and salvation can take advantage of the power of music for praising the Lamb. I don't know if that is true, but I still need to study the Bible and find out if the Bible says the angels "say" and never "sing." Maybe that is a question for a future time. But this suggests that angels give a new song in heaven, and when we hear it, tears will flow.

C. The third song is a song from all of creation (Rev. 5:13). When you study Revelation, did you know there are over 54 "sevens" that appear through this book? The repeated number seven is symbolic of God's faithfulness and completeness. Just as the days of creation were finished by the seventh day and God rested, so the constant use of sevens in this book gives meaning and understanding to God's final future plans for the world and creation. The third song is called the "seven praises" of Jesus. These praises are in the context of Jesus who is the only one worthy to open the scroll of seven seals (5:4-6). He is in the midst of the throne, and He is pictured by several descriptions of seven horns, eyes, and spirits (Rev. 5:6). Whether you know it or not, when you get to heaven, you are going to be in the choir. If we're going to spend eternity praising God, with triumphant praise, if we're going to be praising Him directly as the One who has redeemed us, shouldn't we be rehearsing a little bit down here so we can get ready for that? I like what Warren Wiersbe said: "*True*

spiritual worship is perhaps one of the greatest needs in our individual lives and in our churches. To worship means 'to ascribe worth' (see Rev. 4:11; 5:12). It means to use all that we are and have to praise God for all that He is and does. Heaven is a place of worship, and God's people shall worship Him throughout eternity. Perhaps it would be good for us to get in the practice now!" (Revelation, pg. 49)

In Revelation 5:12 we find this sevenfold doxology: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!" As we praise God, we will have tears. Think about these seven words of praise.

- Power- There is no plan or purpose that Jesus cannot carry out in our lives.
- Riches- There is no promise that Jesus doesn't have the resources to fulfill.
- Wisdom- There is no problem that Jesus cannot solve for us!
- Might- There are no powers of evil or temptation that Jesus cannot defeat for us.
- Honor- There are no princes or politicians that Jesus does not rule above. How many people are worried about losing their jobs? Just remember that Jesus is above our bosses.
- Glory- There are no principalities that Jesus doesn't have divine rights to. He gets the credit for all He sovereignly is doing in answers to our prayers.
- Blessings- There are no privileges that Jesus has not used or granted to us (Eph. 1:3).

Jesus possesses each of these attributes in abundance, completely and perfectly. There is no end to His resources to meet our needs and help us through times of tears and sorrow. We should be brought to tears just thinking that. So, remember, we will have tears of joy as we worship Jesus forever!

4. There will be tears for the prayers answered in heaven!

When we are looking into Heaven in Revelation 7, John shows us the prayers of the saints, which are like incense. When the believers of those prayers see the answers to their prayers, they "cry." So there will be tears in glory as we see our prayers answered at the throne of grace by Jesus (Heb. 4:16). And verse 17 says: "For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and He will guide them to springs of living water, **and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**" (Rev. 7:17). Guess where the saints are located when He wipes the tears away? In Heaven! The picture is true and accurate, that when God answers our prayers there are tears of joy! Those are tears we all will have in Heaven. This reminds us about how important our prayer ministry is!

Charles Spurgeon said this about our prayers going to God in Heaven alluding to Revelation 5:8 “Golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints.” It is a great picture and illustration of how our imperfect prayers are taken and made into an aroma of pleasure and a bouquet of pleasure for God. Here is what he said:

“THE PRAYERS OF GOD’S PEOPLE ARE AS SWEET TO HIM AS INCENSE. This is not due to any natural excellence or merit which they possess in themselves and by themselves. Far from it. In the best prayer that was ever offered by the holiest man that ever lived, there was enough of sin to render it a polluted thing if the Lord had looked upon it by itself. When we approach nearest to the throne of grace, we still fall very far short of being where and what we ought to be. The sins of our holy things are alone enough to condemn us.

We often come before God in prayer unfit to pray, and spoil the action in the very outset by unpreparedness of heart. At other times, when we are in the midst of devotion, when we are being up-borne upon the wings of zeal, pride will intrude, and we congratulate ourselves upon the excellence of our worship. Alas! one dash of that spirit mars all, it is the Pharisaic spirit, and is the bane of devotion. At other times, just as our supplication is closing, we are assailed with suspicions as to the faithfulness of God, doubts as to the success of our pleas, or else some other unhallowed thought pollutes the sacrifice. Alas! how hard it is to begin, continue, and end a prayer in the Spirit.

No, my brethren, the prayers of the saints of themselves considered would rather be an offense unto divine holiness than a sweet savor unto God. Our consolation lies in this that our beloved intercessor who stands before God for us, even Christ Jesus, possesses such an abundance of precious merit that He puts fragrance into our supplications and imparts a delicious odor to our prayers. He makes our intercessions to be through His merit what they could not have been without it, acceptable before the Majesty of heaven.

I think it is Ambrose who uses a very pretty figure concerning believers’ prayers. He says ‘we are like little children who run into the garden to gather flowers to please their father, but we are so ignorant and childish that we pluck as many weeds as flowers, and some of them very noxious, and we would carry this strange mixture in our hands, thinking that such base weeds would be acceptable to Him.’ The mother meets the child at the door, and she says to it, ‘Little one, you know not what you have gathered,’ she unbinds this mixture and takes from it all the weeds and leaves only the sweet flowers, and then she takes other flowers sweeter than those which the child has plucked, and inserts them instead of the weeds, and then puts back the perfect posy into the child’s hand, and it runs therewith to its father.

Jesus Christ in more than motherly tenderness thus deals with our supplications. If we could see one of our prayers after Christ Jesus has amended it, we should scarce know it again. He has such skill that even our good flowers grow fairer in His hand, we clumsily tied them into a bundle, but He arranges them into a fair bouquet, where each beauty enhances the charm of its neighbor. If I could see my prayer after the Lord has prayed it, I should miss so much, and I would find so much there that was none of mine, that I am sure its fullest acceptance with God would not cause me a moment’s pride.” (Spurgeon Sermon #1051 page 2.)

5. There will be tears all the way to heaven and beyond!

Let's go back to the "no more tears" passage your friend used against you to make you feel inadequate as a Christian in your faith because you can't stop shedding tears. What is this promise given in Revelation 21:5? Let's set the context. After Jesus opens the seven seals of the scrolls which are introduced in chapter five of Revelation, we see through the layout of the book that there is a series of seven judgments on the earth which takes place through the Tribulation (Rev. 6-7), along with seven trumpet judgments (Rev. 8-9). We will study those later. But when we see Christ return in Chapter 19, which is another "door opened" in heaven, and Christ returns to set up His literal kingdom (Chapter 20), there is another judgment mentioned. That is the Great White Throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). That judgment will have tears and even emotional "gnashing of teeth" because this is where the judgment of all unbelievers of all mankind through all the ages are brought for final judgment before being punished for eternity. At that judgment those who go into eternal Hell are in endless tears and sorrow for their sins.

It is after that time that Chapter 21 announces all the heavens and earth will be made "new". "Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth' for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away" (Revelation 21:1). This is the removal of all the effects of sin that Romans 8 talks about where all the curse of all creation is removed (Rom. 8:18-23), That final culmination affects not just the matter and energy into remaking a perfect, non-fallen environment, but we also are given glorified bodies and redeemed by Jesus to have perfect lives as Adam and Eve had before the Fall of Sin in Geneses 3. When that act happens, then the verse says that all sinful things will be taken away- anything that is broken, soiled, spoiled by sinfulness including anything that hurts us and causes sin.

Thus, we read: "He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. All of that has gone forever." Revelation 21:4 (TLBP) This is not a description of Heaven, but of what the new heaven and earth in the forever eternal state will be like. He is not eliminating human emotions or the ability to cry, but only those things in connection with the effects of sin. You may have heard that new song "The only scars in heaven will be the ones holding you" (2021 by Casting Crowns). That song has been used recently in a funeral and it reminds us that what God is promising to do is eradicate the effects of sin but not stop tears. Look at those words by Casting Crowns just released this summer. They were words sung at the funeral of Frido Bushmann:

"If I had only known the last time would be the last time
I would've put off all the things I had to do
I would've stayed a little longer, held on a little tighter
Now what I'd give for one more day with you

'Cause there's a wound here in my heart where something's missing
And they tell me that it's gonna heal with time
But I know you're in a place where all your wounds have been erased
And knowing yours are healed is healing mine.

The only scars in heaven, they won't belong to me and you
There'll be no such thing as broken, and all the old will be made new
And the thought that makes me smile now, even as the tears fall down
Is that the only scars in heaven are on the hands that hold you now." (June 2021).

Aren't those words comforting? Jesus doesn't want our hearts to be troubled, (John 14:1) but that doesn't mean we can't have tears. This song is reminding us that someday Jesus will hold us and He will be the only person for eternity that will have any reminder or any effect of sin. I believe that we see the compassion of Jesus here in such a marvelous way!

Notice Jesus' compassion, "He wipes our tears." He comforts and holds and loves us forever into eternity. "He

wipes" tells us that He is the only one active enough to handle our tears and the things we can't. If in heaven, we can't wipe away our sorrow, He will. But the promise isn't to eliminate all "tears", but the promise is to eliminate all of sin's scars and sinful effects. God's plan isn't to make us super human and we never feel weakness or emotion. God's plan is to make us like Jesus, and we will be all that God intends perfect humans to be. We will not lose our "tear ducts" when that



occurs. This doesn't mean we will never cry tears because that is being human. But it does mean that we as remade glorified perfect humans the way God intended will have tears that never cry because of the effects or feelings of sin anymore. No sin, no effects. No tears caused by sinful things will happen someday.

People who claim we are weak or will never cry in Heaven have imposed a false idea onto this promise. They need to see what God really "takes away," and it isn't tears. There will be many times of "good-healthy" perfect tears in glory. We will still feel emotions which are redeemed, yet without sin-filled hearts. We will still have tears, but we will be free forever of sin's scars and effects. Dear "Can't turn off the water works" ... you are okay! You may keep the

“water works going” until you get to heaven, and even through heaven and Jesus will wipe your tears until He “makes all creation new again!”

Isn't it glorious to find tears as we seek what we long for in heaven? I want to close with another song that always brings tears to my eyes. I may even request it for my funeral if I meet the “Uppertaker” instead of the “undertaker.” It was written in the 70's by B. J. Thomas. I still remember that old vinyl 33 speed record album as I wore scratches and skips into the song called: “Home Where I Belong.” It goes like this:

“They say that heavens pretty,
And living here is too.
But if they said that I would have to choose between the two.
I'd go home,
Going home,
Where I belong.

And sometimes when I'm dreaming,
It comes as no surprise.
That if you look and see the homesick feeling in my eyes.
I'm going home,
Going home, to heaven,
Where I belong.”

Then I love the closing of the song until I get to glory:

“While I'm here I'll serve Him gladly,
And sing Him (Jesus) all my songs.
I'm here, but not for long.
And when I'm feeling lonely,
And when I'm feeling blue.
It's such a joy to know that I am only passing through.
And one day I'll be sleeping,
When death knocks on my door.
And I'll awake and find that I'm not homesick anymore.
I'm headed home,
Going home,
Where I belong.” (B. J. Thomas, CC Records, 1977)

There are songs that bring the tears loved ones; just keep singing them until we worship together in heaven! So, kick back, find some songs that bring tears and sing them with all your heart! As we praise God this day, and as our tears flow in worship and joy, let's worship with all our hearts and souls.

Will you pray with me?

“Almighty One on the Throne, Father of great compassion, grace, and

love, we have come before You to worship You. But as we speak words of worship and sing songs of praise that bring tears, we are reminded by Your Word that we are to have no other gods before You. Our worship of You is neither consistent nor wholehearted. Forgive us we pray. Lord Jesus, we know You alone are worthy for us! You alone are worthy of opening Heaven's deed and all that Heaven holds for us to enter. We need You to wipe away our tears and replace them with tears of joy. We confess we don't often long for Heaven. We are creatures of this world and crave worldly things, not heavenly ones. We ask You to grow a desire in us for Heaven. Help us not be satisfied with the things of this world, but long for closeness with You and the perfection of eternity in Your presence. Holy Spirit, clear our vision, we pray, that we might see our souls as hidden with Christ on High, our Savior and Lord, and feel His love. Lord, thank You for the hope of Heaven and the joy we will have when we get there! In Jesus' Name, our Lion and our Worthy Lamb slain, Amen."

**Praying and thinking about home,
Pastor Seltzer <><**

Quote: "Heaven will be the perfection we've always longed for. All the things that made Earth unlovely and tragic will be absent in heaven." ...Billy Graham

Quote: "There are no crown-wearers in heaven who were not cross-bearers here below." ...Charles Spurgeon

Quote: "The way to Heaven is ascending; we must be content to travel uphill, though it be hard and tiresome, and contrary to the natural bias of our flesh." ... Jonathan Edwards

Quote: "Heaven is not a figment of imagination. It is not a feeling or an emotion. It is not the "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere." It is a prepared place for a prepared people."
... Dr. David Jeremiah

Quote: "We need to be homesick for heaven. Though we have never been there, we still have something God has built within us that gives us a certain homesickness, a desire to be there." ...Greg Laurie

Quote: "Heaven is a family gathering of believers from every tribe and nation, but it is also our Father's house, and in that house, He is preparing a room just for you. When you arrive in heaven and Jesus opens the door, you'll know you're home. For the Christian, heaven is spelled H-O-M-E." ...David Mccasland