

QUESTION #21 – Will there be a reunion in heaven with loved ones who died who were believers?

The answer is a dogmatic “yes.” We may establish this fact from both the O.T. and the N.T..

From the first book of the Bible we get an answer to this question. In the Old Testament we may cite several texts that prove the point:

- 1) Abraham was told by God that he would die and “go to his father’s in peace” (Gen.15:15).
- 2) When Abraham did die we read “He was gathered to his people” (Gen. 25:8).
- 3) When Isaac died we read, “he was gathered to his people an old man of ripe age” (Gen. 35:29).
- 4) When Jacob died we read, “He was gathered to his people” (Gen. 49:33).

When we turn to the N.T., the answer is the same—when one dies there is a reunion with loved ones who died before him.

One critical passage of Scripture on this point is I Thessalonians 4:13-18. In verse 17 the critical prepositional phrase is “with them” which indicates there is a reunion that takes place with loved ones who have died and have gone to heaven. In heaven there will be many family reunions.

The truth is Christians never say good-bye forever to their loved one, if that loved one is a believer in Jesus Christ. What they say is “good night for a while; I’ll see you again when I get there.”

QUESTION #22 – Will we be recognizable and will our loved ones be recognizable and have recognizable bodies?

The answer to this is yes. When Jesus Christ was raised from the dead after His death, He came back to life in a real body that included all the scars of the crucifixion (Luke 24:39-40; John 20:27). Jesus was very specific to say that He was not a spirit and He even called His resurrected body “flesh and bones” (Luke 24:39).

We learn in Philippians 3:21 that our bodies will ultimately be like His body so we may assume that we will have a real, recognizable body like He does. What that means is that we will recognize each other.

Moses and Elijah were recognized by Peter and James and John at Christ’s transfiguration (Matt. 17:3).

QUESTION #23 – When one goes to heaven today does one move out of time?

There are those who hold to the position that when one goes to heaven one moves out of a time dimension and into an eternal dimension. In fact, Arthur Custance wrote a book that somewhat touches on this idea called “Journey Out of Time.”

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We know that Peter said one day with the Lord was like one thousand years to us (II Pet. 3:8). So will heaven be a place where time stands still or flies by? **The answer is in heaven we do exist in time.** When we search the Scriptures, it is very clear that time is kept in heaven:

- 1) In Daniel there is a seven year period that is yet to occur that will feature the Tribulation and the last 3 ½ years is broken down into 1260 days (Daniel 9:24-27; Rev. 12:6). Since all of this is being authorized from heaven, heaven is on real time as we know it.
- 2) If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents and comes to Christ, it is obviously happening in real time of which heaven is aware (Luke 15:7).
- 3) In Revelation 7:15 it is revealed that there is service in heaven “day and night.”
- 4) In Revelation 8:1, we learn that there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. So time is operating in heaven in the same way it is operating on earth.
- 5) In Revelation 22:2, in the New Heaven, New Earth and New Jerusalem there is a yielding of fruit every month.

Now all of these things indicate that Heaven operates on a Time schedule as we know it. I like what one student of the Bible said, when it comes to heaven “don’t confuse eternity (time that is without end) with infinity (time that is without limits).”

We will live in eternity, which means we will live with the Lord forever in a time that will not end; but we will live in a time that does have limits that feature real hours, days, months and years. There will be a real chronology in heaven.

QUESTION #24 – Will we be ourselves in heaven?

The answer as near as we may determine is that **we will be ourselves, but without the bad sinful stuff about ourselves.**

It is clear that Jesus recognized people by name, including Lazarus, who was in Abraham’s bosom (Luke 16:25). Jesus spoke of a time when people in eternity would dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. 8:11).

Now the name of a person is that which specifies them from someone else. It is a person’s identity and when we go to heaven we will still have our identity. Our individual assessment at the Bema Seat Judgment demands we be who we were. We certainly are not some faceless, nameless individual in heaven; we will be ourselves.

We will have an intellect; we will have emotions (Rev. 6:10). Apparently there will be laughter (Luke 6:21).

QUESTION #25 – Does one in heaven have memories of what life was like on earth?

Actually there is a debate on this point. Some suggest that the unbeliever does have memory of what life was like on earth but the believer doesn't have much memory. One primary text used to suggest that the believer does not have a memory is Matthew 25:37-40. However, this passage has nothing to do with a believer not having memory; it has to do with a believer not knowing he was actually ministering for Christ by ministering to the Jews.

The true Biblical answer to this question is yes. Those who leave this earth and are in eternity do have memories. One in heaven does remember things from life on earth. By examining several different passages we may conclude the following:

- 1) Gen. 15:15; 25:8; 35:29; 49:33 - All of these passages assume people remember their families.
- 2) I Samuel 28:16-18 - Samuel remembered his connection to Saul and Saul's rebellion.
- 3) II Samuel 12:23 - We can make an assumption that when David died and saw this child, he would remember the circumstances of this.
- 4) Matthew 7:22 - Many who appear before Christ remember what they did religiously.
- 5) Luke 16:25 - The rich man remembered good things he had in life.
- 6) Luke 16:25 - Lazarus apparently remembered some of the bad things he experienced in his life.
- 7) Luke 16:28 - The rich man remembered he had five brothers on earth.
- 8) II Corinthians 5:10 - This assumes that the believer does have a memory of whether or not he/she did good or bad things while in the body.
- 9) I Timothy 5:17-19 - This assumes that a person can remember what he/she did with their money.
- 10) Revelation 6:9-11 - The martyred saints in heaven remember they were martyred. This would be about the worst kind of memory one could have.

There can be little doubt that these passages do prove that one who goes to heaven does have memories of life on earth.

