

Is Heaven the Reward of Salvation?

Is heaven the reward of salvation? Is this promised in scriptures, or is there something else promised? There are 32 scriptures in the New Testament mentioning the “Kingdom of Heaven,” some of which seem to indicate that heaven is where we will be, but is this really what is being stated?

Matt 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." NKJV

Matt 5:10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." NKJV

2 Cor 5:1 "For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. :2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven..." NKJV

Sounds good so far, right? But... is this saying WE will be IN heaven as a reward of salvation?

John 14:3 "Let not your heart be troubled; you 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." NKJV

Christ will come again, and receive the Church to Himself, but where will Christ be? Did you realize that nowhere in scriptures does it say “Kingdom IN Heaven?” It is always “Kingdom OF Heaven” so where is this Kingdom OF Heaven going to be established? In heaven, most presume, but scriptures suggest otherwise...

Dan 2:44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." NKJV

All of Daniel discusses this Kingdom being set up over all other human kingdoms on earth at the time. What time IS that?

1 Thess 4:16 "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord." NKJV

Those dead in Christ (all who have died since the beginning and were converted) will be resurrected from their graves and given new spirit bodies and made immortal, and “always be

with the Lord.” So again, where will Christ, our Lord, be at this junction of time?

Zech 14:4 “And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives...” NKJV

“In that day” is the day of Christ’s return, the first resurrection of the church from death to life, and then off to the battle of Armageddon in Jerusalem and the state of Israel. After this, the Kingdom will be established on this earth, as Micah so clearly states, “on the top of the mountains...”

Mic 4:1 “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills;” NKJV

This “mountain” is the Kingdom of God being set up by Christ. Notice also that our “reward” isn’t to BE in heaven, it is coming FROM heaven...

Rev 11:18 "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come... 18: And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints..."

This rewarding can only take place after the saints are resurrected from their graves. It can’t happen before this.

22:12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." NKJV

Christ is bringing our reward WITH Him, which He prepared while in Heaven... positions (mansions) in the newly established Kingdom of God. This is the Kingdom of God being ushered in by Christ, who will rule over this Kingdom for 1000 years, along with the resurrected saints of the Church helping Him.

Rev 20:4 “And I saw thrones, and they (the resurrected saints) sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years . 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.” NKJV

The rest of humanity who were not part of the church in this age will be resurrected after the millennium, for their time of understanding and “judgment.” In the meantime, God’s kingdom fills th earth...

Dan 2:34 “You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image (symbol of Earth’s kingdoms) on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. 35 Then the

iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.”

Dan 2:44 “And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” NKJV

As you can see, there is no time or reason for the saved to be going to Heaven because the Kingdom will not only be established here on THIS earth at Christ’s return, but the Father Himself will come after the millennium...

Rev 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 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." NKJV

Here’s the capstone of the whole process...

1 Cor 15:28 “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

The above includes the 2nd resurrection mentioned in Rev 20:5, and the final judgment, and end of death...

27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” NKJV

The kingdom Christ is delivering to the Father is right here on Earth. After the millennium, the Father comes to dwell with mankind, and Christ Himself will also be subject to the Father, as Rev. 21:2-4 also shows us. The Father and Son are two distinct beings as they have always been. It is a marvelous plan that the Father and His Kingdom has in store, and our reward will be far better than “going to heaven,” and will last forever!