

1/17/19

What About The Five Crowns? Pt. 1
Selected Scriptures

The Bible is clear that every believer must stand before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 2Cor. 5:10

1. The basis of judgment will be the motive of the heart. 1Cor. 4:5a-c
2. The end result will be that everyone will have praise of God, not from man. 1Cor. 4:5d
3. The loss of all reward has nothing to do with our salvation for it is by grace through faith and not of ourselves. 1Cor. 3:15; Eph. 2:8-9
4. The judge will be Jesus Christ. Jn. 5:22

There are five particular crowns referred to in the New Testament promised to the believer at the “Bema Seat” of Christ, we will take them in two parts.

- I. The incorruptible crown. 1Cor. 9:24-27
- II. The crown of righteousness. 2Tim. 4:7-8
- III. The crown of rejoicing. 1Thess. 2:19
- IV. The crown of glory. 1Pet. 5:4
- V. The crown of life. Ja. 1:12

We want to answer the question, “What about the five crowns?” in our first study by looking at three things.

- I. The various crowns in the Old and New Testament.
- II. The incorruptible crown.
- III. The crown of righteousness.

I. The various crowns in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

- A. Crowns are associated with a head dress to identify and distinguish an individual as King or an exalted position of honor.
 1. They symbolize honor, authority and dignity.
 2. They vary in sizes and shapes from culture to culture.
 3. The sizes and shapes of crowns vary from culture to culture.
 - a. The Upper and lower crowns of Egypt vary in shape, some having a cobra on it.
 - b. The Assyrian crown was different from the Persian crown.
 - c. The common symbolic stature of crowns was to declare the power of ruling through kings.
- B. The Old Testament has five different words that are used for crown.
 1. There is a word “kodhkodh” used to describe the crown of the head, the top of the head or the scalp. Deut. 28:35; 33:16
 2. There is another word “Zer” used for *ornamentation or decoration* to identify the golden molding on the furnishings of the Tabernacle, such as the table of shewbread, the ark of the covenant and the alter of incense. Ex. 25, 30

3. There is yet another word “Nezer” which has a two-fold use of *consecration*.
 - a. The word describes the golden miter on the high priests forehead which read “Holiness to the Lord” and was held on by a blue lace. Ex. 39:30
 - b. The word was also used only for crowning a Hebrew King, who was to be separated unto God and according to Zachariah it had jewels. 2Sam. 1:10; 2King 11:12; Ps. 89:39; Zech. 6:11
 4. There is a fourth word “kether” used of *coronation*, for crowning foreign kings and monarchs and it means to encircle. Est. 1:11; 2:17; 6:8
 5. The last word “atarah” is used also for *coronation* in crowning foreign kings but it is used also for the *exaltation* of the victors of games, achievements in war and places of honor at feasts. 2Sam. 12:30; Song Sol 3:11; Is. 28:13; Ezk. 16:12; 21:26; 23:42
- C. The New Testament has two words for crown.
1. The first word is “diadema” that means to bind around and designates royalty, honor and symbolic of power to rule by a king, appearing three times in the New Testament.
 - a. It is used for the seven crowns of the head of the red dragon, Satan. Rev. 12:3
 - b. It is used for the beast and his ten crowns. Rev. 13:1

- c. It is used of Jesus Christ as He returns to the earth with many crowns. Rev. 19:12
2. The second word is “stephanos” that means a chaplet or circlet from the word “to wreath” and is mostly used to denote the laurel wreath awarded to the victor at the games and also used of festive garland at times of rejoicing.
 - a. This is the word that is used to identify the “five crowns”, for the believer and it is always the representative of the conqueror’s crown not the king’s.
 - b. The only place where the word “stephanos” is used for a king is in the Gospels where our Lord is crowned with the crown of thorns in mockery of being King of the Jews.
 - * Without knowing they were crowning Jesus as the conquering king over sin, death and hell! 1Cor. 15:55-57

These are the various words used to describe the various crowns in the Old Testament and in the New Testament!

- II. **The incorruptible crown. 1Cor. 9:24-27**
 - * *The incorruptible crown is for those who are obedient, disciplined and deny their flesh.*
 - A. The incorruptible crown is characterized by the motivation to win. vs. 24

* “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*.”

1. Paul poses the rhetorical question saying, “Do you not know” all run to win?, the only correct answer is YES!

* Perhaps Paul had the Isthmian games held every two years in mind, second to the Olympics.

2. The motivation to run is in order to win and be crowned.

3. The metaphor of a race is a favorite of Paul for the Christian life. Phil. 3:12-14

a. Not that I have already attained, the race is not over till your life on this earth is over. vs. 12

b. Forgetting those things which are behind, the race can not be run or won by looking backwards. vs. 13d

c. Reaching forward to those things that are ahead, the race is a process and has a finish line. vs. 13d

d. I press towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, the race is in order to be conformed into Christ's death and be more like Him by the resurrected power. Phil. 3:10-11

* Take note as we study these crown that each is built on the previous one, the foundational one is the incorruptible

crown, followed by the crown of righteousness.

B. The incorruptible crown is characterized by discipline. vs. 25

* “And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for an imperishable crown*.”

1. The word competes “agonizomai” has as its root word “agon”.

a. Originally it meant an assembly gathered together for Grecian games.

b. Later it was used to identify the contest.

c. Ultimately it was used of the intensity and conflict of the competition.

* The word means to struggle, labor, fervently strive, we get our word agonize from it. Lk. 13:24; Col. 1:29; 4:12; 1Tim. 6:12; 2Tim. 4:7

2. Athletes that compete are “temperate in all things” “egkrateuomai”, exercising their will to restrain themselves from things that will not help them achieve the physical conditioning or tear down their progress.

a. They sacrificed willfully and willingly pleasure and leisure to spend that time training.

b. They disciplined themselves to a certain life style in terms of schedules, eating habits and patterns of training.

- c. They push their bodies to the limit and endure much pain.
 - d. The athletes of the Isthmian games entered a very strict grueling training ten months prior to the games.
4. The goal of the athlete was to “obtain a perishable crown”.
- a. The word perishable “phtartos”, means corruptible and perishable.
 - b. This was a laurel wreath or garland that would soon wither.
 - c. But Paul says we, the believer runs for an incorruptible “aphthartos” crown, uncorrupted and imperishable.
 - 1) It will not wither through time.
 - 2) It is not for vain glory that we run, but for God's glory.

C. The incorruptible crown is characterized by commitment. vs. 26-27

* The mysterious combination of divine and human is ever necessary!

1. The commitment to be Spirit controlled. vs. 26
- * “Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air.”
- a. Knowing the will and direction of God through His word, “I therefore run thus: not with uncertainty. Gal. 2:20

- b. Knowing the warfare is spiritual, “Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air”. Eph. 6:12
 - * The word fight “pukteuo” means to fight with the fist or shadow box.
2. The commitment of the will to be consistent. vs. 27
- * “But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”
- a. By denying my sin nature that is ever present through the divine nature, “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection”. vs. 27a
 - * The phrase I discipline “hupopiazoo” means to strike under the eye, literally he gave himself black eyes to submit his flesh under. 2Pet. 1:3-4
 - b. By being careful and not do anything to disqualify myself, “Lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”
 - * The word disqualified “adokimos” means disapproved, rejected, rightly disqualified.
 - c. The commitment is personal and individual, five times the personal pronoun “I” appears in these two verses.
3. The good instructions are given to all athletes. Heb. 12:1-2

- a. To lay aside every weight of sin which so easily ensnares me. vs. 1b
- b. To run with endurance the race that is set before me, tailored for my life. vs. 1c
- c. To look to Jesus my example and the author and finisher of my faith, who despised the shame of the cross but endured it through the joy of knowing it would accomplish the redemption of lost man. vs. 2
 - 1) This is the man who brings his body under .
 - 2) This is the one who brings every thought into captivity.
 - 3) This is the one who has self-control because he is Spirit controlled.
 - 4) This is the person who thirst and hungers after righteousness.
 - 5) This is the man whose soul pants after God as the deer pants after the water brook.
 - 6) This is the one who puts on the whole armor of God on in order to stand, withstand and ends up standing, though he agonizes he never gives up.
 - 7) This is the servant that will receive the incorruptible crown.

The incorruptible crown is for those who are obedient, disciplined and denying their flesh!

III. The crown of righteousness. 2Tim. 4:7-8

** The crown of righteousness is for those who love the Lord's appearing.*

- A. The crown of righteousness is characterized by having fought a good fight. vs. 7a
 - * "I have fought the good fight."
 - 1. The difficulties of life and unexplained things have not caused them to look at life with regret or a pessimistic attitude.
 - 2. The perspective about the warfare is that it is a good fight, it is worth fighting.
 - 3. The victory has been accomplished through the spiritual weapons of prayer, the word and the filling of the Holy Spirit.
- B. The crown of righteousness is characterized by having finished the race. vs. 7b
 - * "I have finished the race."
 - 1. Knowing when God saved them, so their committed was to run for the purpose of winning.
 - 2. Trusting God for the strength and depended on Him for wisdom and direction through the difficult times in life.
 - 3. Seeing the value of all their obedience and hardships as they have journeyed through life, for it transformed them into the image of Jesus Christ.

C. The crown of righteousness is characterized by having kept the faith. vs. 7c

* “I have kept the faith.”

1. The faith in reference is to the person in Christ.
 - a. He was the promise Messiah.
 - b. He was God before He came.
 - c. He became man in order to be the substitute for man’s sins.
 - d. He was God-man during His earthly ministry.
 - e. He is God-man interceding for man before the Father.
2. The faith in reference to the Scriptures.
 - a. The need to repent from ones sins in order to be saved.
 - b. The need of growing, developing and maturing in Christ through the word.
 - c. The need of acknowledging the inerrancy and infallibility of the Scripture being Inspired of God, to thoroughly equip the man if God for every good work.
 - d. The need of proclaiming the gospel to the lost for salvation.

D. The crown of righteousness is for all who look forward to the Lord’s return, just as Paul. vs. 8

* “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not

to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

1. The crown is laid up for those who fall in this category.
2. The righteous judge, Jesus Christ will give that crown to them in that “Day”.
3. The reason is that they have lived with the great expectation “loving to see His appearing”, as a bride waiting for her groom because of her love for him.
 - a. Those who live in a continuous anticipation of His Coming are doing all possible to live in His righteousness, purifying themselves as He is pure. 1Jn. 3:1-2
 - b. Those who are living godly are those who are looking for the blessed hope, the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Tit. 2:13
 - 1) So Christ was once offered to bare the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time without sin, for salvation. Heb. 9:28
 - 2) For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Heb. 10:7
 - c. The days before His coming would be like the days of Noah and Sodom and Gomorra.
 - 1) The Second Coming of Christ is mentioned over 30 time in the New

- Testament, equivalence of once every 24-30 verses.
- 2) The writings of Paul reflect more than 50% of the content referring to the second coming of Christ.
 - 3) There are eight times more verses of the Second Coming than the First Coming.
 - 4) There are entire books given to the subject of the Second Coming. 1-2Thess. ; Rev.
 - 5) There are entire chapters given to the Second Coming. Matt. 24; Mk. 13; Lk. 21
 - 6) The Second Coming is literal not symbolic. Jn. 14:2-3, Acts 1:11, Rev. 1:7
 - 7) The Second Coming was not fulfilled by the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost nor at A.D. 70, when Titus destroyed Jerusalem.
 - 8) The Second Coming will be a source of mocker in the last days. 2Pet. 3:3-9
 - 9) The Second Coming is marked by signs and characterized by evil. Matt. 24; Mk. 13; Lk. 21; 1Thess. 5:1-8; 2Thess. 2:1-12; 1Tim. 4:1-3; 2Tim. 3:1-7; Ja. 5:1-8; 2Pet. 3:1-10
 - 10) The Second Coming is anticipated by increased knowledge and travel. Dan. 12:4

* Today's present knowledge is the product of the last 70 years, 80% plus of all medicines and surgical procedures are since WW II and 80% or more of all scientist who ever lived are alive today.

- 11) There are over 50 exhortations to the believer to watch and be ready.
- d. Some questions are needful at this point.
- 1) Are you more pre-occupied and concerned about the earthly realm more than the heavenly realm?
 - 2) Are the things you perceive and come in contact with in your everyday life seen and handled according to the Spirit?
 - 3) Are you going to be like the five foolish virgins who were not ready for the grooms coming?
* In such a time as you think not the Son of Man is coming!
 - 4) Are you looking for his coming only to escape your problems or because you really love His appearing?
 - 5) You stand in one of two places.
 - a) You are living apart from His righteousness and therefore you are not looking or loving His appearing!
 - b) You are living in His righteousness and therefore you are looking and loving His appearing!

The crown of righteousness is for those who love His appearing!

Illustration

The messages of Jesus to the seven churches also gives seven promises to the overcomers.

1. To the church of Ephesus it is to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Rev. 2:7
2. To the church of Smyrna it is to not be hurt of the second death. Rev. 2:11
3. To the church of Pergamos it is to give some of the hidden manna to eat and a white stone with a name written which no one knows except him who receives it. Rev. 2:17
4. To the church of Thyatira it is to have power over the nations. Rev. 2:26
5. To the church of Sardis it its to be clothed in white garments and not blot out his name out of the book of life but confess him before the Father and the angels. Rev. 3:5
6. To the church of Philadelphia it is to make him a pillar in the temple of God and write the name of God and the city of God, the new Jerusalem. Rev. 3:12
7. To the church of Laodicea it is to sit with Him on His throne. Rev. 3:21

Conclusion

These are the first two crowns promised to the believer

- I. The various crowns of the Old and New Testament!
- II. The incorruptible crown: *for those who are obedient disciplined and deny their flesh!*
- II. The crown of righteousness: *for those who have love His appearing!*