

The Hope of GLORY

An Event in Our Conversion Experience, Grossly Under-reported by the Main Stream Religious World, is Our being Made SPIRIT at the Last Trump. The Event we should Anticipate the MOST Seems to be Understood the Least!

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An old love song contains the line, “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread!” There is also a theological area where many fear to delve into. But since angels have desired to look into matters of this nature,¹ **we** shouldn’t shy away. Perhaps trepidation of a sort could help explain the aversion to developing and expounding upon that change from flesh to Spirit we read of in 1st Corinthians 15, re-enforced in 1st Thessalonians 4. Perhaps ignorance could explain it. Perhaps incompatibility with ‘preferred’ explanations can account for the avoidance of this area of understanding. But at the Last Trump, those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life will be called out of their graves or called up from where they stand, being translated into an immortal state of being, no longer alive in the physical form that provided us our living existence previously. What is the **form** of that new existence?

A noticeable clue to a lack of understanding in this area is when religious organizations misrepresent the real intent of the verse that says, “...*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*” (Col. 1:27) Glory in this instance is alleged to be a euphemism for ‘going to heaven’. (It seems there is a dearth of scriptures about going to heaven, and this one is warped to fit the bill.) But, that makes ‘glory’ a locale, not a

state of being. It’s a destiny, **not** a destination!

Is Glory a Place?

What biblical reference do we have that suggests ‘glory’ is a place? There’s little more than over use in that context among the fundamentalists to remotely support the premise. Many have heard it used that way so often, that’s how it registers in their minds. It is a gross mis-conception that obscures the truth of the matter. Further along in Colossians, chapter 3, verse 4, it says, “*When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*” Some see this passage as a description of His snatching away His Saints to heaven, but that creates a significant discrepancy with the teaching that people at death ascend immediately to heaven. Why then would we need to **wait** for Christ’s return for that to happen? There’s no end to the doctrinal incongruities when people promote unbiblical premises.

Paul asks our same question in 1st Corinthians 15, “...*How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?*” (v.35) and answers it! “...*So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*” (vs. 42-44) then, “*And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*” (v.49) Raised in **glory**, the **image** of the heavenly! Glory is a state of being, **not** a location. The ‘spiritual body’ is a glorified immortal form. It is this **form** (not some place) that we should strive to more fully comprehend. What IS ‘*the image of the heavenly*’? If we continue to

¹ 1st Peter 1:10-12 “*Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12: Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*” (They apparently don’t know what we can know!)

ignorantly conceive of glory as a place, would we ever think to ask this insightful question!

The Heavenly Image

Paul called attention to what he referred to as a 'mystery': The suggestion that mortal, corruptible (corrupt) human beings can be changed from their carnal physical existence into another **kind** of being with an entirely different quality of existence. *"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:"* (Col. 1:27) *"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;² neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump**: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."* (1st Cor. 15:49-53) But, as it says earlier in the chapter, *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's **at his coming**."* (vs. 22-23)

What Paul is explaining to us is that the **glorified form** will become manifest in God's Saints at the moment of the first resurrection which occurs at the event of His second coming, not before! That raises the question of what possible *form* would one be in to ascend up to heaven at death?³ Certain 'doctrinal difficulties' are quite apparent, and could well account for the disregard or aversion among fundamentalists of this subject. What **is** glory and when do true Saints receive it?

When God's Saints are resurrected, they are raised

² This statement adds considerably to the dynamics of the considerations. Flesh and blood can not inherit the Kingdom of God, but yet we see flesh and blood INHABITING the millennial kingdom, which we also refer to by that name. What we see is a kind of being which inherits a position within the kingdom, a higher level being, not just a physical subject of it! A being of higher order and plane of existence.

³ The article: *"Absent from the Body and Present with the Lord"* addresses this particular consideration more specifically. In what form do people supposedly ascend to heaven?

in glorified bodies: Those bearing the image of the heavenly, made immortal, incorruptible, and in the express likeness of the 'firstborn of many brethren'. *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be **conformed to the image** of his Son, that he might be the **firstborn among many brethren**. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also **glorified**."* (Rom. 8:29-30) *"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him **in glory**."* (Col. 3:4) It is our destiny to be conformed to the image of His Son's glorified form! Phil. 3:20-21 has: *"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be **fashioned like unto his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."* Again, the question is, what is that form?

Having Seen His Glory

We have several examples of God's servants having **seen** the Lord in glorified form. Not the least of which is Moses. Though YHWH (the pre-incarnate Christ) spoke to Moses face to face as a man to a man, (Ex. 33:11) yet he also was allowed the privilege of briefly seeing Him in His glorified state. (v.18, 20-23 and 34:5-6) But, the high level of glorification Moses saw precluded him from seeing His face! (v.20) Moses was allowed only a brief glimpse of His receding back.

Daniel also saw this Being. His experience is noteworthy and extraordinary. Daniel in chapter 10 saw a "man", obviously in a glorified form, whose appearance was identical to the one John saw in Revelation 1. But Daniel saw this Being in different degrees of glorification. First, highly glorified (v. 5-7) then in less imposing form (v.16) then finally as a 'normally appearing man' (v.18). Daniel refers to this Being three times as "**my lord**", a term he uses nowhere else. (The same term David used in Psalm 110:1, but for some unexplained reason the translators chose to use the lower case here though the upper case in Psalm 110.)

The Apostle John also describes seeing the glorified Christ very clearly identifying Him as such (the Alpha and Omega) (Rev. 1:11-17) John had also

been present with Peter and James on the Mount of Transfiguration late in Jesus' ministry when He showed them His glorified appearance. (Matt. 17:2) (Certain internal evidence suggests this was around the time of the fall Feast of Tabernacles.)

A Glory Divested

We should also be reminded that the Being who became the Son divested Himself of His original state in order to become 'servant' to the interests of humanity. "...*Christ Jesus: Who, being in the **form of God**, thought it not robbery to be **equal** with God: But **made himself** of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was **made in the likeness of men**: And being found in fashion as a man, he **humbled himself**, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*" (Philippians 2:7-8) This form in which He existed while directly interacting with men was vastly different from what He had been like prior to His decision to divest Himself of that Glorified form! Even in the (semi-) glorified state that He manifested Himself to His servants in on rare occasion, He was seen in a form far below the level of His former state. The Glory of the Father which He originally shared is vastly greater. Paul explains that Jesus presently '***dwells in the light that no man can approach unto***', (1st Tim. 6:16) referring to God the Father's Glory. (God the Father is a Being that no man has seen or can see. (Same verse) A statement consistent with John's and Jesus' own affirmations. ⁴ This is a realization we should always keep clearly in mind when identifying who it was that Moses, Daniel and John had seen.)

The Glory of the LORD

In His prayer that Passover evening just prior to His Sacrificial death, Jesus asked to be **restored** to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. (John 17:5) This indicates to us that He enjoyed a more glorious state of being prior to that decision to take on '*the likeness of men*', and that the glorified form exhibited to men was drastically below the level of Glory He had once possessed.

⁴ John 1:18, 6:46, & 5:37 "*And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. **Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.***" My article, "*No Man has Seen God*" addresses who it was that a few DID see and hear.

So, while dealing with mankind even in His preincarnate state, the Lord was manifest in a form that mankind **could** look upon and survive. God the Father's glory is too intensely potent for that to be possible. Even at that reduced level of glory the pre-incarnate Christ exhibited Himself to Moses in was too potent for Moses to survive without being shielded by rock and God's hand so as to not prove fatal! This particular instance is perhaps the highest degree of manifestation of glory a physical human being was ever provided. From this one occasion, Moses even took on an 'afterglow' that disturbed the children of Israel! (Ex. 34:29-35) That glorified form of God that Abraham, Jacob, Daniel, Peter, James and John were allowed to see was lessened from that of Moses and greatly diminished from His full and original glory, though it was still spectacular and incapacitating. (Rev. 1:17, Dan. 10:8)

It should be apparent by this point that God's Glory is far too brilliant for a physical human being to survive anywhere near. (1st Tim. 6:16) That reduced level of glory exhibited by Christ in both Old and New Testament times was drastically lowered in intensity, even to the degree of appearing as a 'normal' human form when the occasion called for it. In other words, Jesus Christ can and did appear in various forms on different occasions! We see three just in Daniel 10. (vs. 5-6, 16 & 18)

Now it says in Colossians 3:4 and Philippians 3:21 that **at** Christ's return, we who experience the first resurrection will receive a body "***fashioned like unto his glorious body***". It is that form we will possess and exhibit while ruling with Him on the Earth during the 1000 years. A form that mankind is capable of seeing in either a glorified or a normal appearance, as did the Apostles Peter, James, John and the prophet Daniel that we know of. While presenting a recognizable appearance to those who knew us, we will also be able to exhibit a brilliant glowing manifestation in appropriate situations. That's what **glory** IS, after all!

His Divine Nature!

In glorified form, we'll take on a new composition. We will share His Nature and jointly wield His God-Plane powers. "*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*" (Jn. 1:12)

*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, **when he shall appear**, we shall be **like him**; for we shall see him as he is.”* (1st John 3:2) *“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto **his eternal glory** by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”* (1st Pet.5:10) *“According as **his divine power** hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath **called us to glory** and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”* (2nd Pet.1:3) This is the HOPE of Glory that is one of those great and precious promises spoken of above.

We, in the millennial age, will become immortal, able to exhibit a glorified appearance as well as our former image. But, is there **more** to this?

Dwelling in the LIGHT

Paul’s mention to Timothy that Jesus “...**dwells in the light that no man can approach unto**”⁵ aptly demonstrates a greater Glory, above that of any Being. The Father remains in His full glory, never having at any time appeared directly to man in any diminished form: A super-powerful brilliance that would incinerate any normal human being, even just approaching. That explains why John the baptist, the Apostle John and Jesus affirmed so pointedly to the Jews that **no man** had **at any time** seen the Being Christ was introducing to them as “The Father”! But Paul affirms that Jesus, restored to His former glorified state, **dwells in** that brilliant ‘consuming’ aura. Keep in mind that both Old and New Testaments establish that “...**our God is a consuming fire**”. (Heb. 12:29 & Deut. 4:24) God the Father, and Christ in His **fully** glorified state, meet this description: Vastly greater than the sun shining in its full strength. But it was Paul’s point to explain that our Lord can and does live in the **full aura** of the Father’s Glory!⁶ This should make us

⁵ 1st Timothy 6:14-16 “...*our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, **dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see:**...*”

⁶ Hebrews 1:3 “*Who being in the brightness of His glory...*”

aware that there is an even higher form of glory than we have to this point considered. Is it our ultimate destiny to enter into **that** Glory ourselves?

There is a significant reason for asking.

In 2nd Corinthians 3:18 there’s this intriguing comment: “*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are **changed** into the same image **from glory to glory**,⁷ even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*” Paul’s illustration is of our looking thru a transparent barrier (a pane of glass) to an image out of reach on the other side. It indicates we are to become ‘*changed*’, but suggests **from** one glory **to** another. That first ‘glory’ can’t be the image we possess in our physical existence, and it involves our being **changed** more than once!

We Shall BE Like Him!

An interesting passage is found in 1st John, chapter 3. Verse 2 says: “*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when **he shall appear**, we shall be **like him**; for we shall see him as he is.”* We usually regard this as referring specifically and exclusively to Christ. Most would agree with that identification. But we should ascertain, exactly WHO is the “*Him*” in this passage. The verse just prior says, “*Behold, what manner of love **the Father** hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew **him** not.*” If we read this more carefully, we see that the subject hasn’t changed to Christ, it remains the Father! **Sons** there is plural, and it refers to US!

Is this verse suggesting we will take on His likeness? The phrase ‘*when He shall appear*’ seems to help, as, after all, the Father isn’t going to ‘appear’, the Son is! *Oops!* Wait a minute! 1st Corinthians 15:24-25 contains this revealing statement: “*Then cometh the **end**, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom **to God, even the Father**; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, **till** he hath put all*

⁷ A similar statement regarding faith (‘from faith to faith’ (Rom. 1:17)) describes our passing from one faith condition (that which is of ourselves) into another faith condition (that which is **not** of ourselves (Eph. 2:8)) so ‘from glory to glory’ would indicate a transference from one glorified state into an even more perfected state of glory.

enemies under his feet.” We are here given an explanation of what will happen **after** the millennial age and the Great White Throne period is completed and the last enemy (death) is conquered. The Son will then **turn over** the Kingdom and its righteous family of immortal Saints to the Father! The Father will then descend to Earth in **full** Glory, and upon doing so, the atmosphere will be blown away and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, as 2nd Peter chapter 3 powerfully explains! ⁸

It’s the final part, “*we shall see Him as He is*” that revives the question. Christ has been seen in various forms at various times. Mortal survivors and their descendants who live on into this Millennial Sabbath and thru the post-millennial era **will** have seen Him and His glorified Saints as they then are. Flesh and blood can not ‘inherit’ the Kingdom of God, but such will populate it in its first thousand years! If the ‘*Him*’ in the passage above refers to the Father, then the ‘*we shall be like Him*’ statement would indicate we’d have taken on a sufficient degree of glorification which would allow us to see Him as He is. A normal human could not!

The melting of Earth’s elements under *fervent heat* is the natural consequence of the presence of God the Father in full Glory. It occurs after a point in time when all physical human life will have been concluded, with all having been assigned to their appropriate destinies, either immortal Life or absolute destruction in the Lake of Fire. Satan and his angels will be similarly dispatched. Thus, with all sinfulness removed from the planet, this dramatic event is **not an expression of wrath!** With no flesh left alive, there will be no beings capable of death, thus death and the grave, as institutions, can be dissolved in the Lake of Fire as well, as Revelation 20:14 establishes. 2nd Peter 3:7 reminds us, “*But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of (destruction of) ungodly men.* The Earth, once ‘judgment’ is completed, and ‘ungodly men’ are expunged from it, will then be reconfigured into a glorious form, appropriate to its newest Inhabitant,

⁸ 2nd Peter 3:7-13 This, in process of renewing the face of the Earth in preparation for the New Jerusalem wherein both the Father and the Son reside! (Rev. 21) My article, “***The Elements Shall Melt with Fervent Heat***” addresses this astounding subject more fully.

and into an appropriate place on which to ‘set’ the 1500 mile jewel-like New Jerusalem which will have been totally pre-fabricated in Heaven! (Rev. 21) The question at this point is, will the Spirit-Born Saints take on a **new degree** of Glory commensurate with this development? Will the Earth then become the brightest heavenly body in the universe? It **will** be the base for God the Father **and** the Son, after all! (Rev. 21:3, 22-23)

Daniel gives us an oblique clue to this, if we choose to believe his inspired words!

As the Stars of Heaven

Daniel 11:32-33 explains: “*...but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many:...*” Daniel 12:2-3 adds: “*And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* This is referring to the general resurrection and sentencing. After that: “*And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness (shall shine) as the stars for ever and ever.*” We see even here two apparent degrees of Glory between those who just ‘get by’ and those who exploit their talents. Shining as the brightness of the firmament compares to the general atmospheric glow that spans horizon to horizon in daylight. But punctuating that globe-encircling illumination will be brilliant spots, like jewels, **daylight stars**, which represent the Glory of God’s exceptional Servants. In other words, the Saints will produce a general glow, but among them: exceptional luminaries, who **did** something significant with what they were given. Do we allow what Daniel wrote as true? Or, do we pass it off as just metaphor or hyperbole? It’s a matter we need to resolve in our minds. It’s our Hope and DESTINY!

“*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*” (Rom. 8:18-19) **Ω**

Note: This article is a companion to the article “***The Elements Shall Melt with Fervent Heat***” and was, along with that, the sub-topic of the Last Great Day message given at the Feast in Grand Junction, Colorado in 2006