

# Connect360: Exploring Heaven

July 10, 2023

- *Lesson 4 in the Connect360 unit “Heaven & Angels: Our Eternal Home and Its Heavenly Hosts” focuses on Revelation 21:1-5.*

The Bible describes in Revelation a special coronation event in heaven. But notice the multitude in attendance in Revelation 7:9—people from every nation, tribe and language.

These will be our forever friends and fellow citizens of heaven, and you will spend much of your time with them. You will have a chance to ask King David how big Goliath really was. You will meet a determined tax collector named Zacchaeus. You can ask Moses what it was like to walk through the Red Sea without getting his sandals wet. You can ask Solomon what it was like to have 700 wives. You can ask Noah what it was like to spend 40 days on a huge boat with an entire zoo onboard.

And there will not just be famous Bible characters in heaven. All the wonderful saints who have lived and died throughout the ages will be there to befriend as well. Personally, I cannot wait to trade “preacher stories” with John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards and Charles Spurgeon.

The most frequent question preachers are asked about heaven is, “Will we know our family members there?” Absolutely. You will know them better than you ever knew them in this life. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:12 of this time in heaven that you will “know fully, just as I also have been fully known.”

We have plenty of evidence from the Bible that after a person of faith died, they did not lose a distinct identity. At the Transfiguration of Jesus, two Old Testament saints appeared and talked with Jesus—Elijah and Moses. They

each maintained a distinct appearance because the disciples saw them and identified them. So yes, you will know your loved ones in heaven.

When King David's infant son died, he said, "I am going to him, but he will not return to me" (2 Samuel 12:23). David believed his son was in a good place where David would meet him someday in the future. According to Hebrews 11, David is in heaven. So, we can know that is where he joined his son.

Your loved ones will be closer to you than they ever were on earth. But here is the amazing truth. You will know everyone in heaven better than you know your closest friends and family members now.

What will we do in heaven? We will be busy loving and enjoying others. Usually, we reserve our closest relationships for family and a few close friends. Can you imagine what it will be like to truly know and love all the redeemed of all the ages?

Throughout Scripture, God gives us instructions on how to love one another. For example, the Bible says we are to bear their burdens and love them as ourselves. Earth is training school for heaven. where we finally will be able to love like Jesus taught us to do in the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35- 40). That love does not stop once a person dies, by the way. You will get a chance to love your family and friends better than you were ever able to do consistently on earth. You will connect with them in ways you always desired to do but something held you back or got in the way. How do I know that? The Bible teaches we have a fallen nature because of sin. We do not love perfectly on earth, but we will do so in heaven.

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