



Crowns

If you've been part of a church for any length of time, you've likely heard the passage where Peter declares, "But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" (I Peter 2:9, NKJV).

When you follow the plan of salvation, you often feel distinctly different from your former self and the world around you. You should feel different because, in Christ, you are transformed. Many people attend church without experiencing such change. Unfortunately, as we witness in our society today, many are changing their churches rather than allowing the church to change them.

Nevertheless, this description—this identity—is available to all. Yet not everyone will embrace it. To be included in this spiritual genealogy, adopted into Jesus' family, and grafted into His vine, we must acknowledge He is our Savior. It is not enough for Him to love us; we must love Him in return. As John 1:12 says:

"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: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

We cannot earn our way into Heaven, pray, or beg our way in. This is why Paul could say in Galatians 3:26: *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."*

As children of the King, we are authorized, destined, and empowered to receive crowns. In the secular world, kings, queens, princes, and princesses often wear crowns, and God has provided no less for us. The Bible speaks of the many crowns we can receive.

Old Testament Crowns

The first mention of a crown in the Bible refers to something physically placed on the head in Exodus 29:6 when God instructs Moses regarding the attire of His priests from the tribe of Levi:

“You shall put the turban on his head, and put the holy crown on the turban.”

Saul, the first earthly king of Israel, wore a crown, as evidenced in II Samuel 1:10 when an Amalekite who killed Saul took his crown and brought it to David:

“So I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord.”

However, none of us were born into the tribe of Levi, nor will we likely be kings or queens in the traditional sense of worldly monarchs. Yet, in I Peter 2:9, it is written:

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

This priesthood, inheritance, and adoption into the royal kingdom of God are available to us today! But what crowns can we expect to receive?

The scribes in the Bible began to develop a more profound understanding of crowns and who is worthy to wear them, especially in the book of Psalms. Though a king, David spoke of crowns that were not physical but spiritual.

Psalm 8:4-5 says:

“What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor.”

Thus, we can receive a crown of glory and honor. This passage is quoted in Hebrews 2:5-8, where the writer replaces "son of man" with "Jesus," affirming His divine identity.

In Psalm 103:4, we read: *“Who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies.”*

So, we can receive **a crown of lovingkindness and tender mercies.**

Psalm 132:18 says: *“His enemies I will clothe with shame, but upon Himself His crown shall flourish.”*

This suggests we can have **a crown that flourishes**—vibrant, thriving, and prospering.

Proverbs, likely written by King Solomon, continues the theme of crowns, with many references to crowns of wisdom, honor, and virtue. Proverbs, being part of the poetic section of the Old Testament, uses vivid imagery to convey these spiritual truths.

Proverbs 4:9 says: *She (wisdom) will place on your head an ornament of grace; a crown of glory she will deliver to you.*

Proverbs 16:31 states: *The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, if it is found in the way of righteousness.*

And in I Peter 5:4, we are promised: *“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”*

Other crowns mentioned in Proverbs include:

Proverbs 12:4: *“An excellent wife is the crown of her husband.”*

Proverbs 17:6: *“Children’s children are the crown of old men.”*

Thus, good wives and future generations can themselves be considered crowns.

Isaiah 62:3 further affirms that we can be **crowns of glory** in the hands of God: *“You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD.”*

Proverbs 14:18 and 14:24 add to this imagery: *“The simple inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.” “The crown of the wise is their riches.”*

We can receive **crowns of knowledge** and with that wisdom, perhaps even material blessings. However, Proverbs 27:24 reminds us: *“For riches are not forever, nor does a crown endure to all generations.”*

This highlights the need for personal responsibility in acquiring crowns. The salvation of our ancestors does not guarantee our own salvation. Each generation must earn their own crowns.

While these crowns in the Old Testament are valuable, they seem somewhat superficial when compared to the crowns described in the New Testament, which are far more profound.



New Testament Crowns

In the New Testament, we learn of the **crown of the soul-winner**. Paul refers to this crown in Philippians 4:1:

“Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.”

James 1:12 tells us of the **crown of life**:

“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

This promise is echoed in Revelation 2:10:

“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

We can also receive an **imperishable crown**, as described in I Corinthians 9:25:

“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.”



In I Thessalonians 2:19-20, Paul speaks of the **crown of rejoicing**:

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.”

Additionally, we can earn a **crown for obedience**, as described in II Timothy 2:5:

“And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.”

However, one might wonder, if Jesus followed His Father’s commandments, why was He given **a crown of thorns** instead of the crowns we seek? The crown of thorns was meant for Him alone, as the sacrificial Lamb who bore our shame so we would not have to. Though this crown is one we deserved; Jesus wore it on our behalf.

Finally, in II Timothy 4:8, we are promised **a crown of righteousness**:

“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.”

The Purpose of a Crown

In the book of Revelation, we receive two important teachings about our crowns. First, Revelation 3:11 warns:

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.”

This means we must protect our crowns. We should safeguard our glory, honor, lovingkindness, knowledge, flourishing, righteousness, soul-winning efforts, and obedience.

Now that we know what crowns are available to us and how to protect them, what do we do with them once we have received them? Do we compare our crowns with others or display them like trophies? The answer is found in Revelation 4:10-11:

“The twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: “You are worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.”

We cast our crowns before Jesus, acknowledging that we are unworthy of the rewards He has given us. Just as we were not worthy of salvation, we are not worthy of these crowns, yet Jesus, in His grace, rewards us.

He became the sacrificial Lamb, dying for our sins, so that we could spend eternity with Him and He with us.

To receive these crowns, we must follow His commandments and the plan of salvation He offers through repentance, baptism, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Only then can we receive the many crowns He has promised us.

Author: *Patricia Peters*

