

The Crowns of Victory: A Christian's Eternal Reward

As we delve into the significance of crowns in the Scriptures, let us begin with the Old Testament and explore the rich meanings associated with the Hebrew words used for crown. In Hebrew, these words offer nuanced insights, shedding light on the various aspects of honor, authority, and distinction.

Qodhqodh **Genesis 49:26**: *“The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.”* The first Hebrew word is "Qodhqodh," derived from "qadhadh," meaning "the crown of the head." This term is rendered in the King James Version as "top of the head," "scalp," or "pate." In Genesis 49:26, Jacob blesses Joseph and mentions this crown, symbolizing a position of honor and authority.

Zer: **Exodus 25:11**: *“And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.”* The second word is "Zer," originating from "zarar." It refers to a "chaplet," a decorative crown or circlet that is spread around the top as a molding about the border. Because of its wreath-like appearance, it is called a crown. This term emphasizes the adornment and distinction associated with the wearer.

Nezer: **Exodus 29:6** *“And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre.”* The third term, "Nezer," or "Netzer," comes from "nazar" and signifies a crown associated with dedication and consecration. It often represents a consecrated separation unto God, reflecting the holiness and set-apart nature of the wearer.

Atarah: **Isaiah 28:5** *“In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people”.* The fourth word is "Atarah," derived from "atar." This term conveys the idea of a crown as a symbol of victory and triumph. It is worn by those who have overcome challenges and adversities, marking them as conquerors.

Kether: **Esther 1:11** *“To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.”* The final Hebrew word is "Kether," originating from "kathar." It signifies a crown denoting honor and authority.

This term is often associated with the regal crowns worn by kings, emphasizing the sovereign rule and majesty of the wearer.

In understanding these Hebrew words, we gain a more comprehensive view of the multifaceted nature of crowns in the Old Testament. They represent not only positions of authority but also symbols of consecration, victory, and regal honor. As we continue our exploration of the crowns promised in the New Testament, let us carry this rich understanding of the Old Testament meanings with us, recognizing the depth and significance of the rewards that await us as faithful followers of Christ.

Turning next to the New Testament, let us explore the profound promises of the five crowns that await faithful followers of our Lord Jesus Christ. These crowns, described in the Scriptures, are a symbol of victory and honor, much like the wreaths awarded in ancient competitions. As we embark on this journey, let us first understand that the Greek term for crown is "Stephanos," representing the wreath worn by victors in various contests, proudly displayed in public for all to see. The "Stephanos" crowns, reflecting victory and triumph, pale in comparison to the imperishable crowns promised by our Lord. Let us strive for these crowns with hearts full of love, service, endurance, and faithfulness, knowing that they are the eternal rewards from our chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ. In His name, we pray. Amen.

I. The Soul Winners Crown *1 Thessalonians 2:19: For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? Our exploration begins with the Soul Winners Crown, as mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 2:19. The apostle Paul speaks of this crown as a source of hope, joy, and rejoicing. The Greek "Stephanos" is a symbol of victory, emphasizing the joyous reward of bringing souls into the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. As Christians, our greatest calling is to share the Gospel, and this crown awaits those who faithfully fulfill that calling.*

II. The Crown of Self-Denial *1 Corinthians 9:25: And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. Moving forward, we encounter the Crown of Self-Denial in 1 Corinthians 9:25. The Greek "Stephanos" is associated with mastery and victory in this context. Unlike those who strive for a perishable crown, we, as Christians, strive for an incorruptible one. This crown is reserved for those who practice self-discipline and deny themselves for the sake of Christ, reflecting the victorious life we lead in Him.*

III. The Crown of Righteousness 2 Timothy 4:8: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Next, we explore the Crown of Righteousness in 2 Timothy 4:8. The Greek "Stephanos" symbolizes the wreath of victory worn by those who excel in righteousness. This crown is laid up for all who love the appearing of our righteous Judge, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a promise of eternal honor from the righteous Judge to those who eagerly await His return.

IV. The Crown of Life James 1:12: *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.* In James 1:12, we discover the Crown of Life, where the Greek "Stephanos" represents the triumph over trials and challenges. Blessed is the person who perseveres under trial, for they will receive the Crown of Life promised by the Lord to those who love Him. This crown is a testament to the endurance and faithfulness of believers in the face of life's hardships.

V. The Crown of the Under Shepherd 1 Peter 5:4: *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.* Lastly, we delve into the Crown of the Under Shepherd as mentioned in 1 Peter 5:4. The Greek "Stephanos" represents the crown of glory that awaits faithful shepherds in God's flock. As we serve under the chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ, we can expect to receive a crown that does not fade away, a symbol of eternal honor and glory.

In this comprehensive exploration of the significance of crowns in the Scriptures, we first journey into the Old Testament, unraveling the profound meanings associated with five Hebrew words for crown: Qodhqudh, Zer, Nezer, Atarah, and Kether. These words reveal layers of symbolism, signifying honor, authority, dedication, victory, and regal majesty. As we transition to the New Testament, we delve into the promises of the five crowns awaiting faithful Christians. The Greek term "Stephanos," akin to the wreaths awarded in ancient competitions, represents victory and triumph. Each of the five crowns — the Soul Winners Crown, Crown of Self-Denial, Crown of Righteousness, Crown of Life, and Crown of the Under Shepherd — holds a unique promise, reflecting aspects of service, discipline, righteousness, endurance, and shepherding. Together, these crowns symbolize the eternal rewards bestowed by our chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ, encouraging us to strive with love, service, endurance, and faithfulness. As we anticipate these imperishable crowns, we carry

with us a profound understanding of their Old Testament roots and the depth of significance they hold for faithful followers of Christ. In His name, we pray. Amen.