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Crowns, Diadem

Stephanos

and five other

Crowns

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Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Crowns, Diadem, Stephanos and Five Other Crowns.

Topics.

- Diadems, headbands, and the Stephanos crown.
 - A crown of righteousness, joy, and life.
 - A crown laid up in heaven, and a crown of glory.
 - A golden crown on Christs head, and many crowns on Christs head.
 - Twenty-four elders with golden crowns on their heads.
 - Twenty-four elders casting crowns at Jesus feet.
 - No one may seize your crown.
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The Bible speaks of:

- A Stephanos crown.
- A crown of righteousness.
- A crown of joy.
- An unfading crown
- A crown of life.
- A crown of glory.

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These are all different names for the same crown.

DIADEMS AND HEADBANDS

A diadem is a type of crown, specifically an ornamental headband worn by monarchs and others as a badge of royalty. The word derives from the Greek word (*diadema*) meaning band or fillet it carries the idea of binding or fastening around. The term originally referred to the embroidered white silk ribbon, ending in a knot and two fringed strips often draped over the shoulders, that surrounded the head of the king to denote his authority. Such ribbons were also used to crown victorious athletes in important sports games in antiquity. It was later applied to a metal crown, generally in a circular or fillet shaped.

For example, the crown worn by Queen Juliana of the Netherlands was a diadem. The ancient Celts were believed to have used a thin, semioval gold plate called a mind (Old Irish) as a diadem. Some of the earliest examples of these types of crowns from the simple fabric type to the more elaborate metallic type, can be found in ancient Egypt and in the Aegean world. A diadem is also a jewelled ornament in the shape of a half crown, worn by women and placed over the forehead (in this sense, also called tiara). In some societies, it may be a wreath worn around the head. The ancient Persians wore a high and erect royal tiara encircled with a diadem.

Hera, queen of the Greek gods, wore a golden crown called the diadem. By extension, diadem can be used generally for an emblem of regal power or dignity. In original historical sources, the head regalia worn by Roman Emperors, from the time of Diocletian onwards, is described as a diadem.

THE STEPHANOS CROWN

Stephanos crown is not the crown of royalty that kings and emperors wear, but a plaited floral wreath generally made of foliage or designed to resemble foliage, much like the one made of thorns placed on the head of Christ at His trial. It was laid on the heads of the winners of the Olympic Games and triumphant Commanders of armies and the heads of brides as a symbol, not of dominion, but of a of a festal day of joy, or of a great victory or of a race won.

- **Matthew 27:29:** Twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
- **Mark 15:17:** They clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him.
- **John 19:2:** The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe.
- **John 19:5:** Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"

In contrast to a Diadem the crown of royalty worn by kings, the stephanos crown was worn by one of high status or held in high regard and honour or by a victor of the Olympic games. It was literally an adornment worn around the head as a crown of victory in the Greek athletic games, this reward being given to the runner who crossed the goal first, to the disc thrower with the longest toss, etc. Apart from recognition of athletes and winners of various kinds of competitions, in the Greco-Roman world, the awarding of a crown or wreath signified appreciation for exceptional contributions to the state or groups within it. The recipients were usually public officials or civic-minded persons serving at their own expense.

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A CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The crown of righteousness indicates a godly lifestyle; not being captivated by this world; trusting in Christ's righteousness for salvation, and while in this world looking forward to his return.

- **2 Timothy 4:7-8:** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

It signifies reward in that the imperfect righteousness we now have on earth by faith will in the resurrection be crowned by the more perfect and spotless righteousness that will be totally free of all blemishes, spots and stains of sin and be far greater in heavenly radiant glory.

A CROWN OF JOY

The crown of joy comes as we lead others to Christ and live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Christian faith, and by doing so influences others towards God and toward the Lord.

- **Philippians 4:1:** Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. (Philip. 4:1).
- **1 Thessalonians 2:19:** For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

Rewards are not just for how we live, they are also for the help we give to others, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ, and the good and godly influence we have on the lives of those around us.

A CROWN OF LIFE

- **Revelation 2:10:** Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

The word crown in this verse comes from the Greek word *stephanos* and refers to a victor's wreath as the reward given to a winner of the Olympic Games, but it can also embrace a diadem (as bound about the head) and worn as a crown. When the Olympian Games were held at Smyrna a crown was given to the victor, however, the crown could also refer to a crown of royalty. It is pointless to debate over which it might be since both are apt. Those who do endure will be crowned as victorious and royally exalted alongside Christ their King. The statement, "I will give you a crown of life," is the same as Christ saying, "I will give you eternal life from my own hand." It symbolises a much better life which will of course be a life lived with the Lord Jesus Christ in everlasting glory and eternal happiness and peace. The crown of life signifies life eternal and glory, it is awarded to those who faithfully continue in faith while enduring trials, difficulty, hardships, troubles, sorrows, persecution and even martyrdom.

- **James 1:12:** Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

Testing and trials are part of the Christian life. There are those who are in Christ Kingdom not, because they have a heart toward God, but because of the blessings they may get, or because they were born into a church, or because of tradition, or in some cases the entertainment value, when many of these are faced with test and trials they turn back to the world.

Jesus said we would have trouble:

- I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world, you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).
- If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. (John 15:18).

Paul wrote to Timothy:

- You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹²Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, (2 Tim. 3:10-12).

To receive the crown of life we must endure hardships and persecution. It should be highlighted here that the reward is not given for having great faith and getting delivered from the trial or test, but for persevering and remaining faithful. When we are faithful to the Lord in trials, he is faithful to reward us for enduring the trial.

A CROWN LAID UP IN HEAVEN

Though there is a crown laid up in heaven for us, it is possible that it may never come to be our actual possession in the future. This is because the Christian life is lived amongst a multitude of corrupt men and women, and a world full of things that have the potential to turn us away from Christ and forsake our faith, and by doing so make us unfit to receive the crown.

If, in our minds eye we viewed temptations of prideful ambition and of sinful pleasures that gratify the many passions of our fleshy nature and promise so much, as temptations trying to turn us away from Christ and forsake our faith, we would see that the purpose of all temptations that surround us is to rob us of our eternal crown that Christ has laid up for us in heaven.

It should be mentioned: all who faithfully cross the finish line will receive the crown of eternal life, however, the following verses show that some will be rewarded, while others will suffer loss.

- **1 Corinthians 3:11–15:** For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

A CROWN OF GLORY

The crown of glory is the final crown awarded to those who have faithfully endured to the end and finished their calling and the work God gave them to do. Although the following verse is in the context of shepherds, elders, pastors, and ministers of Christ's flock who finish their work faithfully, the crown is not limited to them only, but extends to all believers who become what God has created them to be and who serve him faithfully.

- **1 Peter 5:1-5:** I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: ²shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

All who faithfully serve the Lord in whatever they do, not for their own gain and selfish ambition, or for fame money and self-glory, but for his glory and the wellbeing of his people will be rewarded with this crown of glory. The Scriptures picture Christ as the great Chief Shepherd who has appointed his labourers to work in his service, while he is away, and upon his return rewarding those who have served him faithfully and endured to the end, with each of these five crowns. It signifies the future and everlasting glory which all those who hold fast to their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his Gospel will receive as their great eternal reward. This is the inheritance reserved in heaven for all who labour and struggle here

in this world as they walk by faith as Abraham did toward the Promised Land. The reward of the overcomer is certain and sure it lays safely guarded in the treasure-house of God with their name engraved upon. Paul in his letter to Timothy wrote:

- There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. (2 Tim. 4:8)

The truth which is taught here is, that we need to be on our constant guard, that, in a world of temptation, where the enemies of truth abound, we are not be robbed of the crown that we might have worn forever. Paul in his letter to the Colossian church wrote:

- Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism (i.e. harsh self-denial) and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind. (Colossians 2:18).

And John in his letter warned:

- Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. (2 John 1:8).

Following are four things that have the potential to take the crown of the faithful:

1. False and deceptive teachers who are skilled in oratory, and for their own worldly gain an advantage distort the Scriptures to proclaim a gospel that appeals to self, pride, and ego, and promises wealth, health, and a charmed life.
2. The lure and enticements of this world to indulge in excessive luxury and sinful worldly pleasures.
3. The believers' own apathy and indifference toward the Gospel and the word of God.
4. Trial's hardships, suffering, grief, and troubles.

NOTICE: in all these things the power to keep ones' crown is in the hands of the believer and no one else. The good news is that as, long as a believer keeps watch against these things and treasures their salvation and the word of God as gold, they will not fall to any of these enticements and have their crown taken from them.

A GOLDEN CROWN ON CHRISTS HEAD

- **Revelation 14:14:** Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown (stephanos) on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand.

A golden crown on his head signifies Christs royal kingly power and authority and his exalted office.

MANY GOLDEN CROWNS ON CHRISTS HEAD

- **Revelation 19:12:** His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems (crowns in the KJV), and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.

On his head are many diadems signifies the following things:

- All power in heaven and earth is Christ's (given to him at his resurrection).
- Christ's royal status, and that he is the King of kings and Lord of lords.
- Christ has conquered numerous nations and King over them all.
- Christ is the King over many countries that have freely and willingly submitted to his government, rule, and laws.
- Christ's universal reign.
- Christ is King, not only of nations, but over the entire world.
- Christ and his faithful followers and his many victories.
- Christ is the King of history, the King of life, the King of human hearts, the King in heaven and the King of kings, and Lord of lords over the earth.

The fullness of Christ's Kingdom at the time of this vision refers to, that time when the kingdoms of this world become his Kingdoms:

- The seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." (Revelation 11:15).

TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS WITH GOLDEN CROWNS ON THEIR HEADS

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- **Revelation 4:4:** Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.

Golden crowns on their heads signifies:

- The glory and triumph the faithful have with Christ.
- The state of dignity and glory to which God through Christ has granted the faithful.
- The faithful being made kings by Christ as well as priests unto God
- The church being victorious and triumphant over the world, sin, and the devil.
- The faithful dwelling in a kingdom of grace and reigning as kings over the world, sin, and the devil.

The Lord Jesus Christ will make the faithful a kingdom of priests to his God and Father, (Rev. 1:6) and they will reign with Christ the King on the earth a thousand years as kings and priests to God (Rev. 5:10) and then reign with him throughout all eternity in glory.

TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS CASTING CROWNS AT JESUS FEET

- **Revelation 4:10:** the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Casting their crowns at Christ's feet is a token that they owe their triumph and victory over death and sin and their salvation to God's plan of salvation, His mercy and grace and their redemption to Christ who died for them, so it is right and proper that they humbly acknowledge their honour and gratitude to him by placing their crowns at his feet. It is an act of praise that acknowledges that the excellency of their crowns is not due to their self-effort, and that they are not saved by their own self-righteousness, but by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and his righteousness.

NO ONE MAY SEIZE YOUR CROWN

- **Revelation 3:11:** I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown (stephanos).

The crown in focus here is the crown awarded to those who win at the Olympic games, the idea is, as we are running the race of life, do not allowing anyone to lead us off the path that leads to eternal life. It should be mentioned, the following words of the apostle Paul show that no one can pull us off the path, or away from our heavenly Father, and our redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ unless we give them the power to do so,

- **Romans 8:38-39:** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.