

WELCOME ME THERE

A wide-angle photograph of a field of tall, golden-brown grasses, likely during late afternoon or sunset. The sky is dark with a bright light source near the horizon, creating a lens flare effect. The text 'WELCOME ME THERE' is superimposed in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

SEPARATION AND DEATH

- Reunion with loved ones should not be seen as a trivial aspect of our existence in heaven. After all, grief and loss are viewed as painful facts of this life throughout the Bible (1 Thess. 4:13-14, Gen. 23:2, 49:33-50:1, 2 Sam. 1:17ff, Matt. 5:4).
- Understanding grief in a personal, experiential way was one of the key components of the mission of Jesus. He is prophetically called the “man of sorrows” and “acquainted with grief” (Is. 53:3). Fear of death could only be experienced firsthand (Hebrews 2:14ff, 5:7-9).
- John 11:1-44 — Even though Jesus knew He would raise Lazarus from the dead, His own grief and sympathy for others overwhelmed Him (v. 35).







RELATIONSHIP

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE

- John 13:36-14:3 — While heaven should be seen as a spiritual place — a home, an abode, a dwelling place, etc. — the “empty mansion”, so to speak, is not what is most comforting to Jesus’ disciples in this story. Rather, it is the assurance that they will be with Him again one day, that separation is only temporary.
- What would be the point of Heaven if it was only about “me”? What is the joy of having a mansion all to myself, where I can be an eternal hermit? Separation by death is our most profound source of pain, so it would make sense that heaven would be the ultimate answer to that. *“...That where I am, there you may be also.”* Also see Philippians 1:23.

A BANQUET FEAST

- Matthew 8:10-12
- In Heaven we will be filled with a sense of awe at all the other saints who are there. We will get to have eternal fellowship with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the other Old Testament heroes. We will see them and know them without the veil of history, as fellow children of God.
- Jesus sees this desire as entirely appropriate. We should *want* to see all of the saintly loved ones and fellow workers we have known. Reunion with family members, mentors, friends, and heroes of the faith is not an inconsequential part of the heavenly experience!
- The feast won't be a small occasion (Rev. 7:9ff).