

Welcome Home!

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. **—Philippians 3:20**

During the era of President Theodore Roosevelt, who was famous for big game hunting in Africa, a Southern Baptist missionary completed forty years of Christian service in Africa. The missionary sailed from Africa to New York and heard a band playing as the ship was coming into the harbor. He was so excited! He couldn't believe it was happening, that his friends had brought a band to welcome him home. Tears filled his eyes as he quickly worked his way down the exit of the ship to walk down the gangplank. Suddenly a security man stopped him and spoke officiously, "Step back, sir." The old missionary waited while President Roosevelt, who had been on a big game hunting trip, was the first to disembark. As it happened, the old missionary was the last person to leave the ship.

He put his suitcase down as he stood on the dock. The band that had been welcoming the president of the United States had dispersed. Nobody was there to welcome the returning missionary home—not a soul. The old man made his way to a modest hotel in New York and fell to his knees as soon as he entered his room. "Lord," he cried, "I've served You for forty years in Africa, and no one welcomes me home. President Roosevelt spends three weeks hunting, and they have a band playing for him." The Lord then whispered to the old missionary, "But you're not home yet."

One day Jesus will welcome us home. There is coming a day when we will see for ourselves what John saw—the New Jerusalem "coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev. 21:2). That will be our eternal home, and one day we will be home never to move again.

Can you imagine how thankful we will be then? The bliss cannot be described now, and I wonder if we will ever be able to take it all in then. We will certainly thank Him then. Let's do it now more than ever before. In fact, all the time.

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