

Do People in Heaven Know What's Happening on Earth?

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Question: Do people in heaven know what is happening on earth?

Answer: Since heaven is a place of eternal joy and peace, we can be assured that people in heaven aren't disturbed by the evil things happening on earth. The Scriptures give us some clues about what they know. Here are several passages.

Hebrews 12:1 "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." These "witnesses" are the heroes of the faith listed in chapter 11, who are now in heaven. They are like spectators seated in an area cheering us on in the race of life. Bible scholars are divided as to whether this should be interpreted literally, or if this is a simply a metaphor using their faithfulness an example for us to faithfully run to the finish line.

Revelation 6:9-11 "I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been would be completed also."

This passage is referring to the people who are killed during future Tribulation Period on earth, who are asking God to avenge those who murdered them. Apparently their persecutors are still alive on earth and are going to murder even more believers.

Luke 15:7 Jesus said, "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."

Luke 15:10 Jesus said, "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Jesus told us that there is "joy in heaven" and "joy in the presence angels" over one sinner who repents. Repentance is when someone's heart does an about-face—deciding to turn away from sin and to follow Jesus. It doesn't say the angels are rejoicing, but there's joy "in the presence" of angels, which implies that the people who are now in heaven are the ones rejoicing. We are not told how these people in heaven obtain the information when each sinner repents. It doesn't necessarily mean they're watching events on earth, but it could be that God or the angels announce to them when it happens. Heaven erupts with rejoicing over the news.

Luke 16:19-31 Jesus taught about the afterlife and spoke about an unrighteous rich man who died and went to Hades. The rich man asked Abraham, who was on the other side of the chasm, to send Lazarus back to earth to warn his five brothers about hell. The rich man was aware of the spiritual condition of his brothers—they were alive on earth but they were not saved. He also had memories of his own life on earth (v.25)

CONCLUSION: People in heaven are definitely aware when people on earth are saved and will be joining them in heaven after their lives are over on earth. However, it's unlikely they are aware of everything we do on earth, but only what God allows them to know.

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