



The Future Judgments The Judgments Series Part 8



The Judgment of the *Bema* (The Judgment Seat of Christ)

The next prophetic event in God's timetable will be the rapture or the catching up of the body of Christ, the church, as described in **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-18 NIV:

3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;

4 that each of you should learn to control your own body^[a] in a way that is holy and honorable,

5 not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God;

6 and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister.^[b] The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before.

7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

8 Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

9 Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.

10 And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more,

11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you,

12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

Believers Who Have Died

13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.

14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.



A number of things occur at this time. There is the glorification of living believers in glorified bodies, the resurrection of those believers who have died in the Lord also in glorified bodies, and the translation of both to meet the Lord in the air.

This will be followed by their examination before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

This is not the final judgment mentioned in - **Revelation 20:11-15** which is limited to only the unbelieving world.

Revelation 20:11-15 NIV:

The Judgment of the Dead

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done.

14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Rather, the Judgment Seat of Christ is for the body of Christ, the church.



A similar judgment will occur for resurrected Old Testament and Tribulation saints, but probably not until after the Tribulation (cf. Dan. 12:1-3 with Rev. 20:4).

Daniel 12:1-3 NIV:

The End Times

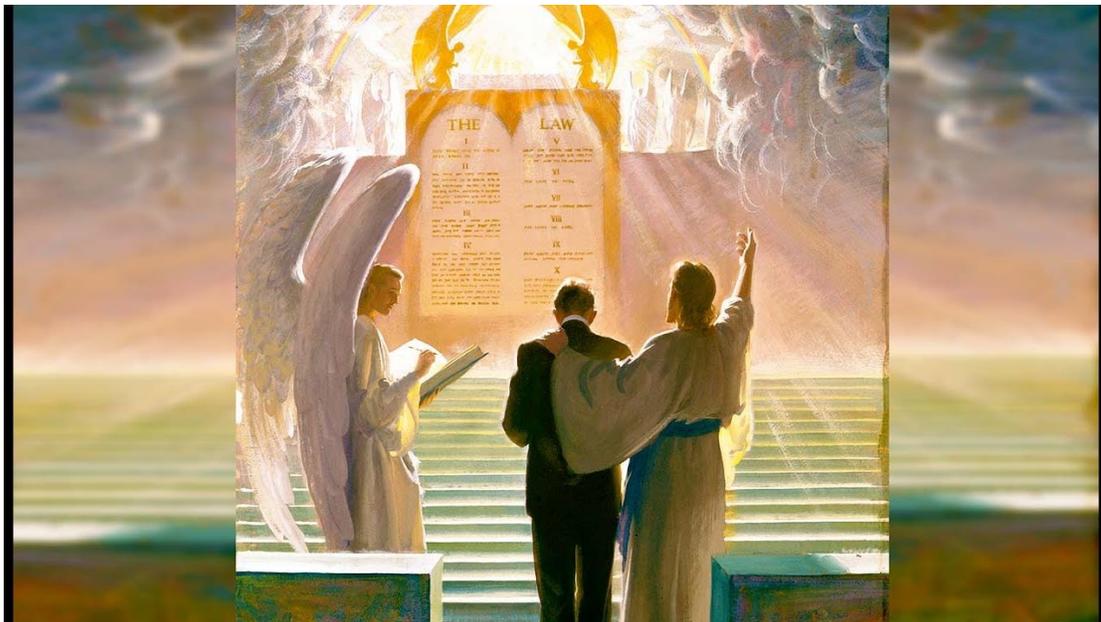
12 “At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.

2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 Those who are wise^[a] will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Revelation 20:4 NIV:

4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They^[a] had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.



The Judgment Seat of Christ is not a place and time when the Lord will mete out punishment for sins committed by the child of God. Rather, it is a place where rewards will be given or lost depending on how one has used his or her life for the Lord.

Both Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:9 speak of the “judgment seat.” This is a translation of one Greek word, the word *bema*.

Romans 14:10 NIV:

10 You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister^[a]? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat.

2 Corinthians 5:9 NIV:

9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

While *bema* is used in the Gospels and in Acts of the raised platform where a Roman magistrate or ruler sat to make decisions and pass sentence (**Matt. 27:19; John 19:13**), its use in the epistles by Paul, because of his many allusions to the Greek athletic contests, is more in keeping with its original use among the Greeks.

Matthew 27:19 NIV:

19 While Pilate was sitting on the judge’s seat, his wife sent him this message: “Don’t have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him.”

John 19:13 NIV:

13 When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge’s seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha).

This word was taken from Isthmian games where the contestants would compete for the prize under the careful scrutiny of judges who would make sure that every rule of the contest was obeyed (**cf. 2 Tim. 2:5**).

2 Timothy 2:5 NIV:

5 Similarly, anyone who competes as an athlete does not receive the victor's crown except by competing according to the rules.

The victor of a given event, who had participated according to the rules, was led by the judge to the platform called the *Bema*.

There the laurel wreath was placed on his head as a symbol of victory (**cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-25**).



1 Corinthians 9:24-25 NIV:

The Need for Self-Discipline

24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

In all of these passages, “Paul was picturing the believer as a competitor in a spiritual contest.

As the victorious Grecian athlete appeared before the *Bema* to receive his perishable award, so the Christian will appear before Christ’s *Bema* to receive his imperishable award.

The judge at the *Bema* bestowed rewards to the victors.

He did not whip the losers.”³ We might add, neither did he sentence them to hard labor.

In other words, it was a reward seat and portrayed a time of rewards or loss of rewards following examination.

It was not a time of punishment where believers are judged for their sins.

Such would be inconsistent with the finished work of Christ on the cross because He totally paid the penalty for our sins.

Though believers are under no condemnation in respect to their sins, having been justified by faith (**John 3:18; 5:24; Rom. 8:1,13-17**), they are subject to judgment at the Judgment seat of Christ in relation to their works.

John 3:18 NIV:

18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

John 5:24 NIV:

24 "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

Romans 8:1 NIV:

Life Through the Spirit

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Romans 8:13-17 NIV:

13 For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

14 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.^[a] And by him we cry, “*Abba*,^[b] Father.”

16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ believers’ works will be evaluated to demonstrate whether they are good or bad, and rewards will be conferred (**2 Cor. 5:10; cf. Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:9-14; 9:24-27**).

2 Corinthians 5:10 NIV:

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Romans 14:10-12 NIV:

10 You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister^[a]? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat.

11 It is written:

“‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord,
‘every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will acknowledge God.’”^[b]

12 So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

The goal of the Christian in his life is to be pleasing to God whether in time or eternity.

The Judgment Seat of Christ is not related to salvation but to the bestowal of rewards, and every Christian is assured that he will receive some reward (1 Cor. 4:5; cf. Eph. 6:8; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:12).

1 Corinthians 4:5 NIV:

5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

Ephesians 6:8 NIV:

8 because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

2 Timothy 4:8 NIV:

8 Now there is in store 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 longed for his appearing.

Revelation 22:12 NIV:

Epilogue: Invitation and Warning

12 “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.



How do we get right with God, regardless of our individual sins?



Just say this Prayer and all of your sins will be forgotten, and you will have Eternal life, with Christ Jesus, in Heaven:

Lord Jesus, I repent of all my sins, and I ask you to come into my life and be my Lord and Savior.

Friends, if you prayed that prayer, I believe that you are born again, and you have ever lasting life, get in a good bible teaching church, and may you keep growing, in the Lord, and may HE use you to help save many souls for His Kingdom !

In, Jesus Mighty Name!

Rev. Jesus Del Rio, Ed