

JUDGMENTS TO RECEIVE A CROWN

By pastor Mike Taylor



26 “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” (Hebrew 9:26-28)

While reading your Bible, you will happen on a central theme that is throughout the Word of God. Beginning in Genesis, the judgment of Adam and Eve begins a story of judgment when our common parents transgressed against God and partook of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. Moving through the pages, you come to the flood of Noah's day, the judgment of an unfaithful generation during the Exodus and 40 years of wandering in the wilderness till every last member of that generation had died. Then other judgments, such as Sodom and Gomorrah, a multitude of judgments against Israel for their idolatry, and finally the ultimate judgment for sin paid for by the only Person who could pay its price, Jesus Christ at Calvary...This is just to name a few of the judgments you will find in Holy Scriptures.

THE ULTIMATE JUDGEMENT

There is coming an ultimate judgment that those who live during this generation we are now in, will experience the 21 judgments outlines in the Book of Revelation during the coming Tribulation period. The Bible outlines five individual judgments that differ in five general aspects; the subjects, the time, the place, the basis of that judgment, and the results of the judgment passed.

There are two judgments for believers. The first judgment was for sinners, and the time of this judgment was roughly 33 AD. The place was the cross at Calvary. The basis for the judgment was the finished Work of Christ. And the result was the *justification* for the believer. For the believer, this first judgment is in three parts. First as a sinner, second as a son, and thirdly, as a servant.

The “sin” part for the sinner was settled at the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The 'son' question is an ongoing process called sanctification through personal judgments the Bible calls 'chastisement'.

I call it the 'wood shed' experience that God will use to discipline those who step outside of His will. This judgment is designed to bring the believer back in line with God's Will.

6 “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? (Hebrews 12:6-9)

Finally, there is the judgment that comes for being God's servants, which brings us to the Judgment Seat of Christ, or the Bema Seat.

The Subjects are believers in Jesus Christ. The time is after the removal of God's true church from this planet, some call the 'rapture'. The basis for this judgment is our works that we have performed for service in the Name of God our Savior, Jesus Christ. The results will either be rewards, or the loss of rewards.

9 "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences." (2nd Corinthians 5:9-11)

11 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (1st Corinthians 3:11-15)

Those that appears before this judgment seat, are not to be judged worthy of entering heaven, or God's Kingdom. That question has already been settled at the cross.

Here we will be judged for what we have done, or not done in the service as servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a 'rewards banquet' and will reveal what sort of works we have done for Jesus and in His Name.

Think about that for a moment! Everything you ever did will be analyzed and scrutinized openly by the Lord Jesus Christ. Every good thing. . . and every bad thing. We'll be called on to give account of every word, every deed, every thought.

I don't know about you, but the bad part that I've done in my life, I don't relish the idea of Jesus piercing gaze cover all the things I've done in my life. I was not always following the Lord, and it makes me sad that I wasted any amount of time not following Him, as a servant that has received a pardon from a death sentence. For all believers, the Judgment Seat of Christ will be an excruciating experience. "Knowing therefore *the terror* of the Lord, we persuade men . . ." As Paul wrote: If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: *but he himself shall be saved*; yet so as by fire." (1st Corinthians 3:14-15)...I can see what He meant by wiping away all tears from our eyes...even now it breaks my heart to know that in my past, I failed my Lord in something I did out of His will.

REWARDS FOR SERVICE FROM OUR LORD

There are five possible rewards, or "crowns" that believers can earn for their works at the Bema Seat.

The Crown of Life. This is the Martyr's Crown. You get this one the hard way;

10 "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death".(Revelation 2:10-11)

The Crown of Glory. This the 'Pastor's Crown' given by the Chief Shepherd when He shall appear to those who serve:

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (1st Peter 5:2-3)

I readily admit that I am working to earn this crown. *Salvation* is a gift of grace through faith, and that not of yourselves -- crowns you have to work for.

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 5:4)

The Crown of Rejoicing. This is the soul winners crown. Those brought to Jesus by us will be our "crown of rejoicing" at His Coming. Our Lord will give us this crown because of our witness to others about the Gospel message, and we will rejoice over who we have led away from the jaws of hell.

19 "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

20 For ye are our glory and joy." (1st Thessalonians 2:19-20)

The Crown of Righteousness. This is the crown earned by the Watchmen on the Wall who give the warning of His soon appearing.

18 "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezekiel 3:18-19)

7 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2nd Timothy 4:7-8)

The Incorruptible Crown. This is a tough one to earn. This is the "Victor's" Crown, which is set aside for those who master temperance in this lifetime.

24 "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." (1st Corinthians 9:24-25)

Those who don't yield to the lusts of the flesh, saturate themselves with alcohol and drugs, and keep themselves separate from the world can expect to be rewarded with the Incorruptible Crown.

TRIBULATION ON EARTH

The judgment seat of Christ takes place simultaneously with the Third Judgment identified by scripture as taking place on the earth.

God's judgment is falling on a rebellious world. Revelation speaks of horrors that only one can imagine and never would want to experience. The Jewish people who are going through intense persecution will make the holocaust pale in comparison. The subject of this Tribulation period are the Jews, the place is Jerusalem, the time is called the "Time of Jacob's Troubles. God will refine the nation of Israel as gold or silver is refined in a hot, fiery furnace.

2 "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." (Malachi 3:2-4)

But God will save a remnant of His people through the fire of purification:

7 "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

8 For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:

9 But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them." (Jer. 30:7-9)

The basis for this judgment is the continued unbelief and rejection of their Messiah, until they cry out as Jesus prophesied they would and will bring national redemption of Israel:

37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 23:37-39)

The fourth judgment identified in Scripture also takes place during the Tribulation. The subjects are the Gentile nations. The place is the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The basis for this judgment will be their treatment of the Jews.

11 "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."

(Revelation 19:11-18)

Those who survive the battle at the plains of Megiddo or from around the world, will be gathered before the King of kings...

31 "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."(Matthew 25:32)

The nations will be divided into the "Sheep nations" and the "Goat nations". The result is the Sheep nations will be permitted to enter into the Millennial Kingdom. The "Goat nations" will be destroyed.

This judgment takes place at the conclusion of the Tribulation Period.

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" (Matthew 25:40-41)

We have a resurrection that takes place at the end of the Tribulation, as Jesus has come and raised those who have experienced martyrdom during this period being of the 1st resurrection...Jesus was the beginning of that resurrection, those raised to life when Jesus came for His church, and those now, are all of the first resurrection..Jesus the First Fruits.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years." (Revelation 20:4)

The fifth and final judgment identified in Scripture is the Great White Throne Judgment. It will take place at the close of the Millennium a 1000 years after the judgment of the Nations, and before the "Great White Throne" and the books were opened:

"And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his work

14. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:12-15)

I want you to notice something. This entire outline only works if the Rapture takes place *before* the Tribulation. If the Church is on the earth during the Tribulation Period, the entire outline falls apart. I've often made mention of this and it bears repeating here....if Jesus comes and destroys all rebellion on this earth and only those who are found in Christ are changed into immortal beings according to Paul's writing, then who goes into the Millennium as mortal? ..the answer, NO ONE.

50 “ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1st Corinthians 15:50-55)

BUT -- and this is the important part -- *this is the only outline there is!* There is only one Bible from which to work, and it doesn't give an alternative scenario. It is the key to understanding the outline of Bible prophecy as it unfolds before this generation.

The Bible identifies five judgments and five crowns. The judgments are as I've outlined them, by those who are subject to them, when, where, why, and how.

WHERE WILL YOU BE?

Now for you who are reading this message, where will you fall when Jesus comes? What judgment will you partake of? What crown will you inherit as a reward, or will you be so unfortunate to be cast out into eternal darkness? This time is fast approaching as we bump right up to the end of this Dispensation, or the Age of Grace. Jesus is coming soon, Make your calling and election sure.

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” (2nd Peter 1:10)...what thing?

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:16-18)

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying you are standing with me at the Bema Judgment Seat of Christ awaiting your crown...if you need prayer, counseling, or just a listening ear, email me at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net, God bless you all....

TILL WE MEET AT JESUS FEET