

# SESSION 8 • The Rapture, 2nd Coming and Final Judgment

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier  
Life Bible Ministry

Hello and welcome to the eighth and final session of our series: Knowing what you Believe. I sincerely hope you've been enjoying this series. And this final session, as you can see, is going to be about the Rapture, the Second Coming, and the Final Judgment.

When we talk about the rapture and the second coming, I think there are a fair amount of Christians who really don't fully understand the difference between those two events.

We're going to do our best to untangle that particular question and help you come away with a better understanding of what things are going to be happening during the last days as it relates to the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Let's get into, The Rapture.

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## The Rapture

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In the rapture, the Lord doesn't actually return to the earth. He simply returns for His bride. This is called also, the catching away of the Church, and it is written about by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians. Let me show you. From 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, it says,

### **1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

There are several things from this passage that I want to point out. The first of which is that we get our word, rapture from some words in this passage.

**“caught up”**

The English words, “*caught up*” that you see there in that passage are from the Greek word, harpazō.

“caught up”

Greek: harpazo

Now, if you were to translate the New Testament in Latin, the word would be rapturo.

“caught up”

Latin: rapturo

And that is where we get our word, rapture; to be caught up.

The next thing we learn is that those who are alive on the earth, who are believers, will not be caught up before those who had previously passed away in Christ. This is where Paul says:

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

And that simply means that the dead in Christ will rise first. Now remember, that doesn't mean that the dead in Christ, were simply waiting in their grave for the rapture to take place. The Bible tells us that, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:8)

When people die in Christ, they immediately go into the presence of the Lord. There's no sleeping or slumber. There's no unconscious state that people are in awaiting the resurrection. They're with the Lord.

At the resurrection, their bodies; we're talking about the bodies of those who have died in Christ, are raised. And their spirit and soul, which has been with the Lord, is joined with that new resurrection body.

Next, we're told:

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

So this is a coming of the Lord since He is descending from heaven, but it's not a full coming of the Lord because again, He doesn't actually come to earth. We meet the Lord in the air.

Next, we're told that there will be heavenly sounds associated with the rapture. Paul writes:

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

And then Paul repeats the phrase,

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

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*caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

Once again, referring to the raising of their bodies.

Next believers who are then alive on the earth at the time of the rapture will be caught up. A Paul says,

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

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And then Paul gives us the location of our meeting with the Lord when he says:

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

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*caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

And finally, Paul says:

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (ESV)**

*For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we will always be with the Lord.*

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This is the apostle Paul's way of saying that after the rapture, there will no longer be any separation between Jesus the bridegroom and His bride. They will forever be together.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 15, the apostle Paul gives us additional information about the transformation that will take place in the bodies of those who are still alive on the earth when the rapture takes place. The passage goes like this:

**1 Corinthians 15:50-52 (ESV)**

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of*

*an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

This is really a wonderful passage where the apostle Paul is describing the immediate transformation that takes place in the bodies of those who are still alive on the earth when the rapture takes place.

I mean, it's one thing to have your resurrection body raised, but can you imagine being on the earth and still alive when the trumpet sounds and Jesus returns for His bride? For those people, they will not experience physical death.

Paul simply says:

**1 Corinthians 15:50-52 (ESV)**

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. **We shall not all sleep**, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. **We shall not all sleep**, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

Now the word, sleep, there, is a euphemism that the apostle Paul uses for Christian death. It's not literally saying that we're going to sleep in the earth or sleep in our graves. He's using that term to describe how the human body looks after the spirit and the soul have departed. In other words, at death it appears like the person is sleeping, And yet he says:

**1 Corinthians 15:50-52 (ESV)**

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. **We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. **We***



*shall not all.. (die), but we... (will) all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

He says, it won't take long. It's just:

### **1 Corinthians 15:50-52 (ESV)**

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

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And then he says,

### **1 Corinthians 15:50-52 (ESV)**

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we (again, who are still alive on the earth will) ...be changed.*

The final thing that we learn about the rapture, is that it's going to be sudden and unexpected. This is what Jesus told us. Let me show you this. From Matthew Chapter 24:



### **Matthew 24:37-39 (ESV)**

*For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*

*For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*

Now you might be looking at this passage and saying, now wait a minute. How do we know that what Jesus is talking about here refers to the rapture? He could be talking about the second coming.

Remember, something, the second coming of Jesus when He comes to the earth, which we'll talk about in just a moment, comes at the very end of the great tribulation. And you need to remember what's been going on during the great tribulation. The last three and a half years have seen the outpouring of God's wrath upon the earth. Many of the people on the earth have perished and much of the earth has been scorched and is no longer livable.

I sincerely doubt that by that time people will be carrying on as normal. Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. No, at the end of the tribulation, it's going to be a terrible time. People hanging on by a thread and it will not be life as normal. But it will be life as normal when the rapture takes place because that happens prior to the great tribulation.

Let's move on now and talk about the second coming.

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## **The Second Coming**

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The Bible tells us about a time of war that is going to take place toward the very end of the great tribulation period. The Bible refers to that war as, the war of Armageddon. And we read about this in many places, frankly, throughout the Bible, but none more clearly shown than in the Book of Zechariah from the Old Testament.

Let me show you. Zechariah 12:

**Zechariah 12:1-3 (ESV)**

*The oracle of the word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus declares the LORD, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the spirit of man within him: “Behold, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah. On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it.”*

*The oracle of the word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus declares the LORD, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the spirit of man within him: “Behold, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah. On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. (and then listen to this) And all the nations of the earth will gather against it.”*

Now, this is one of the ways we know that this sort of persecution of the Jews, this battle against the Jews, has not taken place yet, because it says here very clearly that “*all the nations of the earth will gather against it.*” That hasn't happened yet.

Let's keep reading. From Zechariah 14. We see it says:

**Zechariah 14:1-5 (ESV)**

*Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.*

*Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.*

Now this prophecy from Zechariah 14 is even clearer. It tells us that all the nations will come against Israel and they will appear very much to be winning. In fact, Zechariah says that all the spoil that has been taken from Israel will literally be divided up by their enemies right in their midst as they're watching. And then something incredible is going to happen. It says at the end of that prophecy,

**Zechariah 14:1-5 (ESV)**

*Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.*

*Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.*

We keep reading in the book of Zechariah and we see this:

**Zechariah 14:1-5 (ESV)**

*On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.*

*On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.*

These are amazing prophecies from the Old Testament talking about the second coming of Jesus Christ. And one of the things we see about the second coming is that it is primarily at first for the nation of Israel.

Now the coming of Jesus, this second coming, was also seen by John in the revelation that was given to him by the Lord. Let me show you.

**Revelation 19:11-16 (ESV)**

*Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.*

*Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.*

**Revelation 19:11-16 (ESV)**

*And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.*

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So John was shown the second coming when Jesus comes to make war, and He specifically says in this prophecy that He will:

### **Revelation 19:11-16 (ESV)**

*And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to **strike down the nations** and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.*

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These are the nations that have assembled against Israel. The nations that Zechariah talks about who have come to literally wipe Jerusalem off the map.

Now, how will Israel respond when Jesus first returns? Now this is very interesting. We go back to Zechariah to learn that at first it will be a time of great mourning. Let me show you. From Zechariah 12.

### **Zechariah 12:10-11 (ESV)**

*“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great...”*

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You might be wondering, why is Israel going to mourn when Jesus returns? Aren't they going to be happy about His return? Aren't they going to be thrilled that their Savior has arrived to save them from these assembled nations who have come to destroy them?

Well, that's the point. They're going to realize that their Savior, the One who has come, came a first time and they didn't recognize Him, even though He came to His own people. And because of that, they will mourn. But from that time of

mourning, there will come a time of salvation. They will realize that He is the Savior. The one who died on the cross to forgive their sins. Look at this passage from Zechariah 13.

**Zechariah 13:1 (ESV)**

*“On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.”*

*“On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.”*

In other words, there will be a collective turning of Israel to the Lord at that time. They will receive Him as their eternal Savior, the One who died to bear their sins.

The apostle Paul talks about this same time of Israel coming to the Lord. It's in the Book of Romans. Let me show you. Romans 11.

**Romans 11:25-27 (ESV)**

*Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”*

*Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”*

Paul is quoting a couple of passages there from the Old Testament Book of Isaiah, which speaks of this collective national turning to the Lord when Jesus returns at His second coming.

Finally, this special day of the Lord's return will be a day of victory for Israel, as the Lord enables Israel to fight against their enemies and also fights on their behalf. Let me show you. From Zechariah 12:

**Zechariah 12:8-9 (ESV)**

*On that day the LORD will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD, going before them. And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*

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So you can see that the Lord himself will not only empower Israel against the nations gathered against them, but He Himself will fight against them and destroy them.

Now after this battle, the battle of Armageddon, the Bible tells us that Satan will be bound for a period of a thousand years. This is recorded in the Book of Revelation. It goes like this. From chapter 20.

**Revelation 20:1-3a (ESV)**

*Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended.*

*Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended.*

Until the thousand years were ended, thus begins the period that we call the Millennial Kingdom. It's also referred to as the Messianic Kingdom. A period of a thousand years upon the earth when Jesus will rule the earth and bring peace and unprecedented prosperity.

There are other Old Testament passages that speak of this millennial season when there is incredible changes that will take place on the earth. Let me show you. From Isaiah chapter 11.



**Isaiah 11:4-10 (ESV)**

*...he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*

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**Isaiah 11:4-10 (ESV)**

*The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.*

You can see from the passages that we've been looking at here that the second coming of Jesus is largely about rescuing Israel and bringing judgment upon the nations of the world that come to destroy Israel.

Now, there will be some people, even during the tribulation, who will be friends of Israel. We'll talk about that just a little bit later when we talk about the final judgments, but the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth will be in Israel for Israel.

Let's move on to, The Final Judgment.

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## **The Final Judgement**

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When you read through the New Testament, you learn that there are actually several different judgments that are going to be taking place. In fact, when you see the word, judgment seat in your English Bible, that is a single Greek word that is pronounced, bema.

Greek: bēma

And a bema seat or a judgment seat, was a raised platform where judgments took place. And either judgments of condemnation were meted out, or judgments of reward also took place.

Most Christians know of the bema seat judgment as the time when God will give rewards to the people of God. As believers, we know that we will not be judged for our sin, and the reason we know that is because Jesus took our judgment on the cross. And there is no judgment remaining for believers as it relates to sin. That's why the apostle Paul wrote this. From 1 Thessalonians 5:

**1 Thessalonians 5:9 (ESV)**

*For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

And in Romans chapter 8, he wrote:

**Romans 8:34 (ESV)**

*Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died — more than that, who was raised — who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

*Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died — more than that, who was raised — who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

Paul is literally saying in this passage, who is left to condemn. There's no one left to condemn us because the One who comes to judge is the One who died for us. So the judgment awaiting believers is a judgment of rewards.

But will everyone receive a reward? Unfortunately, this doesn't seem to be the case. The apostle Paul writes about this in his letter to the Corinthians, let me show you.

### **1 Corinthians 3:11-15 (NIV84)**

*For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.*

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Now the context of this passage in 1 Corinthians 3 is about men who are working in another man's field in the kingdom of God. But I believe what the apostle Paul is giving us here is a principle that will apply to all believers as it relates to the works that we do during our time on the earth. It's either going to be left behind after the fire of God tests it, or it's going to be burned up.

And you'll notice that he says the person who finds their works are all burned up, will in fact suffer loss. What is that loss? Well, it's not a loss of salvation. Paul makes that clear. He says in the passage:

### **1 Corinthians 3:11-15 (NIV84)**

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reward. If it is burned up, **he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames**

And the reason he will be saved, even though he has no works to be rewarded, is because our salvation is not based on works. It is based on faith. The righteous shall live by faith.

Although there are other judgments talked about in the Bible, we want to talk about the final judgment, and for that we go back to the Book of Revelation. From chapter 20.

**Revelation 20:11-15 (ESV)**

*Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.*

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**Revelation 20:11-15 (ESV)**

*And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

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We learn from this passage that this final judgment, the white throne judgment and what comes from it is called, the second death. It's important to remember that believers in Jesus will not stand in this judgment.

And the reason is because believers are part of the bride of Christ, and as such, we are among those who have accepted the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf. He took our judgment and now we will not stand to be judged for our sin because Jesus was already judged on our behalf.

Well, that's it. That wraps up the series of Knowing what you Believe. I really hope that this has been a blessing to you.

If you'd like more studies through the entire Bible, just go to our website: [lifebibleministry.com](http://lifebibleministry.com).

We hope to see you soon.

God bless.