

The Lord's Dealing with His People

- I. In eternity future every negative thing and situation will have been judged.**
 - A. Satan will be cast into the lake of fire—Rev. 20:10.
 - B. All who followed him, including angels, demons and people will also be cast into the lake of fire—Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:15.
 - C. Death and Hades will also be cast into the lake of fire—Rev. 20:14.
- II. Before then the Lord needs to fully clear up every negative thing with His people so that all who are being judged will see God's righteousness and have nothing to say except to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord—Rom. 3:19; Phil. 2:10-11.**
- III. The Lord's judging of His people is for discipline, not for any of them to perish in the lake of fire for eternity—Heb. 12:5-11.**
 - A. Once we believe in the Lord, our salvation is secure for eternity; there are many verses that prove this including John 10:28-29; 6:37.
 - B. But this does not mean that after receiving the Lord we can live loosely and carelessly and then go to heaven when we die.
 - C. Even in this age God uses various means to discipline His children; examples are the persecutions suffered by the Hebrew believers, and the weakness, sickness and the sleep of physical death suffered by Corinthian believers who were abusing the Lord's table—1 Cor. 11:30-32.
 - D. Instead of be careless and sloppy, we need to take the Lord's grace to serve God well-pleasingly with piety and fear; for our God is also a consuming fire—Heb. 12:28-29.
- IV. When the Lord comes, He will judge His believers according to two things:**
 - A. The one aspect is whether they have grown to maturity in life—Matt. 25:1-13:
 1. The Lord's believers are like virgins going forth to meet their bridegroom—v. 1.
 2. The wise virgins had paid the price before they became drowsy and slept to gain oil in their vessels in addition to the oil in their lamps—v. 4.
 3. This means that they had let the Spirit spread from their spirit, their lamp, into their soul, their vessel, so that the Lord was filling their inward being; they were ready to enter into the wedding feast with the Lord—v.10.
 4. The foolish virgins had oil in their lamps while they were alive because they had received the Lord, but they had not let Him spread into their souls, so they still had to pay the price to gain oil in their vessels and missed the wedding feast—vv. 11-12.
 - B. The second aspect of the Lord's judgment of His people is according to the profit they have gained for the Lord in their service to Him—Matt. 25:14-30:
 1. The Lord gives each of His believers spiritual gifts that they might gain a profit for Him—vv. 14-15.
 2. To some He gives more and to other less according to each one's ability.
 3. The Lord expects each of us to use what He has given us to gain a profit for Him.
 - a. If we do gain the profit that the Lord expects we will gain the reward of entering into the joy of the Lord in His kingdom—vv. 21, 23.
 - b. If we do not gain a profit for the Lord, at His coming we will be cast into outer darkness—v. 30.
- V. The Lord's coming is not just a single event when He appears to the whole earth and destroys the major armies of the earth at the battle of Armageddon.**

- A. The Greek word translated as *coming* is *parousia* and means *presence*—Matt. 24:3, and footnote 3³.
 - B. The coming of the Lord's presence will be in stages over a period of time.
- VI. The Lord's coming begins with the raptures of the overcomers before the great tribulation:**
- A. The overcomers who died before then will be the man-child raptured to the throne of God—Rev. 12:5, 11; Phil. 3:10-11.
 - B. The first ripe believers who are still alive will be raptured to the heavenly Mount Zion—Rev. 14:1-5.
 - C. The rest of the overcomers who are alive will be raptured to the Lord's presence—Rev. 3:10; Luke 21:36; Matt. 24:39-42.
- VII. The rest of the believers who are still alive will participate in the sufferings of the great tribulation:**
- A. The whole earth will be filled with violence and lawlessness without restraint—2 Thes. 2:7.
 - B. The remaining believers will not be spared like the marked out tribes of Israel from the torment of the demon possessed locusts—Rev. 9:1-11.
 - C. Antichrist will war against God's people and many of them will be martyred—Rev. 13:7, 15.
- VIII. The saints who had not been raptured previously will be raptured near the end of the great tribulation:**
- A. The ones who had died will be resurrected—1 Thes. 4:15-16.
 - B. The ones who are still living on earth will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air—v. 17.
- IX. Revelation chapter 14 shows us:**
- A. The reaping of the firstfruits—vv. 1-5.
 - B. Then is the warning to the whole earth to fear God and honor Him because the Antichrist is about to try to force people to worship himself—vv. 6-7;
 - C. Next is the destruction of the religious Babylon—v. 8.
 - D. Then a warning to not worship the beast—vv. 9-12.
 - E. Then the blessing of those who are martyred during the great tribulation—v. 13.
 - F. Then the harvest of the majority of believers near the end of the great tribulation—vv. 14-16.
 - G. Finally, the gathering of the evildoers into the winepress at the end of the great tribulation—vv. 17-20.
- X. All the believers will stand before the Lord at His judgment seat—2 Cor. 5:10:**
- A. This judgment is not concerning being with the Lord or in the lake of fire in eternity.
 - B. This judgment is to determine the reward or punishment of the believers during the Lord's kingdom on earth for a thousand years.
 - C. As shown in the parables in Matthew 25, some believers will enter into the wedding feast and participate in the joy of the Lord—vv. 10, 21, 23.
 - D. The other believers will miss the wedding feast and be cast into outer darkness—vv. 11-12, 30.
- XI. The discipline of the defeated believers is temporary, lasting only a thousand years; during that time all of them will become mature.**
- XII. After the thousand years of the Lord's kingdom on this earth, all the believers will enter into the New Jerusalem to be with the Lord for eternity—Rev. 21 & 22.**