

## **Judgement on believers**

### **1Co 3:5-17**

#### **Explaining the nature of the leaders' ministry**

The discussion in 1Co 3:5-17 is on the division in the Corinthian church, which is a result of misunderstanding the leaders' role in ministry which Paul clarifies. He uses two metaphors and the first is a cultivated field (5-7). Converts are like crops where the most vital outcome is growth. As this is given by God, all credits are His. In this respect, Paul and Apollos are nothing but mere servants, helping them to believe. The word "believe" in v5 in the context is clearly more than converting but to be inducted into the faith. In this process the leaders have one purpose in v8 namely the growth of believers. However their tasks differ and to explain it Paul uses the second metaphor of a building (8-12). Firstly their roles are different. Paul the evangelist plants and lays the foundation which must be Christ, while Apollos the teacher builds on it (10). Secondly their rewards differ and this will depend on their quality of labour (8). Gold, silver and precious stones are durable materials typifying biblical truths built into believers' lives while faulty teachings are the hay and straws. In this process, exemplary examples are crucial which must be a reason for the call in v10 to do it with care. The quality of work will be tested by intense fire and reward is offered only if it survives (13-15). It will occur at Christ's judgment seat in 2Co. 5:10 but v15 affirms that one's salvation is not at stake. A stern warning is given to those destroying the faith of believers, who are God's temple (16-17). These are heretics who will be destroyed for apostates will lose their salvation.

### **2Co 5:1-10**

#### **The impact of the eternal hope on believers' lives**

In 2Co 4:18, Paul mentions that he looks at eternity for encouragement and now he expands on it. Using an allegory of earthly dwelling to represent our mortal bodies he affirms that immortality awaits us in heaven (1-5). However, it must be so real that we long for it (1-2). This longing is such that we want to be clothed with immortality and in contrast the word naked is used to represent mortality (3-4). The longing is intense for we groan but still Paul says that it is not because we want to be unclothed. So there should be no desire for death but simply a longing for eternity. God even gives us a pledge in v5 to assure us of immortality and it is the Holy Spirit. So experiencing Him is a foretaste of heaven. Note in 1Cor. 15:52-53, the immortal body will only be resurrected on Christ's return. Some commentators therefore postulate that the groaning is for this final state but this means a deficient state even after death until His return. However there is no such picture of lack in Rev. 7:14-17 for martyred saints in the tribulation awaiting their resurrection of the body. The experience of immortality clearly begins at death with no feeling of deficiency. This hope has an impact on the present affecting Paul's ministry in two ways. First it gives them courage to face the present difficulties (6-8). The fact that Paul prefers to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord in v8 shows that there is no feeling of deficiency at death as we await the resurrection. The second is a desire to please the Lord and this is because after death, we will be judged for our works (9-10). Salvation is not at stake in the judgment seat of Christ but only our rewards. Still 1Cor. 3:15 warns us that we will suffer some kind of loss if our works on earth is not pleasing to Him. Having an eternal perspective in the ministry is crucial but only possible if we walk by faith (7).

## **Judgement on unbelievers**

### **Rev 20:11-15**

#### **Judgment of the Great White Throne**

The final judgment begins with God sitting on the throne (11). So immense will this be that heaven and earth fled away as if they disappear. Indeed they will pass away as in 21:1 but v11 is probably poetical for the old earth is subsequently around to release the dead (12-13). Death and Hades are personified with the former having the body and the latter their souls where they are dwelling temporarily. They are all resurrected and their works recorded in books will condemn them. As they are not in the book of life, there is no salvation and they will be thrown into the lake of fire that is the second death (14-15).

## **Judgement on sheep and goats**

### **Mt 25:31-46**

#### **The judgment of the nations for actions on the saints**

Mt 25:31-46 records the last prophecy in Jesus' Mount Oliver Discourse. It is a consoling reminder that as we wait for His return, the world will be judged by their responses to His saints. The timing is after His return and His throne is already set up (31-33). All humanity surviving the tribulation will be gathered under their nations and separated into sheep and goats. The sheep are those who treated His saints admirably (34-40) in contrast to the goats who maltreated them (41-46). This principle will be especially significant in the tribulation when the antichrist will lead the massive persecution against the saints, many of them being the 144,000 Jews in Rev. 7:4-8.

## **基督臺前的審判**

### **林前 3:5-17**

#### **解釋帶領者工作的本質—5-17 節**

林前 3:5-17 是在討論哥林多教會的分裂，而這分裂源於錯誤理解帶領者在服侍工作上的角色，保羅在此詳加澄清。他引用兩個比喻來說明，首先是耕種的比喻（5-7 節）。歸信主的人就像農作物，最重要的成果是生長。因為這是神的賜予，所有功勞都是祂的。就這方面，保羅和亞波羅只不過是神的僕人，幫助他們相信而已。在上下文中，“相信”這詞在第 5 節明顯不止歸信那麼簡單，還有被導引入真理中的意思。在這過程中，帶領者在第 8 節有一個目的，就是幫助信徒長進。不過他們的任務各不相同，作為解釋，保羅引出第二個建築物的比喻（8-12 節）。首先，他們的角色有別，保羅是傳福音的，他負責栽種和打好根基，而根基就是基督。至於亞波羅，他是在其上建造的教師（10 節）。其次，他們的獎賞是不同的，這將取決於他們勞動的質量（8 節）。金、銀和寶石是耐用的建材，象徵聖經的真理，建構信徒的生命；而草、木、禾稈則是錯誤的教導。在建造過程中，好榜樣是至關重要的，這必是第 10 節提醒要謹慎建造的原因。工程的質量會經過烈火的考驗，只有那些存留下來的工程才會得到獎賞（13-15 節）。按哥林多後書 5:10，這將發生在主的審判台前，但第 15 節肯定一個人的得救並不會有危險。對於那些摧毀信徒信心的人，這裡給出嚴峻的警告，為因信徒是神的殿（16-17 節）。這些都是傳異端的人，他們必因離經叛道而被摧毀，失去他們的救恩。

### **林後 5:1-10**

#### **永恆盼望對他們生命的影響—1-10 節**

在林後 4:18，保羅提到他將永恆視作鼓勵，在這他把這論點加以擴展。他用一個地上居所的比喻來代表我們的肉身，他肯定永生在天堂等著我們（1-5 節）。然而，它必須是如此真實以致於我們渴望它（1-2 節）。這種渴望使我們想穿上永活不朽，相反，赤身這詞是用來代表死亡（3-4 節）。渴望是強烈的因為我們在歎息，但保羅仍然說這不是因為我們想脫下。所以，不應有對死亡的渴望，而應僅是對永恆的想望。在第 5 節神甚至給我們一個印記，保證我們的永生，那就是聖靈。所以經歷聖靈是對天堂的預先體驗。留意在哥林多前書 15:52-53，不朽壞的身體必須等到基督回來時才能復活。因此，有些解經家就認為呻吟是為了這最後的狀態，但這意味着即是在死亡後，在祂回來之前，也都是處於一種有缺陷的狀態。但從啟示錄 7:14-17 可見，對於那些在大災難中殉道的聖徒來說，在他們等候身體復活之時，並沒有這樣的景象。永生的經歷顯然是從死亡那刻開始，沒有缺乏的感覺。這樣的盼望如今影響著保羅事工的兩個方面。首先，他們有勇氣去面對當前的艱難（6-8 節）。在第 8 節保羅更願意離開身體與主同住，這表明當我們等候復活的時候，死亡並不會有任何缺乏的感覺。第二是要渴望討主的喜悅，這是因為在死後，我們必因自己的作為受到審判（9-10 節）。在基督的審判台前，我們的得救不會面對威脅，受影響的僅是我們的獎賞。只是哥林多前書 3:15 仍然警告我們，若我們在地上所行的並不討祂喜悅，那麼我們將遭受某種程度的虧損。帶着永恆的焦點去服侍至關重要，但這只有我們憑信心行事才有可能（7 節）。

## 白色大寶座的審判

### **啟 20:11-15**

#### **白色寶座大審判—11-15 節**

最後的審判開始了，神坐在寶座上（11 節）。審判規模之大連天地都要逃跑，好像消失了一樣。根據 21:1 的形容它們確實都會過去，不過在 11 節可能是帶著詩意的描述，因為老舊的地球到後來還在，並且會把死人交出來（12-13 節）。死亡和陰間都用了擬人法來形容，前者有軀體，後者有靈魂，死人都暫住在其中。他們在此刻全都復活了，並會按著被記錄在案卷裏的行為受審判。因為他們的名字不在生命冊上所以都沒得著救恩，他們會被扔進火湖裏去，這是第二次的死亡（14-15 節）。

## 山羊和綿羊的審判

### **太 25:31-46**

#### **對列國的審判和對聖徒的行動—31-46 節**

最後的預言給我們在等候主回來時帶安慰的提醒，世界將會因它如何對待信徒而得到相應的審判。這是發生在祂再來之後，祂是坐在寶座上（31-33 節）。所有大災難的倖存者人都會按所屬國家聚集在神的面前，分成綿羊和山羊。綿羊是那些厚待聖徒的人（34-40 節），而山羊則是那些惡待聖徒的人（41-46 節）。這區分的原則將會很重要，因為在大災難時，敵基督會帶頭對聖徒作出大規模的逼迫，許多都是在啟示錄 7:4-8 提到的那 14 萬 4 千猶太人。