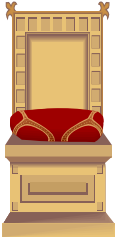


The Bema Seat

The Judgment Seat of Christ

JUDGMENT (Bema) SEAT OF CHRIST (Believers)



As we read in **2 Corinthians 5:10**, we (believers) shall all appear before our Lord at the “*Judgment Seat of Christ*” to be rewarded for our service in the name of Christ. The name is derived from the Greek term *bema*, which described the platform where Olympic athletes were awarded their medals.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 describes the process for determining our *reward*. Our works will be laid on the altar of Jesus Christ and tested by fire. Those works surviving the fire (gold, silver, costly stones) will be the basis/materials for our reward. Those works that are burned (wood, hay, straw) produce no reward. It is possible that we will lose (not receive) any rewards at all – but we retain our salvation (vs. 15).

This judgment is much the way the Olympics are judged. Every athlete competing has already made the team. They are there to have their *performance* judged and rewarded. The highest, best, fastest scores receive medals. Those who score low do not receive a medal, but there is no disqualification from the team. Many scholars believe that, in addition to whatever rewards we may receive from the Lord, there are *5 crowns* which believers are eligible to receive at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Whether these crowns are literal or figurative is not important. What is important is the continuing theme of living for *the Day*, and not for today.



1. Crown of LIFE (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10). This is the reward for those who endure trials, tribulations, temptations/testing for the name of Christ - some even *to the point of death*. (also referred to as the Martyr’s crown, the Sufferer’s crown)

2. Crown of GLORY. (I Peter 5:2-4). The is the reward for pastors, elders and leaders of local congregations - *shepherds of the flock* - who serve faithfully and *not* for the money or the power. They shall receive this crown from the Chief Shepherd - Christ himself. (also referred to as the Pastor’s crown, the Elder’s crown, the Shepherd’s crown)

3. Crown of JOY. (I Thess. 2:19-20, Philippians 4:1). This is the crown for those who lead others to the Lord. In fact, the souls won are actually the crown. (also referred to as the crown of Rejoicing, the Soul Winner’s crown)

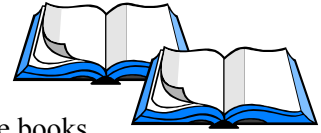
4. Crown of RIGHTEOUSNESS. (2 Timothy 4:8). This is the crown reserved for those who love, and long for, the coming (“appearing”) of the Lord.

5. The VICTOR’s Crown. (I Corinthians 9:25-27, 2 Timothy 2:5). This crown is the only one that uses an athletic analogy. It is for those who have kept their Christian lives pure - not distracted by worldly pleasures, not contaminated by sinful desires or harmful substances - as totally self disciplined as an athlete in training. (also referred to as the Incorruptible crown)

The Books

REASON

Revelation 20:12 - 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. (NIV)



Ecclesiastes 12:14 - For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. (NIV)

RECORDED

Philippians 4:3 - Yes, and I ask you, true companion, help these women who have labored at my side for the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. (NIV)

Psalms 139:15-16 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. (NIV)

Luke 10:20 However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. (NIV)

REMOVED?

Psalms 69:27-28 - Charge them with crime upon crime; do not let them share in your salvation. May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous. (NIV)

Revelation 3:5 - He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. (NIV)

REMAINED - RESULT

Revelation 20:15 - If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (NIV)



Revelation 21:27 - Nothing impure will ever enter it [The New Jerusalem], nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (NIV)

Daniel 12:1 - 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. (NIV)

Hebrews 12:22-23 - But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, (NIV)