

# The Judgment Seat

The Bēma Seat

The altar part or sanctuary in ancient and Orthodox churches.

The podium or platform in a synagogue  
from which the Torah and Prophets are read.

The platform from which orators spoke in ancient Athens

# Historical Origins

The Roman Empire operated with a communal judgment seat.

Lexham Bible Dictionary states:

“The judgment seat was the location from which municipal authorities welcomed visitors into cities, extended favor to righteous citizens making pleas for justice, and assessed punishments on social deviants.”

# Biblical Relevance

New Testament occurrences of this concept:

Acts 12:21; 18:12, 16–17: The judgment seat of Roman judges.

Acts 25:6, 10, 17: Historical tribunals

Matt 27:11&John 18:28–33: The seat of Pilate during Jesus' trial.

Romans 14:10: End times judgment governed by God.

2 Corinthians 5:10: End times judgment governed by Christ.

# The Two Verses that state this concept are:

## **2 Corinthians 5:10**

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.*

## **Romans 14:10-12**

*Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; <sup>11</sup> for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." <sup>12</sup> So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.*

# What does the scriptural text tell us?

Referring to **believers**, not unbelievers.

At salvation, all our sins are forgiven so this cannot be an accounting of our sinfulness.

**1 John 2:2** "He is the propitiation (sacrifice that atones) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

**John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

**Romans 8:1** "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

# What does the scriptural text tell us?

## **Ephesians 6:8**

Because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

## **Colossians 3:24**

Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

[See “Reward” handout for further study.]

**So what is being Judged?**

# What Might Be Judged

Great Commission: Matthew 28:18–20

Controlling our Tongues: James 3:1–9

How well we love one another: John 13:34; 15:9, 12

What would you add?

# What Will Be Judged

Although He was a son, He learned obedience through what He suffered. **Hebrews 5:8**

Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

**Romans 6:16**

Being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete. **2 Corinthians 10:6**

# The Concept of Crowns

## For faithfully serving Jesus Christ

### 2 Timothy 2:1-7

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

(See also 1 Corinthians 9:4–27)

# The Concept of Crowns

## For faithfully serving Jesus Christ

Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. **2 Timothy 4:8**

And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. **1 Peter 5:4**

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. **Revelation 2:10**

[See J. McDowell Article handout for further study.]

# **The Concept of Crowns**

## **For faithfully serving Jesus Christ**

Blessed is the man  
who remains steadfast under trial,  
for when he has stood the test  
he will receive the crown of life,  
which God has promised to those who love him.

**James 1:12**

# The Judgment Seat of Christ

And that you, O Lord, are loving.  
Surely you will reward each person  
according to what he has done.

**Psalm 62:12**