

GLEANINGS

Article GE- 75

WHY WILL CHRIST BRING US TO HEAVEN?

There will be a time in the future when God will gather up those people who are in Christ (2nd Corinthians 5:17-19) and transport them to a place where they will begin a new life. The key word here is the word "begin". The first place Jesus Christ transports us to will not be the place we will spend eternity. If it is, we need to tear out the last two chapters of the book of Revelation because in Revelation 21:1 we find that God is going to create a new earth. Those in Christ will live with Him on that new earth forever and ever.

Christ will leave the Third Heaven and will appear in mid-air over the earth. At the sound of a trumpet, the spiritual bodies of the saved will rise into the air to meet Christ. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye we will receive heavenly, glorified bodies that our spiritual bodies will dwell in through eternity just as they dwell in material, carnal bodies on this material earth.

"For we must all appear before the βῆμα (pronounced bama - reward) judgment seat of Christ". (2nd Cor. 5:10)

The "Reward Seat" was a familiar term to the apostle Paul. In the early days of the Olympics, a judge would be seated on an elevated seat called the *Bama Seat* or the Reward Seat. When the contest was completed, the winners would assemble in front of the Reward Seat where they would be recognized and where they would receive their crowns or rewards. The judge was not there to judge the character of the contestant. The judge was there to award the prizes.

After the catching up, all of the saved up to that moment (both those who have died and those who are still alive) will be assembled before the Bama Seat in the Third Heaven. We will be told of the rewards we will enjoy through eternity. Everything that we have done since salvation has been recorded and our rewards will be based upon the life we have built and upon what we have done for Christ after salvation (Malachi 3:16).