

Difficult Scriptures

26.4.88
E. J. ...
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I. Scripture: I Thessalonians 4:17

II. How This Verse Is Misused By Some

This is one of many texts used to "prove" heaven is the reward of the saved. Specifically, it is twisted to say that Christians will go to heaven and be there with Christ forever.

III. True Explanation

A. Since those who misunderstand this verse believe it to confirm that the reward of the saved is heaven, you should review the general subject of what God's Kingdom really is and what the reward of the saved is.

B. Paul was speaking of the resurrection of Christians at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (verse 16). We will rise to meet Christ in the air -- the atmosphere over this earth (verse 17). Thus we will be with the Lord.

Then what? Where do we go from there? Since we will be with Christ, the question to ask is, "Where will Christ be?"

C. Christ is coming to this earth. Zechariah 14:4 shows that on the very day mentioned in I Thessalonians 4:17, Christ will be standing on the Mount of Olives, which is on this earth.

D. Christ is coming with all glory and with His angels to judge all nations (Matthew 25:31-32). His saints will be given power to rule the nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 2:26-27). They will be kings and priests with Him and will reign on the earth (Revelation 5:10).

