

As stated in verse 31 this judgment is to take place when Christ comes in glory. All nations are to be gathered before Him. This must refer to persons living at that time. It could hardly include those who had died as Christians, or those who, though living, had participated in the Rapture of the Church. Since all of these are not included, it is quite reasonable to suppose that those who had died in wickedness also are not included. It is doubtless a judgment of those who are living when Christ comes to earth.

When Christ comes in glory, the brightness of His coming will destroy all the leaders of wickedness. Yet our passage shows that there will still be a great number of persons left upon the earth. This multitude will evidently be composed mainly of those many who seem to have gone along with the tide, not taking a strong enough stand for the Lord that they would suffer martyrdom during the days of the great tribulation, nor yet taking so strong a position against Him as would involve them in the destruction of the forces of evil that occurs at His coming.

A superficial reading of the passage would make it sound as if mere kindness were the basis of the judgment. A little thought, however, shows that what is actually involved is the question whether those judged have true faith in the Lord or not. We see visibly portrayed the humility of the true believers who are aware of their own unworthiness. On the other hand we see the great numbers who will loudly claim to be followers of Christ whenever it seems to be to their advantage to do so. The Judge pierces behind the modesty of the true believers and beneath the false pretenses of the unfaithful, and makes His division accordingly.

Of course no one who participates in the Rapture will personally be subject to this judgment. Instead they will be with Christ at His coming, observing this judgment and perhaps to some extent participating in it with Christ.