

סֹפָה (suphah) indicates a storm with strong winds that blow away chaff like nothing (Job 21:18). In general, it refers to a storm with destructive powers, a tempest, a hurricane-type storm (Job 27:20). It is used in a figurative sense of God's pursuit of the wicked; or of any calamity on humankind (Proverbs 1:27). God's chariots are like a tempest or a whirlwind (Jeremiah 4:13).²

22. God through Moses warned of this ever-threatening problem in the context of the Second Commandment:

Exodus 20:4 “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

v. 5 “You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,

v. 6 but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.” (NASB)

23. In our context we are studying the differences between liberty and freedom. It is by means of liberty that those who have lost the thought are able, over time, to distort the nation's culture without violating criminal law.
24. The propaganda being communicated is designed to sell the idea that laws upholding cultural standards are unconstitutional because they discriminate against certain individuals who desire to ignore them.
25. We have seen this approach used to particularly target sexual standards, which once implemented eventuate in destroying marriage, home, and family. Here's how.
26. Step #1 was Roe v. Wade (1973) in which the Supreme Court (SCOTUS) ruled that the Constitution protected a woman's right to an abortion prior to the viability of the fetus.

² Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter, “סֹפָה,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003), 772–73.



27. Various court decisions occurred subsequently so that abortion was considered legal into the third trimester and even to the point of murder in the case of the oxymoron “partial-birth abortion.”
28. The theological analysis of these decisions reveals how the omniscience of God anticipated these circumstances. He decreed not to execute selection of human life until the imputation of soul life to biological life at physical birth.
29. The secondary ramification of abortion is that it provides an after-the-fact problem-solving device for engaging in sex without recognizing the responsibilities attendant to the act should pregnancy occur.
30. Culture, history, and common sense indicate that a stable society depends on the integrity of the marriage contract.
31. Scripture advocates the union be consummated between two believers—one man to one woman—who pledge to enter the contract until death parts them.
32. From this circumstance we move to the breakdown of the family. People may or may not decide to enter into the marriage contract. Nevertheless, children naturally enter into the equation whether the parents are married or not.
31. Broken homes eliminate the love, care, guidance, support, and protection that children need from both parents in their advance to adulthood.
32. Further compounding this problem is the fairly recent introduction of same-sex marriages. Who people marry is their business although it violates biblical standards.
33. In this arrangement, there is no way that children can be produced. If they are adopted, then the influence of the missing mother or father is absent in that child’s life.
34. Transgender has recently entered the discussion along with sex-change operations of small children.
35. All of these variations, alterations, and transitions altar the established system of the home, an arrangement that has existed since Eve gave birth to Cain.



36. Had the construct of established boundaries for marriage, home, and family not been adopted by our original parents, then the chart pedigree of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ would have been destroyed.
37. The present hodge-podge of arrangements was conjured right in the heart of hell by Lucifer himself. His human sycophants in the lust of the flesh have signed on to this advancing madness.
38. Once marriage and family are thoroughly redefined, then we may accurately conclude that we will have moved posthaste into the third and fourth generations' curses. These advanced stages of reversionism, are then closing in on the fifth cycle of discipline.
39. Now amidst all of this cultural chaos, we are forced to conclude that due to the long march through the institutions, there are going to be a huge number of believers who will have been part of its madness.
40. This takes us back to our expanded translation in James:
James 2:12 In light of these things, keep on speaking or communicating and keep on applying just as those who are about to receive judgment by the law of freedom. (EXT)
41. This takes us to the doctrine of the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ:

The Doctrine of the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ

A. Introduction

1. This event is referred to by Paul as the "Judgment Seat of Christ" in:

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat [βῆμα (*bēma*)³] of Christ, so that each one may be paid back according to what he has done while in the body, whether good or evil. (NET)

³ "The *judgment seat* (βῆμα, *bēma*) was a raised platform mounted by steps and sometimes furnished with a seat, used by officials in addressing an assembly or making pronouncements, often on judicial matters. The judgment seat was a common item in Greco-Roman culture, often located in the *agorá* [ἀγορά], the public square or marketplace in the center of a city. Use of the term in reference to Christ's judgment would be familiar to Paul's 1st century readers" (*The NET Bible* [Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 2005], 2255sn16).



It is evident from the context of Romans 14:1–13; 2 Corinthians 5:1–11 that this is the judgment of the believers connected with the *parousía* [2d Advent], the coming presence of the Lord Jesus. This concerns the evaluation of our life on earth and its character and works (see especially 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The complete and final evaluation of the believer's life, however, is going to be connected with the *Parousía*, the Second Coming of the Lord as explained in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24; 25; Mark 13; Luke 21). According to 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, the dead in Christ will be resurrected first, and believers who are still alive will be changed to receive a body conformable to that of those who had already risen.⁴

Judgment Seat (βῆμα). In Acts 7:5 *béma* means “step,” “stride,” or “length,” but elsewhere in the New Testament and most often in Greek literature it means “tribunal,” “judicial bench,” “judgment seat” or “throne,” traditionally erected in public from which judgment and other official business was conducted.⁵

The Greek term *bema* portrays a seat or raised platform where a judge sits to adjudicate a case. The Greeks employed the same term to describe the platform on which a judge or referee sat during the Isthmian or Olympic games at Corinth. Here the winner of the various athletic events received their rewards. No doubt the apostle Paul had such a scene in mind when he used the phrase, “judgment seat of Christ.”

Thus, the contexts and the historical background of the term imply that the *bema* is for believers a place and time of rewarding rather than punishing.⁶

βῆμα, a dais or platform that required steps to ascend, *tribunal*.⁷

⁴ Spiros Zodhiates, ed., “βῆμα,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 334.

⁵ Colin Brown, “Judgment Seat,” in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, gen. ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 3:760.

⁶ David R. Nicholas, “The Judgment at the Rapture,” in *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, gen. ed. Mal Couch (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1996), 226.

⁷ Walter Bauer, “βῆμα,” in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 175.



Judgment Seat of Christ. The manifestation of the believer's works is in question in this judgment. It is most emphatically not a judgment of the believer's sins. These have been fully atoned for in the vicarious and substitutionary death of Christ, and remembered no more (Hebrews 10:17). It is quite necessary, however, that the service of every child of God be definitely scrutinized and evaluated. As a result of this judgment of the believer's works, there will be reward or loss of reward. The judgment seat, literally *bēma*, evidently is set up in heaven previous to Christ's glorious Second Advent to establish His earth rule in the millennial kingdom. The judgment seat of Christ is necessary for the appointment of places of rulership and authority with Christ in His role of "King of kings and Lord of lords" at His revelation in power and glory.⁸

2. What distinguishes the tribunal in 2 Corinthians 5:10 are those who gather before the Lord's *bēma* had their sins judged at the cross. In fact, the sins of the entire human race were judged at the cross. For all Church-Age believers, their pre-salvation sins were forgiven at the moment they believed in Christ.
3. During their post-salvation earthy life, their sins were forgiven through confession alone to God alone resulting in the filling of the Holy Spirit.
4. When the Rapture occurs, all Church-Age believers will gather in the third heaven and participate in the Great Genuflect described in:

Philippians 3:9 God has exalted Him to the maximum, and has bestowed on Him the rank which is above every rank [**King of kings and Lord of lords**],

v. 10 so that in the presence of Jesus every knee of heaven shall bow, both the ones on earth [**believers alive at the Rapture**], and the ones under the earth [**those dead at the Rapture**],

Philippians 3:11 and that every tongue shall acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, resulting in the glory of God the Father. (EXT)

5. This passage describes the post-Rapture assembly of the resurrected royal family of God before the throne of God. Jesus Christ will be recognized with His new royal title, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

⁸ Merrill F. Unger, "Judgment Seat of Christ," in *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, rev. 3d ed., ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1988), 728).



6. This new title will be displayed on His toga and sword indicating his authority both judicially and militarily:

Revelation 19:16 He has His royal title which has been written on his *chlamús* [ἱμάτιον (*himátion*): outer garment⁹, specifically, the *χλαμύς* (*chlamús*)] and on His thigh¹⁰: “King of kings and Lord of lords.” (EXT)

7. Following this event, the entire royal family assembles before the Supreme Court of Heaven with Jesus Christ sitting as Chief Justice. He calls to order the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ.

B. The Challenge of Personal Freedom

1. The word “judgment” refers to two concepts: condemnation and evaluation. In this context, it refers to evaluation. In our text the circumstance is the latter since resurrected believers can never again face any judgment.
2. In this case, the royal family will be evaluated with regard to their production of divine good, under the filling of the Holy Spirit, during their Christian lives: “gold, silver, precious stones” (1 Corinthians 3:12a).
3. It is understood that with the possession of a sin nature, the soul will have entertained ideas associated with human good and evil. These areas will be examined in the process of the evaluation.
4. The evaluation will expose those incidences when divine power was not utilized in the execution of certain deeds and will be classified as “wood, hay, stubble” (1 Corinthians 3:12b).
5. Simply put, the evaluation’s purpose is to determine each person’s production, whether performed through the filling of the Holy Spirit or through the energy of the flesh.
6. The outcome of the evaluation does not determine what kind of discipline may be imposed on anyone. Instead, the purpose is to determine who produced a preponderance of divine good as opposed to those who produced a preponderance of human good and evil.

(End JAS2-70. See JAS2-71 for continuation of study at p. 701.)

⁹ Jesus Christ is dressed in military attire at the Second Advent. The garment typical for the authority of highest rank is the *χλαμύς* (*chlamús*): “The purple robe with which our Lord was arrayed in scorn by the mockers in Pilate’s judgment hall.” “A military cloak worn by emperors, kings, magistrates, military officers” (Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, s.vv. “ἱμάτιον,” “*chlamús*,” 774, 1477).

¹⁰ The common practice in the first century A.D. was for a sculptor to engrave his name in silver on the statue’s thigh. Here the titles refer to the Lord’s battlefield royalty over human authorities: “King of kings,” and over angelic authorities: “Lord of lords.”

