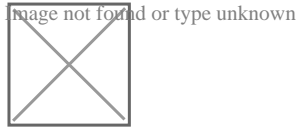


And He will come again in glory to judge both the living and the dead [6] (Saint Cyril of Jerusalem)

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26. God's Judgement certainly gives rise to fear in us, and what we're told about how it will happen terrifies us. Even though the Kingdom of Heaven is the declared aim of our lives, the eternal fire of hell has also been prepared. It's only natural that people will ask: 'How can we avoid the fire of hell? And how will we enter the Kingdom?'. Christ said: 'I was hungry and you gave me food' (Matth. 25, 35). Learn the way, then. There's no need for you to resort to any kind of allegory here. 'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me (Matth. 25, 35-6). Do that and you'll be with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven. But if you don't, you'll be condemned.



So start from now to put this into practice and have living and firm faith. Make sure you're not shut out, like the foolish virgins, by putting off going to get oil. Don't take heart just from the fact that you have a lamp, but make sure it's lit as well. Let the light of your good works shine before other people (cf. Matth. 5, 16) and make sure Christ isn't blasphemed because of you. Put on the garment of incorruption and excel at good, God-pleasing works. And, whatever task God entrusts you with, 'by dispensation', perform in a pleasing and fruitful manner. Have you been entrusted with money? Spend it well and put it to good use. Have you been chosen to teach the word? Employ this gift for the glory of God and the salvation of others. Are you able to bring others to hear the word, the message of the faith? Do so with zeal.

There are so many forms of life and activity in which we can show ourselves faithful and good stewards of God's gifts. Just let's be careful not to make mistakes and then be rejected, so that we can be confident at our meeting with our eternal King, Christ, Who will reign unto the ages of ages. He it is Who will judge the living and the dead. He it is Who died for the sake of the living and the dead as Saint Paul says: 'For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living (Rom. 14, 9)....

33. And may the God of all keep you able and illumined, so that you will retain in

your memory the signs of the end of the world and remain unmoved by the Antichrist. Now you know the particular signs that will declare the coming of the deceiver. You have proof of the real Christ, Who obviously will descend from heaven. Avoid one of them, the deceiver. Await the Other, the true One. You've learned the way, that is, the criteria needed so that you stand on the right hand of the Father. Hold fast to what's been entrusted to you, as regards Christ (cf. I Tim. 6, 20), excelling in God-pleasing works (cf. I Tim. 2, 10), so that you'll inherit the Kingdom of Heaven when you stand with confidence before the Judge, through Whom and with Whom the glory belongs to God, together with the Holy Spirit, unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Source: *agiazoni.gr*