

FAQ 7

Qualities Of The Final Judgment

Q #7 The Parable of the Weeds (Mt. 13:24ff) states the wicked will be gathered first. Your scenario states God's people are raptured first then the wicked are gathered for the Judgment. How do you account for this apparent contradiction?

Sincerely, this is another good question. Once again, there exist multiple answers as to the possible way this passage was intended, so we would ask that you prayerfully consider the following proposed alternative as a viable option. Once again, we offer this as a proposal, so please do not see this as a dogmatic-Truth offering. While we sincerely believe it is God's intended meaning [and, as a result, go on to make application appeals (see our [Truth Matters! Articles](#) and www.enduranceministries.org)], we do understand there does indeed exist other ways of understanding this parable.

The answer to this good question is longer due to many important aspects relating to this question, so please be patient as you read through our response. Thanks

First, parables represent a certain type of genre which especially seek to illustrate certain truths to some but may hide the meaning from others. We do not pretend to know why God has orchestrated this method except when we are graciously granted a glimpse or partial view on the whole: "And the disciples came and said to Him [Jesus Christ], 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' He answered and said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.'" (Matthew 13:10, 11 ; NKJV ; bracketed insertion ours)

Secondly, note the context, including our Lord's interpretation of the parable. The parable is given in verses 24 - 30; the intended meaning of the same is given in verses 36 - 43. Some questions: Where are the tares sent after their gathering? They are cast into the furnace. Does this take place immediately, or does the text allow for the possibility that this casting into the furnace takes place some (undefined) time after the gathering?

When are the wheat (righteous) gathered? Jesus does not say. He only says, "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (vs. 43) No gathering is mentioned in Jesus Christ's explanation of the parable. Is it possible the *gathering* (mentioned in other passages) may have already taken place (over one thousand years earlier at the rapture event)? Remember, their shining as the sun **in the kingdom of their Father** may possibly occur after the event of the great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20; also see Matthew 25 where both the sheep and the goats are judged at the same time).

What we are suggesting is this:

This parable of the weeds or tares is NOT addressing the time when Christ comes for His church at the gathering or rapture event (Mt. 24:31 ; I Cor. 51:51,52 ; I Thes. 4:13ff ;

Rev. 11:15 & Rev. 14:14-16) but is addressing the time when the final judgment takes place - after the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

How do we reconcile the details of Matthew 13, Matthew 25 and Revelation?

Here's a suggested chronology for your prayerful consideration. (Suggested exercise: print the [worksheet](#) so you can put in the appropriate biblical references. #14 on the worksheet is an example.)

1. The Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering takes place.
2. The bowls of God's wrath are brought.
3. The Second Advent of Jesus Christ to the earth takes place.
4. The millennial reign of Jesus Christ occurs.
5. Satan is loosed and finally thrown into the Lake of Fire.
6. Humanity is gathered for the final judgment.
7. Sheep are placed on the right; goats are placed on the left.
8. Sheep (wheat) are addressed first (faithful *talent* servants, etc.); goats (weeds) are addressed second (unfaithful *talent* servants, etc.).
9. The weeds (goats) are then gathered and thrown into the furnace; the wheat (sheep) then shine like the sun in the eternal kingdom.
10. The Earth and Heavens are burned up.
11. New Earth, Heaven and Jerusalem appear.
12. The eternal kingdom is delivered to God the Father.