

**PARABLES OF JESUS, #043**  
**A Chronological Study**

**"To Him who opened His mouth in parables and  
uttered things hidden since the creation of the world."  
Psalm 78:2**



**"The Judgment  
The Sheep and The Goats"  
Matthew 25:31-46**

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**INTRODUCTION**

This is the final parable that Jesus speaks to His followers. This next quote comes directly after this parable:

**Matthew 26:1-2**

***When Jesus had finished all these words, He said to His disciples, 2 "You know that after two days the***



***Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion."***

Closing out Matthew's Gospel will be the dinner at Simon the leper's home where Mary the Magdalene will anoint Jesus with the perfume. Then Judas will bargain with the High Priests for "thirty pieces of silver" for the betrayal of Jesus.

After the second day it's the Passover and Jesus gathers His disciples for "The Last Supper" together – and after singing a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane – Evening came and Judas betrayed The Lord Jesus, The Messiah, The Christ... with a kiss.

This parable is all about judgment. It's a simple story about all of mankind being divided up into just two groups. It is the third parable in a row, just in Matthew chapter 25, that Jesus has been telling His Disciples concerning that coming Judgment. In fact, many of His parables speak of eventual judgment of those who refuse to bow the knee and worship, love, and adore Almighty God and His Son, the sent Savior of sinful man. The Father delegated Him to be the creator and sustainer of His creation. The Father planted the promise of the "Anointed One's" coming in the very first book of the Bible – and continuously over the next 65 books. He has spoken of Him through every one of His prophets, and He came to earth in Human form as the final lesson to His Chosen Nation, Israel.

God established a nation of "covenanted" people (contracted to God) to be His chosen people – and they continuously turned their backs and hearts away from Him – to the extent that they put the Savior of mankind to death rather than submit to "their God."

God then turned to the "Gentile" world (non-Jewish) – the uncovenanted people. People who were in no way under any contract to be His people. Out of them would come millions upon millions of men, women, boys and girls, who would willingly,

voluntarily, believe and believe in Jesus, the Christ, as their Savior.

When that process is completed according to God's timing... Judgment will come – not just any judgment, like He judged Israel, or other evil nations in the past until now, but a final judgment upon all of humanity. Humanity will be divided up into two groups: Those counted as righteous (believers) spoken of as Sheep, and those counted as evil (non-righteous) spoken of as Goats. In this final judgment the Righteous will become His family for all of Eternity, and the un-righteous will be sentenced away from God, in a dark place of His choosing and control, away from all good and righteousness for the rest of Eternity, with no chance of pardon or escape. And that's the story of this parable of "The Sheep and the Goats."

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## **THE JUDGMENT – The Sheep and The Goats**

### **The Dividing of ALL into Two Groups**

#### **Matthew 25:31-33**

***<sup>31</sup> "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them (the people) from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; <sup>33</sup> and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.***

Here we see the events that immediately follow The Lord Jesus' second advent (2<sup>nd</sup> coming) to the earth. He will have already rescued His church age believers from the earth, and they will be with Him upon His return. Also accompanying Him on that return will be all the angels of heaven and earth. He will sit upon His throne (the now re-established throne of King Daved).



Gathering all the peoples of the world He will divide them up into one of two groups. The grouping of the Righteous – to His right, and the grouping of the un-righteous – to His left.

## **THE MESSAGE TO THE SHEEP**

### **Matthew 25:34-40**

***<sup>34</sup> "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.***

***<sup>35</sup> For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; <sup>36</sup> naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'***

***<sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? <sup>38</sup> And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? <sup>39</sup> When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'***

***<sup>40</sup> The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'***

As you can judge, even the smallest kindness paid, by a believer, is credited as a kindness done on Jesus' behalf. We can judge by this that the inclination to do good, in the believer, is a yieldedness motivated by His Holy Spirit. Even the smallest thing is willing obedience to Him.

## THE MESSAGE TO THE GOATS

### Matthew 25:41-45

**<sup>41</sup> "Then He will also say to those on His left (the non-righteous), 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;**

**<sup>42</sup> for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'**

**<sup>44</sup> Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of (serve) You?'**

**<sup>45</sup> Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'**

Again, as you can judge, even the smallest thing that is not motivated by the willing service of the motivation from God's Holy Spirit, is a result of the desperately wicked heart of man. Even the most altruistic actions of an unsaved person – prove to be self motivated and driven, and therefore judged as wicked.

## THE FINAL STATEMENT

### Matthew 25:46

**<sup>46</sup> These (the Goats) *will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*"**

There is no middle ground with God. You are either His through Jesus Christ, or you are not His at all. There are no other gods. Worship and Adoration belong nowhere else than upon the



Trinitarian Almighty God. Any other route of expected salvation will lead to absolute judgment and eternal condemnation being sentenced to suffering and pain – not final death – forever.

We need to be careful in determining the cause and effect here. It would seem, at first glance, that salvation is the result of good works. However, the full teaching of scripture teaches that man's salvation is by faith alone – through the grace of God and not by way of our good works.<sup>i</sup> Jesus makes it clear in this parable that their inheritance was theirs "Since the creation of the world" [**Matthew 25:34**], and that's long before they could ever do any good works! As we have said many times before, the believer's good works are the result of their salvation, not the cause of it. Our good works, in this manner, are only found to be acceptable to our Lord and God because of our relationship to our Lord and Master, the very Son of God.

I read an article by Hayden Hefner of the Gospel Coalition speaking about the real difference between sheep and goats. It was spurred on by a song by Keith Green, "The Sheep and the Goats." Hayden noticed that Green's last line of his song didn't really tell the story of the parable; "According to this scripture is what they did and didn't do." Hayden remarks: "The only difference between righteous sheep and unrighteous goats is not what they did or did not do. The difference is not merely in outward characteristics. Sheep and goats have different DNA. The difference is cellular. They are different species." He says that we must be careful not to confuse symptoms with causes – be careful not to confuse wool with DNA.<sup>ii</sup>

You see his point is that while there are "outward characteristics" that are similar (mankind, often good, often bad, happy, sad, lots of "look-a-likes," One, the Sheep, are lovers of their fellow mankind in such a way as to desire their coming to Christ for eternity. They, from the foundations of the world, were somehow chosen by God for that blessed destination. The other, the Goats, were not chosen in such a way. They were not chosen, and at the same time they absolutely refuse to be chosen according to their

own wills. Just how God has done that I do not know, but I know His heart and His righteousness, and perhaps someday I will know the how. But for now, I know the sheep and the goats are absolutely different and have absolutely different destinations.

“Throughout Jesus’ ministry, He talked about Himself as the sheep’s good shepherd and the people who followed Him as His sheep. Sheep are known to be defenseless and reliant upon a shepherd for care, protection, and direction.

Unlike sheep, goats are known for being headstrong, self-reliant, and independent – likely to “head-butt” you as they would want you to hug them. Two contrasting animals perfectly chosen for this closing parable.”<sup>iii</sup>

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## **THE FOUR FINAL JUDGMENTS OF THE SCRIPTURES**<sup>iv</sup>

There are at least four judgments connected with the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth. Here is a brief summary based on the writings of J. Dwight Pentecost, former Professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, and one of the founders of the Philadelphia College of Bible – my wife’s and my al Mamata.

**First, is the judgment on the Nation of Israel.** Romans 9:6 indicates that the Nation, which was promised through the covenants, a kingdom over which the Messiah, David’s son, should reign. Before this kingdom can be instituted at His personal return to the earth, there must be a judgment on Israel to determine those that will enter into this kingdom, for it is clearly revealed that “they are not all Israel which are of Israel.”

This judgment is scheduled to happen upon Jesus’ second coming, before the Kingdom is established.



**Second, is the judgment of the Gentiles.** This judgment occurs directly following the judgment of Israel, just before the establishment of Israel upon their Land. These two judgments must precede the beginning of the millennium, for those accepted in this judgment are taken into that kingdom.

**Third, The Judgment of the Fallen Angels.** This judgment will wait until after the millennial kingdom is over.

***"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever [Revelation 20:10]."***

This judgement will occur before the final fourth judgment.

**Fourth, The Great White Throne Judgment.** The Final Judgment. It is clearly indicated that this judgment takes place after the end of the millennial reign of Christ.

(brief portions from Revelation 20)

***"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God."***

***The dead were judged out of the things in the book of life.***

***The sea gave up its dead, death and hell delivered up it's dead... and they were judged every man according to their works.***

***And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them [the dead]."***

This judgment, contrary to popular misconception, is not to determine whether those who stand before this judgment



bar are saved or not. All those that are to be saved have been saved and have entered into their eternal state. Those that are to be blessed eternally have entered into their blessing.

This is rather a judgment on the evil works of the unsaved. The sentence of the "second death" is passed upon them. This second death is the confirmation and making eternal their absolute and eternal separation from God.

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## **FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITHOUT ANSWERS**

**1. Why is Jesus' messages so pointed on performance and quality in these last parables?**

**2. What is the point of the message of "The Sheep and the Goats?"**



## **FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS**

### **1. Why is Jesus' messages so pointed on performance and quality in these last parables?**

Jesus has no time left for teaching normal believer level messages to His Disciples. He has only a few days to complete their training. It is essential that they get the message that there are eternal ramifications to His teachings. The nation of Israel is going to be placed aside as far as a people whom God is going to use to spread His Gospel throughout our world. It will be up to the Disciples and their efforts to organize and teach a whole new generation of people who will become known as the "Assembly." Later they will be called "The Church." It is essential that they get the importance of His last messages so that they will be prepared and readied to lead the way into their future.

### **2. What is the point of the message of "The Sheep and the Goats?"**

At the end of the road there's a stop sign. And at that stop sign there's a judgment to be made. Does one belong to God through Jesus, His Son, or not? God has spent thousands of years to gather those who would voluntarily choose to love Him with their Hearts, Minds, and Souls. At a certain point in time that effort will come to a close and the judgment will be initialized. In the lesson Hayden Hefner of the Gospel Coalition clears the matter up substantially – "The only difference between righteous sheep and unrighteous goats is not what they did or did not do. The difference is not merely in outward characteristics. Sheep and Goats have different DNA. The difference is cellular. They are different species. There are those who will come to the Lord God through Jesus because they will. There are those who will not come to the Lord God through Jesus because they will not. It's the believer's job to spread the gospel to all – so that those who will... will. It is essential that each of us do what we can to complete that "Book of Life." Reach out and speak to those who might be saveable.

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Jeremiah 18:15

"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path."

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<sup>i</sup> John 1:12; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:22-24; Romans 4:4-8; Romans 7:24-25; Romans 8:12; Galatians 3:6-9; Ephesians 2:8-10.

<sup>ii</sup> Hayden Hefner, The Gospel Coalition, "The Real Difference Between Sheep and Goats" <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/real-difference-sheep-goats/>

<sup>iii</sup> Jesus Film Project, "What's the Parable of the Sheep and Goats about?" <https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog/parable-sheep-and-goats/>

<sup>iv</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, "Things to Come, A Study in Biblical Eschatology," Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI.