

The Sheep and the Goats

Matthew 25:31-46, Joel 3:1-3, and Luke 21:37-38

Late in the afternoon on Wednesday the thirteenth of Nisan

DIG: How will God provide for His people during the Great Tribulation? When will the Gentiles be judged? On what basis? What happens to **the sheep**? **The goats**? If someone ends up in hell, how did they get there? How will **the sheep** reveal **their** faith?

REFLECT: When have you been hungry, thirsty, a stranger, in need of clothes, sick or imprisoned, and someone reach out to you? When have you reached out to people in those conditions? Do you think you would do it if it might cost you your life?

After answering the third question: **What time will the messianic Kingdom be set up?** Jesus took some time to warn His **talmidim** about something that was a mystery to them, namely the Dispensation of Grace ending with the Rapture. He emphasized through a group of parables (see Js - **The Parables of Watchfulness, Readiness and Labor**) emphasizing that **no one knows the hour or the day that** the Rapture will **come, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father** (Mattityahu 24:36). Meshiach's consistent message was to **be on guard! Be alert and keep watch!**

However, now **Messiah** returns to the topic of Jm - **A Time of Trouble for Jacob**. Although obviously a horrible prophecy of future events for **Isra'el**, **Christ** nonetheless tempers this bad news (as **He** usually does) with some hope in the midst of **their time of trouble**. Believing Gentiles, or **sheep** Gentiles, will be sent to help **them**. The whole world, led by the antichrist will be out to destroy **them**, and when **they** refuse to take **the mark of the beast** (see my commentary on **Revelation Dp - The Mark is the Name of the Beast or the Number of His Name**) they couldn't buy or sell anything to support themselves. Therefore, just **God** sent the **ravens** to feed **Elijah** (**First Kings 17:4**), **ADONAI** will send the pro-Jewish Gentiles to feed and comfort the Jews.

Though a vast number of Gentiles will be killed during the Great Tribulation, and the great Gentile army will be slaughtered during the Campaign of Armageddon, some will still survive. **At that time**, and at the very place where the Campaign ended, each individual Gentile will be gathered for judgment described in two passages.

First, the prophet Joel tells us that in those days and at that time, God will restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem. We are told that He will gather all the Gentile nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There He will enter into judgment against them concerning His inheritance concerning the people of Isra'el. The basis for their judgment will be how they treated the Jews during the Great Tribulation. The sins committed against Isra'el are: first, the Gentiles scattered His people among the nations during the middle of the Tribulation; and next, they divided up God's Land during the Campaign of Armageddon; and last, they sold the Jews into slavery. They cast lots for His people and traded boys for prostitutes and they sold girls for wine that they might drink (Joel 3:1-3). The Gentiles will be judged on the basis of their involvement in these kinds of sins, for whoever touches Isra'el touches the apple of His eye (Zechariah 2:8).

Secondly, the results of this judgment are given. The Judge, the judgment and those judged are identified. When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne as the Judge in heavenly glory. All the Gentiles still living on the earth will be gathered before Him for judgment, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats based on their treatment of the Jewish people during the Great Tribulation. He will put the pro-Jewish sheep on His right and the anti-Jewish goats on His left (Matthew 25:31-33).

There will be Gentiles who will be the pro-Jewish sheep (see my commentary on Revelation Fc - The Sheep and the Goats). They will provide help to the Jews during a time when it will be extremely dangerous to do so. The Jews who will have to flee into the wilderness without anything with them will often be provided with food, clothing and shelter by the sheep Gentiles. They will also render help to the Jews living in Jerusalem. 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, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison for not taking the mark of the beast and you came to visit me (Mattityahu 25:35-36).

Because of these acts of kindness, they will be allowed to enter the messianic Kingdom. Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed by My Father; take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). It will be the sheep Gentiles who will also play a part in the destruction of Babylon, the capital city of the antichrist (see my commentary on Revelation Ej - They Will Make War Against the Lamb, But the Lamb Will Overcome Them). They will reach the 1,335th day (see my commentary on Revelation Ey - The Seventy-Five Day Interval), and will be the ones who will populate the Gentile nations during the Kingdom.

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something to drink? When did we see You a stranger and invite You in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see You sick or in prison and go to visit You?" The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me" (Matthew 25:37-40).

As far as the anti-Jewish **goats**, all who aided the antichrist in the Jewish destruction will be condemned to **hell**. Then He will say to those on His left, "Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire (Mattityahu 25:41). **Hell** is a reality. It was prepared for the devil and his angels (Jude 6; Second Peter 2:4; Revelation 12:7). If **eternal fire** is merely an image in the conception of **hell**, the reality is far worse. There are no second chances. **People** go to **hell** against the wishes of ADONAI, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance (Second Peter 3:9). God does not send anyone to **hell**; **they** end up there because of the accumulative decisions **they** make in **their** lives. **They** are pulled down in the abyss by the weight of **their** own choices. **The Holy Spirit** woos them throughout **their** lives. **They** hear about **Him** in vacation Bible School, but **they** say, "No." Friends in high school witness to **them**, but they say, "No." They see an article about **the Lord** on the Internet, but they don't click on it, saying "No thanks." A neighbor invites **them** to services, but **they** say, "No." Over and over again in a thousand different ways **Jesus** pleads with **them**, saying: Please **come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28)**. But **they** say, "No." Although it breaks **His** heart, **He** will not violate **their** freedom of choice. Character is eternal. The wicked character chooses **hell**, the place of eternal rebellion and endless regret, hopelessness and despair. Children of **the King**, clothed with the righteousness of **Christ**, inherit the estate of the blessed. **His** children would not be an appropriate companion in **hell**. And there is a **hell** as eternal as the heavens.¹³⁵¹

"For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite Me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe Me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after Me" (Mattityahu 25:42-43). **They** will fail to reach the 1,335th day and, as a result, will lose out on the blessings of **the** messianic **Kingdom**.

They also will answer, "Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help You?" He will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did *not* do for one of the least of these Jews during the Great Tribulation, **you did not do for Me**" (Mt 25:44-45). To fail to serve **Messiah's** chosen **people** is to fail to serve **Him**, and to fail to serve **Him** proves one does not belong to **Him**.

The basis of judgment will not be salvation or lack of it, but being pro-Jewish or anti-Jewish. **Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life (Matthew 25:46).** The **goats** will go to **hell**, whereas the **sheep** will inherit eternal life. So is their eternal destiny based upon **works**? Not at all. The Bible is clear that salvation equals **faith** plus nothing. Salvation is totally apart from **works**. During the Great Tribulation the treatment of the Jews will become a dividing line between those who are believers and those who are not. Only the believers will dare to violate the rules of the antichrist and aid the Jews. As **James** would say they will show their **faith** by their **works (James 2:14-26 NKJ)**. But the unbelievers will prove their unbelief by their anti-Jewish acts.

The judgment of the Gentiles, then, will determine who among them will be allowed to enter **the** messianic **Kingdom**. Only believing Gentiles will be allowed entrance, and the evidence of their faith will be their pro-Jewish works.¹³⁵²

Each day Jesus was teaching at the Temple, and each evening He went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, and all the people came early in the morning to hear Him at the Temple (Luke 21:37-38). The imperfect verb teaching emphasizes Messiah's continual practice of teaching at the Temple. In general the people, especially those from outside Jerusalem, were positive toward the Galilean Rabbi and sought eagerly to hear what He had to say. They, of course, stood in sharp contrast to the religious leaders who were trying to kill Him (Luke 19:47) and to trap him in what He said in public (Luke 20:1-8 and 19-40). But by the end of the week, the Pharisees and Sadducees had persuaded a small minority of locals to rally against the Son of God, and they would cry out: His blood is on us and on our children (Mattityahu 27:25)!¹³⁵³