

## THE PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND GOATS

Text: Matthew 25:31-46

**Key Word:** Judgement

**Key Thought:** What Are the Different Judgements That Are about to Take Place?

\*\*\* We know of at least two men who were so touched by the truth of this parable that it completely changed their lives. One was Francis of Assisi who was a wealthy, respected and high-spirited man. But he was not happy and content with his life. He felt something was missing. His life was incomplete.

Then one day he was out riding and met a leper, loathsome and repulsive in the ugliness of his disease. Something moved Francis to dismount and fling his arms around this wretched sufferer; and in his arms the face of the leper change to the face of Christ.

The other man who was changed was known as Martin of Tours. He was a Roman soldier and Christian. One cold winter day, as he was entering a city, a beggar was blue and shivering with cold, and Martin gave what he had. He took off his soldier's coat, worn and frayed as it was; he cut it in two and gave half of it to the beggar man.

That night he had a dream. In it he saw the heavenly places and all the angels and Jesus in the midst of them; and Jesus was wearing half of a Roman soldier's cloak. One of the angels said to him, "Master, why are you wearing that battered old cloak? Who gave it to you?"

And Jesus answered softly, "My servant Martin gave it to me."

William Barclay  
"The Gospel of Matthew Vol. II"  
p. 326

I find it interesting throughout Scripture that God often rewards those who don't think they deserve any commendation. David was the least considered of his family and yet God made him the king over Israel. Gideon considered himself as the least of his tribe of Manasseh. Moses said he was one slow of speech and tongue and yet God used him as His spokesman before Pharaoh. Ruth was chosen to be the grandmother of King David in such an unusual turn of events. Jonah was selected by God to bring about the salvation of the entire city of Nineveh which was known for its wickedness. A common fisherman named Peter was used to bring about the greatest catch of men's souls in one anointed message above anyone else in the New Testament.

This parable offers us direction and encouragement for the End Times.

Before Looking Closely at this Parable it Would Be Beneficial to Remind Ourselves of the Three Recorded Judgements in the Bible.

**1. The Judgement Seat of Christ** - This will take place shortly after the Lord returns in the clouds in the air. He will *“rapture”* His Church to be with Him. They will then stand before Him to give an account for their lives.

*“For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”*

*II Corinthians 5:10*

This is often referred to as the “bema” seat based upon the Greek word used. This is when the true Church is brought before the Lord to have their life reviewed and **receive their rewards.** God will put our actions through His testing.

*“If any man builds on this foundation [Jesus Christ - see verse 11] using gold, silver, costly stones, wood hay or straw,  
13. His work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work.  
14. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.  
15. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.”*

*I Corinthians 3:12-15*

**2. The Judgement of the Living Nations** - This is mentioned in the parable we are about to study. This will take place when the Lord returns to usher in His reign for 1,000 years. At this time all the nations of the world will be judged and either be rewarded or rejected. It is interesting that these nations will reap what they have sown just as Paul warned the church at Galatia.

*“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.*

*8. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.”*

*Galatians 6:7,8*

**3. The Great White Throne Judgement** - This will take place after the Millennial Reign of Christ and the final judgement of Satan (Revelation 20:11). All the lost souls will appear before God to receive their final judgement.

*“And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.”*

*Revelation 20:12*

**\*\*** Mrs. Franklin had been called for jury duty. She declined to serve because, she said, she did not believe in capital punishment. The judge tried to persuade her to stay.

*“Madam,” he said, “this is not a murder case. It is merely a case in which a wife is suing her husband because she gave him \$4,000.00 to buy her a new fur coat and he lost it all at the race track instead.”*

*“I’ll serve,” agreed Mrs. Franklin. “I could be wrong about capital punishment.”*

**Counsel:** Do you wish to challenge any of the jury?

**Prisoner:** Well, I think I could lick that little fellow on this end.

**\*\***

Bob Phillips  
“More Clean Jokes”  
p. 43-44

One thing is for sure in Scripture. Jesus will not be afraid to take on the world of nations. He also will judge with a righteous judgement that will not change under the circumstances.

*“Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”*

*Genesis 18:25*

Before we look into this parable a little closer, we must determine what Jesus meant by the Greek word for **“nations”** found in Matthew 25:32. This word is most frequently translated **“Gentiles”** (cf. Romans 15:11,12; Ephesians 2:11). We are therefore talking about non-Jewish people. On the other hand the hungry, thirsty, unclothed prisoners who were sick and strangers were most likely the Jewish people.

### **I. The Goats (Matthew 25:41-36)**

One thing is very clear about the type of **“nations”** we are talking about. They will be like night and day in difference to each other. A goat is naturally quarrelsome. It is lascivious (offensive sexual desire). The scent that comes off a male goat is rather **“ill-scented”** in the real sense of the word. They are used therefore in Scripture as a symbol of riotous, profane and impure people.

**\*\*** During my teenage years I became a member of a rock band. Once we became known, we found that our equipment increased and so did the distance between our “gigs.” To solve the problem, the lead guitarist told us that his parents had an old van in their back yard where they tended their goats. These belligerent, cantankerous and combative flock of goats were not impressed with us invading their territory.

We finally got past them after a few head butts and began to examine the van. The smell that came from this old piece of junk was unique to say the least. Even after doing all the mechanical work and cleaning up the van, there still remained this odor which was very apparent on hot days. **\*\***

Goats are innately selfish. They are given up to their own passions and lusts. **They fail to see and accommodate the needs of others.** The Bible has more than 130 references to goats and about fifty references to their kids.

## I. The Goats (Matthew 25:41-36) (Contd.)

The goats mentioned in Matthew 25 do not become involved in the welfare of those who are suffering around them. I am reminded of the contrast between Corrie Ten Boom and her family and that of Hitler's regime during WWII in Holland. Hitler acted like a "goat" attempting to wipe out the chosen people of God. The Ten Boom family acted as "sheep" putting their own lives at risk for the sake of those Jews who were being mistreated.

They offered food, shelter, and protection to those whom they never knew. A **special "Hiding Place"** was built in their home so these refugees could escape the tyranny of the German dictator. Their reward awaited them in heaven.

## II. The Sheep (Matthew 25: 31-40)

Sheep are helpless creatures. They require protection as well as guidance to areas of food and water. They cannot exist without a shepherd unless they are wild sheep. Domesticated sheep are limited to function within a flock that is overlooked by a caring shepherd.

The word in both the O.T. and the N.T. speaks of an animal that goes forward. It is not stagnant. They must move from place to place to survive. If a flock of sheep is not constantly moved to greener pastures, they will eventually eat right down to the roots of the vegetation thereby destroying their only means of life support. A wise shepherd keeps his flock moving on when the area cannot support them.

**God knows that due to the unjust nature of the anti-Christ in the End of Time that He'll have to place a continuous watch over those who are easily oppressed.** The Jewish people are increasingly becoming susceptible to the onslaught of the enemy. They will become his main target for acts of hatred.

God is an excellent recorder of acts of mercy. He never forgets what is done in His name for the sake of those who are oppressed. Jesus was not advocating salvation by works.

"They will not be admitted because of their works, but, rather, their works will demonstrate their faith, which will be the basis for their admission into the kingdom . . . Those who have demonstrated their faith by their works will be accepted into His kingdom, and those who demonstrate their lack of faith by their works will be excluded from His earthly, millennial kingdom."

J. Dwight Pentecost  
*"The Parables of Jesus"*  
pp. 159-160

## II. The Sheep (Matthew 25: 31-40) (Contd.)

Jesus gave this parable for a reason. **He knew that there would be perilous times coming.** He also knew who would need to be encouraged to do what is right while most would follow the crowd.

**The next chapter brings out the truth that everyone fled from helping Jesus when He faced His darkest days of persecution.** No one was left to stand with Him before, Pilate, Herod, the soldiers and the Jewish leaders and the mocking crowd. If they forsook Jesus at His time of great trial, don't you think it will be easy to abandon God's people who will be left destitute in the closing days of time.

*“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”*

*Matthew 25:40*

“The way of this world is to praise dead saints and persecute living ones.”

Michael Green

*“Illustrations for Biblical Preaching”*

# 962, p.261

\*\*\* The following is attributed to “Gentleman Jim” Corbett, who held the heavyweight boxing title for five years at the end of the nineteenth century:

*“Fight one more round. When your feet are so tired that you have to shuffle back to the center of the ring, fight one more round. When your arms are so tired that you can hardly lift your hands to come on guard, fight one more round. When your nose is bleeding and your eyes are black and you are so tired that you wish your opponent would crack you on the jaw and put you to sleep, fight one more round - remembering that the man who fights the last round is never whipped.”*

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Michael Green

*“Illustrations for Biblical Preaching”*

# 973, p.263-264

## II. The Sheep (Matthew 25: 31-40) (Contd.)

\*\*\* In a famous boxing match between Ken Norton and Mohamad Ali in 1973 for 12 rounds Ken Norton won on a split decision which was broken by the referee. Ali fought the majority of the fight with a broken jaw. \*\*\*

C:\My Documents\WPWin(X9)\Sermons.2019\Parables\Matthew 25\_31.46.wpd

Date: Sept 29/19

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: See a Victory

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**2. The Judgement of the Living Nations** - *Galatians 6:7,8*

**3. The Great White Throne Judgement** - *Revelation 20:11; Revelation 20:12; Genesis 18:25; Matthew 25:32; cf. Romans 15:11,12; Ephesians 2:11*). We are therefore talking about non-Jewish people. On the other hand the hungry, thirsty, unclothed prisoners who were sick and strangers were most likely the Jewish people.

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