

WHEN CHRIST JUDGE THE GENTILES
Matthew 25:31-46

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. As we come to the end of the Olivet Discourse, we feel that something is missing, not all the pieces of the puzzle have fit together. So far in this discourse Christ has given much information concerning the future of the Jews. He has given some subtle hints about the Church but, up to this point, He has said nothing about the future of the Gentiles and their relationship to the Jews. **NOTE:** At the beginning of the Olivet Discourse, Christ told His disciples who were then Jews, that Jerusalem and the Temple would be over run by Gentiles -- this happened in 70 A.D. when Titus and the Roman armies captured Jerusalem -- and it would be only natural to give some explanation of God's plan for the Gentiles.
- B. This section on the Gentiles and their judgment before God is necessary because 1) Israel's enemies must be put down and the subjugation of the Gentiles is the final step in God's program for Israel; 2) Gentiles are to be judged on their treatment of the Jews, and 3) the future judgment of Gentiles determines who will share the blessings of the millennial kingdom with Israel.

II. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE JUDGMENT OF THE GENTILES

-- Matthew 25:31-33

- A. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him," -- There is a definite break in thought at 25:31 which indicates Christ is going to speak on some other subject. Since 24:42, Christ has been speaking in parables but now He drops the use of parables and takes up the simple narrative. He does this because He is going to speak about the judgment of Gentiles at the second advent of Christ. The parables dealt with the importance of the Church watching for the any moment return of Christ for the Church at the Rapture that will occur before the Tribulation period begins. But this section is dealing with the second advent when Christ "shall come in His glory." **NOTE:** The time of this judgment of Gentiles is put at the second advent of Christ when He shall make a visible manifestation of Himself in complete glory to all the inhabitants of the earth. He will come in glory, not in humility as He did in His first advent (Rev. 1:7). Christ will be accompanied by angels to aid Him in the judgment of men.
- B. "Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" -- The place of this judgment is on earth, for this throne is none other than the throne that was promised to David, upon which one of David's sons would sit to reign over David's nation, kingdom

and land (II Sam. 7:16). At the second advent, Christ will come to reign as the Sovereign One over the millennial kingdom.

- C. "And before him shall be gathered all nations (Gentiles):" -- Many have thought that Christ will actually judge nations based on this verse but the Greek word for "nations" is ethne which should be translated Gentiles. This then, is a judgment of individual Gentiles, not national entities. God never judges eternally whole nations but does eternally judge individuals for the scriptures teach personal accountability to God. This then is the judgment of Gentiles, the non-Jewish peoples of the earth, the last generation of living Gentiles before the second advent of Christ (Joel 3:1, 2; Zech 14:1-3). **NOTE:** This is a judgment upon living Gentiles, who have not been exterminated through the wars and pestilences and judgments of the Tribulation period. At the second advent, multiple millions will be brought into judgment before the King who sits upon David's throne as the Sovereign One.
- D. "And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." -- There will be a separation of these living Gentiles to determine who shall enter into Christ's earthly kingdom which the Son of Man will establish.
- E. "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." -- Without speaking a word, the King will separate all Gentiles into two groups -- those on the right hand, the privileged place, are the sheep; those on the left hand, the place of disfavor, are the goats. The sheep are true believers and have the place of approval; the goats are unbelievers and have the place of rejection.

III. BELIEVING GENTILES REWARDED ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS

-- Matthew 25:34-40

- A. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (earth):" -- This "kingdom" is the earthly kingdom of Christ, for the meaning of "world" is the earth. It has been God's plan to establish a kingdom over this world ever since the Garden of Eden and this will be accomplished at the second advent of Christ. **NOTE:** This kingdom is only for the saved. No unsaved persons will be received into the earthly kingdom. Only those who have been "born again," only those who have received Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, will be accepted into the earthly millennial kingdom. **NOTE:** The kingdom is prepared for certain ones from the beginning. Who are these ones? They are the elect of God; those who personally trust Christ as Lord and Savior.
- B. "For I was an hungered, and you gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothes me: I was sick,

and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” -- These believing Gentiles will meet the needs of Christ in the Tribulation period. They will actually minister to Christ and this will give them entrance into the kingdom.

C. “Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothes thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?” -- The believing Gentile sheep will be somewhat confused for all will not remember personally ministering to Christ in the Tribulation period. **NOTE:** These believers are call righteous for they are righteous in Christ and have righteous acts.

D. “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

1. The first problem is to determine who the “my brethren” are. Some think it refers to any believers in need during the Tribulation period. However, it is better to get more specific and say “my brethren” refers to the Jews, for Christ, according to the flesh, was a son of Abraham and was a Jew. These are believing Jews during the Tribulation and probably can be narrowed down to the 144,000 evangelists who will preach the gospel of the kingdom with reverence during this period. These converted Jewish evangelists will not bow their knee to Anti-Christ and will be persecuted terribly. When they go from city to city, to announce salvation through the shed blood of Christ and to warn that Jesus Christ is coming back to earth to judge, there will be some Gentile individuals who will hear, who will examine the scriptures to see if these things are true.

They will be convinced that the message that these preachers bring is the truth of God and will accept Christ as Lord and Savior. These Gentile believers will suffer horribly for their faith. Yet these Gentile believers will risk their lives to help the Jewish evangelists. They will share the basic necessities of life with the 144,000. When the evangelists are arrested these believing Gentiles will go to the prisons to visit them.

2. The second problem is how did these believing Gentiles minister unto Christ? Christ says, “As ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Jesus Christ is one with His spiritual people and to care for them is to care for Him. If you help them, you help Him. If you ignore them, you ignore Him. These believing Gentiles accepted the message of Christ and accept Christ’s messengers and by helping them they actually minister to Christ.
3. The third problem is theological, for the text says that Gentile believers are accepted into the kingdom according to their works. Is this salvation by good works? No! They are accepted into the kingdom because they

receive the message of the gospel and prove the genuineness of their faith by the works they do for those who brought the gospel to them. These men are not saved by works, for no person in history has been saved by works. But these men by works, demonstrate that they have accepted Christ. **NOTE:** Judgment in the Bible is always on the basis of what faith produces and what unbelief produces. You cannot see faith but you can see works, and works are a proof of real faith. In this context, a practical demonstration of love is the proof of real salvation, for these believing Gentiles met the needs of the Jewish evangelists. The ultimate evidence of a real believer is not his creed, or his faith or his Bible knowledge but his concern to show love.

IV. **UNBELIEVING GENTILES JUDGED ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS**

-- Matthew 25:41-46

- A. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." -- The unbelieving Gentiles are eternally separated from Christ and placed under the eternal curse of God. Why? Because they did not trust Jesus Christ, who is the only way to the Father. **NOTE:** Christ says that hell is a real place but originally it was prepared only for the devil and his angels but those who reject Christ align themselves with Satan and his program, and, therefore, deserve the same kind of punishment in eternity.
- B. "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." -- The Lord says that the goats had a chance to minister to Him as the sheep ministered to those whom He sent, but they will reject the ministers of the gospel because they reject the gospel they proclaim.
- C. "Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee and hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." -- These unbelieving Gentiles will plead ignorance of their lack of good works towards the Jewish evangelists, but it will be obvious that they rejected their message of Jesus Christ.
- D. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." -- The unbelievers are confined to everlasting punishment but the righteous are destined to eternal life. **NOTE:** It is Christ who speaks of everlasting punishment, so best we listen when he speaks about it.

V. **CONCLUSION**

- A. Christ is the Judge of all men. There is no human being ever born who will not pass under the judgment of the Son of God. He will accept into His kingdom those who have trusted Him as Lord and Savior. He will reject from His kingdom those who do not own Him as Lord and Savior. All men must meet Jesus Christ at one of two places: they must meet Him at the cross as Savior, or they must meet Him on a throne as Judge.

- B. Those who receive Christ as Lord and Savior have entrance into eternal life and into the earthly kingdom. To receive Christ gives one entrance into the millennial kingdom on earth but this also includes entrance into the eternal kingdom, for the earthly kingdom will be offered up by Christ to the Father and it will become part of the eternal kingdom.

I want to ask each one of you just one question this morning. At this very moment, is Christ your Judge or your Savior? Your eternal destiny hangs on your answer!