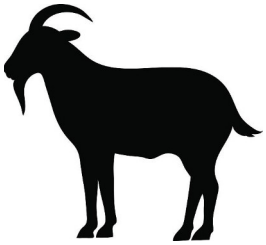


"THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS"



Matthew 25:31-46
1-27-2018

INTRODUCTION: Verses 31-33. No unrighteous person will inherit the future Kingdom.

***King Jesus will one day separate the saved (*"sheep"*) from the unsaved (*"goats"*).**

I. The <u>Blessing</u> Upon the "<u>*SHEEP*</u>"(v. 34-40)



A. The <u>Verdict</u>(v. 34)
"Inherit the kingdom"

B. The <u>Evidence</u>(v. 35-36)
"...Ye took me in..."

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"Ye have <u>done</u> it unto me"



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"Ye did it <u>not</u> unto me"

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INTRODUCTION:

V. 31

Christ's coming in *"glory"* which is also described in Mt. 16:27 was pictured for us (in a preview) in Matthew 17, in which Jesus was *"transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light"* (17:2).

His *"glory"* speaks of His blazing brilliance.

Christ in His first coming entered the human scene in obscurity, veiling from physical sight the splendid glory of His deity. However, when He comes the second time, all of His glory will be displayed.

"Then shall He sit" - After the Rapture and after the trumpet and bowl judgments (in the Day of the Lord's Wrath) and after the Battle of Armageddon, those survivors from all over the earth will stand before Christ, who will *"sit upon the throne of His glory"* at Mount Zion.

When the earth is regenerated (made new) and the promised utopia is ushered in, Christ will rule on His throne (Mt. 19:28 - *"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."*).

V. 32

"All nations" - All of the nations of people (Gentile & Jew) will be summoned to Jerusalem for judgment.

*Be careful not to confuse this judgment with the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20:11-15. That judgment is only of unbelievers and occurs 1,000 years after this judgment (Rev. 20:5, 11) and will involve the unsaved dead who come out of graves and the sea (v. 12, 13).

"Based on the cataclysmic events described in the book of Revelation, we can make an assessment that only a relatively small number of men and women from among the earth's more than four billion [now 7 1/2 billion] survive the seventieth week" (Rosenthal, "Zion's Fire," June 1993, p. 11).

"<u>He</u> shall separate" - The Son of man = Jesus Christ

Jesus is the only Judge (Jn. 5:22), who as the *"Good Shepherd"* (Jn. 10:11, 14), will separate His own sheep from the goats.

Give chronology of End Time events:

1. 70th Week of Daniel 9:26, 27
2. Great Tribulation
3. Rapture
4. Day of the Lord/Armageddon
5. The separation of sheep/goats (living Gentiles & Jews, who will inherit the Messianic Kingdom - over which mortals we will rule and reign)

The *"sheep and goat"* judgment will evidently take place sometime in that extra 75-day period spoken of in Daniel 12:11-12.

V. 33

"Sheep" are a common description of God's people.

The reason why Jesus uses the "sheep" motif as an illustration of His relationship to His children (John 10 and here) is because there are many similarities between sheep and people.

- --Sheep, like people, are <u>dumb</u> and will wander (if left to themselves)
  Isaiah 53:6
  - *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*
- --Sheep, like people, are <u>dirty</u> and need the cleansing that comes from the shepherd
- --Sheep, like people, are <u>dependent</u> (and require the shepherd to led, feed, and stay with them)
  Psalm 23:1-3 A Psalm of David.
  - *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. [2] He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. [3] He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

- --Sheep, like people, are <u>vulnerable</u> and need the shepherd to <u>protect</u> them
  Psalm 23:4
  - *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*
- (Sheep, like people, if abandoned would be lost, ravaged and devoured by wolves, and die)
  -

--We once like sheep went astray (Is. 53:6)

--The God Shepherd gave His life for His sheep (Jn. 10:11)

--The sheep hear His voice and follow Him (Jn. 10:27-28)

Though Sheep and Goats are anatomically very similar and have many similarities, they are totally distinct species (as sheep have 54 chromosomes, while goats have 60).

Differences between Sheep and Goats:

Distinctions	Sheep	Goats
Tail	Hangs down	Sticks up vertically
Horns	Most species have NONE	Naturally horned
Hair	Wool coats	Hair coats
Eating	Graze on ground	Browse tops of plants
Reproduction	Seasonal mating	Less Seasonal
Mating	Less prolific	More Prolific & more "Bizarre" in behavior
		Males emit Offensive Odor during mating season
Diseases	Less susceptible to parasites (worms etc.)	More susceptible to parasites (worms etc.)
Nutrition	Lower maintenance Narrow Diet	Higher maintenance Broader Diet
Social Dominance	Less aggressive	More aggressive
Behavior	More Dependent and stick to themselves	More Independent and very curious

"His right hand" - The place of honor, privilege, and blessing

EX: Jacob was careful to place his right hand on Ephraim's head rather than Manasseh's (Gen. 48:8-20).

As is the consistent teaching of Scripture, there are only two groups of people in the world (sheep and goats, saved and unsaved, believers and unbelievers, heaven-bound and hell-bound).

Incidentally, one of the most well-known symbols of Satanism today is the goat's head.

Verses 31-33. No unrighteous person will inherit the future Kingdom.

***King Jesus will one day separate the saved (*"sheep"*) from the unsaved (*"goats"*).**

I. The <u>Blessing</u> Upon the "***<u>SHEEP</u>***"(v. 34-40)

A. The <u>Verdict</u>(v. 34)

"Inherit the kingdom"

"Blessed" - <u>perfect passive</u> participle - God granted them the blessing of inheriting the Kingdom before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4 - *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."*).

These ***"blessed" "sheep"*** will not worship the Antichrist because their names are written in God's Book before the foundation of the world (Rev. 17:8).

*Note: Although they do not become true, saved believers in Christ until <u>after</u> the Rapture when they *"look on Him"* as He comes in his glory, they did <u>not</u> receive the mark of the Beast, nor worship him nor do his bidding in persecuting God's children. Rather, they assisted God's children.

The Bible gives other examples of people who had never met Jesus Christ personally, yet evidenced God's sovereign working in their lives so that they showed deeds of kindness even before experiencing Salvation.

> For example: Cornelius, prior to hearing the Gospel of Christ performed righteous acts (alms) that were never forgotten by God. *"...And he (the Lord) said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."* (Acts 10:4).
>
> In Luke 7:5, a Roman Centurion (whose heart God evidently was touching) had an unusually great love for others (ex. his servant) and for the Jewish people. His servants told Jesus how he *"loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue."*

"Inherit the Kingdom" - This is the Millennial Kingdom spoken about in Rev. 20:1-10.

This is the promised Golden Age which the Old Testament prophets spoke of frequently (EX: Is. 11:1-12).

Since Christ will rule the nations with a rod of iron (Ps. 2:9), there will be no corrupt government, wife-beating, child-molesting, abortion, rape, murder, pornography, drug or alcohol use tolerated.

Still in mortal bodies and able to have offspring, these people will inhabit the "*new heavens and new earth*" which the Lord will create (SEE: Is. 65:17-25).

"From the foundation of the world" - The Millennium is no afterthought of God. It was part of the plan of God since the beginning of creation. Its coming has been detained until God's timetable for the ages comes to a close (Acts 1:6-7 - *"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."*).

B. The <u>Evidence</u>(v. 35-36)
"...Ye took me in..."

V. 35
This judgment will not be arbitrary, vague, or not objective. But the <u>outward evidence</u> which revealed inward character will be the basis of this separation.

V. 35-36
These are basic human needs, essentials for physical sustenance and emotional encouragement.

"I was in prison" - <u>not</u> in prison for crimes or corruption but for *"righteousness sake"* (Mt. 5:10).

Christians and Jews will be persecuted for their faith during the coming Tribulation (Mt. 24:9 - *"Then shall they deliver you up tot be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.").*

"During the Holocaust of World War II, hundreds of Gentiles fed, housed, and clothed Jewish people escaping the wrath of Nazism. The same will take place during the Great Tribulation" (David Levy, Israel My Glory, April 1994, p. 25).

Christ feels the hunger, thirst, solitude, cold, sickness, and unjust treatment His followers face.

C. The Inquiry(v. 37-38)
"...Lord...when?"

V. 37

Note: The *"sheep's"* astonishment and shock - a surprise of joy as contrasted with the *"goat's"* shock of woe and sorrow (v. 45).

D. The Summary(v. 40)
"Ye have done it unto me"

"Unto one" - He knows and keeps track of every single righteous deed extended toward just one of His own.

"The least" = Those Christians whom people didn't think much of; they were insignificant from human evaluation.

Many would serve the Apostle Paul or Peter, but what did you ever do for a child of God with AIDS? What have you ever done for a homeless believer? What have you ever given to a poor Christian family in need? What time and energy did you ever extend toward someone who had no means of ever repaying you?

"My brethren" - Who are Christ's brethren? Answer: Mt. 12:48-50 - those who do the will of God.

As we have *"opportunity"* (occasion of need and resources to meet that need), we are to *"do good unto all [men], especially unto them who are of the household of faith"* (Gal. 6:10).

Whatever you do for Christ's brethren, you do for Him (Prov. 19:17 - *"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will He pay him again."*)

Whatever you do against Christ's brethren, you do against Him (EX: *"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"* (Acts 9:4).

Prov. 14:31 - *"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor."*

"Ye have done it unto me" - Because of Christ's oneness (Eph. 5:30; I Cor. 6:15) with His believers, to do something for them is to do it for Him.

The Lord never forgets what you do for His people.

Heb. 6:10 - *"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."*

The Lord repays even the most minimal deed done for His people (*"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward"* - Mark 9:41).

II. The Curse Upon the "*GOATS*"(v. 41-45)

A. The Verdict(v. 41)
"Depart...into everlasting fire"

"Depart from me" - go away from me (be removed from my presence)

"Ye cursed" - All who reject Christ are under a curse -- the curse of the Law which they broke (Gal. 3:10) -- but a curse which Christ died to break and remove from us (Gal. 3:13).

"Everlasting fire" - the fires of Hell (Luke 16:24).

"Prepared for the devil and his angels" - Hell was not originally made for man; God created that place of torment for Satan and the demons who fell with him (Is. 14:9-15; Rev. 12:9).

Note the contrasts:

"Come (v. 34) . . . *depart*" (v. 41)
"*Blessed* (v. 34) . . . *cursed*" (v. 41)
"*Kingdom prepared for you* (v. 34). . . *everlasting fire prepared for the devil"* (v. 41)

B. The Evidence(v. 42-43)
"...Ye took me not in"

Note: These people are not condemned for mistreating God's people (i.e. treating them badly), but for not positively doing good for God's people.

C. The Inquiry(v. 44)
"...Lord...when?"

D. The Summary(v. 45)
"Ye did it not unto me"

"Obviously everyone present at the sheep and goats judgment will realize who Christ is, and if given a second chance would be willing to sacrifice all for the sake of Christ rather than spend eternity in the Lake of fire." (VanKampen, The Sign, p. 389). However, such a second chance will not be offered.

"Ye did it not to Me" - To fail to ever do something for *"one of the least"* of Christ's brethren is to fail to serve Him. And to fail to serve Him is fatal!

CONCLUSION: Verse 46

The words *"everlasting"* and *"eternal"* are the same Greek word - *aionion*. Therefore, the everlasting punishment will last as long as the eternal life does. If one is forever, so is the other.

Two groups of people:
*"**These . . . the righteous"***

Two eternal destinies:
"Everlasting punishment. . . life eternal"

It was <u>not</u> the service (v. 35-37) that earned the *"sheep"* eternal life; <u>nor</u> was it the absence of service that was the core reason why the *"goats"* went into everlasting punishment.

It was God's sovereign grace in the sheep (that resulted in fruitfulness) which was the <u>root</u> cause of their *"life eternal"* and it was the absence of God's sovereign grace in the goats which resulted in their fruitlessness and condemnation.

"To fail to serve Christ's people is to fail to serve Him, and to fail to serve Him is to prove one does not belong to Him." (MacArthur, p. 126).

The Bible teaches that you cannot separate <u>action</u> from <u>attitude</u>. The right <u>attitude</u> of <u>faith</u> will always produce the right <u>action</u> of <u>love</u>.

Everyone who has God's salvation will have an imputed righteousness which will show itself by one's actions toward others (SEE: James 2:14-26).

I John 2:29 - *"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."* I Jn. 3:7 - *"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."*

"The righteous" - How does one become righteous?

--Believe God's <u>Word</u> (EX: Abraham - Rom. 4:3 - *"For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.")* (Cp. 4:9; Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:6)

--Receive God's <u>Son</u> (II Cor. 5:20-21 - *"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as thou God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.")* (cp. Jn. 1:12).

For all who reject Christ's salvation (provided at His first coming) will face His judgment (executed at His second coming).