

## Prophecy Sermon #11

Turn in your Bibles to Mathew 25

This is the last sermon in our long journey through the book of Matthew

Books already covered – I Corinthians, Titus, Joshua, I Samuel, II Samuel, Hebrews

We started Matthew in September of 1999

Sermon pile

In Matthew 25 – we are dealing with prophecy – future events

Let me review the order of events:

1. Rapture
2. Peace treaty with Israel – that starts 7-year Tribulation Period
3. Abomination of Desolation – by the man of sin – Antichrist
4. Great Tribulation – second half – last 3 ½ years
5. Then Jesus comes again

I've entitled today's message – "Judgment Day With Jesus"

Matthew 25:31

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word

Matthew 25:31-46

Let us pray

You may be seated

## God's judgment . . . in the Old and New Testaments

No one in Scripture spoke more of judgment than Jesus. He spoke . . . of the danger of losing one's soul forever, of spending eternity in the torments of hell, of existing forever in outer darkness, where there will be perpetual weeping and gnashing of teeth. No pictures of judgment are more intense and sobering than those Jesus portrayed.

His warnings of judgment . . . were . . . divine appeals for men to turn from their sin in order to escape the condemnation that . . . Jesus sought to draw men to Himself not only through the attractiveness of salvation but through the horrors of its only alternative.

When the Lord returns "in His glory," He will judge not only the nation Israel but also the Gentiles. This is not the same as the great white throne judgment, which involves only the wicked and which follows the Millennium (Rev. 20:13-15). The judgment of the Gentiles will occur 1,000 years earlier in order to determine who will and will not enter the kingdom.

Jesus' closing words in the Olivet discourse—a sermon on His second coming given privately to the disciples after His last public teaching in the Temple—were one of the most severe and sobering warnings of judgment in all of Scripture. . . . Not only will it determine the ultimate, eternal destinies of everyone living at the end of the Tribulation but will also determine who will and will not enter the kingdom.

. . . **the Son of Man**. That title demonstrates His incarnation, Jesus identifies with mankind

It was His time of humiliation and sacrifice. It reflected His humility, His heart, and His gracious love for fallen humanity.

The . . . humble, and humiliated **Son of Man** will return one day as the glorious, sovereign, reigning, and judging King of kings and Lord of lords.

Jesus . . . first came in humility to save sinners.

When will the time of judgment be? It will be when He **comes in His glory** (vs. 31)

We do not know at what precise time in history but we know that He will appear “immediately after the tribulation” (24:29-30).

When the clouds should be rolled back like a scroll

Accompanying and assisting the Lord at His appearing in judgment will be all His heavenly **angels**

The Lord will come not only with His angels but with His saints. “When Christ, who is our life, (shall appear) is revealed,” Paul assured the Colossian believers, “then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Col. 3:4). The Old Testament saints, the saints of the church who will have died, the saints who will have been raptured, and the saints who will have been martyred during the Tribulation will all accompany Christ and join the saints still living on earth when He descends to earth to establish His millennial kingdom.

Verse 31 settles beyond any doubt just when Christ will sit on the throne of His glory. It is at His coming in glory.

### **25:31a**

Not if but when Jesus is coming—

Now notice the place of Christ’s judgment will be the earth, where **He will sit on His glorious throne**

Luke 1:31-33

Where was David’s throne? It was in Jerusalem

And that is where Christ’s throne will be (Zech. 14:4).

At the ascension, an angel made clear that Jesus' return would be bodily and historical, not figurative or merely spiritual. He told the astonished disciples, . . . (Acts 1:11) When He returns to earth He will reign personally on a literal **throne**, in a literal Jerusalem, and over a literal people.

Until this point in His ministry Jesus had never directly referred to Himself as King Not until now, did He speak of *Himself* as King. – vs. 31c

Jesus here reveals . . . that the Son of Man who sits on the glorious throne . . . is also the Son of God, the divine **King**.

The throne of Christ will be at Jerusalem (Mic. 4:7, 8) David's throne

He declared that He, the **Son of Man**, would one day take His rightful place as the great King and Judge. . . . sitting "on His glorious throne" (v. 31), He will reign over the earth and that His first act will be to decide who enters His millennial, earthly kingdom and who does not. . . . it is obvious that those who are not allowed to enter will not remain on earth. As Jesus explicitly states, "these will go away into everlasting punishment" (v. 46).

## **25:32**

Verse 32 begins . . . a great judgment. However, this is not the last great judgment. . . . The judgment in Revelation 20 is called the Great White Throne Judgment and it is *after* the thousand years' reign.

Our Lord Jesus describes the judgment day

Notice first *who will be the Judge in the last day*. . . . it will be "the Son of Man," Jesus Christ. The Judge will be Christ Himself . . . John 5:22

That same Jesus who was crucified

Let unconverted people think of this, and be afraid. Their judge will be that very Christ, whose Gospel they now despise, and whose gracious invitations they refuse to hear. . . . if they go on in unbelief and die in their sins! . . . to be condemned by Him who would have saved them will be awful indeed.

His judgment will be instantaneous, at the moment He appears, and when that occurs the opportunity for faith in Him will be past.

### **Vs. 32a**

. . . the decisions people already will have made regarding Him will determine His decision regarding them. Those for whom He is Lord and Savior will enter the kingdom, and those who have rejected Him will be forever excluded. At that time the Lord will roar “from Zion . . .

Now look who is coming to court. It will be **all the nations**.

We read that in front of Jesus Christ “shall be gathered all nations.”

The word **nations** means “ethnic persons” – referring to the Gentiles. These are all **people**, other than Jews, who have lived through the Tribulation period

Turn to Joel 3:2, 12

They will be judged individually, not as national groups. They are described as a mingling of **sheep** and **goats**, which the Lord will separate.

Just as death immediately nails down eternity for unbelievers when they die, so will the second coming of Christ for unbelievers. They will be destroyed on the spot and ushered instantaneously into judgment and eternal punishment.

But believers who are alive at the Lord’s coming in glory at the end of the Tribulation will go directly into the earthly kingdom in their earthly bodies. There is no indication in

Scripture that those saints will experience any sort of transformation or resurrection bodies at this time. But mingling with them and ruling over them will be the glorified saints of all ages who will then be reigning with Christ. Although their bodies will be of vastly different orders, those two groups of saints will be able to communicate and interact with each other just as Jesus communicated and interacted with the disciples in His glorified body after the resurrection.

### **Vs. 32b**

. . . separation of the saved from the unsaved.

A division will take place—

I know we live in a society that wants to be fair – all persons equal – but we're not in God's eyes – saved, unsaved; sheep and the goats

### **Vs. 33**

. . . at this time the battle of Armageddon will just have been completed and all the armies of the Antichrist will have been destroyed . . . Here the civil population of the earth will be judged, saved Gentiles (sheep), unsaved Gentiles (goats).

. . . the Lord Jesus Christ will separate believers from unbelievers when He returns to establish His millennial kingdom. **He will put the believing sheep on His right** hand, see that's the place of favor and blessing. But the unbelieving **goats** He will put **on the left**, that's the place of disfavor and rejection.

Jesus makes clear that those who are alive on earth when He returns will include both saved and unsaved, represented by the sheep and the goats . . . And those two separate peoples will have two separate destinies. The believers will be ushered into the kingdom and the unbelievers into eternal punishment.

All that are judged will be divided into two great classes. There will no longer be any distinction between black and white or rich and poor. There will be no mention of ranks and denominations

Grace, or no grace, conversion, or unconversion, faith or no faith, will be the only distinctions at the last day.

### **Vs. 35-36**

Let us mark, in the third place, *in what manner the judgment will be conducted in the last . . .*

The last judgment will be a judgment according to evidence. . . . The question to be ascertained will not merely be what they said, but what they did,—not merely what they professed but what they practiced. Their works unquestionably will not justify them. They are justified by faith . . . But the truth of their faith will be tested by their lives.

The good deeds . . . are the fruit, not the root, of salvation. . . . If a person has not trusted in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, no amount of seemingly good works done in His name will avail to any spiritual benefit. To such people the Lord, will say, . . . (Matt. 7:23).

*Good deeds do not save.* . . . “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified” (Rom. 3:20 . . .), that it is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us” (Titus 3:5), and “not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:9).

The Lord listed six areas of need: . . . **hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, and in prison.** . . .

James 2:15-17, “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, ‘Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled’; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”

I John 3:17-18, “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in

him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”

Because of their identity with Christ, they will often be hungry, thirsty, without decent shelter or clothing, sick, imprisoned, and alienated from the mainstream of society.

This tells us how bad the Tribulation Period is going to be.

The good deeds mentioned in these verses all deal with common, everyday needs – routine, day-to-day kindnesses that help meet the needs of fellow believers. Nothing more evidences conversion than a life marked by the compassion of God

### **Vs. 37-40**

Whatever believers do for each other they also do for their Lord Jesus Christ, and the person who genuinely . . . serves Christians in Christ’s name proves he himself is a Christian. . . . “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

Notice again that what people do in the Great Tribulation time for Christ and for His people will truly represent their hearts. It will not be a time where people could hope to gain anything by deceit and hypocrisy. Men will suffer for taking the part of the Jews, suffer for witnessing for Christ. Those who hate the Antichrist, who defy him and risk his wrath, those who take up for God’s chosen people, the Jews, will do so because of truly Christian hearts.

Harry Ironside wrote, “My brethren’ . . . are those of Israel who are related to Christ, both according to the flesh and the Spirit, . . .

The expression “these brothers” must refer to a third group that is neither sheep nor goats and we know that the sheep and goats are the Gentiles – that leaves us with the only one possible group of people, the Jews. They are the physical brothers of the Lord.



In view of the distress in the Tribulation period, it is clear that any believing Jew will have a difficult time surviving. . . . A Gentile going out of his way to assist a Jew in the Tribulation will mean that Gentile has become a believer in Jesus Christ during the Tribulation. By such a stand and action, a believing Gentile will put his life in jeopardy. His works will not save him; but his works will reveal that he is redeemed.

#### **Vs. 41**

These are **accursed** because they have rejected Christ.

The unsaved will be immediately cast into Hell-fire. Notice the literal word *fire* in verse 41 and the word *everlasting* in verses 41 and 46. That is a clear picture of Hell.

If the lost will be in hell with the devil forever, believers will be in heaven with God forever. Because Jesus uses the same word in vs. 41 as He does in vs. 46 to describe salvation and condemnation—as everlasting – eternal.

Jesus is speaking of eternal *separation* from God

He is speaking of eternal *association* with **the devil and his angels**

He is speaking of eternal *isolation*

He is speaking of eternal *duration* and of eternal *affliction*, from which there will be no relief or respite.

#### **Vs. 42-45**

“Naked” means scantily clad or scantily clothed.

#### **Vs. 44**

They on the right hand, who are Christ’s sheep, will still be “clothed with humility.” . . .

They on the left hand, who are not Christ’s, will still be blind and self-righteous. They

will not be sensible of any neglect of Christ. “Lord,” they say, “when saw we thee,—and did not minister unto thee?”

#### **Vs. 45**

#### **Vs. 46**

Let us mark, in the last place, *what will be the final results of the judgment day*. . . . “the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

Since the millennial kingdom will be worldwide, there will be no place on earth for the accursed to go. They will be slain on the spot and go immediately into the eternal punishment of hell

Let us not forget that it is Jesus more than any other person in the Bible who speaks most clearly about hell. Matthew 25 is an example. . . . (v. 30). . . . (v. 41). . . . (v. 46).

We may not like these statements, but they were spoken by Jesus, the very Son of God, and I think he knew what he was talking about.

*Hell is a total separation* . . . “Depart from me, you who are cursed”

The ways in which we divide people seem almost endless – we see people as rich or poor, athletic or non-athletic, pretty or ugly, by nationality, and by race.

Yet the division in Matthew 25 is the only one that really matters—the division between those who will “go away to eternal punishment” and those who will enter into “eternal life” (v. 46), between the saved and the lost. . . . “Not one goat will be left among the sheep, nor one sheep with the goats. . . . There will be no middle company in that day.”

*Hell is a bad association* . . . Hell was “prepared for the devil and his angels” (v. 41).

Jesus pictures hell as a place where fallen angels and rebellious human beings are together in their suffering. . . . What a destiny!

*Hell is suffering*

*Hell is darkness* . . . this is a darkness that shuts off all sight of others, indeed, all sight of everything, even sight of oneself. The only thing that will be left is the conscious, mental self in its rebellion.

The idea of eternal suffering has been so disturbing to some people that there have been countless attempts to deny it or limit its duration.

The state of things after the judgment is changeless and without end. The misery of the lost, and the blessedness of the saved, are both alike for ever. Let no man deceive us on this point. It is clearly revealed in Scripture. The eternity of God, and heaven, and hell, all stand on the same foundation. As surely as God is eternal, so surely is heaven an endless day without night, and hell an endless night without day.

Who shall describe the blessedness of eternal life? . . . all this is blessedness indeed. And yet the half of it remains untold.

Who shall describe the misery of eternal punishment? It is something utterly indescribable and inconceivable. . . . the eternal remembrance of opportunities neglected and Christ despised . . . all this is misery indeed. . . . And yet this picture is nothing, compared to the reality.

Let us stand for closing invitation

Let us close . . . with serious self-inquiry. Let us ask ourselves on which side of Christ we are on . . . shall we be on the right hand, or shall we be on the left?

Do we have enough evidence to convict ourselves of being a believer?

## **McGee**

### **Pages 111-113**

Judgment of the Nations

. . . alert . . . to the fact that He is coming and they should ready themselves for His coming. All . . . will be given an opportunity to hear and receive God's message during the Great Tribulation period.

. . . the Olivet Discourse is moving toward the placing of Jesus Christ on the throne of this world. This is the message of the Gospel of Matthew. This is the message of the Word of God.

. . . takes place upon the Lord's return to establish His Kingdom.

Matthew 25:34

Any man who will give these men a cup of cold water will do it at the risk of their lives. To hand out a cup of cold water has little value today, but in that day it will have tremendous value. It will mean that you have taken a stand for Jesus Christ.

Illustration – cup of cold water

## **Wiersbe**

### **Pages 185-187**

This will not be a judgment of groups . . . but of individuals within these nations.

. . . must not confuse this judgment with the Great White Throne judgment described in Revelation 20:11-15. . . . The judgment here . . . takes place *before* the kingdom is established on earth, for the saved are told to "inherit the kingdom" . . . The white throne judgment will take place *after* the 1,000 year reign of Christ (Rev. . . .).

We must not force this passage to teach salvation by good works.

The Old Testament saints were saved by faith (Heb. 11); the New Testament saints were saved by faith in Jesus Christ . . . People today are saved the same way.

If we keep in mind the three groups in the account, . . . There were sheep, goats, and brethren. . . . “My brethren” . . . seems likely that they are the believing Jews from the Tribulation period. . . . How, then, can they survive? Through the loving care of the Gentiles who have trusted Christ and who care for His brethren.

. . . the *sheep* individuals are surprised at what they hear. . . . But just as they lovingly ministered to the believing Jews, they did it to Christ. Their motive was not reward, but sacrificial love. In fact, these Gentiles took their own lives in their hands when they welcomed the homeless Jews and cared for them.

There are sins of omission as well as sins of commission (James 4:17). Not doing good is the moral equivalent of doing evil.

. . . the sheep were blessed of the Father; but it does not say that the goats were “cursed of the Father.” The sheep *inherit* the kingdom, and inheritance is based on birth. Because they had been born again through faith, they inherited the kingdom.

God never prepared hell for people . . . If sinners listen to Satan, and follow his ways, they will end up where he ends up . . .

As we look back over the Olivet . . . God is not finished with the people of Israel.

Second, the Old Testament promises of the kingdom will be fulfilled.

Finally, . . . we know that Jesus is coming again.

Jesus took the disciples to the door and I’m going to take you on in – next week – the Millennial Kingdom.

## **“Rear of Document”**

“Be sure your sin will find you out” (Num. 32:23) . . . what may appear to us to be secret is actually in the full, clear view of God.

Romans: “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against *all* ungodliness and unrighteousness of men”(1:18)

The warning to unbelievers is stated over and over again in Scripture by word and demonstrated by direct acts of divine judgment. . . . During the time of Noah, iniquity had become so widespread and vile that God destroyed all mankind except for the eight . . . Sodom and Gomorrah became so utterly wicked that God destroyed those cities simultaneously with fire and brimstone (Gen. 19:24-25). . . . God has chosen . . . to judge . . . those judgments stand as divine signposts to mankind . . . no person or group of people, no matter how powerful by human standards, can sin with impunity . . .

Amillennialists do not believe Christ will reign in a literal, . . . They consider the Millennium to be a figurative, . . . picture of Christ’s reigning on earth through the hearts of His redeemed people.

The perfect millennial kingdom will testify through all eternity that Jesus Christ is the supreme sovereign, who alone can bring absolute harmony and peace to a world even while it is still infected by sin.