

# Matthew 25 - Olivet Discourse: Parable of the 10 Virgins, 10 Talents; Sheep & Goat Judgment

V. Re-offer and eventual acceptance of the King (Matt 24:1—25:46)

(4) Attitude believers should have towards these events (Matt 24:32—25:46)

(D) Ten virgins: preparedness (25:1-13)

(E) Talents: stewardship (25:14-30)

(F) Sheep and goats: doing good to Christ's brethren (25:31-46)

The parables and teachings of Jesus in Matt 25 are a continuation of the flow from the previous chapter. Jesus did not shift gears and begin speaking about something completely new. This means that the parables continue to be related to Israel, not the Church, Israel's first century rejection of the Messiah, and the coming spoken of is the Second Coming and judgment that will take place upon Jesus' arrival.

## Intro to Parable of the 10 Virgins

Matt 24:50-51 raises the question of on what basis will Israel be judged. The answer in this parable is preparedness. This parable provides a picture of living Israel brought back to the land at the end of days for a judgment to see who is prepared and who is unprepared the second time for the coming of the Messiah. The prepared enter the Millennial Kingdom while the unprepared are excluded.

Some use this parable to support a "partial rapture" position, meaning those believers in the Church Age who are walking with the Lord and ready will be taken, while the others (backsliders, those who are justified by making little to no progress in the area of sanctification) will be left. However, from the context we learn that this is describing Israel, not the Church.

## Matthew 25

(D) Ten virgins: preparedness (25:1-13)

1 **"Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom.**

1 **"Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.**

1 "At that time, the kingdom from heaven will be comparable to ten bridesmaids who took their oil lamps and went out to meet the groom.

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

- "Then" - links this parable with the previous passage, specifically the Second Coming

- "...ten virgins" - represent Israel as a whole

- To understand who the 10 Virgins are, it's important to maintain the context of the previous chapter, and the previous parables, along with the following parables.

- "...to meet" - *hypantesis*, an official welcome of a visiting dignitary

- To understand this parable as a whole, it's critical to understand the Jewish Wedding Ceremony, and the various events associated with it. See **(3) The Retrieval of the Bride** in [Jewish Wedding Ceremony](#) for the details.

- The scene of this parable was at night, when the bride's friends are waiting to welcome the couple and to enter the groom's house where the banquet will begin shortly. All 10 Virgins knew that the groom's appearing would be soon.

2 Five of them were **foolish**, and five were **prudent**.

2 Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent.

2 Now five of them were foolish, and five were wise,

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

- The 10 Virgins (all Israel) are divided into two groups:

- "...foolish" - unbelieving Israel; they are depicted as anticipating the event, but unprepared since they have no oil with them (v3)

- "...prudent" - believing Israel; they are depicted as prepared and waiting since they have obtained extra oil in case of delay

3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they did not take *extra* oil with them;

3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them,

3 because when the foolish ones took their lamps, they didn't take any oil with them.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

- The foolish took *no* oil with them; they did not run out, they had none!

4 but the prudent ones took oil in flasks with their lamps.

4 but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.

4 But the wise ones took flasks of oil with their lamps.

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 Now while the groom was **delaying**, they all became drowsy and *began* to sleep.

5 Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and *began* to sleep.

5 Since the groom was late, all of them became sleepy and lay down.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

- "...delaying" - the period of delay corresponds to the time between the first signs of Jesus' coming and His appearance (Second Coming)

6 But at **midnight** there finally was a shout: 'Behold, the groom! Come out to meet *him*.'

6 But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet *him*.'

6 But at midnight there came a shout: 'The groom is here! Come out to meet him!'

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

- "...midnight" - often the time of judgment in Scripture (Ex 11:4)

7 Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps.

7 Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

7 Then all the bridesmaids woke up and got their lamps ready.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

- When someone announced the groom's arrival, they all woke up and trimmed their lamps

8 But the foolish *virgins* said to the prudent ones, 'Give us some of your **oil**, because our lamps are going out.'

8 The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

8 "But the foolish ones told the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out!'

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

- The lamps of the foolish began to go out (Greek present tense)

- "...oil" - the Holy Spirit (Zech 4; Acts 10:38; Heb 1:9; Rom 8:9; Zech 12:10)

9 However, the prudent ones answered, 'No, there most certainly would not be enough for us and you *too*; go instead to the merchants and buy *some* for yourselves.'

9 But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you *too*; go instead to the dealers and buy *some* for yourselves.'

9 "But the wise ones replied, 'No! There will never be enough for us and for you. You'd better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not* so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

- The preparations of the wise virgins did the unwise no good

10 But while they were on their way to buy *the oil*, the groom came, and those who were **ready** went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut.

10 And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut.

10 "While they were away buying it, the groom arrived. Those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet, and the door was closed.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

- Shortly after the announcement, the groom arrived. There was not enough time for the foolish virgins to obtain oil before the doors were closed.

- "...ready" - readiness is always used in the context of the Second Coming (never the Rapture); believers in the Church Age are instructed to "wait eagerly" (Rom 8:23,25; 1 Cor 1:7; 1 Cor 4:5; Phil 3:20; 1 Thess 1:10; Jude 21).

- In Matt 24:42,44, believers during the Tribulation are instructed to "Watch" and "Be Ready"

11 Yet later, the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.'

11 Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.'

11 Later, the other bridesmaids arrived and said, 'Lord, lord, open up for us!'

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'

12 But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'

12 "But he replied, 'I tell all of you with certainty, I don't know you!'

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

- The groom's refusal to admit them was not the result of callous rejection in spite of their desire to enter the feast. Instead, He refused to admit them because they had failed to prepare adequately.

— These verses picture the judgment of Jews that will happen at the end of the Tribulation and before the establishment of the messianic kingdom.

13 Be on the alert then, because you do not know the day nor the hour.

13 Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

13 So keep on watching, because you don't know the day or the hour."

**13 Watch** therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

- "Watch" [KJV] - *greyoreo*, "to stay awake, to be in constant readiness, to be on the alert"; an admonition related to the Second Coming (Cf. Matt 24:42-43; Mark 13:33-35; Mark

13:37; Luke 21:36).

— The context demands that the admonition to “watch” relates immediately to events occurring in the Tribulation. Thus, these Tribulation events are leading up to the Second Coming of Christ, not the Rapture.

— The Church is instructed to “wait”, not “watch” since there are no prophetic events to be fulfilled prior to the Rapture. See [Doctrine of Imminence](#).

People use this parable to teach such strange doctrines as the “partial rapture”...that if you’re a believer, but you’re watching an “unchristian” movie, or you’re not fully consecrated to Christ at the time of the Rapture, you’re going to be left behind. However, a believer’s participation in the Rapture is part of the “grace package” that every believer receives at the moment of faith in Christ alone for salvation. Part of this “grace package” is not revoked for unsanctified believers.

For 10 reasons why the Parable of the 10 Virgins has nothing to do with the Rapture, see [Rapture 30 Matt 24-25 - Part 10 \(Matt 25:1-13\)](#).

#### (E) Talents: stewardship (25:14-30)

The point of the Parable of the 10 Virgins and the Parable of the Talents is the same. The difference is a matter of emphasis. In the Parable of the 10 Virgins, the importance is on spiritual preparation; in the Parable of the Talents the emphasis is on spiritual service. Both parables deal with the judgment of Jews at the end of the Tribulation, and both apply to Christians today (as does the entire Olivet Discourse).

How will a true son of the kingdom act during his Master’s absence? By being faithful to his lord, or worthless? The servants are evaluated for how they dispensed their responsibilities during the absence of their master. Those who were faithful during His absence were rewarded with greater responsibility and wealth during the King’s future reign. However the unfaithful stewards do not inherit anything and are shut off from even an opportunity for entrance into the Kingdom.

Note that the reward is for faithfulness, not the measure of their work. This parable and the previous one deal with Israel’s faithfulness in light of its responsibility, while the remainder of this chapter (v31-46) relate to the Messiah’s judgment of the nation’s treatment of the Jewish Remnant during the Tribulation. In both instances, Israel and the nations, there will be a mixed response...some will be prepared and faithful while others will not.

1 Cor 4:2: In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

**14 “For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.**

14 "For *it* is just like a man *about* to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.

14 "Similarly, it is like a man going on a trip, who called his servants and turned his money over to them.

14 For *the kingdom of heaven* is as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

- "For" - links this parable with the lesson expressed in v13

- "...it" - the antecedent is the kingdom of heaven (v13)

- "...man" - in this parable, depicted by Jesus, the Master of the house

- "...his own slaves" - Jews living during the Tribulation (not Christians living in the Church Age)

— We should not read into this that all three slaves possessed eternal life. As has been shown in the Parable of the Good and Wicked Servants (Cf. 24:45-51), relationships in parables do not necessarily correspond to spiritual relationships in reality (see notes on 24:48).

15 To one he gave five **talents**, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

15 To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

15 To one man he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, based on their ability. Then he went on his trip.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

- "...talents" - *talanton*, a coin worth about a year's salary

- The master distributed his resources according to his evaluation of the ability of each slave

— As always, greater privilege brings greater responsibility: the use that one makes of his opportunities is the measure of his capacity for more

16 The one who had received the five talents immediately went and did business with them, and earned five more *talents*.

16 Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents.

16 "The one who received five talents went out at once and invested them and earned five more.

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 In the same way the one who *had received* the two *talents* earned two more.

17 In the same manner the one who *had received* the two *talents* gained two more.

17 In the same way, the one who had two talents earned two more.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

- Immediately, the servants entrusted with “five” and “two” talents began to put their money to use for their master. This showed their faithfulness to their duty to make money for him.

18 But he who received the one *talent* went away and dug a *hole in the ground*, and hid his master’s money.

18 But he who received the one *talent* went away, and dug a *hole* in the ground and hid his master’s money.

18 But the one who received one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground, and buried his master’s money.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money.

- By burying his money, this servant showed he valued safety above all else

- The servants of God who have a heart for God and His coming kingdom will sense their privilege, seize their opportunities, and serve God to the maximum extent of their abilities during the Tribulation

— Those who have no real concern about preparing people for the coming King will do nothing with their opportunities

— Being a good steward requires taking some risks

19 “Now after **a long time** the master of those slaves \*came and \*settled accounts with them.

19 “Now after a long time the master of those slaves \*came and \*settled accounts with them.

19 “After a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

- “...a long time” - probably refers to the time between the ascension and the Second Coming

— Thus, even though this parable, and the entire Olivet Discourse, deals with the Tribulation period, the parable has meaning for all of Jesus’ disciples who anticipate the kingdom



20 The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have earned five more talents.'

20 The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.'

20 The one who had received five talents came up and brought five more talents. 'Master,' he said, 'you gave me five talents. See, I've earned five more talents.'

**20** And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter the joy of your master.'

21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

21 "His master told him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy servant! Since you've been trustworthy with a small amount, I'll put you in charge of a large amount. Come and share your master's joy!'

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

- The servant who was given five talents received a verbal commendation from his master, increased responsibility, and joy with his master (Cf. 24:46; John 15:11)

**22** "Also the one who *had received* the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have earned two more talents.'

**22** "Also the one who *had received* the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.'

22 "The one with two talents also came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I've earned two more talents.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and **faithful** slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter the joy of your master.'

23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

23 "His master told him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy servant! Since you've been trustworthy with a small amount, I'll put you in charge of a large amount. Come and share your master's joy!'



23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

- "...faithful" - interesting that the master is not rewarding the servant because he was successful with doubling his talents, but rather on his faithfulness to use those talents to add to his total

— At the Bema Seat judgment, Jesus will not judge believers on our success (wealth, talent, etc.) but rather on our faithfulness with what He gave to us

— The servant who was given two talents received the same verbal commendation as the first servant, increased responsibility, and joy comparable with his God-given capacity

Since we can do nothing except by God's grace (John 15:5), these rewards are really due to God's grace rather than to the servant's faithfulness, which His grace enables (Cf. 1 Cor 4:7).

24 "Now the one who had received the one talent also came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a **hard man**, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed.

24 "And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed.

24 "Then the one who had received one talent came forward and said, 'Master, I knew that you were a hard man, harvesting where you haven't planted and gathering where you haven't scattered any seed.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

- "...hard man" - *skleros*, harsh, cruel; in the slave's eyes, the master exploited the labor of others, namely himself and his fellow servants (Cf. John 6:60; Acts 26:14; James 3:4; Jude 15). He got all the benefits without doing any of the work.

— This servant evidently felt that his master would not share many of the rewards of his labor with him, if he proved successful, but would punish him severely if he failed

— The fact that he received less than the other servants should not have made him resentful, since even he had a great opportunity

— He ignored his responsibility to his master and his obligation to discharge his duty. In addition, he showed no love for his master, whom he blamed, attempting to cover up his own failure.

25 And I was afraid, so I went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you *still* have what is yours.'

25 And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'

25 Since I was afraid, I went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here, take what's yours!'

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 "But his master answered and said to him, 'You **worthless, lazy** slave! Did you know that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter seed?

26 "But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed.

26 "His master answered him, 'You evil and lazy servant! So you knew that I harvested where I haven't planted and gathered where I haven't scattered any seed?

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

- Instead of commending this servant, his master gave him a scathing condemnation: instead of being "good and faithful," he was "wicked and lazy."

— To be lazy is to be unfaithful. The master used the servant's own words to condemn him.

- "...worthless" - describing believers? Nowhere else in Scripture are believers labeled as "worthless" or "wicked"; this is clearly describing unbelievers

- "...lazy" - means failure to act energetically. He also blamed his failure on his master.

27 Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my *money* back with interest.

27 Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my *money* back with interest.

27 Then you should've invested my money with the bankers. When I returned, I would've received my money back with interest.'

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

- If the master was really hard, as the servant believed, he should have known he was in for trouble if he proved unfaithful. At least he should have put his master's money into the bank. The money would have earned interest and been safe.

28 Therefore: take the talent away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.'

28 Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.'

28 Then the master said, 'Take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the ten talents,

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

29 "For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.

29 "For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.

29 because to everyone who has something, more will be given, and he'll have more than enough. But from the person who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away from him.

29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

- Here, Jesus expresses a kingdom principle he previously explained (13:12; Cf. 21:43)

30 And throw the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

30 Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

30 Throw this useless servant into the darkness outside! In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- The master declared the servant worthless because he failed to do his master's will with what the master gave him to use

- For a complete description of "outer darkness" and "weeping and gnashing of teeth," see notes on 8:12; 22:13

Labels such as "worthless slave" and "outer darkness" are nowhere else used in the NT to describe believers. These terms are used to describe non-believers. Many teachers want to compare the master's slaves in this parable to Church Age believers, and the reckoning what the master did with the slaves as the Bema Seat judgment. However, if you go to the passages on the Bema Seat judgment of believers (Rom 14:10-12; 1 Cor 3:10-15; 2 Cor 5:10; 1 John 2:28), nowhere will you find "outer darkness" or "worthless slave." It is not us, but our works, that are tried in the fire. So there is a day of reckoning for the Church Age believer, but it is not described in this passage.

Every Church Age believer has three things: Time, Talent (abilities), Treasure (money). We will be evaluated on how we performed in these areas, not on our success (how rich we

were), but rather on how faithful we were to what God has given us.

It's quite obvious that this is another parable telling Israel to be in faith at the time of the Second Coming; and not just "in faith" but also that their faith should be productive, because there is going to be a division of believing Israel and unbelieving Israel at the Second Coming, and Jesus is urging them to be on the right side of that ledger.

Jesus is telling a series of parables to hammer home that point...the Householder, the Wise Servant, the 10 Virgins, and now the Talents.

All Scripture is *for* us, but not all Scripture is *about* us. There are things we can learn from the Talents, and all of the Olivet Discourse, about God, even though His teaching and the parables are not about Church Age believers. Some of the things we learn about God are:

- He is unequal: He didn't bestow talents equally to His servants, but vastly unequally
- He requires productivity and results, no matter the level of talents each received
- His expectations were based on each servant's opportunity
- God values stewardship (a steward is a manager, not an owner)

#### (F) Sheep and goats: doing good to Christ's brethren (25:31-46)

This is one of the most mis-interpreted and mis-used passages in Scripture. Some claim this passage teaches salvation by social action. But does Jesus here contradict other crystal clear passages that teach salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone, apart from works (Rom 3:27-28; 4:1-8; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5)?

This has always been a go-to proof text for the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation by faith plus good works. To them, heaven can be gained through benevolent or charitable deeds done for "the least among us."

It has also become a favorite passage for today's progressive evangelicals who preach a gospel that requires "social justice" works for salvation. Here is what Kevin DeYoung, a frequent contributor to The Gospel Coalition, says about this passage:

*Matthew 25 is about social justice in the sense that it is about caring for the needy. but the needy in view are fellow Christians, especially those dependent on our hospitality and generosity for their ministry.... Jesus says if we are too embarrassed, too lazy, or too cowardly to support our fellow Christians who depend on our assistance and are suffering for the sake of the gospel, we will go to hell. We should not make this passage say anything more or less than this.*

Tim Keller, the co-founder of The Gospel Coalition, an organization that promotes the social gospel among neo-Calvinists, uses Matt 25:31-46 to support his view of Lordship Salvation, claiming that many who profess faith in Christ today will be rejected by Him at the Sheep & Goat judgment if they lack sufficient works "done for the poor" since such works are necessary proof that professing Christians have "true, saving faith."

Keller claims people are saved by grace through faith, but he also teaches that social justice works must be present at the final judgment as confirming evidence of "saving faith" otherwise they will go to hell.

In reality, this is one of three major judgments in the Bible. We will call it the Sheep and Goat Judgment (not to be confused with the Bema Seat of Christ where the Christians get their rewards for service, nor with the Great White Throne Judgment, which comes at the end of the Millennium.) Who is being judged here? Individual Gentiles who are alive at the end of the future seven-year Tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ the King will separate Gentile nations into two camps of either Sheep (saved, believing Gentiles) or Goats (unsaved, unbelieving Gentiles). He will then honor and bless the sheep for their positive treatment of His "brethren" (saved Jews) during the Tribulation, while the cursed Goats will be condemned for their mistreatment of Christ's brethren during the Tribulation. The treatment of saved Jews during the Tribulation will reflect either the unbelief of the Goats or the faith of the Sheep. The Sheep will believe the gospel of the kingdom that will be preached to all nations during the Tribulation by saved Jewish evangelists.

This judgment takes place on earth immediately after the Battle of Armageddon. The Great White Throne Judgment takes place in space somewhere ("the earth and the heaven fled away," Rev 20:11). The judgment here in Matt 25 takes place *before* the kingdom is established on earth, for the saved are told to "inherit the kingdom" (Matt 25:34). The Great White Throne Judgment will take place *after* the 1,000-year reign of Christ (Rev 20:7ff). The differences in the two judgments include time, scene, subjects, basis, result and resurrection. This judgment is referenced in the OT in Joel 3:1-3,12.

To verify this interpretation, and reject the interpretation promoted by others, including The Gospel Coalition, you should ask and seek answers to several key questions from Matthew's Gospel and the rest of Scripture:

1. When does this event occur?
2. Who are the "sheep," "goats," and "the least of these, My brethren"?
3. Why did the sheep treat Christ's brethren well, but the goats did not?
4. Why are the sheep called "blessed" and the goats "cursed"?
5. What does it mean when Jesus says to the sheep, "inherit the kingdom prepared for you"—receiving salvation or a reward?
6. How does the context of the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24-25) and the events described in it relate to the Sheep & Goat judgment (25:31-46)?

Proper answers to these questions will clearly show that this passage has nothing to do with social justice or needing good works to obtain salvation.

When does this even occur? The context and content of Matt 25 clearly show the specific time when the sheep and goats will be separated. Matt 24-25 is one unified discourse given by Jesus during Passion Week, just before His death. During this discourse, Jesus says the time shortly before His return will involve unique and unprecedented "tribulation" (24:9), even "great tribulation" such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be (24:21), and it will have an "end" (24:3,6,13,14) for the sake of the "elect" (believing Jews/Israelites) and their physical survival (24:22,24,31). This darkest period in human history will come to a conclusion when the "Son of Man" comes "with power and great glory" (24:30; also 24:27,37,39,44; 25:13). Thus, the judgment of the Sheep & Goats will occur at that same time, when "the Son of Man comes in His glory" (25:31), which is the end of the Tribulation.

Many scholars and commentators who do not recognize distinctions in Scripture in order to mold God's Word to fit their own pre-determined beliefs see this judgment as the single judgment of all mankind at the end of time. However, there is no reference to the resurrection of the unsaved dead like there is for the Great White Throne judgment (Rev 20:12-14). Also, the Sheep & Goat judgment happens 1000 years earlier than the Great White Throne judgment. In addition, this judgment speaks of "sheep" being positively judged and commended by Christ, whereas the Great White Throne judgment involves only negative judgment and condemnation of the unsaved dead.

### **The Three Judgments**

- The Sheep & Goat Judgment — Judgment of the Nations
- The Bema Seat of Christ — The Believer's Rewards
- The Great White Throne Judgment — The Final Judgment

**31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.**

**31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.**

**31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels are with him, he will sit on his glorious throne.**

**31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:**

- THIS is when the kingdom comes to the earth

- This verse talks about the inauguration of the Davidic kingdom, and fixes the time of this judgment described in the following verses to Jesus' Second Coming and the beginning of His messianic reign on earth (during the 75-day Interval?)

— This judgment takes place on earth, just after the Second Coming. The location is just outside the City of Jerusalem, in the Valley of Jehoshapat, between the City and the Mount of Olives (Joel 3:1-3).

- "...the Son of man comes in his glory" - the Second Coming (Cf. Matt 24:31)

— We know this refers to the Second Coming (instead of the Rapture) because it follows what Daniel states in his prophecy: that at the end of the 70th Week, Jesus will return and setup His kingdom through believing Israel.

— The purpose of the Tribulation period has been accomplished: Israel is now in belief, they call for the King to come, and He comes to setup His kingdom on the earth.

- "...all the angels with him" - 16:27; 24:30; Cf. 1 Thess 4:16; 2 Thess 1:8

- "...then" - *tote*, temporal adverb links this judgment to the moment of arrival. This may mean that this judgment is the first public act of the enthroned King and not a hearing deferred to later

- "...His glorious throne" - the Davidic Throne (Cf. 28:18; 1 Cor 15:25; Heb 12:2)

— We know this refers to the Davidic Throne because that's what was prophesied in the OT

— Why doesn't Matthew call it "David's Throne"? Because Matthew's Gospel is the most Jewish of any of the Gospels, so this was understood and obvious to his original readers. They would not have thought of any other throne to be associated with the Messiah on this earth.

— Currently, Jesus is sitting on His Father's Throne, not His (Davidic) throne (Rev 3:21)

32 And **all the nations** will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them **from one another**, just as the shepherd separates the **sheep** from the **goats**;

32 All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

32 All the nations will be assembled in front of him, and he will cull them out, one from another, like a shepherd separates sheep from goats.

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:

- "...all the nations" - *ethnoi*, refers to all Gentiles (believing and unbelieving) who have survived the Tribulation. When *ethnoi* is used in the plural, as it is here, it most often refers to Gentiles in contrast to Jews.

— The use of *ethnoi* in 28:19, also in the plural, may refer to all Gentile nations plus Israel, but every other use (11x) of *ethnoi* in Matthew (4:15; 6:32; 10:5,18; 12:18,21; 20:19,25; 24:9,14; 25:32) refers to Gentiles only

— Four groups will survive the Tribulation: believing and unbelieving Jews, and believing and unbelieving Gentiles



- Unbelieving Jews will be cast off the earth into judgment (Ezek 20:33-38). This is a parallel judgment for the Jews, while the Sheep & Goat judgment casts off unbelieving Gentiles.
- These are living beings...no resurrection here (as post-tribulationists believe)
- *ethnoi* never refers to the dead elsewhere in Scripture, thus the timing for this cannot be after the messianic kingdom as many preterists, amilennarians and postmillennarians believe
- Although He sometimes consigns entire nations to suffer temporal punishment, God does not condemn the righteous with the wicked
- The "Times of the Gentiles" comes to an end at the Second Coming, so it stands to reason that there would be a judgment of Gentiles upon the completion of this time period
- John 3:3...to inherit the Kingdom, one must be born again
- "All the nations" here matches "all the nations" of Matt 24:14, demonstrating that the Gentiles under judgment here will be responsible to believe the gospel of the kingdom during the Tribulation period. In the midst of horrible judgment, God still offers His amazing grace!
- "...from one another" - although this is the judgment of the nations (Gentiles), it's an individual judgment rather than a national one since eternal destiny is at stake here
- "...sheep" - Gentiles who have been good to the Jews during the Tribulation, defending them, visiting them in prison, feeding and caring for them at the risk of their lives (Cf. v35-36)
- These are not saved simply by the fact that they treated the Jews well...they are believers, saved by grace, who protected the "brethren" (v40) because the sheep are "righteous" (v37, meaning they have been made righteous by faith in Christ)
- "...goats" - those Gentiles who persecuted or rejected the Jews, signifying their rebellion toward God

33 and He will put the sheep on His right, but the goats on the left.

33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

33 He will put the sheep on his right but the goats on his left.

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

- The "right" often signified the place of favor, and the "left" the place of comparative disfavor, in biblical and Jewish literature (Cf. Ezek 34:17)

<b>SHEEP &amp; GOAT VS GREAT WHITE THRONE</b>	
<b>MATT. 25:31-46</b>	<b>REV. 20:11-15</b>
<b>Post Second Advent</b>	<b>Post Millennium</b>
<b>Living Nations</b>	<b>Dead</b>
<b>Believers &amp; Unbelievers</b>	<b>Unbelievers Only</b>
<b>Angels, Sheep, Goats, Brethren</b>	<b>Unbelievers Only</b>
<b>David's Throne</b>	<b>Great White Throne</b>
<b>Earthly</b>	<b>Non-earthly</b>
<b>After Poverty, Imprisonment, Sickness</b>	<b>After Utopia</b>
<b>Entrance into Kingdom &amp; Hades</b>	<b>Entrance into Lake of Fire Only</b>
<b>Basis: Treatment of Brethren</b>	<b>Basis: Book of Life and Books</b>
<b>Not After Resurrection</b>	<b>After Resurrection</b>
<b>Subjects: Tribulation Survivors</b>	<b>Subjects: Unbelievers of All Ages</b>
<b>After Regathering of the Elect</b>	<b>After the Second Resurrection</b>
Pentecost, <i>Things To Come</i> , 425-26	

34 "Then the **King** will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are **blessed** of My Father, **inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the **foundation of the world**."

34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

34 "Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who have been blessed by my Father! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,

34 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:

- "...King" - identified as the "Son of Man" in v31; obviously referring to Dan 7:13-14, where the Son of Man approaches the Ancient of Day (God the Father) to receive a kingdom

— At this point, Jesus will be functioning as King, a different role than He has now. Today, Jesus is not functioning as King, but rather as Priest, in the Order of Melchizedek.

— The purpose of Jesus separating the them into two groups at the beginning of the kingdom is to determine whom He will admit into the kingdom, and whom He will exclude.

- "...blessed" - *eulogemenoi*, same word used in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1-3: "I will bless them that bless thee...")

— Those who are found worthy (by their justification) to enter the kingdom will be "blessed," a future outworking of God's promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3)

— Joel 3:1-2 confirms the interpretation of "blessed" and "cursed" (v41) by describing the same time, people, and purpose as the Sheep & Goat judgment in v31-46. In Joel 3:1, "in those days and at that time" is specified in the immediately preceding verses (2:30-32) as the end of the Tribulation, the same setting as the Sheep & Goat judgment.

— The "sheep" now enter into their inheritance, which involves the blessings God will give them in the kingdom, which will vary, depending on their service during the Tribulation

- "...inherit the kingdom" - when Jesus comes back, there will be mortal believers on the earth (sheep), who will be ushered into the kingdom in their mortal bodies

- "...foundation of the world" - the rule of Messiah on the earth over all humankind has been part of God's program for humanity since before Creation. This shows it's central place in God's program for humanity.

— See note: **Foundation of the World** in Gen 1

35 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;

35 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;

35 because 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 welcomed me.

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

- The basis for this judgment will be the reception or rejection of the "King" as divinely seen in people's reception or rejection of the King's "brothers"

36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'

36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'

36 I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you took care of me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then the **righteous** will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink?

37 Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink?

37 "Then the righteous will say to him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you something to eat, or thirsty and give you something to drink?

**37** Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

- "...righteous" - this could mean that they were practically righteous as evidenced by their good works toward Christ's brethren. But even if this is so, before believers can have practical righteousness, they must first be judicially forgiven and declared righteous in God's sight through faith alone in Christ alone.

— Jesus doesn't tell us here in what sense the Gentile sheep are "righteous" or how they became "righteous," so many assume they will be counted judicially righteous because of their good works described in this passage. However, that is not true.

— Justification before God by good works contradicts the rest of Scripture, including Matthew's Gospel. Matthew teaches that man is not good (19:17) and lacks inherent righteousness sufficient to save himself (5:20), and thus righteousness is given to the undeserving on the sole condition of faith (21:28-32).

— Therefore, the sheep on Christ's right hand must have been judicially "righteous" already, having believed in Christ prior to this judgment. They had God's righteousness imputed to them as a gift (2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:8-9), not as a reward.

— Their good works toward the Jews during the Tribulation is not their *grounds for* salvation, but the *evidence of* their salvation

- Why can't the righteous figure out He's talking about Himself and His brothers? Because the Spirit has moved back to the OT method of interacting with mankind.

— In the Church Age, we have the "fullness of the Holy Spirit" to understand things that those living in other ages could not understand. This will not be true during the Tribulation period, which is a 1-week completion of God's program with Israel.

— The Holy Spirit will operate in the 70th Week of Daniel (Tribulation period) exactly the way He did in the OT

38 And when did we see You as a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?

38 And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?

38 When did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or see you naked and clothe you?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*?

39 And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

39 When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

39 When did we see you sick or in prison, and visit you?'

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did *it* for one of the least of **these brothers or sisters of Mine**, you did *it* for Me.'

40 The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even the least of them*, you did it to Me.'

40 The king will answer them, 'I tell all of you with certainty, since you did it for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.'

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

- Three groups of people here: the sheep, the goats, and the brethren

- "...these brothers or sisters of Mine" - *adelphōn*, the Jews during the Tribulation, who enter the Kingdom as believers; the Remnant alive at the end of the Tribulation

— Many interpret this group as the poor and needy throughout all of human history, or at least from the time of Christ to the present, but Joel 3:1-3 confirms the "brethren" are the Jewish people during the Tribulation

— In Rom 9:3, "brethren" is used to describe solidarity amongst Jews

— Both the believing Jewish Remnant and the surviving (saved) Gentiles who escaped martyrdom alive at the Second Coming will enter the Kingdom in their mortal bodies (populate the Kingdom)

— Note how the Abrahamic Covenant is still in play here (Cf. v34,41)

— So "these brothers or sisters of mine" refers to Jews who will be mistreated by the world during the Tribulation period, but who will also be helped through the ministry of believing Gentiles (sheep). There are at least three reasons for identifying these "brethren" as believing Jews:

1. "the least" - this description fits with the Jews who will be rejected by the world during the Tribulation. Scripture consistently testifies about what the Tribulation will be like for the Jewish people, as well as the Gentile nations. For the Jewish nation, God intends to use this time to fulfill His purposes for Israel (Cf. Dan 9:24,27). Rev 12:13-17 describes Satan's vicious attempt to destroy Israel during this time. Satan is well-aware that Israel must repent as a nation and believe in Jesus Christ as their Messiah before the prophesied messianic kingdom will come (Hosea 3:4-5; Joel 2:32; Zech 12:10; Matt 3:2; 4:17; Acts 3:19-21; Rom 11:25-27). Thus, Satan will preemptively try to destroy Israel both by himself and through his appointed world ruler, the Antichrist (Cf. Dan 7:21-22,25; 9:27; 11:35-45; Matt 24:15-22; Rev 13:7; 16:6; 17:6; 18:20,24). Under these circumstances, it's easy to see why the Jewish believers will be fugitives and imprisoned, hungry, thirsty, seeking shelter and clothing, and medical attention for sickness.
  2. "of these" - "these" (the near demonstrative pronoun *toutōn*) refers to a nearby group that is separate from the Gentile sheep to whom He is speaking. The Gentile sheep would understand "these" to be the Jews to whom they previously ministered to during the Tribulation. Thus, "these" cannot be the same as, or part of, the Gentile sheep themselves.
  3. "My brethren" - Jesus is Jewish in His humanity as a biological descendant of Abraham and David (Matt 1:1). Thus, "My brethren" refers to Christ's fellow Jews. This is also how Paul used the term "brethren" in Rom 9:3. In addition, the fact that only Matthew records this part of the Olivet Discourse also teaches the same truth, since Matthew's audience was mainly Jewish and his primary purpose for writing was how Christ's coming has and will affect the Jewish people.
- Those who have co-opted this passage for their own political and social justice benefit often mis-quote this as "the least among us" however Jesus never uses the term "among us." He says "the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine."
  - The phrases "the least among us" and "the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine" are significantly different. The contrived phrase "the least among us" twists the words of Jesus to make Christians feel guilty so as to comply with today's "social justice" agenda or face eternal condemnation.
  - This mis-quotation is done in order to recast this judgment as one based on the treatment of people today rather than during the future Tribulation period.

This isn't salvation by works, this is faith without works is dead (James 2:20). During this unique and difficult time in human history, by being willing to help the Jews, believers are

demonstrating that they are believers. They aren't saved because they helped the Jews, they help the Jews because they are saved.

The social justice movement has co-opted this passage for their own benefit, completely out of context. All of a sudden, people who otherwise despise Scripture are quoting it for their own political and social benefit.

### **Populating the Millennium**

Post-Tribulationists believe that the Rapture and Second Coming are either the same event, or occur with virtually no interval of time between them. If that were true, all believers would be raptured (and translated into their resurrection bodies) at the time of the Second Coming, leaving no believers in mortal bodies. The Bible clearly states that all unbelievers will either be judged or killed at Christ's return (Matt 13:30,36-43,47-50; 24:36-41; 25:30-46). In this scenario, there would be no one left in their mortal bodies to populate the Millennium.

Therefore, this judgment seems unfeasible and even unnecessary if, as post-Tribulationists believe, the Rapture takes place at the time of the Second Coming. In a post-Tribulational Rapture, the separation of believers from unbelievers would take place at that point, and would be unnecessary to happen again just afterward.

Believers who come to faith during the Tribulation (and are not martyred) are not resurrected at the Second Coming. They will enter the Kingdom in their mortal bodies, and obtain occupations such as farming and construction (Is 65:20-25), marry and have children, and multiply at a rapid rate since they will be capable of 1000-year lifespans. There will be no poverty, very few people will die (100 years old will be considered a "short" life), and there will clearly be a population explosion likely into the billions (Is 65:17-25). This would be impossible if all saints were translated at the Second Coming. Since pre-Tribulationists have *at least* a seven year interval between the Rapture and Second Coming, this isn't an issue. Literally millions of people will be saved during the Tribulation and thus be available to populate the Millennium in their mortal bodies.

Some post-Tribulationists place the Judgment of the Nations at the end of the Millennium, but that blatantly violates Matt 25:31, and the context of where Jesus' teaching left off (before the 7 parables), which was Matt 24:31.

**41** "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, you **accursed** people, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

**41** "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

**41** "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Get away from me, you who are accursed, into the eternal fire that has been prepared for the Devil and his angels!



**41** 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:

- "...accursed" - same word used in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1-3 - "...I will curse those who curse thee.")

42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink;

42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me *nothing* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink;

42 Here's why: I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink.

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'

43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'

43 I was a stranger, and you didn't welcome me. I was naked, and you didn't clothe me. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

43 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.

44 Then they themselves also will answer, '**Lord**, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or as a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'

44 Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'

44 "Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or as a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and didn't help you?'

**44** Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

- "...Lord" - the fact that they address Jesus as "Lord" does not show they are believers, since everyone will acknowledge Him as Lord then (Phil 2:11)

- Both the sheep and the goats will express surprise, but not because they anticipated a different fate. They will be surprised because of the evidence upon which Jesus will judge their condition, namely: their treatment of His brethren.

— A person's work demonstrates their faith, or lack of it

— Sometimes the sins of omission are seen to be even more damning than the sins of commission

45 Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do *it* for one of the least of **these**, you did not do *it* for Me, either.'

45 Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'

45 Then he will say to them, 'I tell all of you with certainty, since you didn't do it for one of the least important of these, you didn't do it for me.'

45 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" - the "brothers" of v40

46 These will go away into **eternal punishment**, but the righteous into **eternal life**."

46 These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

46 These people will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life."

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

- "...eternal" [2x] - *aiōnios*, forever, without end; used throughout Scripture to describe life in heaven, life in hell, and God Himself

— Some believe that "eternal" does not mean forever, but pertains to the age to come; they believe the lost will suffer annihilation ("conditional immortality"). However, this is contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture.

— "Everlasting" and "eternal" are used to describe both torment and life, indicating that one will last as long as the other. In fact, "everlasting" is used to describe God in Ps 90:2; Rom 16:26.

— This is true in both the OT and NT (compare Dan 12:2 with Ps 90:2; Matt 18:8; 25:41,46; Rev 14:11; 20:10)

— Immediately these unbelievers will enter Hades until God resurrects them at the end of the messianic kingdom and sends them to hell (Gehenna) (Rev 20:11-15)

— The sheep (believers) will enter the kingdom, which is the first stage of their ceaseless life with God. Eternal life for the believer begins when a person trusts Christ, the first stage of life in the King's presence will be the messianic kingdom.

- "...punishment" - *kolasis*, penalty, torment; this is the only time this word is used in Scripture to describe an unbeliever's experience in hell

— A punishment (such as torment) that is not felt is not a punishment. It would be an odd use of language to speak of an insensate state, an inanimate object receiving punishment (i.e. I'm going to punish my car for not starting by plucking out the spark plug wires one by one).

- "...eternal life" - the Jews equated entering the kingdom with eternal life (Mark 10:17)

— To the Jewish mind, to possess one is to possess the other. One cannot enter the Kingdom without being a possessor of eternal life, and one cannot possess eternal life and be excluded from the Kingdom.

— Both punishment and life are eternal, forever; you can't play semantic games with various texts to argue that punishment is temporary but heaven is eternal, since both are described here as eternal.

### **The Sheep & the Goats**

This is *not* a resurrection judgment. There are four groups of people that go into *Gehenna*, or Hell:

1. The Devil's Pair: the Beast and the False Prophet
2. The unrighteous Gentiles (this judgment)
3. (At the end of the millennium): the Devil and his angels
4. The wicked dead from the Great White Throne judgment
  - Here *Gentile individuals* are being judged
  - And they are judged in such a way that even the winners are puzzled...

The Parable of the Sheep & Goat judgment deals with the inauguration of the Davidic kingdom (Cf. v31). This is a fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:12-16), and the "end game" of the Tribulation period: to bring Israel to such a place of crisis that they will be saved and cry out to Yeshua to rescue them from the Antichrist. To get to that place of crisis, God has to bring about the Tribulation period upon the earth.

The Sheep & Goat judgment is the very gathering that Jesus wanted to do at His first coming (Matt 23:37-39), but Israel failed in unbelief. Israel has now passed through the 70th Week of Daniel and are now in faith, Jewish unbelievers have been purged from the earth, and Jesus will return to the earth and "gather" them. Exactly what the OT said would take place as taken place (Jer 30:7).

At the end of the 70th Week of Daniel, Jesus has returned to earth at the Second Coming, rescues believing Israel, purges the earth of unbelieving Jews (Ezek 20:33-38) and Gentiles (Matt 25:31-46), sits on His throne, and inaugurates the kingdom. The Tribulation will accomplish exactly what God said it would accomplish.

At this time, the covenants are in full bloom, in particular the Davidic Covenant.