

## THE LORD'S JUDGMENT OF THE GENTILES

### AFTER THE WAR OF ARMAGEDDON

*Scripture Reading: Matt. 25:31-46; 13:47-50; Rev. 14:6-7; Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:21; Isa. 11:6-9*

When the Lord Jesus comes back, He will fully clear up the situation with the Christians. First, the false ones will be bound and thrown into the fire. These are the tares. Then the matured ones will be caught up into the air, along with the resurrected believers, where the Lord will exercise His judgment over them. At that time some of them will be chosen to be the overcoming ones who will be the Lord's army to fight against the Antichrist. They will also feast with the Lord at the marriage feast of the Lamb. Some of the Christians will be the defeated ones and, because they are defeated, **they will suffer some punishment. They will miss the marriage feast, the manifestation of the kingdom. They will lose their reward, and they will also suffer some kind of dealing.** Thus, by the rapture the Lord Jesus will clear up the whole situation among the Christians.

### THREE KINDS OF PEOPLES

As we mentioned previously, when the Lord Jesus returns, there will be basically three kinds of people upon the earth: **the Christians, the Jews, and the Gentiles** (1 Cor. 10:32). At His coming back He will defeat and destroy the Gentile army and rescue the Jewish people. They will become priests to God during the millennium. Some Gentiles, however, will still be left on the earth, not having been destroyed with the armies. Although so many horsemen and soldiers will have been destroyed by the Lord, some people of the nations will be left alive. It is not logical to assume that all the people will be soldiers and that all will be destroyed. Rather, **all the armies will be destroyed, but some of the people will be left.** What will happen to those who are left from the nations? The Lord must clear up the situation with them. To do this He will send His angels to collect all the people of the nations who remain at that time so that He can exercise His judgment on them.

What will be the Lord's basis for judging them? It is difficult for us to say. Surely it is not a judgment according to the law or to the gospel. If it is a judgment according to the gospel, it will be because **they did not repent and believe in the Lord Jesus.** Or if it is a judgment according to the law, it will be because **they did not keep the law.** But the judgment of the remaining nations will not be based upon these two items. The judgment of the nations at that time will be based upon how they treated the Lord's little brothers during the time of the tribulation (Matt. 25:31-46). By this we can see that the Lord has His dispensation, His way of dealing with people. **In the dispensation of the law, the Lord dealt with people according to the law. In the dispensation of grace, the Lord deals with people according to grace.** But during the time of the tribulation, the Lord will not deal with the nations according to law or grace. Rather, He will deal with them according to how they treated His little brothers, the Jews and remaining Christians, during the time of the tribulation. **If the nations treated the least of His brethren well, they will be considered as sheep; but if they treated the little ones poorly, they will be considered as goats and will be destroyed.**

**Matthew 25:31-46** covers the parable of the sheep and the goats. **Many Christian teachers have made a wrong application of this parable, saying that it refers to Christians.** They think that the Lord Jesus will exercise His judgment over the believers, dividing them into two groups. One group will be the real Christians, represented by the sheep; the other group will be the false Christians, represented by the goats. According to their concept, the good ones will be saved to enter into the kingdom, and the bad ones will be cast into the lake of fire. However, this interpretation is not accurate. **Verse 32** says that all the nations will be gathered before Him. The Greek word here for nations is the same word used for Gentiles. **It will not be the believers who are gathered before Him but the unbelievers, the Gentiles.** With the Gentiles gathered before Him, **the Lord will separate them one from the other as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.**

## THE ETERNAL GOSPEL

This judgment of the nations by the Lord will not be without a warning. **Revelation 14:6-7** says, “**I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having an eternal gospel to announce to those dwelling on the earth, even to every nation and tribe and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give Him glory because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who has made heaven and earth and the sea and the springs of waters.**” The gospel preached in these verses is not the gospel of grace but the eternal gospel. Nor is it preached by a man but by an angel. The gospel of grace on the other hand is not preached by the angels but by man. An angel did come to Cornelius in **Acts 10**, but he did not preach the gospel to Cornelius. Rather, the angel told him to call Peter. As a man, Peter was privileged and authorized to preach the gospel of grace. In **Revelation 14** an angel, not a man, is preaching the eternal gospel. Furthermore, this gospel is not preached on the earth but from the air.

What is the content of the eternal gospel? We know that the content of the gospel of grace is to repent and to believe. These are the two main items of the content of the gospel of grace. But in **Revelation 14** the content of the eternal gospel is different. It simply says to fear God and worship Him. The nations need to fear God because the time of judgment is coming. The nations will not be told to worship God as their Redeemer but as their Creator, the One who created them. They will be told to fear God because the time of judgment is coming and to worship God because He is their Creator. In order to understand these verses we must consider their context. This same chapter says, “**Another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the fury of God, which is mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath; and he shall be tormented in fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb. And the smoke of their tormenting goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. Here is the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus**” (vv. 9-12). This means that the eternal gospel will be preached by the angel at the very time when the Antichrist is forcing people to worship him. While Antichrist is forcing people to worship him, an angel from the air will warn people not to worship him but to worship God. It is as if the angel will testify to all the nations that the beast, Antichrist, is not their creator. They should not worship him but should worship God, their Creator. If they worship the beast, the Antichrist, God will judge them. Verse 12 shows who the people of God will be when the Antichrist rises up. Here is the endurance of the saints. The saints here will include two peoples: the Jews who keep the commandments of God and the Christians who have the faith of Jesus. The Antichrist will set up an image in the temple and force people to worship him. But the Jews and the Christians will refuse to worship his image. Even at that time there will be some Christians left who were not matured and able to be raptured. They will refuse to worship the image of the beast, so the Antichrist will persecute them. Because he will kill them, they will have the need of much endurance. Verse 13 goes on to say, “**Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.**” Surely these are the ones who will die through the persecution of the Antichrist.

In other words, during the time of the tribulation, the Antichrist will set up his image, forcing people to worship it as an idol. However, the Jewish people and the remaining Christians who were not raptured as the firstfruits will not worship his image, so they will be persecuted even to death. Under these circumstances God will send the angel to preach the eternal gospel to the nations of the earth. He will warn them to fear God and worship God. This means to not persecute the ones who are keeping the commandments of God and the ones who have the faith of Jesus. Do not persecute those people who will not worship the image of the Antichrist. Rather, fear God.

All the people on the earth will hear this gospel from the air. It will cover the whole earth. Of all the people who hear this word, a few will receive it and not persecute the Jews and Christians. The Jews and Christians at that time will be under much persecution and suffering. They will be short of food, short of drink, and short of clothing. They will be chased from place to place, making them the strangers. And they will be put into prison. All these points are mentioned by the Lord Jesus in **Matthew 25**. Those peoples of the nations who care for the little brothers of Christ during that time will be considered as the sheep. Those who persecute the Jews and Christians at that time will be considered as the goats.

The good ones, who treated the little brothers of the Lord well during the tribulation, will be transferred into the millennial kingdom to be the nations. The overcoming Christians will be the kings, and the converted Jews will be the priests, but the people will be the good ones from among the nations whom the Lord considers as sheep.

Through these dealings, the Lord Jesus will produce three kinds of people: **the overcoming Christians** as the kings, **the converted Jews** as the priests, and **the preserved, but not regenerated, Gentiles** as the people. **All the bad ones, the goats, will be cast into the fire.**

This parable of the sheep and the goats in **Matthew 25** corresponds to the parable of the net in **Matthew 13:47-50**. The first six parables in **Matthew 13** are related mostly to the Christians, with a small part related to the Jews. The treasure hidden in the field mainly refers to the kingdom with Israel. The pearl that comes out of the water signifies the church. Both are eventually for the kingdom. Thus, in **Matthew 13** there are also the three kinds of people: **the Jews** with the kingdom as the treasure hidden in the field, **the Gentiles regenerated and transformed** into a pearl, the church, and finally, there are **the ones left in the sea, the Gentiles**. The Lord sent the angel to collect those who were left in the sea. The net cast into the sea brings in every kind of creature without regeneration or transformation. This refers to the Gentiles, the natural people from the corrupted world. The Lord will gather all these before Him and judge them. The good will be collected into vessels, that is, into the millennial kingdom to be the nations, but **the evil shall be cast into the furnace of fire.**

### THE JUDGE OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

Both **Acts 10:42** and **2 Timothy 4:1** tell us that **the Lord Jesus was appointed by God to judge the living and the dead**. Before the millennium the Lord Jesus will judge the living unbelievers on the throne of His glory (**Matt. 25:31**). After the thousand years all the dead people of the nations will be resurrected, and the Lord Jesus will judge them at the great white throne (**Rev. 20:11-12**). So **the Lord will be the Judge of the living unbelievers before the millennium, and He will be the Judge of the dead unbelievers after the millennium**. By these two judgments the Lord Jesus will fully clear up the situation among all the Gentiles.

**From among the Christians** the Lord Jesus desires to get a group of kings to rule over the earth with Him. **From among the Jews** the Lord Jesus desires to get a group of priests to teach people how to serve Him during the millennium. Then **from the Gentile world** He desires to get a group of people who will be the nations during the millennium and also during the new heaven and the new earth. **Thus, there are the kings, the priests, and the people. Everything works together for the kingdom!** We must realize that the Gentiles at that time will only be preserved, not regenerated. They will be preserved from being condemned and lost, but they will not be regenerated.

### CREATION RESTORED

**Acts 3:21** says that heaven must receive the Lord Jesus until the times of the restoration of all things. From the time of the fall of man, the whole of creation became degraded. Since that time everything has been under decay and corruption. According to **Romans 8**, all creation is groaning under the slavery of corruption. **Every new item soon becomes old because it is under the law of decay and corruption**. A little baby looks so fresh, but an old man does not look fresh because he is under the process of decaying. The more we grow, the more we are decaying. Our physical body is under the principle of the slavery of corruption. **When the Lord Jesus comes back, there will be a restoration. Restoration will be versus the corruption. Everything will be restored.**

Speaking of the time of restoration, **Isaiah 65:20** says, **“There will no longer be in her / An infant who reaches the age of only a few days / Nor an old man who does not fill up his days; / For the lad will die at a hundred years of age, / And the sinner, being a hundred years of age, will be cursed.”** During that time, one who is a hundred years old will be considered as a child. Everyone will live hundreds of years.

**Isaiah 11:6** further says, **“The wolf will dwell with the lamb; / And the leopard will lie down with the kid, / And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; / And a young boy will lead them about.”** At the time of the restoration, all the beasts will be meek and gentle. The lions and leopards and wild beasts will not hurt people. The children can play with the lions, the vipers, and the poisonous serpents. **Neither shall there be any more war.** The spears shall be made into plows. There will be no more fighting; instead there will be farming. **That will be the time of real peace upon the earth, because everything will be restored.**

## THE RESTORATION

The nations who will be considered as sheep at that time will be preserved not by regeneration but by restoration. Today all the unbelievers on earth are degraded persons, but during the millennium, **all the nations will be restored persons. But that does not mean they will be regenerated. As believers, we are regenerated. We have received another life into us.** Those nations in the restoration will still have the same nature and the same element within them. **What we have is not restoration but regeneration.** During the millennium, the nations will not be regenerated but restored. Although **Matthew 19:28** in the King James Version uses the word regeneration, this is not the Greek word that is normally used for regeneration. The Greek word in verse 28 means a kind of restoration. **Regeneration means that we receive another life besides our natural life.** We all received the natural life by our natural birth from our parents. **When we believed in the Lord Jesus, we received another life, which is God's life, and were regenerated.**

All the good ones in **Matthew 25**, who will be considered as the sheep, will not be born again. They will not receive another life, but God will restore their created life to its condition before the fall. God will restore all the degraded creation. Thus, the word regeneration in **Matthew 19:28** (KJV) **does not mean regeneration in the sense of being reborn.** When applied to believers, the word regeneration means to be reborn, but when applied in this verse to the age, **it means restitution or restoration.**

## THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

After the Lord fully deals with the Christians, the Jews, and the nations, He will bring in the millennial kingdom. The kingdom of the Lord on the earth will be for one thousand years. **Millennium means "one thousand years."** According to the chart of the kingdom in chapter 35, the fifth section of the chart is the millennium. It is divided into two parts. The upper part is the heavenly part, and the lower part is the earthly part. In the heavenly part there is **the manifestation of the kingdom with Christ and the overcoming saints. Included in the heavenly part will also be the kingdom of the Father where the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:43).** This is the heavenly part of the Father's kingdom, the upper part of the kingdom. The lower part is called the kingdom of the Son of Man. In the lower part **the converted Israelites will be the priests leading the people to worship God. Around the Jews within the lower part will be the preserved, restored nations.** In **Matthew 13:41** the Lord Jesus said that He will send His angels to collect out of His kingdom all the stumbling blocks and those who practice lawlessness. Thus, all the wicked ones will be gone, the converted Jews will be the priests, and the nations who will be restored and preserved will be the people. So **there will be three classes of people during the millennium: the kings, the priests, and the people. The creation will be restored. There will be no more war; the whole earth will be full of peace. What a marvelous and glorious kingdom that will be!**

**At the end of the millennium, however, some of the nations will be induced by Satan to rebel once more against God (Rev. 20:7-9).** The rebellious ones then will be destroyed by being cast into the lake of fire, and those who did not rebel will be transferred into the new heavens and new earth to be the nations. **Revelation 21:24** says that the nations will walk by the light of the New Jerusalem. **The New Jerusalem will be the composition of all the regenerated, saved, and transformed persons. But the nations will be there simply as natural, restored people.**

**The fruit of the tree of life will be food for the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, and the leaves of the tree of life will be for the healing of the nations so that they can exist.** From the New Jerusalem a group of kings and priests will rule over the restored nations.

While the restored age will be quite marvelous, it will still be in the old creation. Therefore, there is the sixth section on the chart, **the new heaven and the new earth.** During the time of the new heaven and the new earth, **everything will be made new, and the New Jerusalem will be the center. This will be God's eternal kingdom.**

To the sheep, the nations, the millennial kingdom will be the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world (**Matt. 25:34**). Those who are born again, however, are those who are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (**Eph. 1:3-4**). The nations will receive something prepared from the foundation of the world, whereas we believers will receive something prepared before the foundation of the world. This is another strong indication that these sheep are not believers. They are another category of people. During the millennium, **we will be not the**

nations but the royal family; we will be the kings. Who will be the people? They will be the restored nations. According to **Isaiah 65:20**, those restored persons may still die, being several hundred years old. This means that they are not the regenerated persons. **We, the regenerated persons, will never see death. But they, still being under the curse, will die.** By this we can see that to be saved today is to be under one dispensation of God, and to be saved during the Lord's coming back is to be under another dispensation of God. God has different dispensations by which He produces different peoples. By the dispensation of the law, God will produce the Jewish people as the priests. **By the dispensation of the gospel of grace, God will produce the overcomers to be the kings.** By the dispensation of the eternal gospel, God will produce the people to be the nations during the millennium and during the new heavens and the new earth.

*(The Kingdom, Chapter 42)*