



## Will I Survive God's Final Judgment?

***Matthew 25:32-33: (NASB) <sup>32</sup>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; <sup>33</sup>and he will put the sheep on his right, and the goats on the left.***



Talking about the day of judgment can be difficult. The sad truth is that as magnanimous as the love and mercy of God through Jesus are, the opportunity to fail throughout the day of judgment will be very real. God created humanity with free will and the day of judgment will be about teaching our race how to use that free will to make righteous choices that lead to eternal life. This will require accountability for all and a heartfelt focus

on unlearning and renouncing all things sinful. Because the lessons we all have in this age will be based on enormous firsthand experiences with sin and death, they will be practical, logical, appealing and learnable. Jesus' Parable of the Sheep and Goats is a picture of the end results of these lessons.

Matthew 24 is our Lord's great prophecy about his return. Matthew 25 contains three parables all pertaining to his return. While all parables have a specific lesson, all parables also present us with principles we can learn from, even if the lesson does not apply to us.

### **First, the Parable of the Ten Virgins:**

***Matthew 25:1-2: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent.***

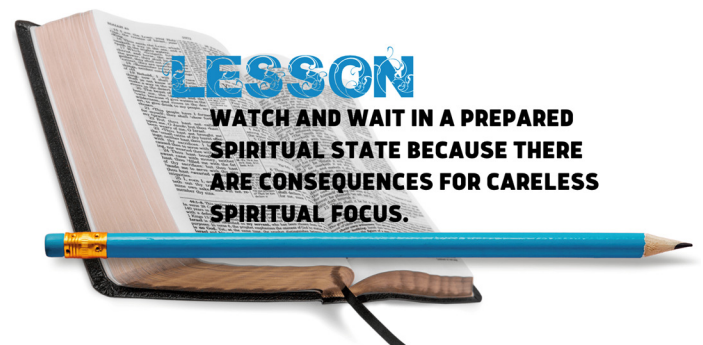
The oil in the lamps represents the holy spirit. If we are not developing the fruit of the spirit, we can lose it. Just because we are called to follow Jesus does not mean we are guaranteed to go to heaven. Developing Christlikeness is a daily process.

**THIS IS A WARNING TO THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS TO BE PREPARED FOR THE COMING OF THE BRIDEGROOM - THE RETURN OF JESUS.**

### **Jesus goes directly into the Parable of the Talents:**

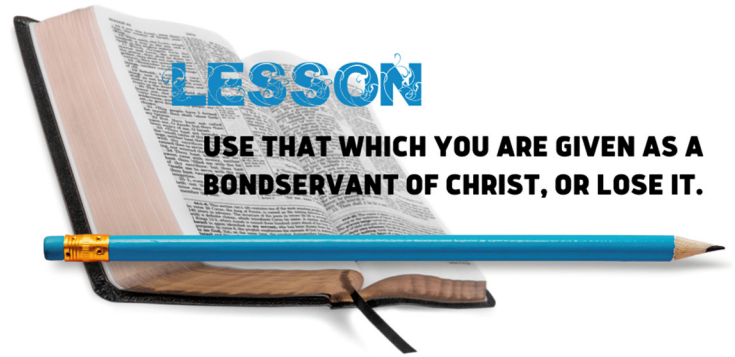
***Matthew 25:14-15: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. <sup>15</sup>To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.***

This is a picture of Jesus going to his Father in heaven. We are represented by the slaves. We must work while the master is gone, looking for those who are called to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. We are fishers of men teaching the good news.





IN THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS, JESUS BUILDS ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS. NOT ONLY MUST TRUE CHRISTIANS WATCH AND WAIT IN A PREPARED STATE, BUT WE MUST ALSO WORK HARD AT THE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GOSPEL WORK WE ARE GIVEN.



Both parables are directed to the disciples of Jesus in this present age and show great reward but the possibility of falling short as well.

Let's not be of the mind, "Because I believe in Jesus, I'm good." These parables disprove the concept, "Once saved, always saved." It is not a free ride once we say, "I love Jesus."

These two parables are followed by the Parable of the Sheep and Goats in Matthew 25:31-46.

The Parable of the Sheep and Goats has similar themes, but applies at a later time and to the rest of the world:

Matthew 25:31: (NASB) *But when the son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.*



This is not at the *returning as a thief in the night* stage of Jesus' return but at the final stage of his returning work when he *comes in his glory*. One of the primary definitions for the word *comes* in the Greek-English Lexicon is "to appear, make one's appearance, come before the public."



Revealing the three scripturally-progressive phases of Jesus' return

WHO?

WHO ARE THESE ANGELS THAT COME WITH JESUS?

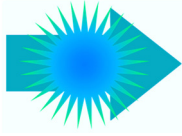
*The son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him* sounds like maybe this is all the angels in heaven. No, we understand these "angels/messengers" to be the true and faithful followers of Jesus working with him, bringing the message of reconciliation and judgment.

Here is the reasoning for why his true followers are human now but are pictured as "angels" later:

Luke 9:26: (NASB) *For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the son of man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*



The phrase *holy angels* only appears a few times in Scripture and is always in relation to those working alongside of Jesus during his return. God has a massive number of spirit beings who were created as angels, but when Jesus talks about the *holy angels* he is narrowing it down to a specific group.



We believe this references the true followers of Jesus who have died, been resurrected and are now joining with him in the reconciliation of the world. Their work of being messengers of reconciliation of the world back to God is why they are described as/pictured as angels. They do not turn into actual angels upon death.

The first two parables of Matthew 25 taught us the necessity to be holy and set apart in faithfulness. The lessons were about being ready and busy with godly work.

**Let's build on this to establish who these holy angels are:**

1 Peter 1:14-16: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, <sup>15</sup>but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; <sup>16</sup>because it is written, You shall be holy, for I am holy.

There is a huge focus on becoming holy. If we are footstep followers of Christ, our lives are to be transformed into a holy being whose life is about working for God. To be holy is to be set apart - to be sanctified.

### Sanctify

Sanctification is a process.

The setting apart of one (or many) for a holy purpose.

To be sanctified is to be considered or to be made holy.

We are to strive to be holy as God is holy. We cannot do this on our own of course because we are human and imperfect, but we must try to do it with all our being.

**Jude speaks of those with Jesus who judge and reconcile as his holy ones:**

Jude 1:14-15: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of his holy ones, <sup>15</sup>to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Verse 15 is referring to the judgment of mankind by Jesus and the church after the resurrection. Reconciliation is a process that will help their recovery. The true church is being developed now for this job of judgment and reconciliation. This is why it says, *the Lord came with many thousands of his holy ones* (some translations say *holy angels* or *saints*). It is the same group, showing us that these were the faithful true disciples of Jesus who developed in his footsteps.

The Parable of the Ten Virgins and the Parable of the Talents were both about being faithful to Jesus in this age. Jesus uses the Parable of the Sheep and Goats in part to show the role those faithful ones will play later, working alongside of him.

Those faithful ones in the first two parables appear in this third parable with Jesus:

Matthew 25:32: (NASB) *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...*

*All the nations* is relatively obvious - everyone is included; no one is left out. This parable shows us the final results of Judgment Day! This is what Jude 1:14-15 is all about. We see the players line up for this important set of lessons.



One of the basic lessons of the parables in Matthew 25 is that no one in this age, or the next, will be exempt from the call to righteousness. God's plan allows sin and death as tools to guide every human being to ultimately choose the high ground. In all cases, choices will be made, and God's appropriate actions through Jesus will follow.

It does not matter when we live, now or later. There is one pattern. We all have to comply now or will have to comply in the future and move up to a higher level. In this present age it is harder to be righteous than it will be in God's kingdom when evil will be curtailed. In God's plan for all of mankind, it is all about living up to godliness no matter who we are, when we live, why we do the things we do - the standard is the same for all.

It is comforting and yet sobering to know that God WILL bring all to appropriate judgment at the appropriate time.

**This parable teaches judgment is inevitable for all.  
But why use the examples of sheep and goats?**

One of the amazing things about the parables of Jesus is his use of specific symbolism to make his point. In this case, sheep and goats are used to reveal specific characteristics that can enhance or detract from humanity's adherence to righteous principles.

Jesus picked up on this symbolism from Old Testament teachings. If we do a study on the parables and teachings of Jesus, we will find more often than not they are founded in the Old Testament. He knew the Old Testament and brought it to light when he was teaching all those who would listen.





**Matthew 25:33:** (NASB) *and he will put the sheep on his right, and the goats on the left.*



### Why the right and the left?

The right represents favor and power. Remember, Jesus was elevated to the right hand of God in **Matthew 26:64**. Great favor is represented by being on the right.

**Why sheep? Because sheep were an often-used Old Testament picture of God's people:**

**Isaiah 53:6:** (NASB) *All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way...*

**Psalm 23:1-3:** (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. <sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. <sup>3</sup>He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.*



The sheep in these verses represent those that trust God and His guidance and are peacefully led on a path of righteousness. They are in harmony with, protected and loved by their shepherd. When we watch a shepherd and sheep, we get a great sense of the care that God our Father and Jesus, His chief shepherd, gives to us. It is a beautiful picture and it is the reason Jesus uses it in this parable.

Jesus used sheep to illustrate all of humanity in two different categories:



**First, the Christian flock - the little flock whose reward is being with Jesus in heaven - the call of the true church:**

**John 10:14-15:** (NASB) *<sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd, and I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>even as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

This fits with the first two parables about the church in **Matthew 25** (The Parable of the Ten Virgins and the Parable of the Talents). When we realize how the disciples followed Jesus around, doing what he said, going where he directed, we understand just how appropriate the picture of shepherd and sheep is now for the true followers of Christ.



**Second, the earthly flock. These are the other sheep of this parable, and their reward will be the earthly kingdom:**

**John 10:16-17:** (NASB) <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear my voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it again.

This fits with the Parable of the Sheep and Goats representing the world of mankind - the *other sheep*. There are two different flocks here. Jesus is very specific.

Jesus' teachings layer one lesson upon another. This is why we need to lay the groundwork for this parable.

**Why goats? They were also a well-used Old Testament picture of rebellion:**

**Zechariah 10:3:** (NASB) My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the male goats; for the LORD of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah...

 **Similar yet different, *Sheep and Goats LKP Documentary***

- To our eyes, certain breeds of goats will look like sheep, and many sheep will look like goats. This will force us to use characteristics other than outward appearance to tell sheep and goats apart - both the spiritual and physical kind. One important additional characteristic to look for as far as differences in sheep and goats regards their behavior. Sheep tend to follow; goats go their own way.



Comparing sheep and goats: Jesus shows us that although people may look the same, inside we all need to be followers of the shepherd and not tending towards our own way.



Goats are rambunctious, always getting into things, reaching and searching for things to eat!

In the picture of the shepherd and sheep, we have the sense of being protected by complying with the shepherd's direction. Goats are more independent and do NOT follow direction well.



## Continuing with the parable:

**Matthew 25:34-40: (NASB)** <sup>34</sup>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. <sup>35</sup>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; <sup>36</sup>naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me. <sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you, or thirsty, and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup>And when did we see you a stranger, and invite you in, or naked, and clothe you? <sup>39</sup>When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you? <sup>40</sup>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.

This is a powerful lesson. Jesus is talking about our treatment of one another. This takes place in the coming age during the day of judgment.

Jesus teaches about six righteous actions we put into **four categories** of distress of others. He is saying that the world will be judged by these things.

- The distress of **HUNGER AND THIRST**
  1. Feeding the hungry
  2. Giving a drink to the thirsty
- The distress of **LONELINESS**
  3. Housing the stranger
- The distress of **LACK**
  4. Clothing the naked
- The distress of **STRUGGLE AND IMPRISONMENT**
  5. Visiting the sick
  6. Going to the imprisoned



The distress of  
**HUNGER and THIRST**

The distress of  
**LONELINESS**

The distress of  
**LACK**

The distress of  
**STRUGGLE and IMPRISONMENT**

We must realize that this is a parable, a story. Jesus is not necessarily talking about literal things that happen in the day of judgment.

### The distress of **HUNGER AND THIRST**

This represents a fundamental need for nourishment. It could be spiritual nourishment or human nourishment, one person to another. It could mean physical or emotional nourishment.

### The distress of **LONELINESS**

There is a fundamental need to belong, to be engaged, to be vital.

### The distress of **LACK**

This is a fundamental need to be equal, to be present on a level of acceptability, presentable to others. To be a part of things.

### The distress of **STRUGGLE AND IMPRISONMENT**

This is a fundamental need to feel cared for. To be helped to get out of our own mental entanglement. To have someone reach out and give support because they have experienced the same struggle. It is the lifting up of our brother.



All of these are dealing with the stresses involved in coming to a level of righteousness and being involved in each other's lives. This parable is not about physical hunger. It is about engaging in the lives of the brotherhood of humanity, for all of us to walk in a righteous way.

In the parable, the sheep are rewarded! They did not need to think about being righteous because they had learned to make righteousness their NATURAL RESPONSE. They have a heart of caring for others without even knowing it. It is their instinct to reach out and help, teach, be an example and be engaged in another's life.



My family has a wonderful, deep, very strong family relationship. When someone has an issue, and there is something broken, this family just rallies around. When someone is overwhelmed by the response - they realize that's what family does. There is no need to think: *What should we do?* We just rally because that's what family does. Jesus is teaching this family feeling for the family of humanity.



### Responding to the shepherd's voice, *Sheep and Goats LKP Documentary*

- In separating the sheep from the goats, note that the shepherds are using their voices, which the sheep and goats recognize. Near grunts and other voice signals are effective in commanding the animals to move, but sheep generally do not listen to the voice of strangers. Let's see if a stranger's voice will get sheep to respond and move.*

The documentary continues with people other than the shepherd trying to call the sheep. The sheep continue grazing, largely ignoring the various people trying to get their attention. Then the shepherd comes, speaking and using his calls for the sheep. First one, then another and another lift their heads and they begin to move forward all together towards the shepherd. It is magnificent!



Sheep emphatically respond to their shepherd's voice but do not respond to a stranger's voice.

This parable builds firmly upon Old Testament prophecy. Isaiah 26 speaks about having the *path of the righteous level*, similar to Psalms 23:3. The shepherd has established the path.

### The beginning describes those who are sheep:

Isaiah 26:7-10: (NASB) <sup>7</sup>The way of the righteous is smooth; O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level. <sup>8</sup>Indeed, while following the way of Your judgments, O LORD, we have waited for You eagerly; Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of our souls. <sup>9</sup>At night my soul longs for You, indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently; for when the earth experiences Your judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

As followers of Jesus, we cannot wait to watch humanity progress towards righteousness and love the shepherd like we do. *When the earth experiences Your judgments, they learn righteousness and it becomes instinctive.*





### Now it describes those who are goats:

*<sup>10</sup>Though the wicked is shown favor, he does not learn righteousness; he deals unjustly in the land of uprightness, and does not perceive the majesty of the LORD.*

Hmmm...sounds like he is not listening to the voice of the shepherd. He is shown favor, but he is not learning. This is what the Parable of the Sheep and Goats is about.

God's judgments are shown throughout the entire Bible.

**If we are willing to learn WHY His judgments are coming, we will be open to see the eternal benefits that come from them:**

Ezekiel 34:16-17: (NASB) *<sup>16</sup>I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment. <sup>17</sup>As for you, My flock, thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.*

*I will seek the lost...the scattered...the broken and strengthen the sick. But those who are full of themselves are not going to make it. Jesus is brilliant in showing us what needs to happen - that everyone will have to grow into righteousness after they are resurrected.*



The resurrection brings opportunity, but that opportunity can only be capitalized upon by learned and intentional obedience. The parable teaches us to focus on the distresses of our fellow man regarding their hunger and thirst, loneliness, lack, struggles and imprisonment. Simply stated ~ humanity is to honestly care for one another on all levels.

Even if you are not a Christian now, if you focus on the distresses of others, it will be easier for you when you are resurrected. Helping people will be second nature. The present is always the best time to get started.

Learning to be instinctively righteous is not just a fascinating idea; it is the core of God's plan for humanity.





**It is easy to see how the sheep learn to follow,  
but what happens to the goats? Where do they go wrong?**

The whole point of this parable is to understand that humanity has choices. So far, we have seen that after being given opportunity, there are many who embraced following righteousness - so much so that they did not even need to think about living righteously. It was instinctive. With this in mind, we need to see what happens with those who do not make that choice.

**Remember, this parable is a final judgment, a final weeding out of unrighteousness:**

Revelation 20:7-8: (NASB) <sup>7</sup>When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, <sup>8</sup>and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth...

Satan will be bound for 1,000 years, so he will not interfere with humanity's progress. It will be a "Satan-free zone," as explained in Revelation 20:2-3. This is important, as this opportunity for mankind will be without Satan's interference.



**A low copper diet, *Sheep and Goats LKP Documentary***

- *Now, one of the main reasons why sheep and goats are to be separated relates to their diet. When sheep consume too much copper, it can kill them. They basically get all they need through grazing. On the other hand, goats do not get everything they need from browsing; therefore, they require a mineral supplement that contains copper. So, when sheep and goats are raised together, separate feeding locations will limit the risk of sheep receiving too much copper in their diet.*

Sheep and goats feed on different things. A sheep's diet is easily accessible along the path. Goats eat anything, not staying on the path, but stretching and reaching, getting into trouble. **As sheep, we need to make sure we eat the diet the shepherd prepares.**

Remember how the righteous sheep were blessed and they wondered, *When did we do these things?* They had grown into righteousness.

Matthew 25:41: *Then he will also say to those on his left, Depart from me... Those "in the right" are on the right. Those who "should have left" are on the left!*

**Here is the judgment of those who did not grow into righteousness:**

Matthew 25:41-46: (NASB) <sup>41</sup>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; <sup>42</sup>for I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink; <sup>43</sup>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. <sup>44</sup>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?

There is equity in judgment for all: no national discrimination, no racial discrimination, no discrimination of man over woman. All have opportunity for everlasting life in an earth that remains forever (Ecclesiastes 1:4).



This parable shows exactly the same proclamation and exactly the same question because the judgment is exact and equal.

<sup>45</sup>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. <sup>46</sup>These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

There is a dramatic difference - *eternal punishment versus eternal life*. This might seem harsh until we look closer at this eternal fire.

**It is NOT a fire of torment. It IS a fire of destruction:**

2 Peter 3:5-7: (NASB) <sup>5</sup>...by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, <sup>6</sup>through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

The world at that time - the "world that was," the time of Noah, was destroyed, being flooded with water. The world was not literally destroyed, but society as "the world" knew it, ceased to exist.

**Verse 7 carries that thought into the next age:**

<sup>7</sup>But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

- Heavens and earth picture false religion and governments during Satan's reign. It is the order of things that are being destroyed.
- The destruction of men is death, which is the opposite of life. There is no torment here; there is destruction.

Peter is saying the heavens and earth met their "end" by water, and in the same way will meet their "end" by fire.

**What happens to the ungodly is destruction:**

Psalm 37:20: (NASB) But the wicked will perish; and the enemies of the LORD will be like the glory of the pastures, they vanish—like smoke they vanish away.

The wicked will perish ...vanish - like smoke they vanish away - this is a clear picture of going into absolute nothingness, oblivion and being over. It is done. That is what destruction is.



 **Browser or grazer, Sheep and Goats LKP Documentary**

- We just mentioned the two ways they eat as well. Goats are natural browsers. Browsing in this sense means to feed on leaves, twigs or other high-growing vegetation. Therefore, goats prefer to eat leaves, twigs, vines and shrubs. Since they are very agile, often they will stand on their hind legs to reach certain vegetation. In other words, goats like to eat the tops of plants. Sheep, however, are grazers. Grazing means to feed on growing grass. Therefore, sheep prefer to eat short, tender grasses and clover. They like to graze close to the soil surface. Similarly, one of the easiest ways to tell the



*difference between a sheep and a goat is to look at their tails. Usually, a goat's tail goes up unless it is frightened, sick or distressed. A sheep's tail will normally hang down.*

Goats feed on high-growing vegetation while sheep graze close to the surface of the earth. Think of goats like pride: "Look at me! Look what I can do!" They are seemingly not content with what or where the shepherd brought them. They are going to try to stretch the limits of what is right. This is not saying that goats are inherently bad and sheep are inherently good as actual animals.

It uses the general characteristics of goats being apt to push against being fenced and controlled, as compared to the sheep's docility and contentment to follow their shepherd to demonstrate what characteristics we should either develop or avoid as followers of righteousness. True Christians are developed now in this age. This parable is focusing on those - *the other sheep* - who will follow righteousness in the next age of God's kingdom.

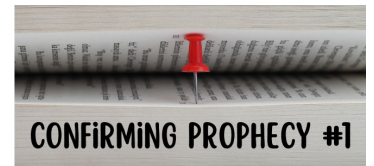
God's plan puts Jesus in place to bring beneficial judgment to the world.



**Because Jesus paid the ransom price, all will be raised into God's kingdom and have equal opportunity:**



**Isaiah 28:16-17:** (NASB) <sup>16</sup>Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed. <sup>17</sup>I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the level; then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters will overflow the secret place.



I was once a cabinet maker and installer. One of the things that had to be done for European-style cabinets, where the door covered the entire cabinet, was to make them plumb and level. If not, it was awful. The doors would be crooked - they would not hang in a straight line. They had to be plumb. It had to be right to look right and function correctly. I developed an eye after a time. Even today, I walk into a kitchen and look at the line of cabinets to see if they are level. I can look at an 8-foot stretch of cabinets and tell if it is off by a quarter to a half inch. That is why this verse means so much to me -

**God will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the level. It is perfect for us!**

**Then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies** - scripturally, water often symbolizes truth. Here hard truths are represented by the hail.

**And the waters will overflow the secret place** - truth gives all humanity an opportunity for everlasting life. All have this opportunity and it is plumb, level and perfect for everyone who chooses to pursue it.

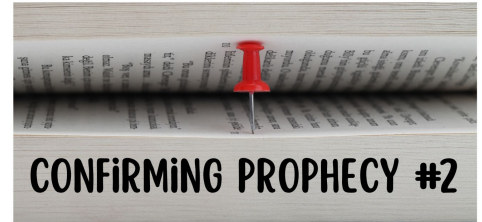
The Parable of the Sheep and Goats is a lesson that takes place in the future. The story illustrates the final accounting for every human being resurrected on earth.





## The learning process for both sheep and goat will offer clear accountability for each individual's sins:

**Ezekiel 18:20-22:** (NASB) <sup>20</sup>*The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.*



Curses in family bloodlines and the bigger context of Old Testament curses

It is clear - everyone will be responsible for their own mess. You are not responsible for mine; I am not responsible for yours. This shows a starting point of equity.

### What about those who have done a lot of bad things in this life?

<sup>21</sup>*But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all my statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die.* <sup>22</sup>*All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live.*

This shows forgiveness!

**1 Timothy 2:4:** (KJV) (God) *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

The truly repentant person who turns away from evil will be forgiven and be given life in the kingdom - *he will live.*

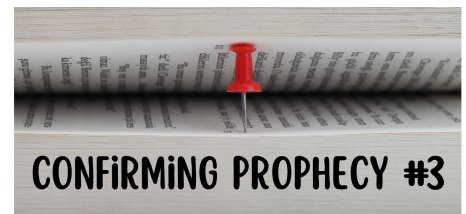
### Back to Ezekiel:

**Ezekiel 18:23:** (NASB) *Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD, rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?*

Here we again see righteousness of God. He wants His human creation to live. He is judging us so that we can live. What more can anybody ask for than a 100 percent fair and equal opportunity to be redeemed and to succeed?

### The way of righteousness for both sheep and goats will be one of abundant opportunity. We have seen the accountability; here is the context:

**Isaiah 35:8-10:** (NASB) <sup>8</sup>*A highway will be there, a roadway, and it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, but it will be for him who walks that way, and fools will not wander on it.* <sup>9</sup>*No lion will be there, nor will any vicious beast go up on it; These will not be found there. But the redeemed will walk there,* <sup>10</sup>*and the ransomed of the LORD will return and come with joyful shouting to Zion, with everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*



This broad, multi-lane highway will be for both “sheep” and “goats.” They will be redeemed and have the opportunity to walk on this highway.



Both the sheep and the goats in this parable have the same redemption, the same opportunity and the same environment through which to grow into an instinctively righteous individual. Being entirely equal before God, the scales of justice will be tipped by what each individual chooses to be driven by.


It comes down to personal choice.

When we put all of the details in order, it becomes much easier to see and appreciate how God's justice unfolds.

**What is the bottom line for all who will be resurrected on earth?  
How do you make sure you are a sheep?**

Getting to the bottom line on any matter that has eternal implications is always a good idea. The key factor here is Jesus. Think about his ministry. He preached to Israel, the nation that was under God's Law for their *earthly* prosperity. If we take his statements regarding what was most important for them, we will see the basis for eternal earthly life.

The Jewish Law was about Israel's earthly prosperity in exchange for the obedience of the nation. We will look at how Jesus' references to Israel show a direct comparison with what we expect during the "sheep and goat" period of the coming kingdom.

 **Investigative or head down, *Sheep and Goats LKP Documentary***

- *Mark Silver of NPR conducted a 2014 interview with Cathy Dwyer, a professor at Scotland's Rural College. She does research on animal behavior and welfare. In that interview she said, "Because they browse, goats spend a lot of time investigating things. They are forever nibbling on and eating things, so they have more exploratory, investigative behavior because of their feeding style. They appear to be more interactive with the environment, and they are very engaging animals. Because of that, I can completely understand why people think they're more intelligent or have more personality than sheep. When you are a grazing animal like sheep, you spend a lot of time with your head down eating grass. That's much less interesting to people."*

Keeping your head down reminds us of humility. We want to take the words of Jesus as our shepherd to heart. The purpose of this parable is to contrast those in full compliance with God's will through Jesus with those who still follow their own will.



Being a follower of Jesus is not a miserable life! There are many prophecies that show us the grandness, beauty and opportunities of living a righteous life. It starts with internal growth.

### Jesus taught a core value for eternal earthly life:

Mark 12:28-31: (NASB) <sup>28</sup>One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the foremost of all? <sup>29</sup>Jesus answered, The foremost is, Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; <sup>30</sup>and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. (Jesus is quoting from Deuteronomy 6:4-5) <sup>31</sup>The second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Jesus is quoting from Leviticus 19:18) There is no other commandment greater than these.



Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Mark 12:30

If we take the four ways to love God - heart, soul, mind and strength - and combine them with the “distress principles” from the Parable of the Sheep and Goats, and finally, apply them to loving our neighbor, here is what that looks like:

 <i>Parable</i>	 <b>ways to love God</b>	 <b>"Love thy neighbor"</b>
The distress of <b>HUNGER and THIRST</b>	<i>with all your heart</i>	<b>We need to have our heart opened to the immediate filling of the physical needs of our neighbor.</b>

We offer nourishment to our neighbor.

We took a stranger in, providing help, giving guidance and direction.

 <i>Parable</i>	 <b>ways to love God</b>	 <b>"Love Thy neighbor"</b>
The distress of <b>LONELINESS</b>	<i>with all your mind</i>	<b>We need to have our mind opened to immediate human need with compassion for those in unfamiliar and difficult circumstances.</b>

Any kind of lack can be debilitating. Our lives now and in the future day of judgment need to be open to whatever the lack is in our fellow man to lift them up and walk with them.

 <i>Parable</i>	 <b>ways to love God</b>	 <b>"Love Thy neighbor"</b>
The distress of <b>LACK</b>	<i>with all your soul</i>	<b>Our soul must be open to the tragedies that expose others to the harsh elements.</b>

Jesus is telling us that these are the ways to love God and love your neighbor as yourself. This is how we apply ourselves to living righteously and to make righteousness instinctive.

 <i>Parable</i>	 <b>ways to love God</b>	 <b>"Love Thy neighbor"</b>
The distress of <b>STRUGGLE and IMPRISONMENT</b>	<i>with all your strength</i>	<b>Our strength must be open to the long-term healing and freedom needs of those who struggle.</b>

The next age will be about bringing humanity together. Everyone will need to be aware of their friends, neighbors and strangers. Will I extend myself to become their brother or sister?





## Returning to feral state or stay domesticated, *Sheep and Goats LKP* Documentary

- Unlike sheep, goats have a tendency of being able to go back to their feral or wild state when given the chance, and it has been discovered that the only domestic species of animal that will return to a wild state as rapidly as a goat is the domestic cat. So, that trait of a spiritual goat is to turn their foot back to evil; in other words, to turn right or left and leave the path that Yahweh had set them on. This is something that spiritual sheep will never do.

This character trait of rapidly returning to a feral state when given the chance speaks volumes about why the illustration of sheep and goats is a good one, learning from the inside out and changing of our hearts. Without the heart changing, we revert to a “feral” state rather rapidly.



*Has our heart changed with all the opportunities we have been given?*

*Are we becoming instinctively righteous?*

God will do for His earthly creation exactly what He wants them to do for each other. We know this by looking at [Ezekiel 34](#) to see God's response to each of our four categories of distress.



The distress of  
LACK

**God's very existence is opened to the tragedies that expose His human creation:**

**Ezekiel 34:23-25:** (NASB) <sup>23</sup>Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David (representing Jesus), and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. <sup>24</sup>And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David (Jesus) will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken. <sup>25</sup>I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

Again, this describes a “Satan-free zone.” There will be no fear, no intimidation and no harm.



God replaces the distress of lack with absolute security!



The distress of  
HUNGER and THIRST

**God's heart is open to the immediate physical needs of His human children:**

**Ezekiel 34:26-27:** (NASB) <sup>26</sup>I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing. <sup>27</sup>Also the tree of the field will yield its fruit and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure on their land....

There will be no anxiety for our next meal. God provides.

Showers of blessing...the tree of the field will yield its fruit - the world is going to work the way God intended. The earth will be productive under mankind's supervised management. Hunger and thirst will be replaced with abundance.



The distress of  
STRUGGLE and  
IMPRISONMENT

## God's strength will break any captivity that has held humanity back:

**Ezekiel 34:27-28:** (NASB) <sup>27</sup>...Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. <sup>28</sup>They will no longer be a prey to the nations, and the beasts of the earth will not devour them; but they will live securely, and no one will make them afraid.

The injustice humanity had to live through under Satan's dying world is history. It is over. God gives true freedom to everyone willing to learn and apply righteousness from the inside out.

God will replace anything that imprisons mankind with absolute freedom and protection.

What does "true freedom" look like?

There is no such thing as unfettered freedom. Freedom within the guardrails of God's righteousness is a freedom that can last forever.



The distress of  
LONELINESS

## God's mind created a plan that gave humanity Jesus as their shepherd. The human race will be as a flock of sheep, always together and always protected:

**Ezekiel 34:29-31:** (NASB) <sup>29</sup>I will establish for them a renowned planting place, and they will not again be victims of famine in the land, and they will not endure the insults of the nations anymore. <sup>30</sup>Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people, declares the Lord GOD. <sup>31</sup>As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God, declares the Lord GOD.

We have a concise picture of how this comes together.



- God's existence will provide for any lack with security.
- God's heart is open to mankind's physical needs and the earth will bring forth its abundance.
- God's strength breaks any captivity that has held mankind back.
- God's mind had a plan in place from the beginning. He will replace the loneliness and insecurity that is inherent in sin with belonging to His righteous family.



With eternal life on the line, we simply need to decide to be all that God will give us opportunity and capacity to be. Once the judgment of this parable is over, humanity will be in full harmony with their Creator for eternity.



Matthew 6:10: (KJV) *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

We have this sense of clarity by the way God treats us. Jesus tells us we have to learn to treat one another with that same godly respect.

Proverbs 4:23-27: (NASB) <sup>23</sup>*Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.* <sup>24</sup>*Put away from you a deceitful mouth and put devious speech far from you.* <sup>25</sup>*Let your eyes look directly ahead and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.* <sup>26</sup>*Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established.* <sup>27</sup>*Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil.*



Rick: Verses 23 and 26 were the verses I put in my yearbook when I was in high school. I had just dedicated my life to God through Christ and wanted to do something to be a witness. My dad told me to use those verses: *Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life. Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established.* Those were the words of my dad to me as a very young Christian, and those words apply to the world of mankind later on in the next age.

Resurrected mankind will come to the point where righteousness will need to be instinctive, from the inside out. They will not give a second thought to lifting others up and helping others through their issues of lack, hunger and thirst, struggle and loneliness. They will do it because they love God, Jesus and their fellow humans.

That is the lesson of the Parable of the Sheep and Goats.

*So, will I survive God's final judgment?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated.



Join us next week for our podcast on July 18, 2022  
Ep. 1238: Is Parental Discipline of Our Children  
a Thing of the Past?



## Bonus Material and Study Questions

### The Parable of the Sheep and Goats:

**Matthew 25:31-46:** (NASB) <sup>31</sup>But when the son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup>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; <sup>33</sup>and he will put the sheep on his right, and the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup>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. <sup>35</sup>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; <sup>36</sup>naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me. <sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you, or thirsty, and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup>And when did we see you a stranger, and invite you in, or naked, and clothe you? <sup>39</sup>When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you? <sup>40</sup>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. <sup>41</sup>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; <sup>42</sup>for I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink; <sup>43</sup>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. <sup>44</sup>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? <sup>45</sup>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. <sup>46</sup>These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

### A little more on the judgment to come:

### The return of Christ brings the long-awaited resurrection and judgment - these are the results of Jesus paying the ransom price, once and for all:

**Hebrews 9:24-28:** (NASB) <sup>24</sup>For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; <sup>25</sup>nor was it that he would offer himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. <sup>26</sup>Otherwise, he would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages he has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. <sup>27</sup>And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, <sup>28</sup>so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await him.

### The day of judgment is the most righteous day that the world will have ever seen up to that point:

**Acts 17:29-31:** (NASB) <sup>29</sup>Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the divine nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. <sup>30</sup>Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, <sup>31</sup>because he has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom he has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising him from the dead.

### The standard for judgment will be perfect justice:

**Romans 2:3-10:** (NASB) <sup>3</sup>But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? <sup>4</sup>Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

### There is a vast tolerance that God displays as His plan unfolds:

<sup>5</sup>But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, <sup>6</sup>who will render to each person according to his deeds.





### **This tolerance does NOT overlook accountability; it prepares us for it:**

*<sup>7</sup>to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; <sup>8</sup>but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. <sup>9</sup>There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, <sup>10</sup>but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

The clear “reap what you have sown” process will be in full swing for all nations.

### **Judgment will be based fully upon one's own actions:**

Jeremiah 31:27-30: (NASB) *<sup>27</sup>Behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. <sup>28</sup>As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the LORD. <sup>29</sup>In those days they will not say again, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. <sup>30</sup>But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.*

The good news is, there will be no place to hide!

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CQ Rewind Show Notes and  
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Text

**CQREWIND**

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# Study QUESTIONS

## Ep. 1237: Will I Survive God's Final Judgment?

See:  **CQ Rewind**  
SHOW NOTES

<https://christianquestions.com/parables/1237-sheep-and-goats/>

1. What is the purpose of the Day of Judgment? Will it be possible to fail during this time? What will be necessary to succeed and live eternally?
2. What are the first two parables in Matthew 25? In the first parable, what does the oil represent? What is the message of this parable? In the second parable, who are the slaves? What is the message of this parable? What is the complete warning? For whom is it meant? (See Matthew 25:1-13, 14-30)
3. What is the third parable? Who is it meant to represent? In what time period is it set? Who do the "holy angels" that come with Jesus represent? Whether we live now or in the future, what is required of every person who has ever lived? (See Matthew 25:31-46, Luke 9:26, 1 Peter:14-16, Jude 1:14-15)
4. Why were sheep used in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats? What behavior is typical of sheep? Which two distinct groups does Jesus say the sheep represent? Why are goats used as a picture of rebellion? What behavior distinguishes goats from sheep? (See Isaiah 53:6, Psalm 23:1-3, John 10:14-17, Zechariah 10:3 )
5. In the Parable of the Sheep and Goats, what is the main behavior Jesus is warning about? What are the "four categories of distress" of others? What fundamental need does each represent? Why do the sheep seem surprised when they are praised in the parable? In Isaiah 26:7-10, how do the righteous and wicked differ in behavior? (See Matthew 25:34-40)
6. Does God discard those that have become lost and scattered? What about those who are smug in their own strength? (See Ezekiel 34:16-17)
7. When does the Parable of the Sheep and Goats apply? Why is the binding of Satan during this timeframe important? What did the goats NOT do? What is the result? (See Revelation 20:2-8, Matthew 25:41-46, Psalm 37:20)
8. Will wicked people be resurrected? Will they even have a chance at righteousness? Does a righteous person have a better chance of succeeding? What will be required of all at this time? Describe God's (and Jesus') attitude in judgment. (See Ezekiel 18:20-22, Isaiah 28:16-17, 1 Timothy 2:4)
9. How does the concept in Deuteronomy 6:4-5 of loving God fit with the four categories of distress?
10. What is God's example for us in His response to the four categories of distress? (See Ezekiel 34:23-31)
11. How do we "watch over our heart with all diligence"? How do you and can you make sure you are making righteous decisions and living a life of righteousness? (See Proverbs 4:23-27)