
Subject: THE FINAL SEPARATION

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THE FINAL SEPARATION

"Before Him shall be gathered ALL nations."

THE SEPARATION OF SHEEP AND GOATS

Matthew 25:31-46

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: (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: (33) And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. (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: (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: (36) Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. (37) Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? (38) When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? (39) Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? (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. (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: (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 ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. (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? (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. (46) And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

UPON THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY

There are to be but two classes upon the earth, the obedient children of God and the disobedient.

Upon one occasion Christ thus set before his hearers the Judgment work:

"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: 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: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."

Christ would have all understand the events of his second appearing.

The judgment scene will take place in the presence of all the worlds; for in this judgment the government of God will be vindicated, and his law will stand forth as "holy, and just, and good."

Then every case will be decided, and sentence will be passed upon all.

Sin will not then appear attractive, but will be seen in all its hideous magnitude.

All will see the relation in which they stand to God and to one another.

At his first advent, Christ came to the world as its Redeemer. He came to plant truth in the hearts of all who would give place to it, who would receive it and be converted. He came to take away the sin of the world, and to fill every heart with pure, healthful joy. He longed to breathe into prostrate humanity the breath of life. And in his attitude toward men was a foreshadowing of his work in the Judgment. From the men whom the world had favored, those who found their own enjoyment in fulsome flattery, he turned with gladness to a peculiar people, and showed which class was blessed. He assigned appropriate rewards to those who were faithful and true. Having brought into the world the accumulated treasure of heaven, he bestowed it upon them. He pronounced his blessings upon true merit, upon all who were seeking for that righteousness which it was his prerogative to give. To those who should suffer for his name's sake, he declared: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." He gave evidence that all the treasures of heaven were at his command, and that in dispensing them he knew no restriction.

Let us mark the partition made between the sheep and the goats, and listen to his words to each:

(Personal Note): The sheep who follow the Lamb wherever He goes stand before the Lord to His right, whereas the goat who murmur, butt, and do not the Lord's will are made to stand before the Lord to His left. The righteous (sheep) will stand at the right side of the Lord in judgment while the wicked (goats) will stand to His left.

"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: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Thus Christ identifies his interest with that of suffering humanity.

Every attention given to his children he considers done to himself personally.

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 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."

"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: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 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. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 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. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

When God's people are clothed with white robes, and crowned as true subjects of his kingdom, those who have been disloyal will see the inconsistency of their uniting with the loyal to honor and magnify the law of God, which they have educated themselves to disregard. They have regarded the law of God as null and void, and should they be trusted to come through the gates into the city? They then find that they have no passport, nothing in them that can change their life sentiments. They have made their choice of false sentiments in the place of truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and they can not change them. Every man who, by his actions, has declared, I will not have this Man to reign over me, will no longer have the privilege of being under that rule.

Those who have tried to lay their plans in councils, and by their superior numbers gain power to oppress the saints of God, to compel them to dishonor and disobey their Redeemer, will understand the work they have done upon the earth, as enemies of God, betrayers of sacred trusts. They will then know how many souls they have deceived and led away from allegiance to God. They will see that they have made themselves responsible for their own destruction and the destruction of God's property, his own heritage, purchased at an infinite cost. The blood of these souls will be upon their garments.

They will understand in that day that they were dealing with Christ in the person of his saints.

Whatever influence opposes the truth that God has made it the duty of his servants to proclaim in his name, dishonors him. This is a violence offered to the laws of his kingdom, and he will not suffer it to go unpunished.

"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

The Judge, the Prince of sufferers for the truth's sake, is on the throne,--he who suffered himself to be arraigned before Herod and Pilate, who was rejected by his own nation, and condemned by the man who had declared, "I find no fault in him,"--he who was lacerated with stripes, spit upon, degraded, and whose holy brow was crowned with thorns. He does not now stand before the bar of Pilate or Herod. He himself is judge, and these men stand before him whom they scourged, and delivered up to the will of his enemies. Pilate and Herod, who suffered the Lord to be scourged; priests and rulers, who clamored for the death of the Messiah; those who mocked him,--all now understand what it means to meet the wrath of the Lamb.

"The hour is coming," Christ said, "in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and

shall come forth." That voice is to resound through all the habitations of the dead; and every saint who sleeps in Jesus will awake and leave his prison-house. Then the virtue of character we have received from Christ's righteousness will ally us to true greatness of the highest order.

Every action of ours in befriending God's people will be rewarded as done unto himself.

In the day of final reckoning, Christ does not present before men the great work he has done for them in giving his life for their redemption. He presents before them the faithful work they have done for him. What surpassing love is this! He even mentions the work of the heathen, who have no intelligent knowledge of the law of the Lord, but who have done the very things the law required, because they have heeded the voice speaking to them in the things of nature. When the Holy Spirit implants Christ's Spirit in the heart of the savage, and he befriends God's servants, the quickening of the heart's sympathy is contrary to his nature, contrary to his education. The grace of God, working upon the darkened mind, has softened the savage nature untaught by the wisdom of men. And these uneducated heathen, in all their cruelty, are regarded in a more favorable light than are those who have had great light and evidence, but who have rejected the mercy and reproof of God.

Christ implants his grace in the heart of the savage, and ministers to the necessity of the missionary, even before he has heard or comprehended the words of truth and life. Behold that crowd collected about God's servant to harm him! But the Lord is working upon the heart and mind of perhaps one man to plead in behalf of his servant; and when the war council has determined the destruction of the Christian's life, the intercession of that savage turns the decision, and his life is spared. O, the love that goes forth to the savage for this one act! To such Christ says, in the Judgment: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

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