

THE KINGDOM

Judgment of the Living Nations

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The section of scripture from Matthew 24:01 to 25:46 is a record in which our Lord answers a three-fold question posed to him by four of His apostles, Peter, Andrew, James, and John. These disciples had shown to our Lord the buildings of the temple (24.1) whereupon, our LORD said: "...See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." (24.2). The very next verse records the question which the disciples asked Jesus privately. "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Let's examine the question.

- (1) *Tell us, when shall these things be?* This part of the disciples' question refers to Jesus' statement about the destruction of the temple and the buildings. "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." (Mt. 24.2). When the Romans besieged Jerusalem in 70 A. D., history tells us that Jesus' words concerning the temple were fulfilled. The Romans are said to have torn down the buildings, then sowed the city with salt. Therefore, the first part of the question was answered when the Romans besieged and destroyed Jerusalem.

- (2) *"and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"* This is a two-fold question. Some say it is one. Let's consider it. What sign would there be of Jesus' coming? And of the end of the world (age – Greek: aion). Two things are being considered; Jesus' coming (his return) and the end of the age.

The answer to his coming is found in Matthew 24:27-31. Read it with me:

- a. **Matthew 24:27-31** *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*
- b. We see that his coming is “after the tribulation of those days, when the sun is darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, etc.” At his coming, there shall be the great sound of a trumpet, and the angels shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
- c. Jesus shall return to earth with his saints, according to Zechariah 14.1-4. At his return, his feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives and the mountain shall cleave in the midst toward the east and toward the west so that the mountain parts move toward the north and toward the south making a great valley. In this chapter, much is said about Jesus’ return. A notable verse says this: “And the LORD shall be

king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one." (Zech. 14:9). His second coming and the events on earth which follow soon afterward shall bring an end to this present age. The very last part of the answer concerning the end of the age is found in Matthew 25:31-46. This is a judgment of the living nations. No resurrection is mentioned, but we know that his saints shall have been caught up at the last trump. He returns to earth with them to sit on the throne of his glory – the throne of His father David. When he sits on this throne of his glory, then shall he gather all nations before him. These are living nations. The rest of the dead shall not be raised until after the 1000-years-reign of Christ as recorded in Revelation 20:11-15. Let us notice this judgment of the living nations.

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.

- (1) Notice that the nations on his right hand are compared to sheep and are said to have treated well "these, my brethren." The LORD bids these on his right hand to "inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world."
- (2) The living nations gathered before him on his left hand did not treat "these, my brethren" well. The LORD said to these, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:"
- (3) Who are "these, my brethren?" Are they not the saints – the members of the Lord's church which was gathered at his coming – who shall be forever at his side? All the elect shall believe and come to him – but all the elect are not in the Lord's church which is his bride. Will anyone say that these "sheep nations" are not of God's elect? The nations of the LORD's right hand shall go into the millennial reign in their natural bodies. During this time, the head nation on earth shall be Israel – and the LORD, being king over all the earth shall reign from Jerusalem. DID YOU NOTICE THAT THERE SHALL NOT BE A SINGLE UNSAVED PERSON ON EARTH AFTER THIS JUDGMENT OF THE LIVING NATIONS? Think of it, beloved! Every wicked ruler on earth shall have been put down at Christ's coming. Satan shall have

been sealed, chained and assigned to the bottomless pit for a thousand years. Christ, himself, shall reign over this earth as King of kings and Lord of lords!