

Sunday March 29th 2015
From Here To Eternity
Part Twenty One

1). *Re 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

a). We had last week identified the pattern to which all judgment of the eternally saved prior to the Millennial Kingdom conforms.

b). We had seen that with Christians the dead in Christ who are resurrected are gathered together with those who are physically alive into the Lord's presence in the heavens where a separation takes place between the faithful and the unfaithful - *1Co 3:13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

c). This is the same separation that we have seen pictured through the wise and foolish virgins - *Mt 25:10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*

Also through the wedding guest without a garment who is put into the outer darkness, as well as many other examples that we have seen over the years.

d). And the purpose for this separation has to do with God's plans for redeemed Man which are regal - the separation then draws a line of demarcation between those of the eternally saved who will participate in God's plans and purposes for the 7th Day and those of the eternally saved, who as a consequence of their own actions, will be denied this privilege.

e). And there will be a separation of the exact same kind for the exact same purpose with regards to resurrected OT saints and Jews coming alive out of the Tribulation. Although some OT saints will be awarded positions in

the heavens - Heb 11:10 *for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

Despite this however, the major focus of the account we see in Ezekiel Chapter 20 is a position with Christ on the earth.

f). And just as Adam was placed in a specific location for the purpose of rulership, as was Abraham – the one man, like Adam, whom God chose to work through, so God’s firstborn son, Israel will be placed in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in fulfillment of God’s purpose from the beginning.

g). And then last week, seen in our opening verses this morning, we saw a separation taking place amongst the eternally saved Gentiles who had been killed during the Tribulation.

h). This, as with Christians, is a heavenly scene with positions of rulership in the heavens being awarded to those who are faithful -
Re 20:4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them.*

i). And for those eternally saved Gentiles who are killed who are not faithful we are told that the second death will have power over them just as will be the experience of unfaithful Christians who will be hurt by the second death, with neither group experiencing ‘life’ with respect to regality until the 1000 years are finished.

j). And with this group of eternally saved and killed Gentiles faithfulness or the lack of it is expressed in a very particular way - *who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands.*

As those who had not done the things itemized here are then seen ruling and reigning with Christ for the 1000 years, we can assume that those who make up ‘the rest of the dead’ had done these things and are therefore found to be unfaithful.

2). Then as we continue to follow this pattern of gathering followed by separation with a view to rulership we must expect to see exactly the same process with respect to the eternally saved Gentiles who come physically alive through the Tribulation.

a). This group we find dealt with in - Mt 25:31 ¶ *"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.*

Here in v31 the timeframe is set for us – we see ‘the Son of Man’ [a Messianic title] coming in His glory with ‘all the holy angels’ and He is then seen to ‘sit on the throne of His glory.’ This clearly then takes us beyond the end of the Tribulation and by comparing scripture with scripture takes us beyond the battle we know as Armageddon.

b). In the next verse we see - 32 *"All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.*

Here then is the gathering followed by the separation that we would expect from our pattern.

c). Now someone might be tempted to think that the phrase ‘all the nations’ would encompass every single Gentile alive on the earth, both the saved and the unsaved, following Armageddon, but this could not possibly be correct for very obvious reasons.

d). Firstly, that seen in these verses is set in the same overall context as the parable of the 10 virgins and the parable of the talents – both being parables that deal with the separation of the eternally saved on the basis of faithfulness – this being the case for these 2 parables which immediately precede these verses things would not be different when we get to the ‘sheep and goat judgment’ which follows.

e). Secondly, it is impossible for the eternally saved and the unsaved to appear together in judgment as the judgment for each has to do with a totally different time span. The eternally saved must be judged with respect to the Millennium as the Millennium is the reason for their eternal salvation. The unsaved find their judgment in relation to the endless ages. Having rejected God’s provision of redemption they do not even enter the picture with regards to the regal process of the Millennial Kingdom and having rejected God’s purpose for Man’s creation, through their rejection of God’s redemption, they can have no part in the regal process of eternity and it is immediately at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, prior to the beginning of eternity, where we will find their judgment at a later date.

f). And lastly, the purpose for the ‘sheep and goats’ judgment is one of inheritance as we see from our next verse - 34 *"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

And as we know, inheritance is only ever a family issue, and to be part of God’s family they must be eternally saved.

g). As we continue to follow our pattern we would expect to see separation on the basis of faithfulness and this is exactly what we see, with those on the Lord's right hand designated as 'sheep' and called the 'blessed of My Father' and therefore faithful, and those on His left hand designated as 'goats' and therefore unfaithful. And just as we have seen with the heavenly group of eternally saved Gentiles, faithfulness is also described here in a specific way -35 *'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 'I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'* 37 *"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 'When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 'Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

h). And here we see that the 'sheep', the faithful have demonstrated their faithfulness through their treatment of 'the least of these My brethren' – the Jewish people – simply then, how this group has treated the Jews from the moment of their eternal salvation onwards through the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation is the standard by which their faithfulness is judged.

i). This is really quite a simple thing to understand as we think about our own experience over these past months – if there is one thing that the Lord has reinforced time and time again through our studies it is the absolute necessity of Israel to the fulfillment of His purpose. We might remember that Paul says – Ro 3:1 ¶ *What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.*

And we can add to the fact that God has given His word through the Jews, our reliance on our Jewish Messiah, the fact that Israel remains God's firstborn son, what we have learned about God's plans for them - Jer 29:11 *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

And so we could go on and on – But, the point is, because of that which the Lord has shown us concerning His chosen people we can never have anything but the deepest respect and honor and love for them along with an overwhelming gratitude. And I would like to think that if we encountered a Jew being ill-treated we would go to his aid and that we will continue to

denounce the corrupt ideology that is called 'replacement theology' for the anti-Semitic, satanic lie that it is.

j). That said there is no reason to think that the gospel of the Kingdom preached to the eternally saved Gentiles by the 144000 who are themselves Jews, would not include the significance of the Jewish people to that Kingdom, in fact it is impossible to preach the gospel of the Kingdom without it, and it is based on their understanding of the significance of the Jews in God's plans and purposes that we would see the actions of eternally saved Gentiles as described Matthew 25:35-40 – actions we must assume, given Antichrist's attempted genocide, that will put these eternally saved Gentiles in a very dangerous place; for some resulting in martyrdom.

k). Needless to say, because of the separation we see between the sheep and the goats we would understand that the group of eternally saved Gentiles referred to as 'goats', although having been given the same understanding of the significance of the Jewish people as the 'sheep', responded in a totally opposite fashion, thereby proving themselves unfaithful - Mt 25:41 *"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 'for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 'I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' 44 "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 "And these will go away into everlasting [age lasting] punishment, but the righteous into eternal [age lasting] life."*

l). And here we see the 'goats' unfaithfulness demonstrated through their failure to respond to the Jewish people, just as we would expect to see. And the consequence for their unfaithfulness is expressed in a way we have seen many times before – they are to depart from the presence of the Lord 'into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'.

m). This phrase is then qualified in v46 where it is seen to be age lasting 'punishment' and that experienced by the unfaithful is set in sharp contrast to the experience of the faithful who will enter into age lasting life.

n). With respect to the eternally saved Gentiles in the heavens we have seen the experience of the unfaithful described as 'death' and so we can understand 'death', 'everlasting fire/punishment', 'the furnace of fire', outer darkness', the 'second death' and 'Gehenna' as synonymous terms and all

convey a contrary experience to 'life'. All have the Millennial Kingdom exclusively in view, eternal issues are not present here at all, and all have to do with either embracing or rejecting the reason for eternal salvation, embracing or rejecting that which the blood of Christ shed on behalf of the eternally saved has made possible. This is of course no small thing.

3). These final 2 judgments of the eternally saved, Gentiles saved during the Tribulation, are clearly seen to take place following the battle of Armageddon and must take place prior to the Millennial Kingdom as all judgment for the eternally saved is with a view to participation or non-participation in that Kingdom.

a). Those eternally saved Gentiles seen in heaven who have been found faithful will have a position of rulership in that realm of the Kingdom. They cannot be a part of the Bride, who by this time will have become Christ's Wife, as these are exclusively positions for the eternally saved from this dispensation. Exactly what the role of the eternally saved, faithful Gentiles, will be the scriptures don't say and so we can leave it there.

b). For those eternally saved Gentiles seen on the earth, those described as 'sheep', they will have a role within the earthly realm of the Kingdom. We are simply told with regards to them that they will 'inherit', they will have a share in the earthly realm of the Kingdom and again exactly what that looks like the scriptures don't say. What we can say for certain is what we know from the scriptures in Hebrews Chapter 2, that those in the heavens and those on the earth will receive a just recompense of reward entirely in keeping with their faithfulness - More than that we really don't need to know.

c). These final 2 judgments having been completed the additional 75 days beyond the end of the Tribulation, detailed for us in Daniel Chapter 12, also come to an end and so finally, after 6000 years and 75 days the long awaited Millennial Kingdom of Christ begins with God's 3 firstborn sons, the Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son, His adopted son, the Church and His adopted son Israel now exercising the rights of the firstborn within the newly established Theocracy.

d). It will be at this point then that Christ with His Wife and other rulers as we have seen, will have replaced the angels in the heavenly realm and will, from Christ's throne in the New Jerusalem above the earth, begin to rule the nations with a rod of iron, just as the scriptures have promised - Re 3:21 *"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."*

Re 2:26 *"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations-- 27 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' --as I also have received from My Father;*

e). On the earth a fully redeemed and restored Israel will for the first time be occupying the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the head of the nations. Rulership will go forth from the earthly Jerusalem as Christ sits on the throne of His father David and David, himself having been resurrected, will also be Israel's king - Jer 30:9 *But they shall serve the LORD their God, And David their king, Whom I will raise up for them.*

f). The Millennial Temple will now be in operation with Christ as both Priest and King, according to the order of Melchizedek, and that pictured in Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek following the battle of the kings will have been fulfilled - Ge 14:18 *Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;*

g). The promise given to Abraham recorded in Genesis Chapter 22 will also have been fulfilled - Ge 22:15 ¶ *Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 16 and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son - 17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

For the first time in the whole of history, Israel, the physical descendants of Abraham, will take the blessings of God to the ends of the earth and in fulfillment of God's purpose for the nation, foreshadowed by the 144000, Israel as a nation will take God's word to the Gentile nations pictured for us in Ge 45:26 *And they told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt."*

Bringing to fulfillment the type seen in Jonah - Jon 3:1 ¶ *Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD.*

Jer 16:19 O LORD, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things."

Zec 8:21 The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Let us continue to go and pray before the LORD, And seek the LORD of hosts. I myself will go also." 22 Yes, many peoples and strong nations Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, And to pray before the LORD.' 23 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."'"

h). Israel will be prosperous and the wealth of the Gentiles shall come to her - *Isa 60:3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. 4 "Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you. 6 The multitude of camels shall cover your land, The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba shall come; They shall bring gold and incense, And they shall proclaim the praises of the LORD. 7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you, The rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; They shall ascend with acceptance on My altar, And I will glorify the house of My glory.*

i). And these are the circumstances that will continue throughout the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles, throughout the Millennial Kingdom.

j). In the midst of our euphoria though let's also keep in mind that there will be unsaved Gentiles entering into the Kingdom Age from the Tribulation and that procreation will continue upon the earth. And just as matters exist now with regards to eternal salvation so they will exist then – Faith must be placed in the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary so that the Holy Spirit can breathe the breath of life into the one who to that point is spiritually dead. And again, just as today, this will be an individual choice.

k). Incredible though it seems we must assume that over the course of the 1000 years there will be very many who will reject the offer of eternal salvation and find themselves in rebellion against God and against His Christ. Remember sin will still be in existence on the earth during this time. The events at the end of the Millennium when Satan is loosed from the bottomless pit are testimony to this.

l). The epithet, 'rule the nations with a rod of iron' is not just prosaic, but will be a consummate reality given the circumstances that will exist.

m). And in connection with the rulership from the heavens over the earth let's just revisit one of the overcomers' promises from Revelation Chapter 2 seen in conjunction with the church of Ephesus - Re 2:7 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*

n). We might remember that the tree of life first appears in the midst of the Garden and is one of the trees from which Adam and the Woman in their unfallen state could eat. This tree clearly has nothing to do with the impartation of 'life' as Adam and the Woman were created and made eternal beings.

o). Rather than having anything to do with the impartation of eternal life this tree needs to be seen in connection with the purpose for that 'life' which is rulership – Adam and the Woman were created to rule in Satan's stead, but because of Satan's deception, introducing sin they were both separated from their created purpose and it is because of this separation that access is no longer granted to the tree of life - Ge 3:24 *So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.*

p). The tree itself then completely disappears from the earth only returning again, in the heavens, in order to be accessed by the overcomers, those who will now rule with Christ – So once again then rulership is in view and the tree of life is in view as well, leading us to the conclusion that this tree provides that which is necessary for those who will rule to rule effectively.

q). And so then, for each of us, should we be found faithful, there is the promise that we will eat from this tree as crowned rulers in Christ's Kingdom.

4). And where do we see the tree of life in Revelation 2:7? 'In the midst of the Paradise [or Garden] of God' – a tantalizing allusion to the tree's original location in the Garden which God planted eastward in Eden.

a). And this allusion to the Garden of Eden is I think quite deliberate as there are other aspects to do with Christ's Millennial Kingdom that we will look at that maybe we have not considered before, aspects that will explain for us why this allusion is found in Revelation Chapter 2 and also explain the apparent longevity that will be experienced by those on the earth during the Kingdom Age.

b). With this in mind let's close today with 2 scriptures that we will return to next time, if the Lord is willing - Ac 3:20 *"and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until **the times of restoration of all things**, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*

Ro 8:19 *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*