

Sunday, May 24, 2009—Great Lakes Grace Bible Conference—Rewards for the Kingdom Saints

Purpose: Demonstrate rewards available to the Little Flock  
Demonstrate that there are degrees of punishment in Hell

### **What is the Little Flock?**

- Luke 12:32—it is the Father's good please to give the kingdom to a group called the Little Flock, rather than the apostate leadership of Israel.
- Romans 11:4—there has always been a believing remnant in Israel that sought to believe God and follow his word.
- Joshua and Caleb are an example of this. They choose to believe God rather than give ear to who questioned and disobeyed God.
- Water baptism served to identify those within the nation of Israel who would believe God and those who would not.
  - Matthew 3:7—John calls Israel's leadership a generation of vipers who were trusting in the fact that they were the physical descendants of Abraham.
  - Acts 2:40—Peter calls his audience to save themselves from the current untoward generation by repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins in verse 38.
  - Luke 7:30—the leadership of Israel rejected by counsel by not submitting to John's baptism.
- Therefore, it is clear that the Little Flock (or believing remnant) were those who believed God and submitted to John's water ceremony.
- Exodus 19:6—God's original purpose was for the entire nation to be a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. Leviticus 8—every priest needed to be washed with and anointed with oil in order to function in the office of a priest. Jesus was baptized by John to fulfill all righteousness or the legal requirements that would allow him to function as Israel's high priest.
- John's baptism was a first step in preparing the Little Flock to be the kingdom of priests and holy nation God created them for.
- Matthew 21:33-43—the kingdom will be taken from Israel's leadership and given to a nation bring forth the fruits there of.

- The nation that receives this kingdom is believing Israel (i.e. the Little Flock) not the Gentiles. Nation is singular not plural.

### **Rewards for the Kingdom Saints**

- Matthew 19:27-28—Peter asks what the rewards will be for those who had forsaken all to follow Christ.
  - Verse 28—the 12 apostles would receive thrones upon which they would judge the 12 tribes of Israel.
- Matthew 19:29—those who leave houses and family will receive a 100-fold or 100 times as much as what they forsook.
- Here we see a physical material reward for members of the Little Flock.
- Matthew 19:30—those who were nothing materially and last in terms of physical things will be made first.
  - First--in time or place or in any succession of thing or persons,
    - first in rank, influence, honor, chief, or principal
  - Last—in time or place, in a series of places, in temporal succession
    - Referring to time, rank, or grade of worth, i.e. lowest
- Deuteronomy 28:13—Israel was to be set on high above all nation of the earth. She was supposed to be the head and not the tail. This will be true for the believing remnant in when the kingdom is established.
- Matthew 19:28--all of these things occur when the son of Man sits upon the throne of his glory. These rewards are meted out at the establishment of the kingdom.

### *The Parable of the Ten Pounds*

- Luke 19:11—Jesus tells them the parable of the ten pounds because they thought the kingdom of God would immediately appear.
- Luke 19:12—the central message is clear Jesus was going to have to go away to receive the kingdom and then come back to established it.
- Acts 3:31--This tells us that the ascension of Jesus was an essential part of the prophetic program.
- Psalms 110:1—Christ sits down on the right hand of the father thus making the ascension to receive the kingdom a prophetic necessity.

- Luke 19:19—Chronologically Jesus is in Jericho when he tells this parable before He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday
- Key observations from the parable:
  - Verse 13—each servant receives 1 pound each. They are told to occupy (or carry on a business, to carry on the business of a banker or trader) until the Lord returns.
  - Verse 15—there is a reckoning where the servants are called to give an account.
  - Verses 16-19—each servant is given authority over the same number of cities as their increase yielded.
- Main Point: Jesus will be leaving them to receive a kingdom and the Little Flock lead by the Apostles was continue business as usually for which they would receive ruler ship over cities.

### *The Parable of the Talents*

- Matthew 25:14-30—is part of the Olivet Discourse which began at the beginning of chapter 24 through the end of chapter 25.
- Matthew 24:3—Jesus has already told them the Parable of the Ten Pounds at Jericho prior to the triumphal entry. They already know that Jesus will be leaving to receive the kingdom and then returning to established. Here in Matthew 24, the Apostles want to know the signs that precede the return of Christ.
- Main Point: the main point of the Parable of the Talents is how the rewards will be distributed. There is a clear difference in focus between Luke 19 and Matthew 25.
- Matthew 25:14—notice that those who receive goods are the servants of the man who is traveling into a far country. The man doing the traveling entrusts his goods (i.e. possessions, wealth, or property) to his servants prior to leaving for his journey.
- Matthew 25:15—unlike Luke 19, the servants in this passage do not receive the same amount of money.
  - Notice that the talents are distributed according to each mans ability.
- Matthew 25:19—after being gone for a long time the lord returns to reckon with them or settle their accounts.

- Matthew 25:20-23—the first two servants have doubled their talents and are told that because they were faithful over a few things they will be made ruler over many things.
  - Both servants receive the same reward, ruler ship over many things. This demonstrates that the rewards are not conditioned on how much each made in the lord’s absence but their faithful stewardship over what they had been given according to their ability.
  - God is fair not only he how he judges as we will see in a few minutes but also in how he rewards his children.
- Matthew 25:24-30—the man that buried his talent is thrown into outer darkness.

*Concluding Remarks on Rewards for the Kingdom Saints*

- The kingdom will be taken from Israel’s apostate leadership and given to the Little Flock, the nation bring forth the fruits meet for repentance.
- The 12 Apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel.
- Colossians 1:16—just as the body of Christ inherits the structures of governmental authority in the heavenly places, Israel receive the earthly, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.
- The Little Flock will receive back 100-fold what they sacrificed materially to follow Christ.
- They will receive a reversal in the order of earthly authority by being made first rather than last.
- The Little Flock is rewarded based upon their individual stewardship. These saints are rewarded based on what they did according to their own abilities.
- The Little Flock receives the authority to rule over cities or earthly thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.

**Degrees of Eternal Punishment**

- Matthew 10:15—“more tolerable” for Sodom and Gomorrha
- Genesis 19:24-28—destroyed the city instantly with fire and brimstone
- Matthew 11:20-24, Luke 10:10-15—“more tolerable” for Tyre and Zidon

- Isaiah 23:1-18—Tyre is laid waste
- Amos 1:9-10—will not turn away punishment from Tyrus, Fire on the wall of Tyrus which shall devour the places thereof.
- Matthew 23:14, Mark 12:40, Luke 20:47—greater damnation
  - Greater—over and above, more than is necessary, supersede
    - Something further, much more
  - Ephesians 3:20—exceeding abundantly
  - I Corinthians 12:23—more abundant
- It is clear when the lost are judged a great damnation or punishment is reserved for some. So how does it work?
- Revelation 20:11-15—the dead are judged out the books according to their works.
  - Book of Life—if your name is not written in the Book of Life a second set of books is consulted that contains a record their works and life.
  - From this second set of books eternal sentences are meted out based upon their works.
- While God’s justice can not allow sin to go unpunished, he is also just in how punishments are handed out. The nice lady down the street who has never stole, or killed anyone will not be given the same eternal sentence as Hitler, Stalin, or the like.
- People will be judged based upon the amount of light they were given. Even the native in the middle of the jungle has been given enough so that they are without excuse.
- People with greater light or authority will be judged accordingly.
- Consequently, there must be degrees of eternal punishment.