



MOUNT MERRION FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

[BELFAST NORTHERN IRELAND].



Pulpit Ministry of Mount Merrion Free Presbyterian Church

Lord's Day Evening 18th Jan 2009.

"Barack Obama - The Preparation For the Presidential Inauguration"

Scripture Reading Matt Ch 25:31-41; Rev Ch20:11-.15

By. Rev. Paul Thompson.

In recent days we have been hearing of the final preparations that are being made for the inauguration ceremony of President-elect Barack Obama on Tuesday 20th Jan 2009; who will become the 44th President of the United States. Recent reports estimate that up to three million people will flock into the Washington Mall with a further three hundred thousand standing on the immediate site, to witness this historic event. In January 2007 it was declared that over seventy Million Hindu Pilgrims gathered for the world's largest religious festival in Allahabad in India. This world has seen many large scale events. However, the scene before us, described by Christ in Matthew Ch25 gives us is that of the final or last judgement. As far as world events go, this will be the final and greatest gathering ever witnessed by mankind. Christ declares [v32] that this will be a day when *"before him shall be gathered all nations."* A vast concourse of people before the *'throne of His glory.'* This is the final judgement, at the last judgement, all the dead and the living now stand before God, every nation on earth represented before Christ. It was John Trapp who made the statement that *"then shall Adam see all his nephews at once."* All men who ever lived, post and pre-flood, from Adam to the last man living, a great multitude that no man can number, kings, rulers, Presidents, whole nations, is it any wonder that Jude spoke of this judgement as the *"The judgment of the great day."* [Jude v6]. This will be *'the'* day of reckoning!

For several months the primary message that Barack Obama has propounded as his mandate is *'change.'* What is it that Obama is intending to change? We now know. Today on the Sabbath, *"At Barack Obama's request, in the Lincoln Memorial, Gene Robinson, the first openly non-celibate homosexual bishop in the Episcopal Church, will deliver the invocation for the inauguration kick-off. It is as though Obama sought out a church which blessed stealing and adultery, and then chose its most well-known thief and adulterer, and asked him to pray. The gospel, with its forgiveness and deliverance from homosexual practice, offers salvation. Gene Robinson, with his blessing and approval of homosexual practice, offers damnation. And he does it in the name of Christ."* [John Piper]. Obama has now set forth the change that he intends to evoke; and that is to have the life changing message of the Church replaced with *'a ministry of damnation.'* Obama intends to change how people think about abortion. This conditioning will affect us here in the UK, before long it will be the *'thing to do.'* Recommended DVD *"The Monstrous Regiment of Women."*

On Tuesday morning the world will laud all possible honour upon a man who has shown no kinship to the Christian faith, but rather has now revealed a pre-arranged agenda that in no way favours Christianity. What the world will hear today from the lips of Gene Robinson will not be words that have them think on eternity or the judgement day.

At this judgement Christ shall be the administrator, Matthew tells us that [v31], *"Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."* This throne is the same throne that John saw in Rev Ch20:11-15, a throne from which the nations desire to flee away! Yet there is no escape from this judgement, John states that, *"There was no place found for them."* [v11].

1) A Distinction will be present. *"Sheep and goats" "Left hand. Right hand."*

As we will see, this distinction is not made on that day, but it is a distinction that men bring with them on that day. Men will stand on that day either as a sheep or a goat. They will stand in one company or another according to how they have died. Christ as the judge will maintain that distinction, He will see you as either a sheep or a goat. Men laugh at the warnings of scripture, *"It is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgement."* Time or space is not given after a man dies to repent or 'put things right.' This can only be done while a man lives; after death all that remains ahead is judgement. Notice that:

a) *It will be An impeccable distinction.* Impeccability will be one vital mark of this judgement:

i) *Because of Christ's Supreme Knowledge.* [v32], *"As a shepherd."*

Christ will distinguish between those who are his and are not his in the same way that a shepherd would separate sheep from goats. However, Christ possesses superior, unfailing, impeccable, faultless attributes that others shepherds do not have. He is the good, chief and great shepherd who knows his sheep, [John Ch10:14], *"I know my sheep."* As sure as Christ knows every one of his own people, he knows all those who are not his. This distinction that Christ places upon both sheep and goats is not decided upon at the judgement; but rather is something that Christ has known from all eternity. He knows now how men will stand before him on that day, such is the knowledge of Christ; a solemn meditation indeed! John 6:64 *"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him."* Do not despise the knowledge of Christ, you will not fool the judge! Self-delusion and hypocrisy will all be discovered on that day! A judgement with unquestionable accuracy! Christ says in John Ch10, *"Ye are not of my sheep."* His Sheep John Ch10 (my sheep). The goats are not the possession of Christ.

In Rev Ch20:12 John states that at this judgement every man will be judged *"according to his works."* When the books are opened, those pages will reveal the true identity of every one present in that concourse of people. Their true nature is known by Christ, no man can deceive Christ. Paul warned the Corinthian Church in 2 Cor Ch 5:10, *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."* When you read of men being judged according to their works, we are not to think that men inherit heaven on account of their earthly performance, neither do men receive hell because they have done evil works. I will clarify this. Too often men have view the judgement of God as being like a pair of balances were good works must outweigh the bad deeds in order to obtain eternal life; a preposterous view. Passages such as Rev Ch20:12; 2Cor Ch5:10 teach that these works, shall be produced in this open court as evidence and proof of identity [as evidence is submitted]; it is grace alone that will admit a man to heaven; it is man's sinful nature that will take him to hell, though a man may deny that he is worthy of hell, Christ will submit overwhelming evidence to that supreme Court showing that man otherwise. Like wise it is true of the Christian, all our worth on that day will be found not in us but in Christ!

b) *This impeccability will be maintained because of Christ's love.* [John Ch10:14], *"I know my sheep."*

The verb *'know'* in John Ch10:14 speaks of intimacy. Christ knows his sheep with an undying love, it is undying because he never changes. for that reason no child of God will ever find him/herself among the goats, it just cannot happen, *"Loved with everlasting love, led by grace that love to know!"* The opposite is true, no man who dies without Christ will find himself among the

"This mystery of the final state of the wicked is indeed dark and it has not pleased the Lord to take us very far beyond that sad boundary."

...Charles .D. Alexander...

saints; turn to Psalm 1:5, *“The ungodly shall not stand in the judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.”* Why will that be so? V6, *“For the Lord knoweth.”* Christ’s knowledge of his people and those who are not his! He knoweth, *“The way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”*

John Gill, *“Christ has an universal, special, distinct, and exact knowledge of all his sheep, as they are the choice of his Father, as his Father’s gift to him; and as his own purchase; he bears an affectionate love to them, and takes special care of them; indulges them with intimate communion with himself; and owns and acknowledges them as his, both here and hereafter.”* What an encouragement to the saints of God, to know that God will not make a mistake on that day.

2) A Division will be executed. *“He shall separate them one from the other.”*

On earth the sheep and goats can and do live together. The picture is that of the visible church where unsaved and saved alike can sit alongside each other, even though in God’s eyes there is this distinction. However, there will be coming a day when the Christ whom the goats profess on earth to worship will be separated from those whom they knew on earth.

At the throne there will be a separation, no man will be able to cross over into another’s company, the distinction will be seen, and the separation will be made. Those who are brought to the throne of Christ will know that they where they now stand they deserve to be. The dead who have been brought forth from ‘Hades’ know that they have died as lost souls and that at the final judgement with their resurrected bodies they will still be lost!

a) A Necessary Separation.

This separation must be enforced by Christ because of the justice of God. God’s strict uncompromising justice cannot allow sin to go unnoticed. Rev 21:27 *“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.”* Heaven must remain free from all contamination of sin. Hence if a man would enter heaven, he must be washed in the blood of the lamb! He must have on the garment [Matt Ch22]. **Gal 5:21** *“Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”* **Eph 5:5** *“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”* **1Co 15:50** *“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”* **1Co 6:9** *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? [Paul then adds] Be not deceived.”* This judgment and separation is according to justice and truth [Rom Ch2:].

b) A Separation without any hope of reunion.

Once the division is made, the sheep set on the right hand and the goats on the left, it cannot be reversed, all hope of reunion is abandoned! How tragic it is to here the worlding speak of the afterlife as a great meeting point, where he will gather with all his friends; there won’t be any reunion! In fact the bible teaches clearly that when the ungodly die, one of the first things that the soul is made sensible of is a loss of communion with anyone but themselves. This man wanted to be reunited with the saints [v24], *“send Lazarus”*, he calls for Lazarus, but he is told there is no possibility of reunion with the saints. He then seeks a reunion with his family through Lazarus, *“send Lazarus with this message to my five brethren!”* But even then he is told, there is no possibility of reunion! Why is this! **Luke 16:26**, *“And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.”*

3) A Departure and entrance will be made. *“these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”*

The pronouncement is based upon the distinction and the division. Both destinations of the sheep and the goats are prepared places. Heaven is said to be a prepared place [Christ speaking in John Ch14:2-3]. Hell is said to be a prepared place [Matt Ch25:41]. yet both places also are also described by the adjective *‘everlasting or eternal.’* This word brings joy to the heart of the saint, but when used of hell, it ought to engender fear and horror in the souls of the ungodly; everlasting fire without intermission. The punishment of the wicked will be as long as the heavenly life enjoyed by the saints.

a) A Hell Prepared. v41&46 Eternal Punishment. *“These shall go away into everlasting punishment.”*

That is exactly what Christ means, *‘everlasting punishment.’* There is no room for any concept of Hell’s punishment being purgatorial. The fire of hell is not intended to be remedial [to prepare a man for heaven], how *‘hellish’* is the teaching of Rome, that assures a man that when he finds himself in hell, it will only be for a while! That teaching has come straight from the pit! The truth of hell being a place with eternal attributes is made clear by Christ’s words in Mark Ch9:48, *“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”* That is the portion of all those that believe not on the son, [John Ch3:36], *“He that believeth on the son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,”* The word *‘abideth’* indicates that the wrath of God shall never lift from off him, what is the wrath of God? It is a penalty without end! A sentence that when pronounced will never be reviewed. To the second death men are consigned forever [Rev Ch20:14], implying absolute desolation!

b) A Heaven Prepared v34 Eternal life, *“But the righteous into life eternal.”*

It is often said that *‘heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.’* Only grace can prepare a man for heaven. It’s not of works lest any man should say, I have gained heaven my way! By Grace are ye saved. What did John see in Rev 7:9-10 *“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”*

God warns men that they are to prepare to meet thy God, whether you be a President or a nobody, the preparation remains!

“The occasion of the incarnation is rooted in sin.”

...Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield...

By. Paul Thompson.

“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.”

Hebrews 10:16