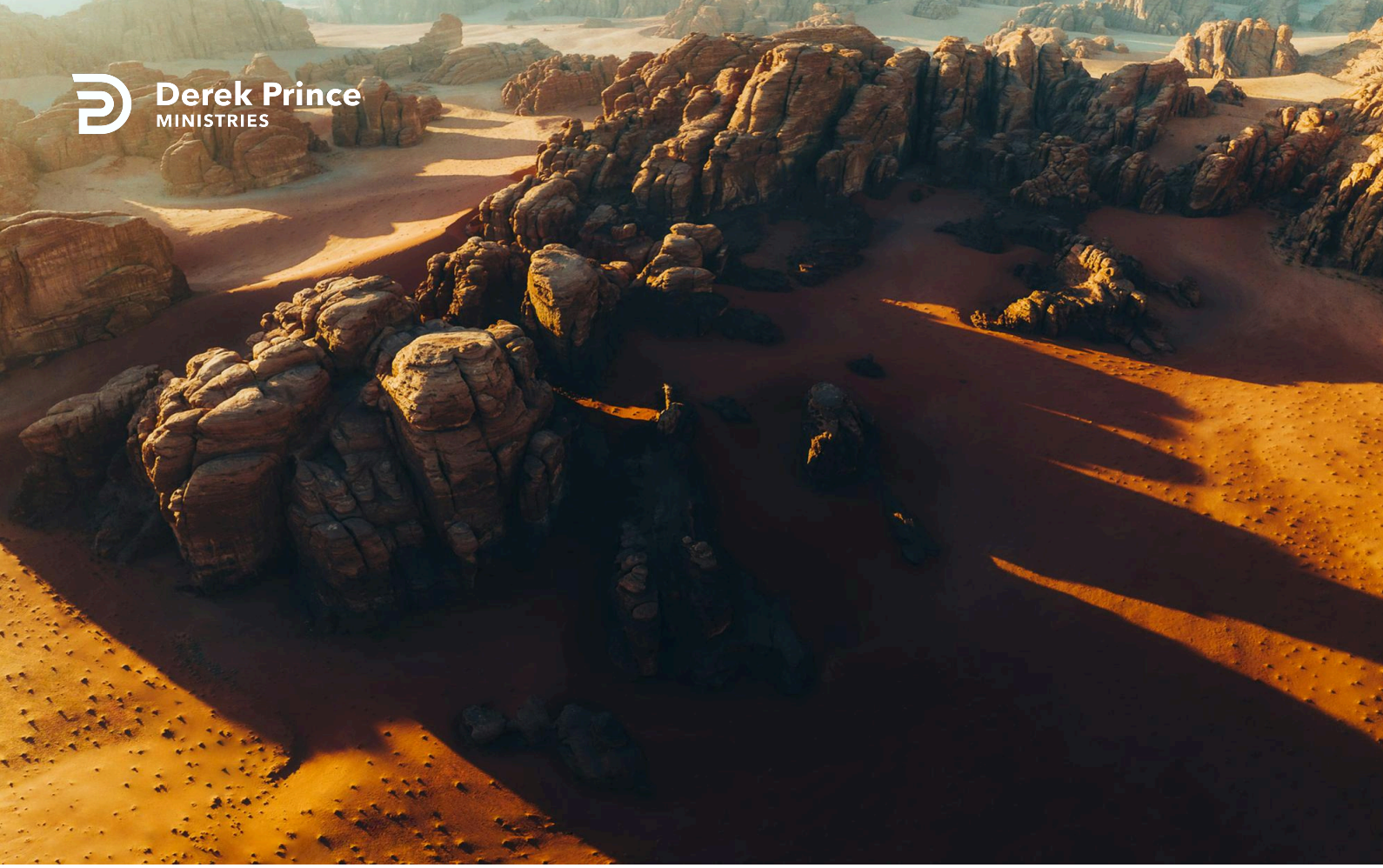

The Sheep And The Goats



Foundations (Day 355)
by Derek Prince

After Israel has thus passed through the fires of the great tribulation and been reconciled again to God through Jesus Christ, there will be no further need for God to judge them. Thereafter, when Christ sets up His earthly kingdom and takes His seat upon the throne of His glory, He will need only to judge the Gentile nations remaining alive on earth at the close of the great tribulation.

Jesus gives a vivid picture of the judgement of the Gentile nations (see Matt. 25:31-46). There is no suggestion that this is a parable. It is a direct, prophetic prediction, using the analogy of a shepherd dealing with his flock. Let us examine the opening scene.

> "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. 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. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." (Matt. 25:31-33)

The purpose of the judgement that follows is to separate the sheep (those whom God accepts) from the goats (those whom God rejects). The sheep will be received into the kingdom God has prepared for them – that is, Christ's millennial kingdom. The goats will have final, irrevocable judgement pronounced upon them, by which they will be banished into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

These rejected Gentiles will be sent forth not to Sheol or Hades but directly to the place of final punishment of all rebels – the lake of fire. Into this lake the beast – the Antichrist – and his false prophet already will have been cast.

The separation between sheep and goats is based upon one decisive issue: the way in which those being judged have treated the brothers of Jesus; that is, the Jewish people.

Many passages of Scripture make it clear that at the close of this age there will be world-wide hostility toward the Jewish people and the state of Israel. Not only will there be a

concentrated attack by the Gentile nations against Israel, but Jews in other countries will be subjected to various forms of persecution. In the midst of all this, however, there will be some Gentiles who take their stand – either as individuals or as nations – on the side of the Jewish people. These will do everything in their power to protect the Jews and to alleviate their suffering. At the ensuing judgement, this will mark them out as sheep, counted worthy to enter into Christ's kingdom established on earth.

Devotional

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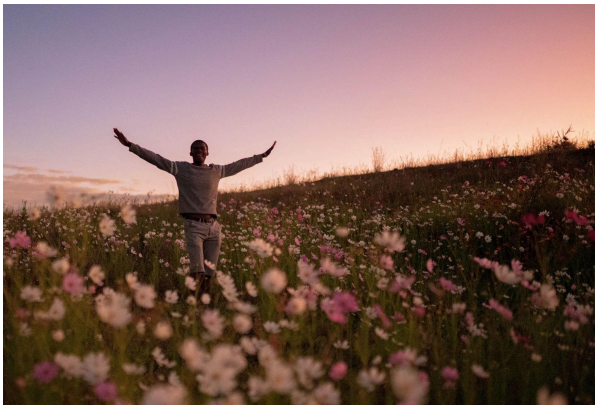

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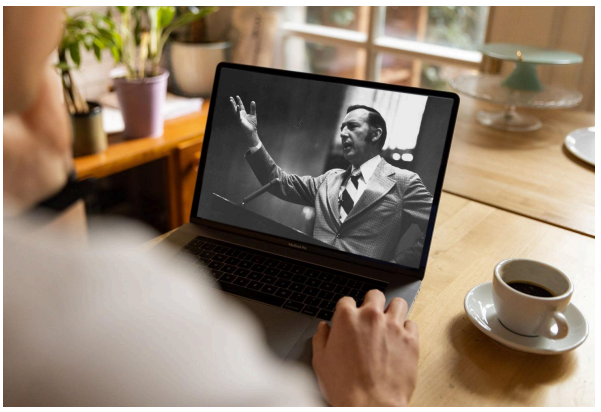

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