

## Matthew 25

This chapter is easily divided into three large sections with the first two being parables (25:1-13; 14-30). Jesus had said that no one knows when the heavens and earth will pass away (24:35-36) so He gives several illustrations of the need to be prepared, despite our ignorance of that time frame (24:37-41; 42-44; 45-51). The chapter concludes with Jesus discussing the final judgment using the metaphor of sheep (representing the righteous) and goats (representing the wicked): 25:31-46. In Peter's day, some were scoffing that Jesus had not come back yet, therefore He *would* not come back (2 Peter 3:4).

### TRANSLATION - 25:1-13:

**1** At that time the kingdom of heaven will be compared to ten virgins, who after taking each of them lamps, they went out for to meet the bridegroom. **2** And five from them were foolish and five, wise. **3** For the foolish, after taking their lamps, did not take with them oil. **4** And the wise took oil in the flasks with their lamps. **5** And the bridegroom delaying, all became drowsy and were sleeping.

**6** And in the middle of the night, a shout happened, "Behold the bridegroom, go out for [his] meeting!" **7** At that time all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. **8** And the foolish to the wise said, "Give to us from your oil, because our lamps are extinguished." **9** And the wise answered, saying, "Perhaps there might not be sufficient for us and for you; Go rather to the sellers and buy for yourselves." **10** And while going out to buy, the bridegroom came, and those prepared entered with him into the wedding and the door was closed. **11** Then later there came also the rest of the virgins saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us." **12** And after answering, he said, "Truly I say to you, I do not know you." **13** Therefore, be watchful, because you do not know the day nor the hour.

### GREEK WORDS:

"To be compared" (ver. 1) was used first at 6:8. It is used 15 times in the NT; eight are in Matthew. For "kingdom," see 3:2. "Virgin" was first seen at 1:23 but not since then. The word will be used here at 25:1, 7, 11. It is used extensively in 1 Corinthians 7. "Lamp" is used 9 times in the NT, five times here: 25:1, 3, 4, 7, 8. "Bridegroom" was first used at 9:15. This context is its last use in Matthew: 25:1, 5, 6, 10. "Foolish" or "stupid" (ver. 2) was used at 5:22; 7:26; 23:17; and here: 25:2, 3, 8. It will be used an additional six times in the NT. "Wise" or "prudent" was used at 7:24; 10:16; 24:45; and here: 25:2, 4, 8-9. It will be used an additional 7 times.

"Oil" (ver. 3) would be olive oil. The word is used here for the first (and only) time in Matthew: 25:3, 4, 8. The word is used in the NT 11 times. "Flask" (ver. 4) is used only here in the NT. "Delaying" (ver. 5) is used at 24:48; 25:5; Luke 1:21; 12:45; Heb. 10:37. "To become drowsy" is used here and 2 Peter 2:3. "To sleep" was used first at 8:24.

"Shout" (ver. 6) is used 6 times: here; Luke 1:42; Acts 23:9; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 5:7; Rev. 21:4. "Meeting" is used three times: here; Acts 28:15; 1 Thess. 4:17. "To trim" (ver. 7) was used first at 12:44. "To extinguish" or "to quench" was used first at 12:20. "To be enough" or "sufficient" is used only here in Matthew; it is used 8 times in the NT. "To sell" is used first at 10:29. "To buy" is used first at 13:44, 46.

"To go away" (ver. 10) was used first at 2:22. "Prepared" was used at 22:4, 8. "Wedding" was used at 22:2, 3, 4, 8-12. "To close" was used first at 6:6. "Door" was also used first at 6:6. "Rest" (ver. 11) was used first at 22:6. "To open" was used first at 2:11. "Be watchful" (ver. 13) was used at 24:42-43; 25:13; 26:38, 40-41 in Matthew. The verb is used 22 times in the NT.

### GREEK GRAMMAR:

The verb translated "became drowsy" (ver. 5) is an aorist verb, which means it happened in the past; it might suggest *beginning* to become drowsy. In the same verse, "was

sleeping” translates a verb in the imperfect tense, which denotes an action continuously occurring in the past.

#### OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

The Messiah is pictured as the bridegroom in Isaiah 54:4-6; 62:4-5; Ezekiel 16:7-34; Hosea 2:16, 19; Jer. 31:32.

#### ARCHAEOLOGY:

We do not have sufficient information to know the details of a Jewish wedding ceremony in the first century. It seems that the bridegroom with close friends would leave his home and go to the bride’s home. They would enjoy various rituals there. Then, they would walk in a procession through the streets, after night came, to the groom’s home.

These lamps could be small (2-3” in diameter) oil lamps with wicks or torches which burned rags soaked in oil.

#### COMMENTS:

The “kingdom of heaven” pictures the church as it prepares for heaven. The “ten virgins” represent people who wish to be a part of the “heavenly banquet” (8:11; 22:1-14) which the prophets had predicted. The virgins are young women who are eligible to be married but are not yet. There is not any significance in their being “virgins;” it is just the age of those who are attendants at a wedding ceremony. We do not know if they are waiting at the home of the bride or the groom, but it does not matter to the parable. There is also no significance to Jesus choosing “ten” as the number; it is divisible so that half are “wise” and half are “foolish” (cf. 24:45, 48). They go to meet the bridegroom, who symbolizes (and this is significant to the parable) Jesus Christ (9:15; Mark 2:19-20; John 3:29). Jesus states that half the foolish were defined by their behavior; they forgot to take extra oil (which has no significance in the parable). The wise, on the contrary, took extra oil.

However, the bridegroom delayed and the maidens got drowsy and fell asleep. There is no criticism to this behavior; it is part of the parable picturing their unpreparedness for the bridegroom’s coming. At midnight, the shout awakened them that the bridegroom was coming! It was time to meet him and enjoy the celebration! The bridegroom’s coming symbolizes the second coming of Christ.

Therefore, the virgins arose and prepared their lamps by trimming the wicks and replenishing the oil. The foolish, however, asked for some oil because they had run out. But there would not be enough oil to share, so the wise encouraged the foolish to go buy extra oil, again not knowing exactly when the groom would arrive.

Yet while the foolish were gone, the groom came, entered the house, and those who were ready. Then the door was closed, just as with the door of the ark in Genesis 7:16. The foolish virgins arrived, but the door had been shut. Their cry, “Lord! Lord!” is reminiscent of 7:21-23. The groom stated emphatically that he did not know them; that is, he did not have a relationship with them. In reality, the groom might have allowed them entrance, but for the purposes of Jesus’ parable, he did not allow them. The purpose of the parable is given in verse 13. His disciples need to be alert and stay as free from sin as possible, because they do not know the “day nor the hour” when Jesus will come again (cf. 24:35-36). Christians need to be prepared for the coming of Christ: 24:36, 42, 44, 50.

#### APPLICATION:

The NT continues the picture that Jesus is the bridegroom and the church is His bride (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:27). While the second coming will be as a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5:2-6), it will be preceded by a shout by an archangel (1 Thess. 4:16; cf. 1 Cor. 15:52). In 1 Thess. 5:6, perhaps alluding to this parable of his Master, Paul states that Christians should not “sleep” in anticipation of the return of Jesus.

#### TRANSLATION - 25:14-30:

**14** For [it is] like a man going on a journey, he called his own slaves and delivered to them his belongings. **15** And to one, on one hand, he gave five talents, and to one, two, and to one, one, to each according to his own power, and he went on a journey. Immediately **16** after going out, the one [with] five talents after taking, did business among them and gained other five. **17** Likewise, the one [with] two gained other two. **18** And the one [with] one, after taking, after going out, dug the earth and buried the money of his lord.

**19** And after much time, the lord of those slaves came and settled account with them. **20** And approaching the one [with] five talents having taken, brought other five talents, saying, "Lord, five talents to me you delivered. Behold other five talents I gained." **21** His lord was saying to him, "Excellent, good and faithful slave! Over a little you were being faithful, over much you I will appoint. Enter into the joy of your lord."

**22** And approaching, the one [with] two talents, he said, "Lord, two talents to me you delivered; behold other two talents I gained." **23** His lord was saying to him, "Excellent, good and faithful slave! Over a little you were being faithful, over much you I will appoint. Enter into the joy of your lord."

**24** And approaching also the one [with] one talent having received, said, "Lord, I knew you, that you are a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not disperse. **25** And fearing, after going out, I hid your talent in the earth; behold you have yours." **26** And after answering his lord said to him, "Evil slave and lazy! You had known that I reap where I did not sow and I gather where I did not disperse. **27** It was necessary, therefore, for you to cast my money to the money-changers, and after coming I, myself, would receive back my own with interest. **28** Therefore take away from him the talent and give to the one having the ten talents. **29** For to the one having all will be given and he will have abundance, and the one not having even what he has will be taken away from him. **30** And the worthless slave, cast out into the outer darkness; there there will be weeping and gnashing of the teeth."

#### GREEK WORDS:

"Journey" (ver. 14) was used first at 21:33. "Slave" is used 126 times in the NT; it was used first at 8:9. "To deliver" or "hand over" was used first in 4:12. "Belongings" is a participle which we translate as a noun. It was used first at 19:21. "Talent" (ver. 15) was seen first at 18:24. It is used extensively here: 25:15, 16, 20, 22, 24, 25, 28. "Power" was used first at 7:22. "To work" or "do business" or "trade" (ver. 16) was used first at 7:23. "To gain" or "to earn" was used first at 16:26. "To dig" (ver. 18) was used first at 21:33. "To hide" was first used at 5:14. "Money" or "silver" is used 20 times in the NT, first here in Matthew: 25:18, 27. It is also used at 26:15; 27:3, 5, 6, 9; 28:12, 15.

"To settle" (ver. 19) was used at 18:23-24. This is its only other use in the NT. "Account" is the word *logos*, often translated "word." It is used 330 times in the NT; it is found first at 5:32, 37. "To bring" (ver. 20) was used first at 4:24. "Excellent" (ver. 21) is used twice here (25:21, 23) and in Mark 14:7; Acts 15:29; Eph. 6:3. "Good" is used 102 times in the NT, first at 5:45. "Faithful" is used 67 times in the NT, first at 24:45. "To appoint" or "to put in charge" is used 21 times, first at 24:45, 47. "Joy" was used first at 2:10.

"To receive" (ver. 24) was used first at 5:40. "Hard" or "harsh" is used 5 times in the NT: here; John 6:60; Acts 26:14; James 3:4; Jude 15. "To reap" was used first at 6:26. It is used here at 25:24, 26. "To sow" was used first at 6:26. "To gather" was used first at 2:4. "To disperse" is used here (25:24, 26); 26:31; Mark 14:27; Luke 1:51; 15:13; 16:1; John 11:52; Acts 5:37. "To fear" (ver. 25) was used at 1:20. The verb is used extensively (18 times) in Matthew.

"Evil" (ver. 26) was used at 5:11, 37, 39, 45. It is found 78 times in the NT. "Lazy" or "idle" is used three times: Matt. 25:26; Rom. 12:11; Phil. 3:1. "Money-changer" (ver. 27) is used only here in the NT. "To receive back" is used here for the first time, out of 10 occasions. "Interest" is used only here and Luke 19:23. "To take away" (ver. 28) was used first at 4:6. "To abound" or "to have an abundance" is used first at 5:20. Matthew uses the word also at 13:12; 14:20; 15:37; 25:29. "Worthless" or "useless" (ver. 30) is used here and Luke 17:10. "Darkness"

was used first at 4:16. “Outer” was used at 8:12; 22:13; 25:30. “Weeping” and “gnashing” are found in this same phrase at 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28.

#### PARALLELS:

A similar, but different, parable is found also at Luke 19:11-27. There is no reason to believe these are two versions of the same parable, altered either by Matthew or Luke. Jesus could easily have taught two parables that were essentially similar but different in their particulars.

#### OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

Israelites could not charge fellow Israelites interest (Psa. 15:5) but they could foreigners (Deut. 23:19-20; Exo. 22:25; Lev. 25:36-37; Deut. 23:19-20).

#### ARCHAEOLOGY:

For a discussion of the “talent,” see “Archaeology” under 18:24. The talent was, originally, a measurement (58-80 pounds). It could be the weight of gold, silver, or bronze. In this context, it seems to refer to silver. As a unit of money, it was valued at 6,000 denarii, which was one day’s salary. Five talents would be worth about 82 years’ salary. Two talents would be worth nearly 33 years’ salary. One talent (6,000 days’ wages) would be just over 16 years’ salary. The purpose of the parable is not related to the value of the talent (as the parable is in Matthew 18).

#### COMMENTS:

The second parable in this chapter begins with an abbreviated introduction: “For like a man...” That is, the “kingdom of heaven” (ver. 1) is “like a man...” This wealthy master desired to go on a long journey and called his slaves to himself and entrusted them with his possessions, perhaps all of his possessions. To one of the three, he gave possessions equal to five talents. This would have been an incredibly large sum of money, but it is not necessary for the details of the parable to be taken literally or realistically. It serves the purpose of illustrating the high degree of trust the master had in this particular slave to use “according to his own ability.” To a second slave, he gave two talents, and to one slave, he gave one. Then the master left.

The first two slaves immediately set to work to increase their profit, and increase it they did! These men earned 100% profit! It does not matter what the business venture was; it is irrelevant to the parable. Yet, the one who had only been given one talent (“according to his own ability”) dug a hole in the ground and hid the money. He did not waste the talent; he did not gamble; he was not careless. He just did not use it at all. This was a safe decision, but it brought no profit.

Reflecting the idea that no one knows when Jesus will return (24:36, 42, 48; 25:10), the master delayed his coming for a long time. When he arrived, he decided to settle his accounts with his slaves. There is nearly complete similarity between the response of the “ten-talent” man and the “two-talent” man as well as the response of the master to each one (ver. 20, 22). The master (ver. 21, 23) commended each one for being “good and faithful,” having done well, and supervising “a few things.” As a reward, he would put each one over “many things” and they were invited into the “joy of their master.”

The longer section of this parable (25:24-30) deals with the one-talent man, who was given according to his ability. He first describes the master in harsh terms, as a “hard man.” The master would reap where he had not sown and would gather where he had not scattered. Whether this was a true assessment of the master’s behavior is not relevant to the point of the parable. It was his perception of the master’s nature that inspired fear in this slave and caused him to be lazy (ver. 25). He gave the talent back to the master, but without any income from it.

The master is furious and accuses the slave of being “wicked” and “lazy.” He assumes as true the accusation of the slave (ver. 26), whether it was true or not is not relevant. If it were true, it should have compelled even more the slave to do something with that investment! At a

minimum, he should have put the money in the hands of money-changers who could have paid in interest. In that case, the master would have gained something.

Instead, he gained nothing. The master takes the one talent from him, giving it to the one with the ten, stating a general principle in verse 29 (the point of the parable) that rewards will be distributed, to some degree, based on one's willingness to use what he is entrusted with. There is no reason to speculate why the master gave the extra talent to the ten-talent man rather than the two-talent, or even to divide between the two. The purpose was to show that if one *works*, he will be blessed. While Christians wait for Jesus' return, they are to be busy staying faithful and producing fruit (cf. John 15). The fruit will be illustrated in the judgment scene with follows (25:31-46). Finally (ver. 30), the master commands other slaves to cast that "worthless" slave into the outer darkness, a picture of hell, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

#### APPLICATION:

Jesus had stated verse 29 substantially the same in 13:12. The Scriptures teach that God gives, and expects out of us, proportionate to our ability: Romans 12:3, 6; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 12:4-7; Eph. 4:7-8; 1 Peter 4:10. God does not tolerate laziness in anyone: Prov. 6:6-9.

Peter will argue in 2 Peter 3:14-16 that Christians should keep themselves "in peace, spotless and blameless" until Christ comes again. Then, Christians will enjoy the presence of Christ: Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Heb. 12:2; Rev. 19:7.

Stewardship (1 Cor. 4:1-2) involves: a master (spiritually speaking, Christ), a steward (humans), something entrusted (our lives, our energy, our money, our hearts), and a reckoning (the final judgment).

#### TRANSLATION - 25:31-46:

**31** And whenever may come the Son of Man in His glory and all the angels with Him, at that time He will sit on the throne of His glory. **32** And there will be gathered before Him all the nations, and He will separate them from another, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, **33** And He will stand the sheep on His right, and the goats on His left. **34** At that time, he will say, the King to those on His right, "Come those blessed of My Father, inherit the having-been-prepared for you kingdom from the founding of the world. **35** For I hungered and you gave to me to eat, I thirsted and you gave drink to me, a stranger I was being and you welcomed me, **36** naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you cared for me, in prison I was being and you came to Me."

**37** At that time they will answer Him, the righteous, saying, "Lord, when you did we see hungering and we fed, or thirsting and we gave drink? **38** And when you did we see a stranger and we welcomed, or naked and we clothed? **39** And when you did we see being sick or in prison and we came to you?" **40** And after answering the King will say to them, "Truly I say to you, 'In as much as you did to one of these, my brothers of the least, to Me you did.'"

**41** At that time, He will say also to those from the left, "Go away from me, those having been cursed into the eternal fire, that having been prepared for the devil and his angels. **42** For I hungered and you did not give to me to eat; I thirsted and you did not give drink to me, **43** a stranger I was being and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me; I was sick and in prison and you did not care for me."

**44** At that time, they will answer also those saying, "Lord, when you did we see hungering or thirsting or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and we did not minister to you?"

**45** At that time, He will answer them saying, "Truly I say to you, in as much as you did not do to one of these from the least, neither to me you did." **46** And those will depart into eternal punishment, but the righteous unto life eternal."

#### GREEK WORDS:

“Glory” (ver. 31) was used first at 4:8; it is used 166 times in the NT. “Angels” or “messengers” was used first at 1:20, 24. “To sit” was used first at 5:1. “Throne” was first used at 5:34. The word is used extensively in the book of Revelation, 47 times. “To gather” (ver. 32) is used 59 times in the NT, first at 2:4. “Nations” was used first at 4:15. “To separate” was used first at 13:49. “Shepherd” was used first at 9:36. It is used here and 26:31 in Matthew. “Sheep” was used first at 7:15. “Goat” is used here and Luke 15:29 in the NT.

“Right” (ver. 33) was used first at 5:29-30, 39. “Left” was used first at 20:21, 23. “King” (ver. 34) is used 115 times, first at 1:6. “Blessed” is used 41 times in the NT, first at 14:19. “To inherit” was used first at 5:5. “To prepare” was used first at 3:3. “Founding” or “foundation” was used first at 13:35. “World” or “cosmos” (which is the Greek word transliterated) was first used at 4:8.

“To be hungry” (ver. 35) was used at 4:2. “Stranger” or “alien” is used here for the first time in Matthew: 25:35, 38, 43-44; see also Matthew 27:7. It is used a total of 14 times. “To receive” or to “welcome as a guest” was used first at 2:4, but not with this connotation. “Naked” (ver. 36) is used here: 25:36, 38, 43, 44 and 11 more times in the NT. While the word can mean “naked” or even “scantily clad,” the idea means destitute. “To clothe” or “to dress” was first used at 6:29, 31. “To be sick” was used first at 10:8. “To care for” or “to look after” is used here (25:36, 43) and 9 more times in the NT. “Prison” was used first at 5:25.

“Righteous” (ver. 37) was used first at 1:19; it is used 79 times in the NT. “To feed” or “to nourish” was used first at 6:26. “Brother” (ver. 40) was used first at 1:2. The word is used 343 times in the NT, 39 times in Matthew. “To be cursed” (ver. 41) is used only 5 times: here; Mark 11:21; Luke 6:28; Rom. 12:14; James 3:9. “Fire” was used first at 3:10-12. “Eternal” (ver. 41, 46) was used first at 18:8. “Devil” was used first at 4:1, 5, 8, 11. He was mentioned at 13:39 and again, here. The word is used 37 times in the NT. “To minister” (ver. 44) is the verb related to the noun for “deacon.” It was used first at 4:11. “To go away” or “to depart” (ver. 46) is used 117 times; first in Matthew at 2:22. “Punishment” is used only here and 1 John 4:8.

#### GREEK GRAMMAR:

“Having been prepared” (ver. 34, 41) and “having been cursed” (ver. 41) translate a perfect, passive participle suggesting an action completed in the past with continuing effects.

#### PARALLELS:

A “judgment scene” is also found in Romans 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-13 (see also Acts 17:30-31).

#### OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

The idea of Jesus sitting on His throne is rooted in Daniel 7 and Psalm 110:1. For the idea of the people of God as sheep and goats, see Ezekiel 34:17-19. The picture of God as shepherd is found in such passages as: Gen. 48:24; 49:24; Psa. 23:1-4; 74:1-2; Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:11-17; Zech. 10:3.

#### COMMENTS:

Jesus will come “in His glory” - next time for the final judgment (see Heb. 9:28) - and will sit on His throne as He judges. Jesus had already mentioned His sitting on the throne in 19:28. Using a metaphor of sheep and goats - with no indication as to why He chose one to represent the righteous and one to represent the wicked - Jesus pictures a division between those saved and those lost, based on their response to Him in forms they would not recognize. There is no significance to the sheep being on the right versus the goats on the left. The fundamental point of the imagery is that of division and the basis of that division. The separation of the nations was earlier taught in the parables in 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50.

“All the nations” refers to every group of individuals who have ever lived. It is another way of saying every single human being (cf. Rev. 20:11-15). Verse 34 is the only time Jesus refers to Himself (“the Son of Man”) as a king, although He has alluded to it in reference to His kingdom many times. To picture Himself as King was for Jesus to assume the nature of deity

(Psa. 10:16; 146:10; 29:10; Judges 8:23; 1 Sam. 12:12). To picture Himself as Judge was for Jesus to assume the nature of deity (Psa. 75:7; 50:6; 76:8-9; 33:22; 66:16). To picture Himself as Shepherd was for Jesus, to assume the nature of deity (Gen. 48:24; 49:24; Psa. 80:1; 95:7; Jer. 50:7). As He judges, He will bless those on His right and offer them entrance into His kingdom (2 Peter 1:11) which has been prepared since the beginning of the world (cf. John 14:1-4).

Beginning in verse 35, Jesus lists six specific behaviors which will help determine the eternal destination of the “sheep” versus the “goats:” hunger, thirst, traveler, destitute, sick, and imprisoned. This list of good works is repeated, likely for emphasis, four times: 25:35-36, 37-39, 42-43, 44. The “sheep” will respond that they could not remember having treated Jesus this way, to which He will respond with emphasis: “Truly I say to you, whenever you did this to one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did it to me.”

“Least,” in Matthew, refers to followers of Christ, perceived to be more insignificant (11:11). The word “brother(s)” is found in Matthew 38 times. If it is not referring to physical brothers, it is referring to fellow Christians (see, for example, 12:46-50; 28:10). These two points argue strongly that Jesus has in mind the nations’ treatment of servants of Christ.

The similar judgment scene involves those on the left, the “goats.” To them, He will say, “Depart from me cursed ones into eternal fire.” This eternal fire has been prepared for the devil and his messengers (angels, demons, evil spirits), but if one refuses the love of God expressed through Jesus Christ, then the alternative is separation from God, eternal fire with the devil and his messengers. Jesus bluntly accuses the “goats” of ignoring His needs. They responded that they did not know they were ignoring His needs. He responded that when they ignored the needs of His brothers, they were ignoring Him. In words we have seen many times before, the goats, at the final judgment, will be cast into eternal punishment, while the righteous (“sheep”) will enter into eternal life. It is clear, with the word “eternal” modifying both punishment and “life,” that one will last as long as the other. There is no biblical support for the concept of annihilation.

This picture will be the last formal teaching Jesus gives His apostles. Chapter 26 begins the very quick movement toward the cross, the death, burial, and consummating in the resurrection.

#### APPLICATION:

Jesus closely identifies Himself with His disciples in Matthew 10:40-42; 1 Cor. 8:12; 12:27; Acts 9:5. Christians are challenged by Jesus to do good works, which will impact their salvation: Gal. 6:7-10; 2 Cor. 5:10; James 2:14-17; 1 John 3:17-18.

Jesus had talked about His “glorious appearing” in 13:41, 49; 16:27; 24:30. He will sit on His throne while He judges the nations: John 5:24-29; Acts 10:42; 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2 Tim. 4:1. The phrase “eternal life” is used 41 times in the NT; three times in Matthew: 19:16, 29; 25:46. “Eternal punishment” is only found here; but its parallel is “eternal destruction” only in 2 Thessalonians 1:9. This is “destruction” of life, joy, happiness, not destruction of one’s existence.

For the “eternal punishment” otherwise known as the “lake of fire,” see Revelation 14:10-11; 19:20; 20:10, 14-15. For the punishment of demons, see Jude 6 and Revelation 12:7. “Darkness” as a description of hell is found in Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6, 13. There will be only one judgement, when all are gathered before the King: John 5:28-29; Luke 10:31-32.