

# Judging the Sheep and the Goats

Lesson # 32: (Mt. 25:31-46; Acts 9:4-5; Mk. 9:41-42; Zech. 2:8; DA 637-641)

The subject of study in this lesson is the parable of the sheep and the goats. There are several issues which must be looked at as we move along in our study. Whom is Jesus addressing? Who are the brethren of Jesus? When is this scene taking place? What determines the reward of the righteous and the wicked? How is Jesus depicted in the parable? We will seek to answer these and other questions as we proceed.

## The Historical Setting

1. To whom was Jesus particularly addressing in the parable of the ten virgins (Mt. 25:1-13) and the parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14-30)? Was he addressing believers or unbelievers?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. According to Jesus Himself, who are His brethren? “For whosoever shall do the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, the same is my \_\_\_\_\_, and my sister, and mother.” (Mk. 3:35)
3. According to Ellen White, in the strictest sense of the word, who are the brethren of Jesus? “All who have been \_\_\_\_\_ into the heavenly family are in a \_\_\_\_\_ sense the brethren of our Lord.” (DA 638)

**Note:** It would be well to remember this on communion Sabbath when the deacon’s fund offering is received to help the needy of our congregation!!

4. How did Jesus refer to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead? “Go to my \_\_\_\_\_, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and \_\_\_\_\_ Father; and to my God, and \_\_\_\_\_ God.” (Jn. 20:17)
5. How does Jesus refer to those who have been sanctified? “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are \_\_\_\_\_ are all of one; for which cause he is not \_\_\_\_\_ to call them \_\_\_\_\_.” (Heb. 2:11)
6. In the broadest sense of the word, who are the brethren of Jesus? “He [Jesus] is the Son of man, and thus a brother to \_\_\_\_\_ son and daughter of Adam. His followers are not to feel themselves \_\_\_\_\_ from the perishing world around them. They are a part of the great \_\_\_\_\_ of humanity; and Heaven looks upon them as brothers to \_\_\_\_\_ as well as to \_\_\_\_\_.” (DA 638)

## When Does This Scene Occur?

1. Where is Jesus seated as the parable begins? Is he seated alone? Upon the “\_\_\_\_\_ of His \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mt. 25:31)

**Note:** The glory of Jesus is mentioned twice in this parable. We are told that Jesus will “come in his glory” and that he will “sit upon the throne of His glory.” This cannot refer to the second coming because then Jesus will come “in the glory of His Father.” (Mt. 16:27)

2. With whom does Jesus come as the parable begins? With “all the \_\_\_\_\_ angels.” (Mt. 25:31)
3. Who will be gathered before the throne when Jesus comes with all the holy angels? “And before Him shall be gathered \_\_\_\_\_ nations.” (Mt. 25:32)
4. Who will be cast into the fire at the conclusion of this judgment? “Then shall he say also unto them on the \_\_\_\_\_ hand, Depart from me, ye \_\_\_\_\_, into everlasting \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mt. 25:41)
5. Who else will be cast into the fire when this judgment scene concludes? The everlasting fire has been prepared for the \_\_\_\_\_ and his \_\_\_\_\_. (Mt. 25:41)
6. What will God’s people receive at the conclusion of this judgment? “Come, ye blessed of my Father, \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Mt. 25:34)

**Note:** This judgment does not take place at the second coming of Jesus as is commonly believed. For the following reasons, it is describing the great judgment which will take place at the conclusion of the millennium: **1)** It is at the conclusion of the millennium that Jesus will sit upon the throne of His glory and be coronated as King (Rev. 20:11; GC 666). Before this, Jesus was seated with His Father on His throne (Rev. 3:21). **2)** Though Jesus will come with all the holy angels at His second coming, He will also come with them at his “third coming” after the millennium (Zech. 14:5; II Thes. 1:7-10), **3)** It is after the millennium that all nations will be gathered before Christ’s throne (Rev. 20:7-9; GC 670). However, each individual in those nations will be personally judged (Rev. 20:11-15), **4)** It is after the millennium that Satan, his angels and the wicked will be cast into the fire (Rev. 20:7-9, 15), **5)** It is only after the millennium that the saints will inherit the kingdom (Mt. 5:5; Rev. 21:1; Dan. 7:27)

## The Sheep

1. What type of animal does Jesus use to describe His followers? “I am the good \_\_\_\_\_: the good shepherd giveth his life for his \_\_\_\_\_.” (Jn. 10:11)

2. Which Old Testament text stands in the background of the separation process of Matthew 25? “Behold I \_\_\_\_\_ between cattle and cattle, between the \_\_\_\_\_ and the he \_\_\_\_\_.” (Ezek. 34:17; study the entire chapter)

3. Where did Jesus place the sheep after He separated them from the goats? “And He shall set the sheep on his \_\_\_\_\_ hand.” (Mt. 25:33)

**Note:** The right hand is the side of God’s favor and blessing and the left hand is the side of God’s disfavor (see, Gen. 48:13, 14; Mk. 14:62; 16:19; Col. 3:1). Significantly, Judas sat on Jesus’ left hand at the last supper while John the beloved disciple, sat at His right hand (DA 644)

4. According to Jesus, what did the sheep do to Him? “For I was an \_\_\_\_\_, and ye gave me meat; I was \_\_\_\_\_, and ye gave me drink; I was a \_\_\_\_\_ and ye took me in; \_\_\_\_\_, and ye clothed me; I was \_\_\_\_\_, and ye visited me; I was in \_\_\_\_\_, and ye came unto me.” (Mt. 25:35-36)

**Note:** The words of Jesus possess a profound spiritual meaning. He is not only stating that His followers must share their literal food, water, clothing, freedom and shelter with the needy. Food represents the Word of God. Water symbolizes the Holy Spirit. Visiting those who are in bondage means visiting those who are slaves to sin. Sharing our clothing represents sharing Christ’s righteousness. Taking in the homeless means to bring into the household of faith those who were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers fro the covenant of promise” (Eph. 2:12)

5. What does Ellen White say about those who feel that they must visit the “holy land” in order to get closer to Jesus? “But we need not go to \_\_\_\_\_, to \_\_\_\_\_ or to \_\_\_\_\_, in order to walk in the steps of Jesus. We shall find His footprints beside the \_\_\_\_\_, in the hovels of \_\_\_\_\_, in the crowded alleys of the \_\_\_\_\_, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall \_\_\_\_\_ in His steps.” (DA 640)

6. What evidence do we have that the sheep did not serve Jesus with a mercenary spirit? (Read verses 37-39 and then answer the question) \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Those who are genuine followers of Jesus do not serve Him because they hope for reward. Their works of love for the needy are spontaneous.

7. How did the righteous do these things to Jesus? “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my \_\_\_\_\_, ye have don it unto \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mt. 25:40)

8. What did Jesus say to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus? “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou \_\_\_\_\_?” (Acts 9:4)
9. What did Jesus say about those who shared a glass of water with his thirsty disciples? “For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye \_\_\_\_\_ to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mk. 9:41)
10. According to Zechariah, how does God look upon those who mistreat His children? “He that toucheth you, toucheth the \_\_\_\_\_ of His \_\_\_\_\_.” (Zechariah 2:8)
11. According to James, the brother of Jesus, what two elements characterize true religion? “Pure religion and \_\_\_\_\_ before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and \_\_\_\_\_ in their affliction, and to keep himself \_\_\_\_\_ from the world.” (James 1:27)

**Note:** Pure religion, like a coin, has two sides. One side is composed of practical religion, doing good to those who are in distress. The other side has to do with keeping oneself unspotted by the world. On the one hand we are to do good. On the other hand we must cease to do evil.

12. Is it necessary to be a Bible scholar in order to be commended in the judgment? “Those whom Christ commends in the judgment may have known little of \_\_\_\_\_, but they have cherished His principles.” (DA 638)
13. Will Christians have a monopoly when Jesus passes out commendations in the final judgment? “Even among the \_\_\_\_\_ are those who have cherished the spirit of \_\_\_\_\_; before the words of life had fallen upon their ears, they have befriended the \_\_\_\_\_, even ministering to them at the peril of their own lives. . . . Among the heathen are those who \_\_\_\_\_ God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by \_\_\_\_\_ instrumentality, yet they will not perish.” (DA 638)
14. What will God’s faithful people inherit and from when was this inheritance prepared? “The meek shall \_\_\_\_\_ the earth.” (Mt. 5:5). Come, ye \_\_\_\_\_ of my Father, \_\_\_\_\_ the kingdom prepared for you from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world.” (Mt. 25:34)

### The Goats

1. According to Jesus, did the goats actively mistreat His people? (Read verses 42-44 for the answer) \_\_\_\_\_. What will Jesus say to the goats? “Inasmuch as ye did it \_\_\_\_\_ to one of the least of these, ye did it \_\_\_\_\_ to me.” (Mt. 25:45).

**Note:** The wicked goats did not actively mistreat Christ's brothers. Their sin was not of commission but of **omission**. Their evil consisted in **neglecting** to meet the needs of Christ's brothers. In the allegory of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man did not mistreat Lazarus. He simply neglected to alleviate his suffering. We will be judged not only on the basis of what we do, but also on the basis of what we neglected to do.

2. According to Ellen White, why do the goats say: 'Lord, when saw we thee and hungred or athirst, or a stranger or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?' "Satan had \_\_\_\_\_ them; they had not perceived what they owed to their brethren. They had been \_\_\_\_\_, and cared not for others' needs." (DA 639)
3. **Thought Question:** What implicit evidence do we have in the parable that Jesus keeps a record of our deeds? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Hint: Notice the tense of the verbs in verses 35-43)

### Judgment Review and Execution

4. According to Ellen White, what will determine our eternal destiny in the final assize? "There will be but two \_\_\_\_\_, and their eternal destiny will be determined by what they have \_\_\_\_\_ or have \_\_\_\_\_ to do for Him in the person of the poor and suffering." (DA 637)
1. According to Revelation 20:12-13, what is contained in the books which will be examined after the millennium? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which book is brought to light after the millennium and why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Revelation 20:15)
3. What kind of fire will the goats be cast into? \_\_\_\_\_ fire. (Mt. 25:41)
4. What is God called in Hebrews 12:24? "For our God is a \_\_\_\_\_ fire."
5. Because God is everlasting, the fire is also everlasting. What will the fire do to the wicked? "And \_\_\_\_\_ came down from \_\_\_\_\_ out of heaven, and \_\_\_\_\_ them."  
(Rev. 20:9)
6. How does Malachi describe the destruction of Satan and the wicked? "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall \_\_\_\_\_ as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do \_\_\_\_\_, shall be stubble, and that day that cometh shall \_\_\_\_\_ them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor \_\_\_\_\_." (Mal. 4:1)

**Note:** Jesus said to His disciples: “I am the vine, you are the branches.” On the other hand, Satan is the root of all evil and his followers are the branches.

7. What will hapapen to Satan when he is cast into the fire? “I will bring thee [Satan] to \_\_\_\_\_ upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be \_\_\_\_\_ at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and \_\_\_\_\_ more shalt thou be any more.” (Ezek. 28:18-19)

8. Who alone will be able to dwell with God who is an everlasting consuming fire? “He that walketh \_\_\_\_\_, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding \_\_\_\_\_, that stoppeth his ears from hearing \_\_\_\_\_, and shutteth his eyes from seeing \_\_\_\_\_.” (Isa. 33:15)

**Note:** Only those who have developed a fire proof character will be able to dwell with God who is an everlasting consuming fire.

9. **Thought Question:** What does Ellen White mean when she says that “Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God”? (DA 641)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. When will God’s people be prepared for heaven? “When we love the \_\_\_\_\_ as He has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are \_\_\_\_\_ for heaven; for we have heaven in our \_\_\_\_\_.” (DA 641)

11. What will happen on judgment day with those who have not worked for Christ? “In the great judgment day, those who have not worked for Christ, who have \_\_\_\_\_ along thinking of themselves, caring for \_\_\_\_\_, will be placed by the Judge of the whole earth with those who did \_\_\_\_\_. They receive the same condemnation.” (DA 641)

