# Lesson Notes on Matthew 25 – Sheep and Goats Judgement Study

**31**“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. **32**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. **33**And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. **34**Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **35**for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; **36**I *was* naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

**37**“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You,* or thirsty and give *You* drink? **38**When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You?* **39**Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ **40**And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’

**41**“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: **42**for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; **43**I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’

**44**“Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ **45**Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.’ **46**And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Observations:

* This event it appears doesn’t refer to the Great White Throne judgement or the believer’s judgement at the Rapture. Since all nations are called. Also, Jesus is called King, so this must be at Step 7.
  + The end of Matthew 24 also walks through the steps and describes this as part of Step 7.
  + Reading Revelation Chapter 20, reveals that the Great White Throne Judgement must occur “after” the 1,000 year reign. So, the judgement mentioned here must occur earlier.
  + This judgement is sometimes referred to as the Judgement of the Nations.
  + David Guzik thought – this may be the judgement immediately after the Tribulation. This is the separation before the 1,000 year reign.
* A parable reference is made in the natural pertaining to sheep being separated from goats.
* If on the right side, you receive an inheritance that was designed ever since the beginning.
* How did the ones on the right qualify for this inheritance? They performed good works directly for the King when He was in need.
* They are called righteous or in right standing with the Father and the King.
* When did they ever see the King in such distress or need? The answer is when it is performed to those who are the least, it was performed for him.
  + Note: one commentary makes the distinction that this may mean “Christian Brethren”. This has some credibility since in order to be related to Christ, it is through belief and the process. This same perspective expands the definition to everyone based upon what we know about the nature of Christ….He died for all.
* The King just identified himself with those who are in need. This is the Kingdom perspective.
* If you are on the left side, or the wrong side, instead of a blessing, you get cursed. The reference here is that eternity in torment with the devil awaits them.
* Why such a harsh judgement? What qualified them for this? Because they didn’t show these specific examples of compassion….they didn’t minister to those in need.
* The difference in actions are judgement versus eternal life and blessings. Both sides exist for eternity….but forever punishment is no way to live.

It is important to have a Kingdom perspective of what’s happening around us and to us.

David Guzik – what we don’t do, might be more damaging than the sins we did do.

 **Rapture**

 **Tribulation Period (7 years)**

 **Second Coming of Christ**

 **Sheep and Goats Judgment** (Matt. 25)

 **Millennial Reign (1000 years)**

 **Final Rebellion / Satan judged**

 **Great White Throne Judgment** (Rev. 20:11–15)

 **New Heavens and New Earth**

Isaiah 61: “The Spirit of the Lord God *is* upon Me,  
Because the Lord has anointed Me  
To preach good tidings to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives,  
And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound;  
**2**To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,  
And the day of vengeance of our God;  
To comfort all who mourn,  
**3**To console those who mourn in Zion,  
To give them beauty for ashes,  
The oil of joy for mourning,  
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;  
That they may be called trees of righteousness,  
The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”

Prophesy says the Lord has anointed him to preach hope to the poor, heal brokenhearted, liberty to captives, setting free those in prison. Verses 2-3 refers to the Fall Feasts.

See also Isaiah 35:5-6

Luke 4: **16**So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. **17**And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

**18**“The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon Me,  
Because He has anointed Me  
To preach the gospel to *the* poor;  
He has sent Me ]to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to *the* captives  
And recovery of sight to *the* blind,  
*To* set at liberty those who are oppressed;  
**19**To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

**20**Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. **21**And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Notice where Christ is in the process when he declares and reads this scripture. He has just come back from the temptation in the wilderness (Steps 1-6?).

Luke 7: **18**Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. **19**And John, calling two of his disciples to *him,* sent *them* to Jesus, saying, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

**20**When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’ ” **21**And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

**22**Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the* blind see, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised, *the* poor have the gospel preached to them. **23**And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me.”

Matthew 7: **15**“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. **16**You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? **17**Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. **18**A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. **19**Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20**Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

**I Never Knew You**

**21**“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **22**Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ **23**And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

This may refer to people who are doing works but have skipped the first four steps of righteousness.

| **Step** | **Feast** | **Spiritual Focus** | **Personal Relationship Emphasis** | **Scripture Links** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. The Cross** | **Passover** | **Receiving Christ as Savior** | Personal revelation of Jesus as the Lamb. Begins with brokenness, repentance, and the joy of salvation. | Matt. 7:21–23 – They said “Lord,” but never surrendered.Isa. 61:1 – *“Preach good news to the poor”* – poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3). |
| **2. The Tomb** | **Unleavened Bread** | **Turning from Sin and Self** | You bury your old self. Intimacy grows as you choose to deny flesh and follow Jesus—not just in name, but in daily surrender. | Matt. 25:42–45 – Goats refused to die to self-interest.Luke 4:18 – *“Heal the brokenhearted”* – inner healing through confession and trust. |
| **3. Resurrection Life** | **Firstfruits** | **New Identity and Living Hope** | You experience Christ’s resurrection power in your life. You no longer just believe in Jesus—you begin living through Him. | Isa. 61:3 – *“Beauty for ashes… joy instead of mourning”* – signs of personal resurrection.Gal. 2:20 – *“It is no longer I who live…”* |
| **Step** | **Feast** | **Spiritual Focus** | Outward Fruit and Ministry | Scripture Links |
| **4. Spirit Empowerment** | **Pentecost** | **Walking by the Spirit** | Genuine relationship leads to hearing God’s voice, discernment, and boldness. | Matt. 7:23 – “I never knew you” — absence of intimacy.Luke 4:18 – “Anointed to proclaim liberty” |
| **5. Mercy & Justice** | **Trumpets** | **Bearing Fruit in Compassion** | The sheep in Matt. 25 show love because they know Love. True mercy flows from a heart aligned with God’s justice. | Matt. 25:40 – “You did it to Me” – union with Christ visible through actions. |
| **6. Sanctification** | **Day of Atonement** | **Inner Cleansing & Right Standing** | The Spirit continues refining you. You live with a clear conscience before God and others. | Isa. 61:3 – “Oaks of righteousness”Ps. 24:3–4 – “Clean hands, pure heart” |
| **7. Kingdom Inheritance** | **Tabernacles** | **Dwelling with God Forever** | You’re ready to enter His Kingdom—having walked in union, bore fruit, and loved the least. | Matt. 25:34 – “Inherit the Kingdom”Isa. 61:7 – “Everlasting joy shall be yours” |

Summary and Conclusion:

"Jesus isn’t giving us a legal checklist. He’s revealing His heart—and what it looks like when someone truly knows Him. Some may care for the homeless, others may disciple prisoners, and some may comfort the grieving. But **all true believers** will bear some **evidence** of His mercy and compassion.”

Most theologians do **not** teach that a person must perform **every individual act listed** (e.g., feeding the hungry, visiting the prisoner, healing the brokenhearted, etc.) to be accepted by Christ.  
But they do affirm that **genuine saving faith** will produce **some** evidence of these **kinds** of works—because they reflect the **heart and character of Jesus**.

Follow the Steps….His steps!

| **Judgment** | **When** | **Who Is Judged** | **Purpose** | **Believers Involved?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Bema Seat (Judgment Seat of Christ)***(2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10–12; 1 Cor. 3:12–15)* | After the **Rapture** | **Church-age believers** | To **reward** believers for faithfulness—not to punish or condemn | ✅ Yes — only believers |
| **2. Sheep and Goats Judgment***(Matt. 25:31–46)* | At Christ’s **Second Coming**, before the Millennial Kingdom | **Survivors of the Tribulation** (nations/individuals) | To separate **righteous from unrighteous** based on how they treated “the least of these” (likely Christ’s brethren during the Tribulation) | ✅ Possibly — *Tribulation believers*, not Church-age saints |
| **3. Great White Throne Judgment***(Rev. 20:11–15)* | After the **Millennium** | **All unbelievers** from all ages | To judge and sentence the dead who rejected Christ | ❌ No — believers are not judged here |