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Serving the Least of His Brethren

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **February 15, 2015**

Matthew 25:31-46

Introduction: The Old Testament records numerous prophecies related to the coming of Christ, the Messiah. Some of those prophecies present Him as the suffering Servant, upon whom is laid the "iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). Other prophecies portray Him as the Son of Man, coming in the clouds to take **dominion** over all the earth (Dan. 7:13-14).

These prophecies must have been perplexing to those who recorded them. What the Old Testament announces, however the New Testament explains.

The Old Testament anticipated a coming judgment when the dead shall rise, "**some to everlasting life**, and **some to shame and everlasting contempt**" (Dan. 12:2). However, the New Testament delineates (describes) several aspects (views) of the coming **judgment** that occur at different times. The judgment described in Matthew 25 will occur immediately upon Christ's **return to earth** to establish his **everlasting kingdom**.

(Source: The Bible Expositor and Illuminator, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series)

Matthew 24:29-30, Immediately **AFTER** the **tribulation** of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the **sign** of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth **mourn**, and they shall **SEE** the **Son of man** coming in the clouds of heaven with POWER and great glory.

Matthew 24:36, But of that **day** and **hour** knoweth no man, NO, not the angels of heaven, but my Father ONLY.

Revelation 1:7, Behold, he cometh with clouds; and **every eye** shall **SEE** him, and they also which pierced him: and **all kindreds** of the earth shall WAIL because of him.

NOTE: WHEN the **second coming** will occur is not and **cannot be known**, **except** to the "Father" (Matt. 24:36). Reference to Christ's coming "on the clouds of heaven, etc." is similar to the words he used before the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:62) and also coincides with the message of the angels who said upon the occasion of his ascension that "in like manner" he would come again (Acts 1:11). *(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/ com/bcc/)*

Thought 1. In Matthew 24:36, Jesus told them he doesn't even know when this day is. Another truth is his second coming is **AFTER** the Seven years of Tribulation. What's normally called the "Rapture", takes place before the Tribulation and Jesus is NOT seen by "every eye" as is written about his Second Coming.

Matthew 25:31, When the Son of man shall come in **his glory**, and all the **holy angels** with him, THEN shall he sit upon the **throne** of his glory...

NOTE: When He returns to earth in the future, He brings those Christians who **died** during the tribulation (Rev. 3:5; Rev. 19:11-16, before the tribulation (Rev. 20:4-6) and at the **end** of the **tribulation** (Matt. 25:31-33) together. That is the message of Matt. 24:31-33. (Source: <http://www.neverthirsty.org/pp/corner/read1/r00302.html>)

Revelation 20:4-6, And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and **judgment** was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the WITNESS of **Jesus**, and for the word of God, and which had **not worshipped** the **beast**, neither his image, **neither** had received **his mark** upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and **reigned** with Christ a **thousand years**. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the **first (best) resurrection**. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the SECOND DEATH hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall **reign** with him a **thousand years**.

Thought 1. Remember, in reference to time, when Jesus was resurrected along with the other saints, this was literally the FIRST resurrection.

Matthew 27:51-53, And... The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top... and the earth did quake... And the **graves** were **opened**; and many **bodies** of the **saints** which slept **arose**. And came out of the **graves AFTER his resurrection**, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

Matthew 25:32-34, ...And before him shall be **gathered** all **nations (people)**: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto THEM on his **right hand**, Come, ye **BLESSED** of my Father, **INHERIT** the **kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world...

NOTE: ...In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus tells us that He will place the sheep, **Christians**, on His right and **non-Christians** on His left. Those He places on His right will go into the kingdom (Matt. 25:34) which starts as an **earthly Kingdom** and ends up as a heavenly kingdom (Rev. 20:2, 4-5; Rev. 21:5-7; 1 John 5:5 and Rev. 2:11). Those on His left will go into eternal punishment (Matt. 25:46).

Some have said the goat and **sheep judgment** occurs immediately at Jesus' Second Coming. Others believe it occurs at the **Great White Throne**. This difference of opinion is mainly found between dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists such as **amillennialists** and **postmillennialists**. Non-dispensationalists say Matthew 25:31-46 is the Great White Throne judgment. But there are several reasons this cannot be true.

First, **IF** the non-dispensationalists are correct that this is the Great White Throne judgment, then **everyone** should be sent to the Lake of Fire, according to Rev. 20:11-15. Even the sheep should be sent into eternal punishment. But this cannot be true since earlier in Rev. 20:4-6 the Holy Spirit has told us that those who are resurrected earlier – the **first resurrection** – will not be subject to the "**second death**."

Revelation 20:11-15, And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw **the dead**, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up **the dead** which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the **lake of fire**. This is the **second death**. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

There are **two different resurrections** and **two different judgments** in Revelation 20 (Rev. 20:4-6 and Rev. 20:11-15).

God made a decision or a judgment in order to select those who would **reign** in the **Kingdom**. Second, in Matthew 25:31 Jesus sits on a glorious throne and in Rev. 20:11 Jesus sits on a **great white throne**. A throne of judgment. The first is a time of victory and the second is a sober time.

Finally, **this judgment** is for those are **living** (Matt. 25:31). In Revelation 20:4-15, there are two resurrections - for the DEAD people. At the end of Rev. 19:20-21, we find that living persons who received the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image were immediately judged. This is the time of the Sheep of Goat judgment.

Conclusion: Yes, the Sheep and Goat judgment occurs on earth just **before** the 1,000 year reign of Christ. Scripture teaches that there are **three judgments**: Bema Seat judgment, Sheep and Goat Judgment, and the Great White Throne judgment. The Bema Seat judgment is for **all Christians**. The Goat and Sheep judgment separates the living saints from those who are not (*saints*). The saints enter the Kingdom both those who were resurrected and those who were still living at the end of the Tribulation. The **Great White Throne judgment** is for **all dead NON-Christians**.

(Source: <http://www.neverthirsty.org/pp/corner/read1/r00302.html>)

Matthew 25:35-40, For **I was** an hungred, and ye gave me meat: **I was** thirsty, and ye gave me drink: **I was** a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: **I was** sick, and ye visited me: **I was** in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the **RIGHTEOUS** answer him, saying, Lord, when **saw** we thee an **hungred**, and **fed thee?** or thirsty, and gave thee **drink?** When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the **LEAST** of **these my brethren**, **YE have done it** unto **ME**.

Thought 1. In this set of verses there are TWO key words as to the identity of the people. The first is “righteous” and the next is “brethren.” What Jesus said is these people on the right are BELIEVERS on him, so they are Christians. These are spiritual brethren made up of people from different nations, but are ONE in his body. That’s why he said if you have done it to the LEAST of my brethren, you have done it unto me.

Remember in Acts 9:4, Saul, while on the Damascus road had a vision and heard Jesus say, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest THOU ME?” So, when Saul persecuted Christians, he was persecuting Jesus, because they are in him, and he in them. This is more EVIDENCE that what is done to the LEAST of the Christians is in FACT done to Jesus.

Romans 5:19, For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, c so by the obedience of ONE shall many be **made righteous**.

1 John 3:22-23, And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should **BELIEVE** on the **name (authority)** of his Son Jesus Christ, and **LOVE** one another, as he gave us commandment.

1 John 3:14, 17-19, We KNOW that we have passed from DEATH unto LIFE, because we LOVE the brethren. He that loveth not **his brother** abideth in death. ...But whoso hath this world's good, and SEETH his BROTHER have NEED, and shutteth up his **bowels** of compassion from him, how dwelleth the **love** of God **in him?** My little children, let us NOT love in word, neither in tongue; but in DEED and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall ASSURE our hearts before him.

Galatians 6:9-10, And let us not be **weary** in **well doing**: for in due season we shall reap, IF we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us **DO GOOD** unto ALL men, especially unto them who are of the **household (relative)** of faith.

Thought 2. So, Jesus was saying their works: showing love, showed their faith.

Ephesians 2:8-10, For by **grace** are ye SAVED through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: **Not of WORKS**, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created IN Christ Jesus UNTO **good WORKS**, which God **hath** before **ordained** that we should walk in them.

James 2:18, Yea, a man may say, Thou hast **faith**, and I have **works**: shew me thy faith without thy **works**, and I will **SHEW** thee my faith by my WORKS.

James 2:19-21, Thou **believest** that there is one God; thou **doest well**: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou **KNOW**, O vain man, that faith without **works** is **dead** (IDLE [inactive; doing nothing])? Was not Abraham our father

JUSTIFIED by works, when he had **offered** Isaac his son upon the altar?

Justified defined 1344, SHOW just or innocent: RIGHTEOUS.

Matthew 25:41-46, Then shall he say also unto them on the **left hand**, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the **devil** and **his angels**: For I was an **hungred**, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, **LORD**, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it NOT to **one** of the **least** of **these**, **YE** did it **NOT** to me.

And these shall go away into everlasting **punishment**: but the **righteous** into **life eternal**.

NOTE: These persons. Many, holding the doctrine of universal salvation, have contended that God would punish sin only. Christ says that **those** on his left hand shall go away-not sins, but **sinners**. Besides, sin, as an abstract thing, cannot be punished. It is nothing but the acts of transgressors; and to be reached at all, must be reached by punishing the offenders.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

Thought 1. This punishment is appointed to all unbelievers because of their refusal to obey God's command to **BELIEVE** on Jesus: trusting in his work on the cross. And consequently their names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

John 3:14-18, And **AS** (just like) Moses lifted up the **serpent** in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever **believeth** in him should **not perish**, but have **eternal life**. For God **so loved** the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever **believeth** in him should not perish, but have everlasting **life**. For God sent not his Son into the world to **condemn** the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is **NOT** condemned: but he that believeth **NOT** is condemned already, because he hath **not BELIEVED** in the **name (authority)** of the only begotten Son of God.

John 16:7-9 ...if I go not away, the **Comforter** will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will **reprove** the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of **SIN**, because they **believe not** on me...

1 John 3:23, And this is his commandment, That we should **believe** on the **name** of his Son Jesus Christ, and **LOVE** one another, **AS** he gave us commandment.

Revelation 20:15, And whosoever was not found **written** in the **book** of **life** was cast into the lake of **fire**.