

Serving the Least

Key Verse: *“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.”*
—Matthew 25:40

Selected Scripture:
Matthew 25:31-46

in blessing all the families of the earth during his kingdom.

Today’s lesson involves a future judgment of the human family. This process will require a thousand years for its completion. At the end of that time, a decision will be rendered for each individual member of mankind as to their ultimate destiny.—Rev. 20:4,6

At the commencement of Jesus’ parable of the sheep and the goats, we note those who have been faithful footstep followers of Christ in this life will have already received a heavenly reward. These will be associated with their Lord in the glorious kingdom of righteousness. “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels [faithful followers] with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his

DURING HIS EARTHLY ministry, our Lord Jesus humbled himself to the death of the cross. As a result, an opportunity has been provided for all mankind to be resurrected from the death sentence which came upon humanity because of Adam’s original sin. (Phil. 2:8) Furthermore, it was God’s desire that there be a “little flock” of faithful followers which would be associated with Christ Jesus

glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.”—Matt. 25:31,32

Jesus indicated the sheep would inherit the kingdom, whereas the goats would be destroyed. (vss. 34,41) The reason for these decisions lay in the fact that the sheep ministered to the Lord’s needs and received his approval, whereas the goats failed to render any assistance. Therefore, they merited being rejected because of their selfish attitude.—vss. 37-39,44

Since neither the sheep nor the goats had an opportunity to walk with Christ during his earthly sojourn, both groups were puzzled as to how they aided or failed to assist him in his time of need. The conclusion of the matter rests in the fact that during the kingdom, there will be opportunities to help bless or ignore fellow members of the human family when they are awakened from the sleep of death.

Our Key Verse indicates the sheep will merit everlasting life because the Lord will credit their works in assisting fellow travelers up the highway of holiness as though they had done it for him personally.

Although the setting of this parable is during the kingdom when mankind will be judged worthy or unworthy of everlasting life on earth, it also contains a lesson for those who are striving to be footstep followers of Christ during this Gospel Age. When we note the weaknesses, trials, and temptations of fellow believers, let us remember that we, too, are subject to the same attacks by the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. Our sympathetic desire to help others would demonstrate our appreciation for the privilege of rendering service. Let us recognize the importance of aiding our brethren through our actions, prayers, and general spirit of encouragement. ■