

# The Two Builders

## Lesson \* 20: (Mt. 7:15-29; Lk. 6:47-49; MB 145-152)

One of the great parables of Jesus is that of the men who built their houses upon the rock and upon the sand. I vividly remember going through the primary division of Sabbath School and singing at the top of my lungs about the house of the foolish man which came tumbling down! But oddly enough, I don't remember ever hearing about what the parable means. In this lesson we will attempt to decode its important meaning for God's people in these last days.

### Textual and Geographical Setting

1. What relationship does this parable have with the Sermon on the Mount? "Jesus ended His teaching with an illustration that presented with startling \_\_\_\_\_ the importance of putting in \_\_\_\_\_ the words He had spoken." (MB 147)

**Note:** This parable is not only the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. It reveals the eternal consequences of accepting or rejecting that sermon.

2. What was the geographical setting of this parable? "As they say upon the \_\_\_\_\_, listening to the words of Christ, they could \_\_\_\_\_ valleys and ravines through which the mountain streams found their way to the sea.." (MB 145)
3. What happened in the summer and winter? "In summer these streams often wholly \_\_\_\_\_ leaving only a dry and dusty channel. But when the wintry \_\_\_\_\_ burst upon the hills, the rivers became fierce, raging \_\_\_\_\_, at times overspreading the valleys and bearing everything away on their resistless flood." (MB 147-148)
4. What classic word did Jesus often use to introduce this and other parables? "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will \_\_\_\_\_ him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." (Mt. 7:24)

### Wise and Foolish Builders

1. In which other parable does Jesus refer to wise and foolish followers? "And five of them [virgins] were \_\_\_\_\_, and five were \_\_\_\_\_." (Mt. 25:2).

**Note:** The Greek words for "wise" and "foolish" in the parable of the ten virgins are identical to those in the parable of the two builders. This indicates that these parables should be studied together.

2. What characterized the wise man who built his house upon a rock? "Therefore whosoever heareth these \_\_\_\_\_ of mine, and \_\_\_\_\_ them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which \_\_\_\_\_ his house upon a rock." (Mt. 7:24)

**Note:** It is important to realize that the word for “sayings” in this verse is *logos*. This very word is used to describe Jesus in John 1:1-3, 14.

3. What significant expression does the gospel of Luke add to this parable? “Whosoever \_\_\_\_\_ to me, and \_\_\_\_\_ my sayings, and \_\_\_\_\_ them, I will shew you to whom he is like.” (Lk. 6:47)
4. What characterized the foolish man who built his house upon the sand? “And every one that heareth these \_\_\_\_\_ of mine, and doeth them \_\_\_\_\_, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mt. 7:26)

### Hearing and Doing

1. What significant statement did the apostle Paul make? “For not the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law are just before God, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law shall be justified.” (Rom. 2:13).

**Note:** We have all heard the expression, “words are cheap”. This is exactly what the apostle Paul is saying in Romans 2:13.

2. What information does the apostle John add to this discussion about saying and doing? “My little children, let us not love in \_\_\_\_\_, neither in \_\_\_\_\_; but in \_\_\_\_\_ and in truth.” (I John 3:18)
3. How does the context of this parable illustrate the contrast between the sayers and the doers? “Not everyone that \_\_\_\_\_ unto me, \_\_\_\_\_, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that \_\_\_\_\_ the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (Mt. 7:21)
4. Is it possible to perform supernatural feats and yet to be reckoned among the foolish? “Many will \_\_\_\_\_ unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not \_\_\_\_\_ in thy name? And in thy name have cast out \_\_\_\_\_? And in thy name done many \_\_\_\_\_ works? (Mt. 7:22)

**Note:** These counterfeit disciples claimed the name of Jesus. They exercised what appeared to be the gifts of the Holy Spirit (see, I Corinthians 12:7-11) and yet Jesus refused to recognize them as His.

5. What important words does Ellen G. White write about those who place their personal experiences above the Word of God? “When persons speak lightly of the word of God, and set their impressions, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ above the divine standard, we may know that they have no \_\_\_\_\_ in them.” (MB 146)
6. What sobering words did Jesus pronounce to these counterfeit disciples? “And then I will \_\_\_\_\_ unto them, I \_\_\_\_\_ knew you: depart from me, ye that \_\_\_\_\_ iniquity.” (Mt. 7:23)

**Note:** The word “iniquity” here is the Greek *anomias*. It means “lawlessness” or “one who lives contrary to the law.” It is significant that many of those who profess the name of Christ will actually be opposed to God’s law. The same word is used in II Thes. 2:7, 8.

7. What other contextual evidence do we have that the foolish man represents those who disguise themselves as Christians? “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s \_\_\_\_\_, but inwardly they are ravening \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mt. 7:15)
8. What parallel expression did Jesus use to address the five foolish virgins? “Afterward came also the other [foolish] virgins, \_\_\_\_\_, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mt. 25:11-12)

### **Bearing Fruit to God’s Glory**

1. “Doing” and “bearing fruit” are two ways of saying the same thing. What will be the evidence of a truly committed Christian? “Ye shall know them by their \_\_\_\_\_. . . . A good tree \_\_\_\_\_ bring forth \_\_\_\_\_ fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” (Mt. 7:16, 18).
2. What is the good fruit which the good tree bears? “But the fruit of the \_\_\_\_\_ is love, joy, \_\_\_\_\_, longsuffering, gentleness, \_\_\_\_\_, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no \_\_\_\_\_.” (Gal. 5:22-23)
3. What is the evil fruit which the evil tree produces? “Now the works of the \_\_\_\_\_ are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, \_\_\_\_\_, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, \_\_\_\_\_ variance, emulations, \_\_\_\_\_, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, \_\_\_\_\_, drunkenness, revelings and the \_\_\_\_\_.” (Gal. 5:19-21)
4. What will happen to those who bear evil fruit? “Every tree that bringeth \_\_\_\_\_ forth good fruit is \_\_\_\_\_ down, and cast into the fire. . . . they which do such things shall not \_\_\_\_\_ the kingdom of God.” (Mt. 7:19; Gal. 5:21)
5. Which is the only way we can bear good fruit? “I am the vine, ye are the \_\_\_\_\_: He that \_\_\_\_\_ in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth \_\_\_\_\_ fruit, for without \_\_\_\_\_ ye can do \_\_\_\_\_. . . . Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much \_\_\_\_\_; so shall ye be my \_\_\_\_\_.” (Jn. 10:5, 8)
6. What boastful claims did the Jews of Christ’s day make? “We be \_\_\_\_\_ seed.” (Jn. 8:33)
7. What did John the Baptist say about this boastful claim? “And now also the axe is laid unto the \_\_\_\_\_ of the trees: Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth \_\_\_\_\_ fruit is

hewn down, and cast into the \_\_\_\_\_.” (Mt. 3:10; read Luke 3:10-14 to see what John meant by “fruit”).

8. What did the apostle Paul say about the meaning of the word “fruit”? “But now being made free from \_\_\_\_\_, and become \_\_\_\_\_ to God, ye have your \_\_\_\_\_ unto holiness, and the \_\_\_\_\_ everlasting life.” (Rom. 6:22)

### **Building the House**

1. What did God call Israel and Judah in the Old Testament? “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel, and with the \_\_\_\_\_ of Judah.” (Jer. 31:31)
2. What does the house represent in the New Testament? “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, which is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the living God, the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the truth.” (I Tim. 3:15)
3. In a broader sense, what does the “house” represent? “Except the LORD build the \_\_\_\_\_, they labor in vain that \_\_\_\_\_ it.”

**Note:** The succeeding context clearly indicates that the word “house” means the family.

4. Besides the corporate church, does the “house” also represent individual persons? “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a \_\_\_\_\_, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will \_\_\_\_\_ into my \_\_\_\_\_ from whence I came out. . . .” (Mt. 12:43-44). Clearly, “man” and “house” are parallel in these verses.
5. How difficult is it to build a house upon a rock? “These houses were reared with \_\_\_\_\_ and difficulty. They were not \_\_\_\_\_ of access, and their location appeared less inviting than the grassy \_\_\_\_\_.” (MB 148)

**Note:** Building is hard work. It takes planning, carefully chosen materials and a solid foundation. But all the hard work is worth it when the tempest comes.

6. What is meant by the act of building? “To a great extent everyone is the \_\_\_\_\_ of his own \_\_\_\_\_. Every day the structure more nearly approaches completion. The Word of God warns us to take heed how we \_\_\_\_\_, to see that our building is \_\_\_\_\_ upon the Eternal Rock.” (Child Guidance, p. 164).
7. How is character built? “We build on Christ by \_\_\_\_\_ His word. It is not he who merely \_\_\_\_\_ righteousness, that is righteous, but he who \_\_\_\_\_ righteousness. Holiness is not \_\_\_\_\_; it is the result of surrendering all to God; it is

doing the \_\_\_\_\_ of our heavenly Father. . . . It is through \_\_\_\_\_ that character is built.” (MB 149)

### **Building Upon the Rock**

1. In the Old Testament, what is represented by the rock we must build upon? “The LORD is my \_\_\_\_\_, and my fortress, and my deliverer; the God of my rock; in him will I trust: He is my \_\_\_\_\_, and the horn of my salvation, my high \_\_\_\_\_, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.” (II Sam. 22:2-3)
2. Who is identified as the rock in the New Testament? “And did [Israel] all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ that followed them, and that Rock was \_\_\_\_\_.” (I Cor. 10:4; see also I Peter 2:8)
3. How does the gospel of Luke underline the importance of a proper foundation? “He is like a man [the wise builder] which built an house, and digged \_\_\_\_\_, and laid the \_\_\_\_\_ on a rock.” (Lk. 6:48)

**Note:** Ellen White describes the five foolish virgins as those Christians who have a superficial religion. They do not dig deep into the Word of God to put the character in harmony with it.

4. What is the only sure foundation we can build upon? “For other \_\_\_\_\_ can no man lay than that is laid, which is \_\_\_\_\_ Christ.” (I Cor. 3:11)
5. What assurance is given to those who build upon Christ, the Rock? “And I say also unto thee that *thou* art Peter [*petros*, meaning pebble], and upon *this* \_\_\_\_\_ [*petra*] I will \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_; and the gates of hell [*hades*, the grave] shall not prevail against it.” (Mt. 16:18)
6. How do we build upon Christ? “The \_\_\_\_\_ of God is the only steadfast thing our world knows. It is the sure \_\_\_\_\_.” (MB 148)

**Note:** Jesus is the Word of God in person (John 1:1-3, 14) but we assimilate that person by studying and obeying His word. When we assimilate His Word we partake of His very life. This is what Jesus meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood (see, John 6:63).

7. In a specific sense, what did Jesus mean when He spoke about building on the rock? “The great principles of the \_\_\_\_\_, of the very nature of God, are \_\_\_\_\_ in the words of Christ on the \_\_\_\_\_. Whoever builds upon them is building upon Christ, the Rock of \_\_\_\_\_.” (MB 148-149)
5. How does the apostle Paul amplify what it means to build upon Christ? “And are built upon the foundation of the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus Christ himself being the chief \_\_\_\_\_.” (Eph. 2:20).

**Note:** To build upon Christ means to build upon the teachings of Christ as found in the writings of the apostles and prophets.

8. How can we be sure our experience with Jesus is genuine? “When the \_\_\_\_\_ we accept kills sin in the \_\_\_\_\_, purifies the soul from \_\_\_\_\_, bears fruit unto \_\_\_\_\_, we may know that it is the truth of God.” (MB 146)
9. What is meant by building on the sand? “[The person who builds upon] the foundation of \_\_\_\_\_ ideas and opinions, of forms and \_\_\_\_\_ of man’s invention, or by \_\_\_\_\_ that he can do independently of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ is erecting his structure of character upon \_\_\_\_\_ sand.” (MB 150)

**Note:** The contrast between the builders upon the rock and the builders upon the sand can be seen in the concluding verse of Matthew 7. Jesus taught with the authority of God’s word. In contrast, the scribes taught with no authority because they depended upon the traditions of men (see, Mk. 7) Ellen White remarks: “Self is but shifting sand. If you build upon human theories and inventions, your house will fall. By the **winds** of temptation, the **tempests** of trial, it will be swept away. But these principles that I have given will endure. Receive me, build on My words.” (DA 314)

10. According to the prophet Isaiah, what would God do to Israel for preferring a refuge of lies instead of the foundation stone? “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall \_\_\_\_\_ away the refuge of \_\_\_\_\_, and the waters shall \_\_\_\_\_ the hiding place. . . . when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be \_\_\_\_\_ down by it.” (Isa. 28:16-18)

### **Storm, Floods and Winds**

1. What is represented by the winds? “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, \_\_\_\_\_ the four \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.” (Rev. 7:1)  
**Note:** When the winds of strife are released, the world will experience the time of trouble such as has never been seen in the history of planet earth. Then, only those who have built upon the solid foundation of God’s word will be able to stand (see the question in Rev. 6:17)
2. What insight does the apostle Paul add concerning the meaning of the word “winds”? “That we henceforth be no more children \_\_\_\_\_ to and fro, and carried about with every \_\_\_\_\_ of doctrine, by the \_\_\_\_\_ of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to \_\_\_\_\_.” (Eph. 4:14; see also, Jude 12; Mt. 11:7; James 1:6)
3. How does John describe the persecution of God’s people during the Middle Ages? “And the serpent cast out of his mouth \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_ after the woman, that he might cause her to be \_\_\_\_\_ away of the flood.” (Rev. 6:15; see also, Isa. 8:7-8).

4. What particular stage of human history is the storm of Matthew 7 describing? “But it is not yet too \_\_\_\_\_ to escape the impending \_\_\_\_\_. Before the tempest breaks, flee to the \_\_\_\_\_ foundation.” (MB 152; see also Isaiah 4:1-6)
5. What will be our only protection in the coming cataclysmic storm? “None but those who have fortified the \_\_\_\_\_ with the truths of the \_\_\_\_\_ will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching \_\_\_\_\_: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? (GC 592-593)
6. According to Revelation, what is meant by the falling of the house? “Babylon the great is \_\_\_\_\_, is \_\_\_\_\_.” (Rev. 18:2).

**Note:** The whole worldwide system (Babylon) which is based on human greatness and prowess will come crashing down (remember why the Tower of Babel came crashing down). Then only those who have built a character according to the divine similitude will be able to stand.

7. What glorious promise does God give through David to those who will experience the time of trouble? “For in the time of \_\_\_\_\_ he shall hide me in his \_\_\_\_\_; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he \_\_\_\_\_ me; he shall set me up upon a \_\_\_\_\_.” (Ps. 27:5)
8. In what sense is Jesus far more than a common, ordinary stone? “Christ, the true foundation is a \_\_\_\_\_ stone; His life is \_\_\_\_\_ to all that are built upon Him. . . The stones [us] became \_\_\_\_\_ with the foundation; for a common \_\_\_\_\_ dwells in all. That building no tempest can \_\_\_\_\_.” (MB 150; see Eph. 2:20-22)

