

MATTHEW:
THE GOSPEL
OF THE KINGDOM

Come!...or Depart?

Matthew 25:31-46

Introduction:

- Last of 5 major discourses in book of Matthew...
- Sermon on the Mount (5), Missionary Discourse (10), Kingdom Parables (13), Kingdom Greatness (18)
- This one, often called the Olivet or “end times” discourse is shaped by questions in response to Jesus’ prediction of judgment on Jerusalem and the coming of the Kingdom of God.
- This passage the last of Jesus’ teaching in this Gospel.
- This section less parabolic story than the use of simile (sheep/goats) for Jesus to describe His coming in judgment.

The Coming of the Son of Man - v.31-33

When **the Son of Man** comes *in his glory*,
and all the angels with him,
then he will sit on his glorious throne.

Before him will be *gathered* **all the nations**,
and he will *separate* people one from another
as a shepherd separates the sheep from the
goats.

And *he will place* the sheep on his right,
but the goats on the left.

The King Speaks to the Blessed - v.34-36

Then **the King** will say to those on his right,
‘Come, you who are *blessed* by my Father,
inherit *the kingdom* **prepared for you**
from the foundation of the world.

For I was *hungry* and you gave me food,
I was *thirsty* and you gave me drink,
I was a *stranger* and you welcomed me,
I was *naked* and you clothed me,
I was *sick* and you visited me,
I was in *prison* and you came to me.’

The Question of the Blessed - v.37-40

Then the righteous will answer him, saying,
'Lord, when did we see *you* hungry and feed *you*,
or thirsty and give *you* drink?

And when did we see *you* a stranger and
welcome *you*, or naked and clothe *you*?

And when did we see *you* sick or in prison and
visit *you*?'

And the King will answer them,

'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the
least of these *my brothers or sisters*, you did it *to me*.'

The King Speaks to the Cursed - v.41-43

Then he will say to those on his left,

'Depart from me, you *cursed*,
into the eternal fire

prepared for the devil
and his angels.

For I was *hungry* and you gave me no food,

I was *thirsty* and you gave me no drink,

I was a *stranger* and you did not welcome me,
naked and you did not clothe me,

sick and in *prison* and you did not visit me.'

The Question of the Cursed - v.44-46

Then they also will answer, 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*?'

Then he will answer them, saying,

'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one
of the least of these, you did not do it *to me*.'

The Final Pronouncement - v.44-46

And these will go away into *eternal punishment*,

but the righteous into *eternal life*."

Conclusions/Applications

- This text doesn't say everything that can be said about the basis and circumstances of judgment...
- However, it does say something obviously crucial to Jesus
- The acts are focused on works of mercy in the necessities of human nature and the relief of temporal suffering.
- In the least, what we do toward Jesus' followers is done (or not) to Him.
- This does not exclude doing good to all (Galatians 6:10), and in particular remembering the difficulty of identifying true disciples. The element of surprise.
