

Matthew 25:42

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

Analysis

I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat (ἐπείνασα καὶ οὐκ ἔδώκατέ μοι φαγεῖν, epeinasa kai ouk edōkate moi phagein)—The identical language from v. 35 now condemns through negation. The Greek ouk (not) is emphatic: they actively failed to give. This isn't passive oversight but culpable neglect.

I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink (ἐδίψησα καὶ οὐκ ἐποτίσατέ με, edipsēsa kai ouk epotisate me)—Christ's cry from the cross, 'I thirst' (John 19:28), makes this judgment searingly personal. To refuse water to the thirsty is to re-crucify Christ in His members. The judgment isn't for what they did, but for what they failed to do.

Historical Context

The goats' condemnation echoes prophetic denunciations of Israel's failures: 'Woe unto you... for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men' (Matthew 23:13). James would later write: 'To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin' (James 4:17). First-century Christian communities practiced radical economic sharing (Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-35); those who refused to share faced judgment (Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-11).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does judgment for omission (what we failed to do) challenge cultural Christianity's focus on avoiding 'big sins'?
2. What does Christ's identification with the thirsty teach about the seriousness of ignoring physical need?
3. In what ways might comfortable Christians today be guilty of the same neglect as the goats?

Interlinear Text

ἐπείνασα	γὰρ	καὶ	οὐκ	έδωκατέ	μοι	φαγεῖν	έδίψησα
I was an hungred	For	and	no	ye gave	me	meat	I was thirsty
G3983	G1063	G2532	G3756	G1325	G3427	G5315	G1372
καὶ	οὐκ	έποτίσατέ	με				
and	no	drink	me				
G2532	G3756	G4222	G3165				

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 16:22 (Parallel theme): If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

Matthew 12:30 (Parallel theme): He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

John 5:23 (Parallel theme): That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 (Parallel theme): In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1 John 4:20 (Parallel theme): If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

Matthew 25:35 (Parallel theme): 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:

John 14:21 (Parallel theme): He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Amos 6:6 (Parallel theme): That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

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