

Jesus' teaching about the "separation of the sheep and the goats" is found in only one place in the New Testament, Matthew 25:31-46. It is easily one of my favorite passages of the entire Bible, and as I have pointed out, in my view, it is a teaching of Jesus himself (not something put on his lips by Matthew or by Matthew's source, M, or by an early Christian story-teller). I think in fact, it well encapsulates Jesus' entire proclamation. There is a judgment day coming and those who have lived in an upright way, loving others, showing compassion on those in need, helping those in dire straits, will be given an eternal reward; those who fail to live in this way will be severely punished.

The passage is sometimes called a "parable," but I don't see any strong indication that it is meant to be taken metaphorically. As far as I can tell, it was meant as a literal description of what would happen at the end of this age when the judge of the earth, the Son of man, determines the fate of all those who have ever lived.

Here are some random observations about the passage and its interpretation:

To see what I have to say about this important passage, you need to belong to the blog. If you don't belong yet, don't be a goat! Why not join now?

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