

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 5 (PART 1)

MATTHEW 5:1-2 - SERMON ON THE MOUNT

THIS IS THE FIRST OF THE 5 MAJOR TEACHING SECTIONS OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

LOCATION: "THE TRADITIONAL SITE OF THIS SERMON (THOUGH MATTHEW DOES NOT PINPOINT THE LOCATION) IS ABOVE TABGHA, NEAR CAPERNAUM, ON A RIDGE OF HILLS NORTHWEST OF THE TOWN, WITH A MAGNIFICENT VIEW OF THE SEA OF GALILEE." (ESV STUDY BIBLE).

AUDIENCE: NEWS ABOUT JESUS HAS SPREAD - SURELY BECAUSE OF HIS KINGDOM PROCLAMATION AND MIRACULOUS HEALING MINISTRY AND "LARGE CROWDS" ARE GATHERING TO KNOW AND SEE MORE (CP. MATTHEW 4:25). JESUS GOES TO THE MOUNTAIN RIDGE TO TEACH THE PEOPLE GATHERED. HE SITS DOWN, WHICH IS THE COMMON TEACHING POSTURE OF JEWISH RABBI'S AT THE TIME. THE GATHERED CROWDS ARE THERE LISTENING (CP. 5:1 & 7:28), HE ADDRESSES THIS TEACHING TO HIS DISCIPLES - THOSE WHO HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS AS HIS STUDENTS AND APPRENTICES.

CONTENT: IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT IS EITHER A RECORD OF A LENGTHY TEACHING OF JESUS FROM ONE SETTING OR A COLLECTION THAT SUMMARIZED WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE REPEATED OFTEN AS HE TRAVELED FROM PLACE TO PLACE. IT IS A MESSAGE WHICH WILL COVER A VARIETY OF TOPICS WHICH RELATE TO BEING HIS APPRENTICE.

IT WILL CHALLENGE HOW HIS FOLLOWERS SHOULD LIVE, THINK, AND RELATE TO THE WORLD.

IT HAS JESUS' COMMENTARY ON THE MOSAIC LAW AND RABBINICAL TEACHING OF HIS DAY.

IT SPEAKS OF THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES THAT WOULD BE PRACTICED BY HIS FOLLOWERS.

IT CONFRONTS HYPOCRISY AND OUTWARD RELIGIOSITY IN CONTRAST TO THE INNER LIFE AND HEART OF A PERSON.

IT ADDRESSES BOTH INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND HOW WE RELATE TO ALMIGHTY GOD - REVEALING HIM AS A HEAVENLY FATHER.

IT CONCLUDES WITH AN APPEAL TO NOT JUST HEAR THIS MESSAGE BUT TO PUT THESE WORDS INTO PRACTICE.

AS WE BEGIN LOOKING AT THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, IT'S IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS TEACHING IS NOT INTENDED TO BE FOLLOWED APART FROM A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST NOR WITHOUT AN "AGE TO COME" PERSPECTIVE. IT MAKES A LOT OF SENSE THAT THIS WOULD BE JESUS' DISCIPLESHIP TEACHING FOLLOWING HIS PROCLAMATION OF THE COMING KINGDOM OF HEAVEN/GOD. THIS SERMON IS INTENDED TO BE LIVED OUT BY PEOPLE WHO ARE LIVING IN LIGHT OF THE COMING KINGDOM. WITHOUT AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, MUCH OF THE SERMON WILL BE HARDER TO UNDERSTAND OR OBEY.

MATTHEW 5:3-12 - THE BEATITUDES

BEATITUDES: THE OPENING OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT IS CALLED THE "BEATITUDES" BECAUSE OF THE 9X REPETITION OF THE WORD "BLESSED". IT IS THE GREEK WORD **μακάριος** (*makarios*) WHICH MEANS BLESSED OR HAPPY - BUT NOT JUST A TEMPORARY, FLEETING, HAPPINESS BUT AN ATTITUDE OR STATE OF BEING. THE LATIN EQUIVALENT IS THE WORD "*BEATUS*" IS WHERE THE WORD "BEATITUDES" COMES FROM - ORIGINALLY COINED BY ROMAN PHILOSOPHER CICERO TO DESCRIBE THIS STATE OF BLESSEDNESS (CITED BY HENRY EDWIN SAVAGE IN "KINGDOM OF GOD", PG 69).

EACH BEATITUDE HAS A VIRTUE AND A CORRESPONDING PROMISE OR REWARD/RESULT. THESE ATTITUDES AND THEIR PROMISE RELATE TO LIFE TODAY AND LIFE IN THE AGE TO COME. REMEMBER, THE AUDIENCE IS THE OPPRESSED ISRAELITE-GALILEAN POOR - CONSIDER THAT IN LIGHT OF THE

VIRTUES THAT ARE EXTOLLED IN THESE OPENING LINES. LIFE WAS HARD AND OPPRESSION AND INJUSTICE WAS NORMAL. LIFE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE GOOD, NOR BLESSED - YET JESUS' KINGDOM MESSAGE TURNS WHAT IS EXTOLLED IN THIS WORLD UPSIDE DOWN.

BEATITUDE: 3 "BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

BEATITUDE: 4 "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN,

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED.

BEATITUDE: 5 "BLESSED ARE THE GENTLE,

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.

BEATITUDE: 6 "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS,

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEY SHALL BE SATISFIED.

BEATITUDE: 7 "BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL,

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEY SHALL RECEIVE MERCY.

BEATITUDE: 8 "BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART,

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD.

BEATITUDE: 9 "BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS,

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF GOD.

BEATITUDE: 10 "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN PERSECUTED FOR THE SAKE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

BEATITUDE: 11 "BLESSED ARE YOU WHEN PEOPLE INSULT YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU, AND FALSELY SAY ALL KINDS OF EVIL AGAINST YOU BECAUSE OF ME.

PROMISE/REWARD/RESULT: 12 "REJOICE AND BE GLAD, FOR YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN IS GREAT; FOR IN THE SAME WAY THEY PERSECUTED THE PROPHETS WHO WERE BEFORE YOU.

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS:

ARE THESE COMMANDS TO KEEP?

ARE THEY BEHAVIORS TO ASPIRE TO?

ARE THEY STATEMENTS ABOUT WHAT IS ALREADY HAPPENING OR FORESHADOWING OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

ARE THESE INDIVIDUAL VIRTUES?

ARE THEY INTERCONNECTED?

IS THERE A PROGRESSION WITH EACH BEATITUDE, ONE BUILDING UPON ANOTHER?