

**Sermon on the Mount—Beatitudes**  
**Matthew 5:1—12**

Although there is nothing wrong with trying to emulate the characteristics of those who will be entering into the Millennial Kingdom, this is not how we gain our salvation. Israel's Little Flock of Luke 12:32 are those who have put their faith in their Messiah and have proved their faith genuine by producing good fruit. An Israelite who puts their faith in the Messiah produces good fruit because they are connected to the Vine. The bad fruit producers are producing fruit in their own strength as shown in John 15:2.

**John 15:1—6** <sup>1</sup> "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

The Sermon on the Mount separates out the good fruit from the bad. Those who are producing good fruit are doing so because they are connected to the Vine. Everyone else, the bad fruit and non-fruit producers will experience eternal damnation.

**Matthew 7:17—19** <sup>17</sup> So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 So then, you will know them by their fruits.

These teachings of the Kingdom are showing what type of people will be a part of the Kingdom. Since the Kingdom is said to be at hand throughout the Gospels, it only makes sense that Jesus is preparing the Little Flock to become a part of that soon-to-come Kingdom. Matthew 7:24 likens Jesus' teaching to a wise man building a house on a solid rock. Anyone who built their future on the wrong foundation (that of the Scribes and Pharisees) will only realize destruction. Only those who are poor in spirit, mourn, are meek, hunger and thirst after righteousness, show mercy, are pure in heart, are peacemakers and have been persecuted will be admitted into the Kingdom. Take note of how well the beatitudes fit for those believing Israelites who will be going through the Tribulation.

These characteristics of believers going into the Millennial Kingdom focus on man's relationship with God not on man's relationship with other men. If a person has a right relationship with the Messiah then entrance into the Kingdom is assured.

The Sermon on the Mount must be put into its proper context in order to interpret it correctly. Most understand it is to be applied to today's church. Those areas that are hard to follow or understand are usually spiritualized. To spiritualize is to take a literal concept and turn it into a spiritual analogy. This is how Israel suddenly becomes the Church or how the Millennial Kingdom magically turns into heaven. By understanding that the Sermon on the Mount is taught in preparation for the literal, prophetic Kingdom that will be ruled by Jesus Christ sitting on a physical throne from the actual city of Jerusalem it will be easier to accurately interpret what Jesus was talking about. When you recognize that the Kingdom was the next course of events that would happen after Jesus' death, burial and resurrection according to Daniel's prophecy then it's only logical that the Sermon on the Mount fits in perfectly with the Old Testament and the coming Kingdom.

## The “Beatitudes”

The word beatitude comes from the Latin for blessings and literally means happy or fortunate. There are eight blessings listing a personal characteristic followed by their promise. Although most churches teach that the Sermon on the Mount is for today’s church, I believe they fit perfectly with Israel’s Kingdom program instead of our Grace program.

### Poor in spirit

The poor in spirit realize they have a great spiritual need. They know they are not able to fulfill this need in and of themselves and therefore are humble enough to realize they need a Savior because they are spiritually bankrupt.

**Psalm 34:17—18** <sup>17</sup> *The righteous cry, and the LORD hears And delivers them out of all their troubles.* <sup>18</sup> *The LORD is near to the brokenhearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

**Psalm 51:17** *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.*

Just the opposite of this trait is demonstrated in Jeremiah where the unbelievers in Israel don’t know how bad off they really are.

**Jeremiah 44:10** *But they have not become contrite even to this day, nor have they feared nor walked in My law or My statutes, which I have set before you and before your fathers.*

The reward for being poor in spirit is to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Just as the Kingdom of Rome extended way beyond Rome, the Kingdom of Heaven will extend way beyond heaven to the earth. It will be a heavenly government in control of the earth.

### Those who mourn

It’s not necessary to explain what mourning is because we have all experienced times of mourning. Many in Israel have already experienced great distress, persecution and hardship and have been scattered many miles from their homeland. There will be a very deep mourning brought on by the sorrow of the Tribulation and alleviated only by the coming of Christ to set up His Kingdom.

**Isaiah 60:19—20** <sup>19</sup> *“No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory.* <sup>20</sup> *“Your sun will no longer set, Nor will your moon wane; For you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, And the days of your mourning will be over.*

**Isaiah 61:2** *To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,*

However, this mourning is not caused by the Tribulation but by the coming of Christ. Not only will Israel suffer and mourn during the Tribulation but when Christ appears in all His glory Israel will realize they killed their Messiah and there will be a great mourning throughout the land.

**Zechariah 12:10—11** <sup>10</sup> *“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.* <sup>11</sup> *In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo.*

**Revelation 1:7** *BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes [of Israel] of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.*

### Meek

Meek is often equated with weak. I’ve heard a definition years ago that said meekness is power under control. Moses is called meek (Numbers 12:3) but you would be hard-pressed to say he was a weak man. He was actually a very strong leader because he humbled himself before God and realized his strength came from God.

Those who are meek in this passage knew they were not strong in themselves. They humbled themselves and put themselves under God’s control and timing. Even when persecution comes, they humble themselves under God’s authority and allow Him to work. Their reward will be an inheritance of the earth.

Does this fit in with today’s Age of Grace? Do the meek inherit the earth today? Of course not. This passage makes perfect sense for an Israelite looking forward to the coming of their Messiah to set up a

Kingdom. These Israelites who have humbled themselves during the Tribulation are the ones who will physically and literally inherit the earth. Peter's writings will have special meaning to those going through the Tribulation because it is the meek who will submit themselves to those God has put over them.

However, we are not to submit to human authority when it is in direct violation of what God demands.

**1 Peter 2:12—15** <sup>12</sup> Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation. <sup>13</sup> Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, <sup>14</sup> or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.

The Old Testament confirms this promise to the Little Flock of Jewish believers and will give them hope as they endure the Tribulation.

**Psalm 37:9—11** <sup>9</sup> For evildoers will be cut off, But those who wait for the LORD, they will inherit the land. <sup>10</sup> Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more; And you will look carefully for his place and he will not be *there*. <sup>11</sup> But the humble will inherit the land And will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

### Hunger and thirst for righteousness

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are those who realize they are poor in spirit. Like a hungry infant craving his bottle these righteous remnant of Israel know their condition and seek to satisfy it. During the Tribulation righteousness will be lacking as the world is under the control of Satan. Their hungering and thirsting for righteousness will intensify because they will be surrounded by unrighteousness. In contrast to the Tribulation is the Millennial Kingdom when righteousness will be the standard.

**Hebrews 1:8** But of the Son *He* says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.

It is into this righteous city that the believers coming through the Tribulation are looking forward to and it is the righteous who will be hidden from God's anger and allowed entrance into the Kingdom.

**Isaiah 26:1—2** <sup>1</sup>In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. <sup>2</sup>Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

**Zephaniah 2:1—3** <sup>1</sup> Gather yourselves together, yes, gather, O nation without shame, <sup>2</sup> Before the decree takes effect—The day passes like the chaff—Before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you, Before the day of the LORD'S anger comes upon you. <sup>3</sup> Seek the LORD, All you humble of the earth Who have carried out His ordinances; Seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps you will be hidden In the day of the LORD'S anger.

It is promised that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be satisfied. They will have the inheritance of an earthly existence in which righteousness will be the rule rather than the exception. They will be a part of the righteous Kingdom ruled by the righteous and perfect King.

### Merciful

To be merciful is to add action to compassion. It is finding someone in need and then taking steps to help that person. I believe that this is again looking ahead to the Tribulation period and gives credit to the Little Flock for reaching out and helping those in need. Their reward is that they will in turn receive mercy. Again, the reward is looking to the Millennial Kingdom when the faithful will be shown mercy by the King of Israel.

**Psalm 41:1—2** <sup>1</sup> How blessed is he who considers the helpless [poor in spirit]; The LORD will deliver him in a day of trouble. <sup>2</sup> The LORD will protect him and keep him alive, And he shall be called blessed upon the earth; And do not give him over to the desire of his enemies.

**Matthew 10:40—42** <sup>40</sup> "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. <sup>41</sup> He who receives a prophet in *the* name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. <sup>42</sup> And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones [**righteous flock**] even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

### Pure in heart

These are the ones who have been cleansed and made pure. These are the ones who hunger and thirst after righteousness and humble themselves before God. Their promise is that they will see God. The Old Testament promises that those who are pure in heart will have access to the King.

**Psalm 24:3—5** <sup>3</sup> Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? <sup>4</sup> He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully. <sup>5</sup> He shall receive a blessing from the LORD And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Believing Israel will need to wait for Christ to be ruling before this promise is realized, but we in the Body of Christ are already seated in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6).

### Peacemakers

The only place this word is found is Matthew 5:9. It refers to a person who has received peace and then shares this peace with others. On the surface it appears this verse is telling believers that instead of fighting with other believers they should have a spirit of peace, but entrance into the Kingdom is not based on how they treat each other but rather on their relationship with God. Since the majority of the Old Testament was written for and about Israel we can get a better understanding of what this verse means by looking at Old Testament verses. According to Isaiah the peacemaker is the one who announces peace. In context, he is announcing the coming of the Messiah and the resultant peace that will come with His takeover of the world. This is why Jesus is called the Prince of Peace in Isaiah 9:6 and in Luke 2:14 it was Jesus who was the peace that was among men. Christ's peace in the Kingdom is in contrast to Satan removing peace in the Tribulation (Revelation 6:4).

**Isaiah 52:7** How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

**Michah 4:1—3** <sup>1</sup> And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. <sup>2</sup> Many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war.

### The persecuted

This isn't referring to just anyone who has been persecuted but those who have been persecuted for the sake of Christ. Christ was getting the Little Flock ready for the coming Tribulation by warning them of persecution. Those who are able to endure unto the end are the ones who will be saved (Matthew 10:22, 24:13, Mark 13:13). Satan will be persecuting believing Israel especially beginning at the midpoint of the Tribulation when he is thrown out of heaven (Revelation 12:13). There will be many at that time who will turn away from God because of intense persecution. Those who turn away from God will not reap the promise of inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven.

**Malachi 3:16—18** <sup>16</sup> Then those who feared the LORD [remnant] spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. <sup>17</sup> "They will be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "on the day that I prepare *My* own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him." <sup>18</sup> So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

### The Rewards

Each reward is focused on Jesus Christ and the Millennial Kingdom. They are comforted because they are going into the Kingdom. The ones hungering and thirsting for righteousness are satisfied because the Kingdom is righteous. The merciful will receive mercy by God in the Kingdom.

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