

Sermon on the Mount—Ask, Seek, Knock

Matthew 7:7—12

Jesus continues His Sermon on the mount addressing Israel to draw individuals into the Little Flock of remnant believers and speaking to those who have already believed to give them the tools they will need to get through the Tribulation and ultimately into the Kingdom.

Looking for the Kingdom (verses 7—8)

When we ask God for our supply or bring Him our concerns we are humbling ourselves and demonstrating our reliance on Him. This is a cross-dispensational truth, true of all people in all eras. In verse 7 we see Jesus telling this believing remnant to ask, seek and knock. They will be completely at the mercy of God for their survival and He is now teaching them that when they are going through the Tribulation that they will need to trust Him for their daily needs. When they do this they will be following God's instruction as to how Israel is to get right with God.

Deuteronomy 4:27—30 ²⁷ And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you. ²⁸ And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. ²⁹ But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. ³⁰ When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice;

Hosea 3:4—5 ⁴ For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: ⁵ Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.

Not only will they be praying for sustenance, they will be praying for deliverance from their enemies. I believe what King David wrote in Psalm 18 will apply to the Tribulational saints. As God saved David from his enemies He will save the Little Flock from Satan. Even though God seemed far removed from David, David remained righteous and the Lord rewarded him for his faithfulness. As verse two says: "I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies." Israel will be asking (calling out) and seeking Him.

The words ask, seek and knock are in the present tense giving the idea that they need to continually ask, seek and knock. The verse would thus literally read:

Asking, and it will be given to you; seeking, and you will find; knocking, and it will be opened to you.

These believers will be depending on God for their next meal and salvation from their enemies. Just as Israel was sustained while traipsing around the wilderness for 40 years God will supply Israelites who ask for help during the Tribulation. I believe John 16 addresses this promise when Jesus said:

John 16:21—24 ²¹ A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come [the Tribulation]: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. [the Kingdom] ²² And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again [Second Coming], and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. ²³ And in that day [Second Coming] ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you [Tribulational promise]. ²⁴ Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

We can see how John continues this thought and expands on it in his later book.

1 John 3:22—23 ²² And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. ²³ And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

1 John 5:14—15 ¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: ¹⁵ And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Notice that when they ask it must be done according to God's will. James mentions prayers that do not fall under God's will.

James 4:1—3 ¹ From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? ² Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. ³ Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Christ already gave them the model prayer to pray during the Tribulation. This so-called Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9—13) explicitly tells them to pray for the coming of the Kingdom, pray for their daily bread and to not be led into temptation (testing). This is the prayer that will be answered because it is prayed according to God's will.

The answer to asking, seeking and knocking is all wrapped up in the Kingdom. When the Kingdom comes Israel's enemies will be defeated and the remnant believers will be ushered into the Kingdom to take their rightful place as priests of God. They will be knocking to get into the Kingdom. After they have entered the Kingdom the door closes and no one else will be able to gain entrance.

Luke 13:22—25 ²² And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³ Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, ²⁴ Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. ²⁵ When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Bread and fish or stone and snake (verses 9—11)

To emphasize that they will be able to trust God, Christ compares a human, sinful father with the Father in heaven. If even a father with an evil, sinful heart gives his son good things, how much more will the heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him.

When we ask the Father for healing, safety, health, food, salvation of loved ones, etc. they are not always answered as we think we want them to be answered. God will always answer our prayers with a yes, no or wait but they are often answered in a way we never thought of or even contrary to what we expect. When we pray we can be confident that God hears our prayers and the Spirit will get the prayer to the Father even when we really don't know how we should pray.

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Our promise when we pray is not that God will grant everything we pray for but that we will have peace. What better promise can we have? If we are dying but have a complete peace about it do we need anything more? If we have monetary needs but are at perfect peace does it matter that we lack? This peace comes about only if we give Him our request and trust Him to do the right thing. Praise God for this wonderful promise of peace.

Philippians 4:6—7 ⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The Golden Rule (verse 12)

This is a quote that many would be shocked to find it actually came from the Bible. In context the Little Flock needs to treat other Israelites as they want to be treated. In this case they are to judge others with the same standard that they would like to be judged.

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