

Jesus proclaims the message and heals the sick

²³He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing all kinds of disease and illness among the people. ²⁴His fame spread throughout Syria, and those who were suffering from diseases and painful complaints of one kind or another, the possessed, epileptics, the paralysed, were all brought to him, and he cured them. ²⁵Large crowds followed him, coming from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea and Transjordan.

B: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

The Beatitudes^a

Seeing the crowds, he went onto the mountain. And when he was seated his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

³How blessed are the poor in spirit: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

⁴Blessed are the gentle:^b they shall have the earth as inheritance.^c

⁵Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their fill.

⁷Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognised as children of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

¹¹Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven; this is how they persecuted the prophets before you.

^{5a} Lk 6:20-23.

^{5b} Ps 37:11.

^{5c} Gn 13:15.

^{5d} Ex 20:13.

Salt for the earth and light for the world

¹³You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under people's feet.

¹⁴You are light for the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. ¹⁵No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven.

The fulfilment of the Law

¹⁷Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them. ¹⁸In truth I tell you, till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, not one little stroke, is to disappear from the Law until all its purpose is achieved. ¹⁹Therefore, anyone who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of Heaven; but the person who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of Heaven.

The new standard higher than the old

²⁰For I tell you, if your uprightness does not surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of Heaven.

²¹You have heard how it was said to our ancestors, *You shall not kill*;^d and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. ²²But I say this to you, anyone who is angry with a brother will answer for it before the court; anyone who calls a brother "Fool" will answer for it before the Sanhedrin; and anyone who calls him "Traitor" will answer for it in hell fire. ²³So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. ²⁵Come to terms with your opponent in good time while you are still on

the way to the court with him, or he may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶In truth I tell you, you will not get out till you have paid the last penny.

²⁷You have heard how it was said, *You shall not commit adultery*.^e ²⁸But I say this to you, if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye should be your downfall, tear it out and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of yourself than to have your whole body thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand should be your downfall, cut it off and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of yourself than to have your whole body go to hell.

³¹It has also been said, *Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a writ of dismissal*.^f ³²But I say this to you, everyone who divorces his wife, except for the case of an illicit marriage,^g makes her an adulteress; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³Again, you have heard how it was said to our ancestors, *You must not break your oath, but must fulfil your oaths to the Lord*.^h ³⁴But I say this to you, do not swear at all, either by heaven, since that is God's throne; ³⁵or by earth, since that is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, since that is the city of the great King.ⁱ

³⁶Do not swear by your own head either, since you cannot turn a single hair white or black. ³⁷All you need say is "Yes" if you mean yes, "No" if you mean no; anything more than this comes from the Evil One.

³⁸You have heard how it was said: *Eye for eye and tooth for tooth*.^j ³⁹But I say this to you: offer no resistance to the wicked. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well; ⁴⁰if someone wishes to go to law with you to get your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.

⁴¹And if anyone requires you to go one mile, go two miles with him. ⁴²Give to anyone who asks you, and if anyone wants to borrow, do not turn away.

⁴³You have heard how it was said, *You will*

^{5e} Ex 20:14.

^{5f} Dt 24:1.

^{5g} Marriage within the Jewish forbidden degrees, allowed by the Romans but not in Christianity.

^{5h} Ex 20:7.

⁵ⁱ Ps 48:2.

^{5j} Ex 21:24.

^{5k} Lv 19:18. The rest of the sentence is not from the OT.

^{6a} Is 26:20.

love your neighbour^k and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say this to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on the bad as well as the good, and sends down rain to fall on the upright and the wicked alike. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Do not even the tax collectors do as much? ⁴⁷And if you save your greetings for your brothers, are you doing anything exceptional? ⁴⁸Do not even the gentiles do as much? You must therefore be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.^l

Almsgiving in secret

Be careful not to parade your uprightness in public to attract attention; otherwise you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. ²So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win human admiration. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. ³But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; ⁴your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

Prayer in secret

⁵And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. ⁶But when you pray, *go to your private room*, shut yourself in, and so pray^a to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

How to pray. The Lord's Prayer

⁷In your prayers do not babble as the gentiles do, for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard. ⁸Do not be