

## The Sermon on the Mount, Part 1: Overview

*The Sermon on the Mount is one of the greatest sermons ever preached.*

One of five sermons in the Gospel of Matthew:

1. Matt 5-7: The Sermon on the Mount
2. Matt 10: The M\_\_\_\_\_ Discourse
3. Matt 13: The P\_\_\_\_\_ of the Kingdom
4. Matt 18: The C\_\_\_\_\_ Discourse
5. Matt 23-25: The E\_\_\_\_\_ Discourse

In this structure, Matthew intends for us to see Jesus as a New \_\_\_\_\_. But when we read that Jesus “went up on the mountain” to teach, it calls to mind three characters of the Old Testament:

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In particular, we want to focus on *Moses*, and the promise he delivered from God at Sinai:

*“Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a **royal priesthood** (or, a **kingdom of priests**) and holy nation ...”* Exod 19:6

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is delivering a New \_\_\_\_\_ for his disciples, who are a New \_\_\_\_\_, and have both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ status ...

Thus, *Kingdom* (for royalty) and *Temple* (for priesthood) themes run throughout the Sermon:

#### I. The Kingdom Themes:

1. At the Beginning: The B\_\_\_\_\_, the qualities of Kingdom citizens.
2. At the Middle: The Lord's Prayer, a prayer for the coming of the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. At the End: The Royal Promise: you will be like \_\_\_\_\_.

#### II. The Temple Themes:

1. You are S\_\_\_\_\_ (5:13)
2. You are L\_\_\_\_\_ (5:14)
3. You are "a City set on a hill" (5:15)
4. Lay up for yourselves "treasure in heaven" (6:20)
5. Do not give pearls to "dogs or swine" –neither permitted in \_\_\_\_\_
6. "Ask, seek, knock"—the language of \_\_\_\_\_, going up to the Temple
7. Enter the " \_\_\_\_\_ Gate"—reference to the gates through which one passed into the Holy City
8. Finally, the image of Solomon the Temple-Builder at the end.

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us to be kings and priests who can reign and serve in the Royal Temple City of the Kingdom of Heaven!*

## The Sermon on the Mount, Part 2: The Blessings and Encouragements

The Structure of the Sermon on the Mount:

- I. Kingdom Blessings: The Beatitudes and Encouragements (5:1-14)
- II. Kingdom Law: "Fulfilling" the Law of Moses (5:17-47)
- III. Kingdom Piety (6:1-34)
- IV. Pilgrimage to the City of the Great King (7:1-28)

### I. The Blessings (Beatitudes):

*A chain, a certain progression in this list of virtues:*

#### 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Primary reference is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Nonetheless there is a relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ poverty.

For this reason, many saints have understood "poor in spirit" to be "poor for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit," that is, temporally poor for the sake of spiritual ends.

The opposite: most of the Pharisees: both spiritually and temporally wealthy.

St. Josemaria discussed the issue of spiritual and temporal poverty by the example of the beggar and the Comtessa.

Point: "poor in spirit" refers to spiritual poverty, but nonetheless is tied to living a form of temporal poverty as well, because temporal indulgence is incompatible with spiritual poverty.

#### 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Who mourn for their spiritual \_\_\_\_\_, for their nothingness, for their emptiness, for their sins ...

#### 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Meekness is roughly the same as \_\_\_\_\_. Not putting oneself forward, not throwing your weight around, being docile. They are meek/humble because they realize they are spiritually poor.

**6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.**

Hunger and thirst for it, because they realize they do not have it of themselves, but need to receive it from God ...

A secondary sense refers to F\_\_\_\_\_.

**7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.**

Merciful, because, recognizing their own sinfulness and emptiness, they can empathize with other sinners and grant mercy to them ...

**8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

The P\_\_\_\_\_ that comes from recognition of spiritual poverty, of mourning for sin and seeking God’s grace, purifies the heart from attachments to the world, particularly the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh ...

**9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.**

They no longer fight and make war, because it is the desire for \_\_\_\_\_ goods, essentially lusts, that cause war. See how thoroughly St. James, the Lord’s cousin, assimilated the beatitudes:

James 4:1 What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members? 2 You desire and do not have; so you kill. And you covet and cannot obtain; so you fight and wage war. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. 4 Unfaithful creatures! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. .... 6 But he gives more grace; therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double mind. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to dejection. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you.

Peace is found from denying our passions/lusts and turning to God to find our true joy.

## **10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Those who live this way will be hated by those who don’t want to give up their lusts, because

(1) the disciple is a painful \_\_\_\_\_ to others that they are not following the way of God, and

(2) the disciple becomes an \_\_\_\_\_ to others fulfilling their lusts, because he will not cooperate.

Persecution comes, which is a blessing, because it assists in gaining \_\_\_\_\_ from the things of this world

### **II. The Encouragements:**

**Matt. 5:13** *“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.*

A reference here to the \_\_\_\_\_ or *Levitical covenant*:

Num. 18:19 All the holy offerings which the people of Israel present to the LORD I give to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a perpetual due; it is a *covenant of salt* for ever before the LORD for you and for your offspring with you.”

Also the *royal* \_\_\_\_\_ *covenant*:

2Chr. 13:5 Ought you not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel for ever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt?

But salt was particularly associated with the priestly liturgical ministry in the Temple.

“To lose saltiness” is to abandon the life of poverty and to engage once more in the rat race of the “Kingdom of the Earth”

**Matt. 5:14** *“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. 15 Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

Two obvious references to the Temple here.

(1) “The Light of the World” = the eschatological Temple:

Based on Zech 14:6-9, the Jews believed the \_\_\_\_\_ of the End Times would provide light to the world:

Zech. 14:6 On that day there shall be neither cold nor frost. 7 And there shall be continuous day (it is known to the LORD), not day and not night, for at evening time there shall be light. 8 On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter. 9 And the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one.

John 8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world ..."

(2) "City set on a hill" = \_\_\_\_\_ especially:

Psa. 87:1 On the holy mount stands the city he founded; the LORD loves the gates of Zion.  
Psa. 48:1 Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, 2 beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King.

(3) "The Lamp set on its stand" = The Lampstand of the \_\_\_\_\_

Num. 8:2 "Say to Aaron, When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand." 3 And Aaron did so; he set up its lamps to give light in front of the lampstand, as the LORD commanded Moses. 4 And this was the workmanship of the lampstand, hammered work of gold; from its base to its flowers, it was hammered work; according to the pattern which the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

Lev. 24:4 He shall keep the lamps in order upon the lampstand of pure gold before the LORD continually.

2Chr. 13:11 They offer to the LORD every morning and every evening burnt offerings and incense of sweet spices, set out the showbread on the table of pure gold, and care for the golden lampstand that its lamps may burn every evening; for we keep the charge of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken him.

Light also disinfects, also enables sight, brings color and cheer—these things are what the disciples of Jesus bring to the world through their *good deeds*.

## The Sermon on the Mount, Part 3: The Kingdom Law (Six Antitheses)

*In this part of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus deals with the relationship between the Law of Moses (the “Old Law”) and the New Law of the New Covenant (the Law of the Kingdom of Heaven).*

Matt. 5:17 “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. 19 Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

The different senses of “fulfill the law”:

- (1) To finish or complete: for example, the sacrificial laws.
- (2) To “fill up,” “amplify,” or bring it to its highest potential: for example, the Ten Commandments
- (3) To perfect it, by removing accumulated imperfections: for example, the laws on divorce and enemies.

### The “Six Antitheses”

- I. Murder and Anger:** *You have heard that it was said, “You shall not kill ... but I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother ...*

Jesus goes to the root of murder, which is anger often arising from envy of some kind,.

*James 4:2 You desire and do not have; so you kill. And you covet and cannot obtain; so you fight and wage war. You do not have, because you do not ask.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers ...*

Fulfillment by \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

- II. Adultery:** *You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery ... but I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully ...*

Jesus goes to the root of adultery, which is lust in the heart, the “lust of the flesh.”

*Blessed are the pure in heart ...*

Fulfillment by \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

**III. Divorce:** *It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife ... but I say to you, that every one who divorces his wife ... makes her an adulteress ..."*

Here Jesus deals with imperfect laws in the Old Testament that were added as a result of sin.

*The Three Makings of the Mosaic Covenant*

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Consider these texts:

Ezek. 20:23 Moreover I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations ... 25 *I gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not have life*

Gal. 3:19 Why then the law? *It was added because of transgressions*, till the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained by angels through an intermediary.

Excerpted from the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, chapter 26 (c. AD 150): "The Law therefore is indissoluble; but the Second Legislation is temporary, and is dissoluble. Now ... the Law then consists of the Ten Words and the Judgments, which God spoke before the People made the calf and served idols. ... This is the simple and light Law, wherein is no burden, nor distinction of meats, nor incensings, nor offerings of sacrifices and burnt offerings. ... But when the People denied God ... and sacrificed to a graven image, therefore the Lord ... bound them with the Second Legislation, and laid heavy burdens upon them, and a hard yoke upon their neck."

*Blessed are the pure in heart ....*

Fulfillment by \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Swearing Oaths:** *You have heard that it was said, "You shall not swear falsely ... But I say to you, Do not swear at all ..."*

Here Jesus corrects not so much the Law, as its misuse. The manipulation of oaths, which are only appropriate in a public and covenantal context, to gain someone's confidence in a private context.



*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness ...*

Fulfillment by \_\_\_\_\_.

**V. Retaliation:** *You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye ... But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil ..."*

The intent of the *lex talionis* was to limit punishment in a civil court—it was never a command for personal revenge! But so it was understood!

Notice that the examples Jesus gives are not of lethal attacks—he is not forbidding self-defense!

*Blessed are the meek ... Blessed are the merciful ... Blessed are the peacemakers ... Blessed are the persecuted ...*

Fulfillment by \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

**VI. Love for Enemies:** *You have heard that it was said, "You shall hate your enemy... but I say to you, Love your enemies ..."*

Refers to the total warfare against the enemies of Israel (Deut 20:16-18).

This was a concession mandated by the weakness of Israel to corruption by pagan religion.

In the New Covenant, the warfare is no longer physical but spiritual (Eph 6:12)

*Blessed are the merciful ... Blessed are the peacemakers ... Blessed are the persecuted ..*

Fulfillment by \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

**The conclusion: Be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect!**

*Ex. 12:5 Your (Passover) lamb shall be perfect, a male a year old ....*

*Psa. 101:6 He who walks in the way that is perfect shall minister to me.*

**The Sermon on the Mount, Part 4: Piety (ch. 6) and Pilgrimage (ch. 7)**

**I. Kingdom Piety (6:1-34)**

*Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven...*

Jesus then addresses the three traditional forms of piety. The common theme through this whole chapter is *detachment from worldly things*.

A. \_\_\_\_\_ (6:1-4)

*Blessed are the poor in (for the sake of) Spirit ...*

B. \_\_\_\_\_ (6:5-15)

The Lord’s Prayer merits special attention, particularly the request, “Give us this day our ‘daily’ bread.” The word “daily” is actually the Greek phrase “epi ousias,” which can take three different meanings:

Epi, epi	Ousioj, ousios	=meaning

*Blessed are the merciful ...*

C. \_\_\_\_\_ (6:16-18)

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for (attaining) righteousness ....*

The subsequent teachings really flow from Jesus’ instructions on the practice of piety:

(1) *Lay up treasure in Heaven (6:19-21): related to almsgiving, don’t miss the \_\_\_\_\_ reference!*

(2) *The eye is the lamp of the body (6:22-23): related to alms, the Lust of the*

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) *Serving Two Masters (6:24): related to almsgiving and fasting and prayer. Prayer is to serve God, the other two practices breaks us free from the slavery of*

\_\_\_\_\_.

(4) *Do not be \_\_\_\_\_ (6:25-34): relates to almsgiving, fasting, and prayer. Fear for our physical well-being prevents us from giving alms, fasting, and devoting time to prayer. Trusting the providence of God is essential to have that interior calm or peace which is necessary to devote ourselves to a life of prayer!*

## **II. The Pilgrimage to the City of the Great King**

*Matt 7:2-6 do not fit into a nice pattern, but beginning with 7:7 we have a series of pilgrimage allusions.*

- A. *Ask, Seek, Knock (7:7-12):* Like a pilgrim asking for directions. A progression— increasingly active. A metaphor for the life of prayer, of seeking the dwelling place of the Father.
- B. *Enter by the Narrow Gate (7:13-14):* appropriate after a discussion of knocking. There were several gates to Jerusalem, and better or worse ways of trying to get into the city. Here it is used as a metaphor for entering heaven.
- C. *Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20):* False prophets were notoriously associated with Jerusalem (see Jer 28); indeed, the city was full of false prophets and messiahs when it was destroyed by the Romans according to Josephus.
- D. *Beware that you are not yourself a false prophet! (7:21-23):* Warning against self-deception.
- E. *The Final Parable: The Man who Built his House upon the Rock (7:24-28):* As mentioned before, an allusion to \_\_\_\_\_ the great Temple builder.

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us to be kings and priests who can reign and serve in the Royal Temple City of the Kingdom of Heaven!*