

-A STUDY OF THE BEATITUDES-

# Blessed

*is the One*

| MATTHEW 5:1-12 |



# Overview and Review: The Gospel of Matthew

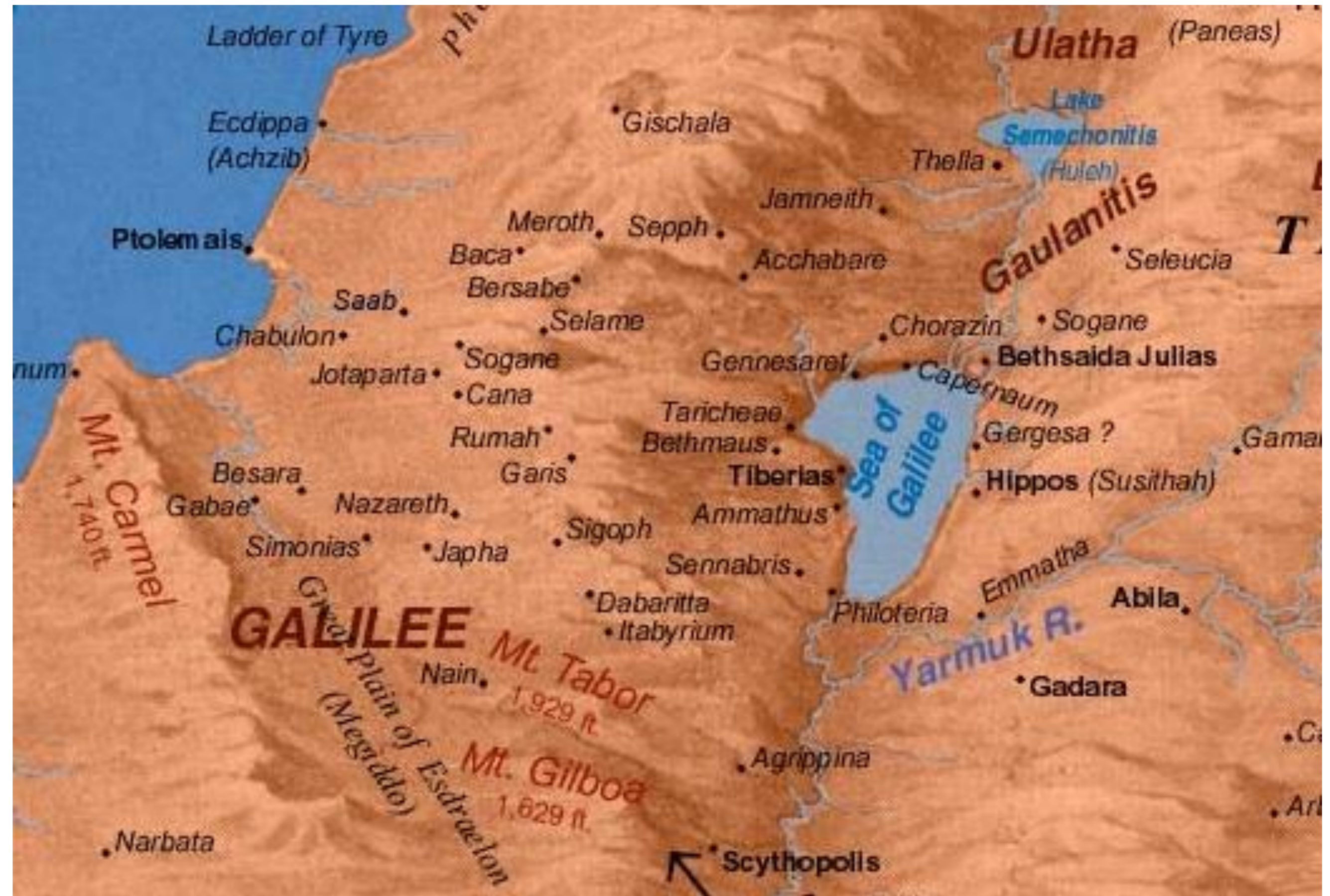
- Like all of the Gospels, the book of Matthew is anonymous. The title, attributing the work as Matthew's, appears in early manuscripts and is concurred by many early church leaders.
- Matthew, writing for a Jewish audience, referred to Hebrew prophecies around 60 times. Throughout the book, Matthew tackles topics difficult for a new believer to understand, such as:
  - How could Jesus be the Son of God and also be crucified?
  - What did Jesus actually say about the future of the church?
- “It is no accident that Matthew appears as the first book of the New Testament. Matthew serves as the hinge upon which the Testaments pivot. Matthew is the gateway to the New Testament with the strongest of closing connections to the Old Testament.” (Holman New Testament Commentary)

# Overview and Review: The Gospel of Matthew

- Birth and Infancy of Jesus (Matthew 1:1- 2:23)
- Beginning of Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (3:1- 4:25)
- **Sermon on the Mount (5:1- 7:29)**
- Jesus' First Miracles (8:1- 9:38)
- Ministry of Jesus' Disciples (10:1-42)
- Responses to Jesus' Ministry (11:1- 12:50)
- Parables about the Kingdom (13:1-58)
- Close of Jesus' ministry in Galilee (14:1- 17:27)

# The location of The Sermon on the Mount

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# Introduction to The Sermon on the Mount

- The Sermon on the Mount is written as Jesus is describing the traits expected of His followers, and thus citizens of Heaven. From a secular perspective, these traits are not only against the normal behavior of human civilization, but they are even countercultural. So, do they apply today?
- “For if today’s young people are looking for the right things (meaning, peace, love, reality), they are looking for them in the wrong places. The first place to which they should be able to turn is the one place which they normally ignore, namely the church. For too often what they see in the church is not counter-culture but conformism, not a new society which embodies their ideals but another version of the old society which they have renounced, not life but death.” *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount, John R. W. Stott*

# Introduction to The Sermon on the Mount (cont.)

- Beginning in chapter five of the gospel of Matthew, Jesus is speaking to a crowd gathered specifically to hear Him. Jesus is sitting in a position of authority, as a rabbi.
- “Now when He saw the crowds, He went up on a mountainside and sat down.” (Matthew 5:1)
- The Greek words translated “He went up on the mountain” are used three times in the Greek Old Testament (Exodus 19:3, 24:18, 34:4), and all three fall into the section describing Moses’ ascents onto Mount Sinai.
- Where God’s people previously needed to hear the commandments given to them by sending a representative, they now had God incarnate both showing and telling them how to live.

- Jesus, beginning the greatest sermon ever given, starts with the Beatitudes. Here He impresses the formula of:
  - Blessed are \_\_\_\_\_, originally in Greek as *μακάριος* or *Makarios*.
  - “Makarios then describes that joy which has its secret within itself, that joy which is serene and untouchable, and self-contained, that joy which is completely independent of all the chances and changes of life.” (Barclay)
- For (or because) \_\_\_\_\_, originally in Greek as *ὅτι* or *hoti*.
  - This is the clause describing the reason or ground of that blessing.
  - “The future tense... emphasizes their certainty and not merely their futurity.” *The Gospel according to St Matthew*, Professor R.V.G. Tasker

<b>Blessed are:</b>	<b>For:</b>
v. 3 The poor in spirit	Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven
v. 4 Those who mourn	They shall be comforted
<u>v. 5 The gentle</u>	<u>They shall inherit the Earth</u>
<u>v. 6 Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness</u>	<u>They shall be satisfied</u>
<u>v. 7 The merciful</u>	<u>They shall receive mercy</u>
<u>v. 8 The pure in heart</u>	<u>They shall see God</u>
v. 9 The peacemakers	They shall be called Sons of God
v. 10 Those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness	Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven

## Matthew 5:5-8 (NAS)

5 “Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

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

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

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

# Matthew 5:5

5 “Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.”

## Gentleness, Meekness

Greek adjective: πραῦς, Praus, prah-ooce’

Definition: “It has the idea of the proper balance between anger and indifference, of a powerful personality properly controlled, and of humility.” (David Guzik, Enduring Word Commentary)

## Meekness, defined:

- “These pre-Christian meanings of the word exhibit two general characteristics.
  - 1. They express outward conduct merely.
  - 2. They contemplate relations to men only.
- The Christian word, on the contrary, describes an inward quality, and that as related primarily to God. The equanimity, mildness, kindness, represented by the classical word, are founded in self-control or in natural disposition. The Christian meekness is based on humility, which is not a natural quality but an outgrowth of a renewed nature. To the pagan, the word often implied condescension, to the Christian it implies submission.” *Word Studies in the New Testament*, Marvin Richardson Vincent

# Blessed is... Gentleness/Meekness

- The common metaphor used to describe the biblical trait of meekness is that of a trained horse. Despite its inherent capacity for disobedience or going astray, a trained horse, with an ear for its master, follows the commands it is given.
- Meekness is predicated on a willingness to see that you are a sinner, and that God is perfect, so the correct response is one of upward facing.
- Jesus was not sent to be a conquering hero despite many in Israel who hoped for a warrior (to initiate an uprising for the Jewish people). Instead, Jesus clearly teaches and models an obedient following of God's commands no matter our emotions or societal pressures.
- The definition of meekness implies the ability to be both:
  - Inside the will of God, able to hear His commands and obey.
  - Outside the bondage of human emotion and desire, able to do what is right.

# For... they shall inherit the Earth

- The principal worry, from the human purview, of existence in a state of meekness is that you will draw the short straw... that everyone else will be fighting for what is theirs and you will be left behind. Jesus alleviates fear by telling His followers that they who obey God will inherit the earth.
- Throughout the Bible, God does not call those who have been exalted, and He does not call those who do not seek Him. (James 4:10)
- God has used those considered “lowly” by the culture in mighty ways. Similarly, if you are worried most about the will of God, then the desire for retaliation, social hierarchy, rights or privileges, falls by the wayside as you know the battle has already been won.

# Matthew 5:6

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

<b>Do Hunger</b>	<b>Thirsting For</b>	<b>Righteousness</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>
Greek verb: πεινάω, peinaō, pi-nah'-o	Greek verb: διψάω, dipsaō, dip-sah'-o	Greek noun: δικαιοσύνη, dikaiosynē, dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay	Greek verb: χορτάζω, chortazō, khor-tad'-zo
To crave ardently, to seek with eager desire		Equity (of character or act)	From the same word as the place where grass grows and animals graze; to fulfill

# Blessed is... hungering and thirsting for righteousness

- Throughout His ministry, Jesus uses the metaphor of the physical sensations of hunger and thirst as an explanation of our soul's need for spiritual nourishment. (John 4:13-14... the woman at the well; John 6:35... feeding the crowd of 5000)
- Jesus was also acutely aware of the physical sensations of both hunger and thirst, in both His 40 days in the desert, and later upon the cross. (Luke 4:1-2, John 19:28) Despite His divinity, Jesus willingly experienced the worst of the human life, and was speaking to a Jewish crowd who had also felt these same feelings of hunger and thirst.
- The aforementioned hunger and thirst are not of the physical only, but also of the spirit. This is one of a deep, all-encompassing desire to draw closer to the Creator. Is there anything more fulfilling than clinging to Him who gives us life?

- In the Bible righteousness is made up, at least, of three parts:
  - **Legal:** This is an abiding by the laws of an area, the rules and regulations you exist under. This can also be considered in the ways of the Pharisees, the strict obedience to the Torah but without a heart change. (Matthew 5:20)
  - **Moral:** Compared to legal righteousness, the moral refers to what is inside. This trait is explained by Jesus in Matthew 6:6, where He says, “But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”
  - **Social:** God did not design people to be either alone nor uncaring toward each other. Followers of Jesus, armed with a hunger and thirst for this righteousness, should set out to free others from oppression and establish justice and integrity.

For... they shall be satisfied.

- Jesus does not promise a mere Thanksgiving Day fullness, a holding over until the next meal arrives. Jesus promises that they shall be satisfied, in a way of complete fullness, the same way that the 5000 were fed (Matthew 14:20).
- The great paradox of God's grace upon us is that we are both:
  - Given a cup overflowing with the Father's love, able to be given away.
  - Never able to receive the fullness of this love, on this side of eternity, but are still satisfied.
- Please understand that the satisfaction given in verse 6 is in the passive voice... meaning we cannot achieve this fulfillment on our own. It is only by God's gift of grace that this fullness can be received.

# Matthew 5:7

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”

## Merciful

Greek adjective: ἐλεήμων, eleēmōn, el-eh-ay'-mone

Active compassion, pity, and loving-kindness. Rather than a feeling of sympathy alone, it translates to active help or forgiveness extended to someone in distress.

# Blessed is... mercy

- The incredible idea of mercy, at its full breadth, must be without situation or motivation. Jesus does not give qualifiers of who is to receive this, whether it is nationality, age, proximity, or race. The gift of mercy, when given without ceasing, can only be provided by the loving God who shows mercy continuously.
- “The noun *eleos* (mercy)... always deals with what we see of pain, misery and distress, these results of sin; and *charis* (grace) always deals with the sin and guilt itself. The one extends relief, the other pardon; the one cures, heals, helps, the other cleanses and reinstates.” *Interpretation of St Matthew’s Gospel, R.C.H. Lenski*

For... they will receive mercy.

- In Matthew 18:21-35, Jesus tells the parable of the debtor. In this story, He tells of a man with an incredible debt that was forgiven, only to later imprison another slave who owed him a much smaller debt. Along the same lines, we will never have a chasm between other people as great as our sin nature separates us from a loving God.
- The correct, Godly response to one another must come from a place of compassion. Giving mercy points to a correct understanding of the relationship between the sinner and the Savior. There will never be a time when we do not need mercy, and there also will never be a time in which we should not extend it. All love, all goodness, and all kindness cannot be given away unless first received.

# Matthew 5:8

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

**Pure**

Greek adjective: καθάρως, Katharos, kath-ar-os’

Free from corrupt desire, from sin and guilt

# Blessed is... a pure heart

- Purity in the Bible is often described as one of two metaphors:
  - A cleansing fire (Malachi 3:2-3)
  - Pruning of a tree or vine (John 15:1-8)
- Purity, of the material or of the soul, is not something that is original or natural. It must be accomplished through intentional and attentive removal of that which is evil or dead.
- To understand the foundation of a pure heart, there are two fundamental precepts:
  - Inward purity, without need for ceremony: Throughout the Gospels, Jesus clearly demonstrates and commands a quiet, inward faith, while rebuking a public and boastful faithfulness, like the Pharisees. (Matthew 6:6)
  - An undivided heart: A heart cannot be under the tyranny of division and be honoring to God. (Matthew 6:24)

# For... they shall see God

- Jesus, later in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:29-30), teaches us that upon being afflicted with a sin nature, we are to remove a portion of ourselves, instead of the whole being sent to hell. We, as fallible, impure humans, have a limited sightline and slender shoulders. We cannot have a divided heart and still seek after God. In this life, through the grace given to us by God, humans are in constant need of prayer and refining. Through this process, we will become more and more “pure of heart”.
- “For though no mortal eye can see and comprehend the essence of God, yet these men shall by an eye of faith see and enjoy God in this life, though in a glass more darkly, and in the life to come face to face.” Matthew Poole

# What should we takeaway?

- The Sermon on the Mount features the longest continued discourse by our Savior in the Gospels. If Jesus spent the time to impart such a large amount of His teaching, it must be incredibly valuable.
- The Beatitudes feature:
  - The first four are descriptors of man's correct and righteous relationship from within himself to God... the blessings that are a byproduct of the righteous person interacting with the divine.
  - The next four exist as correct interactions with other people, and as a society, which can only exist as a byproduct of a loving relationship with the living God.

# Blessed is the one who...

... has chosen meekness

... hungers and thirsts for righteousness

... receives and gives mercy

... sees God with a pure heart

... upon seeing the example given by the Savior, chooses to follow fervently after God, loves others, and lives by faith despite the difficulties of this life.



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