

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adult Sunday School

SERMON ON THE MOUNT (I)

LESSON SIX: FULFILMENT OF THE LAW

I. PASSAGE

Matthew 5:17-20, “¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. ¹⁸ For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

II. INTRODUCTION

The Lord has completed teaching the disciples on the beatitudes and similitudes as part of the Sermon on the Mount. And these teachings must have been so fascinating and refreshing to them because they were never taught like this before. All that they had learnt from the scribes and the Pharisees were the laws of God including their own by-laws of all the dos and don'ts which had been a great burden to them.

It was also possible that they had never known that God wants them to live a happy and blessed life on earth as His people. Because with all these by-laws, they were so restrictive and burdensome, how will anyone find happiness in doing them? They were happy enough not to be caught by the scribes and Pharisees for breaking any of these laws, much less to find happiness in their daily living.

In this lesson, we are going to learn how the Lord is going to correct their misconception concerning the law. Not only that, He is going to point to them that He will be the only One who is able to keep the whole Law perfectly on their behalf.

III. CORRECTING THE MISCONCEPTION (verse 17)

It begins with the Lord saying in verse 17, “Think not I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” In saying this, it gives us the idea of what the disciples were thinking about. What was their mindset? The Lord has just taught something which was very new to the disciples. And how from these teachings, they had learnt so much from Him. And so just follow the Lord is good enough, for His Word is full of authority and power. The law which the Pharisees and the scribes burdened the people so much. The more they taught, the more they felt so burdensome. It was so hard to fulfill the law. But the Lords’ teaching was so captivating. It was simple to grasp and understand.

The disciples must have harboured the thought that the law was going to be thrown out of their life. This Master Teacher must be here to take away the law. He must be here to destroy the law that is so burdensome to the people. But this is far from what they were thinking. The Lord has to correct their misconception. He does not want them to think that the beatitudes and similitudes are going to replace the law. No, it was the opposite. The Lord told them that He is going to fulfill the law, not destroy the law!

IV. THE WHOLE LAW MUST BE FULFILLED (verse 18)

Verily means truly. The Lord wanted the disciples to be serious with what He was saying to them because He is telling them the truth. The truth is that the law will not be destroyed. Instead the law will be fulfilled completely, otherwise the kingdom of heaven will not come. The new earth which they will inherit will not become a reality. The whole law must be fulfilled.

How did the Lord describe the fulfilment of the whole law? It is by every jot and tittle of the law to be fulfilled. What is one jot? It is the letter yod י. This is the smallest letter in the Hebrew Alphabet. This is significant. You missed out this letter in a word, either it becomes another word, or the word became no meaning without it. What is the tittle? The tittle is a little stroke that protrudes out in the letter. See the comparison between these two Hebrew letters beth ב and kaph כ.

Are the jot and tittle important? They are very important! And the Lord emphasizes that the whole law will be fulfilled. Not one law will be left out.

V. IMPORTANCE OF FULFILLING THE LAW (verse 19)

Every commandment is important and must be obeyed. Who will be the ones who will obey the law? Are they not believers who are saved? Those who on purpose refused to obey the law and even teach others to do the same thing, they are called the least in the kingdom of heaven. In other words, they have no part at all in God's kingdom. They will be cast out. There is no ranking in heaven. It is either you are in or out. But if you obey the law and the commandment, and teach others to follow faithfully, you are called great in the kingdom of heaven. You are part of God's kingdom.

The law was supposed to show the way in which God's people ought to live a godly and holy life before God. And this is what the scribes and the Pharisees have been called to do. They were supposed to reflect the law to the people. They were supposed to be living examples for the people to follow the law. The Lord is preparing the people to know that the law which the scribes and the Pharisees had taught perfect and good. But the problem is: is the law fulfilled perfectly and completely? The answer is, No.

VI. ONLY CHRIST CAN FULFILL THE LAW PERFECTLY! (verse 20)

The people had been looking at the scribes and the Pharisees as standards since they know the law at their fingertips. But the Lord says in verse 20, "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." No one is to assume that as long as his life is as holy and godly like the scribes and Pharisees, that would be the standard to enter heaven. This is a false assumption. Where did the people get this false assumption? It came from the scribes and the Pharisees themselves. They thought they were good enough for heaven. Surely if anyone is worthy to enter heaven, it would be the scribes and the Pharisees. But the Lord says no. Only the one whose righteousness surpassed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees will be able to enter heaven.

The Lord is pointing the disciples to Himself. What is impossible to men is possible for Him. He is the only One who is able to fulfill the law perfectly, and what He did exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees.

The fulfillment of the Law is to be done by Him and Him alone. For He has obtained that perfect righteousness by the perfect fulfilment of the law upon His finished work on the cross of Calvary. And then He gave us His perfect righteousness in order for us to be worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven. Not only His perfect righteousness gives us the passport to heaven, it also empowers us to live and obey the law by the same righteousness on this earth as God's children. All glory be to God! Amen.