

**Notes on the Greek New Testament**  
**Week 133 – Matthew 4:18-5:20**

**Day 661: Matthew 4:18-22****Verse 18**

Περιπατών δὲ παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας εἶδεν δύο ἀδελφούς, Σίμωνα τὸν λεγόμενον Πέτρον καὶ Ἀνδρέαν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, βάλλοντας ἀμφίβληστρον εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν· ἦσαν γὰρ ἀλιεῖς.

περιπατεω walk, walk about  
 παρα preposition with acc beside, by  
 θαλασσα, ης f see v.15  
 εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄραω see, observe  
 δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυοιν two  
 βαλλω throw, throw down  
 ἀμφίβληστρον, ου n casting net for fishing

"The ἀμφίβληστρον (which I have seen in use near Sidon) was a circular net with weights on the circumference and lines from the circumference to an opening in the middle. The net was thrown so that it fell flat on the water, the weights took it to the bottom, the lines were pulled to draw in the circumference, and any fish underneath the net were trapped." Morris.

ἀλιεὺς, εως m fisherman

**Verse 19**

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων.

δευτε adv. come (of command or exhortation)  
 ὀπίσω after, follow

"It is noteworthy that Jesus called those he wanted; in Judaism the disciple chose his rabbi." Morris

"It is no longer a question of taking fish from the lake, but of drawing men up out of the abyss of sin and death, catching them in the great net of God." Dietrich. Cf. 13:47-48.

**Verse 20**

οἱ δὲ εὐθέως ἀφέντες τὰ δίκτυα ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ.

εὐθεως adv straightway, immediately  
 ἀφιημι leave, forsake, let go

"The word *left* can have the meaning 'abandoned' (cf. 26:56), and whether Matthew means it in this sense or not, he is speaking of a decisive action." Morris.

δικτυον, ου n fishing net  
 ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple

**Verse 21**

Καὶ προβάς ἐκεῖθεν εἶδεν ἄλλους δύο ἀδελφούς, Ἰάκωβον τὸν τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ μετὰ Ζεβεδαίου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καταρτίζοντας τὰ δίκτυα αὐτῶν· καὶ ἐκάλεσεν αὐτούς.

προβάς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s  
 προβαίνω go on

ἐκεῖθεν from there  
 εἶδεν see v.18  
 ἄλλος, η, ο another, other  
 πλοῖον, ου n boat, ship

καταρτιζω mend, restore, make complete; act & midd make, prepare

"καταρτιζω means 'make ἀρτιος' that is, 'fit, complete'; they were making their nets ready for a further fishing expedition. This would involve any necessary repairs, and cleaning and folding the nets." Morris.

δικτυον, ου n see v.20

**Verse 22**

οἱ δὲ εὐθέως ἀφέντες τὸ πλοῖον καὶ τὸν πατέρα αὐτῶν ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ.

Note the identity of expression with v.20. "Matthew tells us further that this pair left not only their boat but *their father*, thus breaking the strongest family tie. Allegiance to Jesus is stronger than any earthly attachment." Morris. Cf. Matt 12:46-50.

**Day 662: Matthew 4:23-25****Verses 23-25**

"The evangelist wants us quickly to sense the great excitement surrounding Jesus at the beginning of his ministry, where he began to preach 'the good news of the kingdom,' before presenting him in more detail as the master teacher (chaps 5-7) and charismatic healer (chaps 8-9)." Hagner.

**Verse 23**

Καὶ περιήγεν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ,  
 διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ  
 κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας  
 καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν  
 μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ.

περιήγεν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl  
 περιαγω go around, travel over  
 ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire  
 διδάσκω teach  
 συναγωγή, ης f synagogue

Matthew speaks of "their synagogue" to distance Jesus from the Jewish leaders who ran the synagogues and who, from early on in his ministry, opposed him.

κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

"The good news is that God is at work bringing in the kingdom that will be associated with the work his Son is doing. *The gospel of the kingdom* is an expression found in this Gospel only (9:35; 24:14). It matters to Matthew that the gospel was concerned with God's sovereign rule." Morris.

θεραπεύω heal, cure  
 νόσος, ους f disease, illness  
 μαλακία, ας f sickness

Notice the contrast with the work of popular healers in Jesus day (and today):

- i) They normally made great play of their techniques while "the mode of healing practiced by Jesus is infinitely simple, externally unimpressive, but inwardly much more powerful." Oepke
- ii) Jesus healed *all*. "Those healers had their successes and their failures, but Jesus had complete mastery over illness." Morris.

λαός, ους m people, a people

**Verse 24**

καὶ ἀπήλθεν ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ εἰς ὅλην τὴν  
 Συρίαν· καὶ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ πάντας  
 τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ποικίλαις νόσοις καὶ  
 βασάνοις συνεχόμενους [καὶ]  
 δαιμονιζομένους καὶ σεληνιαζομένους καὶ  
 παραλυτικούς, καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτούς.

ἀκοή, ης f report, news, hearing

"Syria was the name of the Roman province that covered all of Palestine (cf. Luke 2:2; Acts 15:23,41), and he [Matthew] may be referring to the province." Morris.

προσήνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl  
 προσφέρω bring, bring before  
 κακῶς badly, severely; κακῶς ἔχω be sick  
 ποικίλος, η, ον various kinds of, diverse  
 βασανός, ους f torment, pain  
 συνεχῶ hem in; pass. be sick, suffer with

δαιμονίζομαι be possessed by demons  
 σεληνιαζομαι (lit be moonstruck, a lunatic), be an epileptic  
 παραλυτικός, ους m paralytic, cripple

**Verse 25**

καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ  
 τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ Δεκαπόλεως καὶ  
 Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ Ἰουδαίας καὶ πέραν  
 τοῦ Ἰορδάνου.

ἀκολουθεῶ see v.20

ὄχλος, ους m crowd, multitude

"In Matthew the crowds occupy a middling position: they are not opposed to Jesus as the Jewish leaders are (though they can be found in opposition, as in 26:55; 27:20), but they are not adherents as the disciples are (though they can support him, 21:9)." Morris.

πολύς, πολλή, πολυ gen πολλοῦ, ης, ου  
 much, many  
 πέραν beyond, across

**Day 663: Matthew 5:1-10****Chapters 5-7**

"The Sermon on the Mount (chaps 5-7) is the first and lengthiest of the five Matthean discourses. It presents the first and main example of the ethical teaching of Jesus. The righteousness of the kingdom of God (cf. 6:33) expounded in the sermon is presented as being in continuity with the righteousness of the OT law (5:17-19), yet also as surpassing it (cf. the antitheses of 5:21-48). The evangelist's placement of this first discourse toward the beginning of the Gospel indicates he attached importance to this material. Indeed the content of the sermon would have had special relevance for the Jewish-Christian readers of the Gospel." Hagner.

**Verses 1-16**

"The norms of the kingdom, worked out in the lives of the heirs of the kingdom, constitute the witness of the kingdom." DA Carson.

**Verse 1**

Ἴδων δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος·  
 καὶ καθίσαντος αὐτοῦ προσήλθαν αὐτῷ οἱ  
 μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ·

ἴδω Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω see, observe

ὄχλος, ους m see 4:25

ἀνέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀναβαίνω go up, ascend

ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill

Green suggests that the mountain has symbolic significance suggesting a place of divine revelation. He links this with what he views as the 'Exodus typology' of these chapters and sees this hill as linked with Sinai. Hagner comments, "Jesus, somewhat like a new Moses, goes up to the mount to mediate the true interpretation of the Torah."

καθίσαντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s  
καθίζω sit down, sit, take one's seat

"It was customary in Judaism for the rabbi to teach from a seated position." Hagner.

προσερχομαι come or go to, approach  
μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower

Cf. 7:28 which indicates that 'disciple' here means more than the 12 and may simply denote all who wished to hear the teacher's instruction. Nevertheless, Matthew is emphasizing that this is instruction for *disciples* – it is not an evangelistic address.

### Verse 2

καὶ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς λέγων,

ἀνοιγω open  
στομα, τος η mouth, utterance  
διδασκω teach

### Verses 3-12

"The beatitudes stand at the head of the Sermon on the Mount as the 10 commandments stand at the head of the Torah (Ex. 20:1-17) ... [they are] a statement of the moral and spiritual qualities which are characteristic of discipleship, and of the rewards which go with them." Green.

### Verse 3

Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

μακαριος, α, ον blessed, fortunate,  
happy

The word μακαριος is difficult to translate adequately with a single English word. It carries the sense of a privileged recipient of divine favour. "The true background to the NT use of the word is in the OT... The LXX often uses the word as a translation of מְשֻׁבְּחִים (deeply 'happy, blessed'). The word is of course especially appropriate in the NT in such contexts as the present one, where it describes the nearly incomprehensible happiness of those who participate in the kingdom announced by Jesus. Rather than happiness in its mundane sense, it refers to the deep inner joy of those who have long awaited the salvation promised by God and who now begin to experience its fulfilment." Hagner.

πτωχος, η, ον poor, pitiful

Cf Is 61:1. The term 'poor' is used in the OT of those who, perhaps because of long economic and social distress, have placed their hope and trust solely in God. See also Pss 9:18; 34:6, 18; 40:17; Isa 57:15; 66:2 and also Jas 2:5.

Hagner draws attention to Isaiah 61:1-2 saying, "This passage is almost certainly the basis for the present beatitude. The good news that has now come to the poor is that the kingdom is 'theirs' (αὐτῶν is in an emphatic position). Thus this opening beatitude points to eschatological fulfilment (cf. the citation of Isa 61:1-2 at the beginning of Jesus' Galilean ministry in Luke 4:18-19)."

It is interesting to note that Plato uses πτωχος of those who have no resource of their own and are reduced to begging. He believes that there should be no place for such in the State.

αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν  
They have "a present claim to a future inheritance." Green.

### Verse 4

μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.

A number of MSS reverse the order of verses 4 and 5.

Again in this beatitude there is a strong allusion to Isa 61:1-2.

πενθεω mourn, be sad, grieve over

Some MSS (κ<sup>1</sup> 33 vg<sup>mss</sup> sa<sup>mss</sup> bo) add νυν, 'now,' emphasising the contrast between the present time and the future eschatological blessings.

Thomas Watson says that this mourning is Gospel repentance and comments, "We must go through the valley of tears to paradise."

Hagner comments, "Those who mourn do so because of the seeming slowness of God's justice. But they are now to rejoice, even in their troubled circumstances, because their salvation has found its beginning."

παρακληθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl  
παρακαλεω encourage, comfort

The passive is a reverential circumlocution for the action of God.

"Perhaps we should bear in mind that typically the worldly take a lighthearted attitude to the serious issues of life, a fact that is very evident in our modern pleasure-loving generation. In their seeking after self-gratification and pleasure they do not grieve over sin or evil. Because they do not grieve over the wrong they share with others in the communities in which they live, they take few steps to set them right. Because they are not moved by the plight of the poor and the suffering, they make no move to help the world's unfortunate. It may be that Jesus is saying that our values are wrong and that it is those who mourn in the face of the evils that are part and parcel of life as we know it, those who mourn over the way in which God's cause is often neglected and his people despised, who are the truly blessed ones." Morris.

In his book, *Lament for a Son*, Nicholas Wolterstorff writes, "'Blessed are those who mourn.' What can it mean? One can understand why Jesus hails those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, why he hails the merciful, why he hails the peacemakers, why he hails those who endure under persecution. These are qualities of character which belong to the life of the kingdom. But why does he hail the mourners of the world? Why cheer tears? It must be that mourning is also a quality of character that belongs to the life of this realm.

"Who then are the mourners? The mourners are those who have caught a glimpse of God's new day, who ache with all their being for that day's coming, and who break out into tears when confronted by its absence. They are the ones who realise that in God's realm of peace there is no one blind and who ache whenever they see someone unseeing. They are the ones who realise that in God's realm there is no one hungry and who ache whenever they see someone starving. They are the ones who realise that in God's realm there is no one falsely accused and who ache whenever they see someone imprisoned unjustly. They are the ones who realise that in God's realm there is no one who fails to see God and who ache whenever they see someone unbelieving. They are the ones who realise that in God's realm there is no one who suffers oppression and who ache whenever they see someone beat down. They are the ones who realise that in God's realm there is no one without dignity and who ache whenever they see someone treated with indignity. They are the ones who realise that in God's realm of peace there is neither death nor tears and who ache whenever they see someone crying tears over death. The mourners are aching visionaries.

"Such people Jesus blesses; he hails them, he praises them, he salutes them. And he gives them the promise that the new day for whose absence they ache will come. They will be comforted.

"The Stoics of antiquity said: Be calm. Disengage yourself. Neither laugh nor weep. Jesus says: Be open to the wounds of the world. Mourn humanity's mourning, weep over humanity's wounds, be in agony over humanity's agony. But do so in the good cheer that a day of peace is coming."

#### Verse 5

μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ  
κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.

Practically a quotation of the LXX of Ps 36[37 in English enumeration]:11. Cf. also Deut 4:1; 16:20; Ps 68 [69 Eng.]:36; Isa 61:7. Hill comments, "Just as obedience and righteousness (for the deuteronomist) are the conditions of entrance into the land of promise, so is humble obedience to the pattern of life approved in the Beatitudes the means of entering the new land of God's kingdom."

πραεῖς Adjective, m nom pl πραῦς,  
πραεῖα, πραῦ humble, gentle

"Self-assertion is never a Christian virtue; rather it is Christian to be busy in lowly service and to refuse to engage in the conduct that merely advances personal aims." Morris. Hagner, however, writes, "In view are not persons who are submissive, mild, and unassertive, but those who are humble in the sense of being oppressed (hence, 'have been humbled'), bent over by the injustice of the ungodly, but who are soon to realise their reward."

κληρονομεω receive, gain possession of, inherit

γη, γης f earth

"The 'earth' (την γην) originally referred to the land of Israel, i.e., what was promised to the Jews beginning with the Abrahamic covenant (cf. Gen 13:15). But in the context of messianic fulfilment it connotes the regenerated earth (19:28; cf. Rom 4:13, where κοσμος, 'world,' replaces γη), promised by the eschatological passages in the prophets (e.g., Isa 65-66)." Hagner.

#### Verse 6

μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.

πεινῶντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom pl  
πειναω be hungry

διψαω be thirsty, thirst for

Cf. Is 55:1; Ps 42:1f.

δικαιοσυνη, ης f righteousness, what is right, what God requires

χορταζω feed, satisfy

Cf. Ps 107:9.

"In keeping with the preceding, the fourth beatitude names the literally hungry and thirsty, i.e., the downtrodden and oppressed, who especially hunger and thirst after the justice associated with the coming of God's eschatological rule. There is, then, no significant difference between the Matthean and Lukan versions of the beatitude, despite the additional words καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην 'and thirst for justice,' in Matthew. That δικαιοσυνη here means 'justice' rather than 'personal righteousness' is clear from the context. The poor, the grieving, and the downtrodden (i.e. those who have experienced injustice) are by definition those who long for God to act. They are the righteous who will inherit the kingdom. Yet this interpretation does not altogether exclude the sense of δικαιοσυνη as personal righteousness. The justice of God's eschatological rule presupposes the δικαιοσυνη of those who enjoy its blessings (cf. 2 Pet 3:13). Thus, albeit to a slight degree, this verse may anticipate the stress on δικαιοσυνη in v.20 and 6:33." Hagner.

#### Verse 7

μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.

ἐλεημων, ον gen ονος merciful  
ἐλεαω and ἐλεεω be merciful; pass.  
receive mercy

Mercy is a theme running right through Matthew's gospel, see 6:12,14f; 6:19-7:12; 18:23ff; 23:23 and the two citations of Hos 6:6 at 9:13 and 12:7. "What the poor and oppressed have not received from the rich and powerful, they should nevertheless show to others." Hagner.

#### Verse 8

μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.

Cf. Ps 24:3-4

καθαρος, α, ον pure, clean, innocent

"'Pure in heart' refers to the condition of the inner core of a person, that is, to thoughts and motivation, and hence anticipates the internalising of the commandments by Jesus in the material that follows in the sermon." Hagner.

ὄψονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl  
ὄραω see v.1

Cf. Ps 73:1. To see God is a pictorial expression indicating the bliss of fellowship with God in the kingdom.

**Verse 9**

μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ  
θεοῦ κληθήσονται.

εἰρηνοποιος, ου m **peacemaker**

Occurs here only in the NT (though a verb from the same stem occurs in Col. 1:20). It denotes active pursuit of peace.

κληθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl  
καλεω

**Verse 10**

μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν  
δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία  
τῶν οὐρανῶν.

δεδιωγμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl  
διωκω **persecute, seek after**

The perfect participle suggests that persecution has already been experienced.

ἕνεκα (ἕνεκεν and εἵνεκεν) prep with gen  
**because of, for the sake of**  
δικαιοσύνη, ης f see v.6

Cf. 1 Peter 4:15. "To be identified with Jesus and the kingdom is to be in 'the way of righteousness' (cf. 21:32); hence ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, 'on account of righteousness,' finds its counterpart in the ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ, 'on account of me' (cf. 10:22), of the following verse." Hagner.

**Day 664: Matthew 5:11-16****Verse 11**

μακάριοι ἐστε ὅταν ὀνειδίωσιν ὑμᾶς καὶ  
διωξωσιν καὶ εἴπωσιν πᾶν πονηρὸν καθ'·  
ὑμῶν [ψευδόμενοι] ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ·

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as  
ὀνειδίζω reproach, insult, abuse  
διωξωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl διωκω  
see v.10

εἴπωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl λεγω  
πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked  
ψευδομαι lie, speak untruth, deceive

ψευδομενοι is read by many important MSS but is also omitted by a significant group. It is difficult to judge whether it is original or an addition. Having considered the evidence and arguments, Morris concludes, "On the whole I think it should be read. But if it is not read it is implied, for what the enemies say could not really be evil if it were true."

On this point, Morris says, "Believers are not to engage in the kind of conduct that enables people to accuse them genuinely; their lives are to be above reproach."

ἕνεκα (ἕνεκεν and εἵνεκεν) see v.10

**Verse 12**

χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ὅτι ὁ μισθὸς  
ὑμῶν πολὺς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς· οὕτως γὰρ  
ἐδίωξαν τοὺς προφήτας τοὺς πρὸ ὑμῶν.

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

ἀγαλλιᾶσθε Verb, pres midd/pass dep  
imperat, 2 pl ἀγαλλιαω **be extremely  
joyful or glad**

μισθος, ου m **pay, reward, gain**

The promise of reward is not an insignificant element in the teaching of Jesus (cf. 5:19; 46; 6:1; 19:29; 20:8). It is present also in the teaching of Paul (see Rom 8:18; 2 Cor 4:17 cf 1 Cor 15:19).

πολὺς, πολλή, πολὺ gen πολλοῦ, ης, ου  
**much, many**

οὐρανός, ου m **heaven**

οὕτως and οὕτω **thus, in this way**

"The suffering of the righteous at the hands of persecutors is nothing new in the history of God's dealings with Israel, as the evangelist reminds his readers. It is an honoured tradition they stand in when they suffer persecution." Hagner. Morris comments, "Persecuted believers are in good company."

**Verses 13-16**

On the theme of salt and light, compare Mk 9:50; 4:21; Lk 8:16; 11:33; 14:34f for similar sayings in other contexts and with a slightly different sense. The emphasis here is upon good works: it is by their good works that disciples will be 'salt' and 'light'. See also the comment by Don Carson quoted at the beginning of Verses 1-16.

**Verse 13**

Ἔμεῖς ἐστε τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς· ἐὰν δὲ τὸ  
ἅλας μωρανθῇ, ἐν τίνι ἀλισθήσεται; εἰς  
οὐδὲν ἰσχύει ἔτι εἰ μὴ βληθὲν ἔξω  
καταπατεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

Note the emphatic use of ἕμεῖς – 'it is you who are my disciples and none other who ...'

ἅλας, ατος n **salt**

Salt is a preservative from corruption and gives taste to food. "What is good in society his followers will keep wholesome. What is corrupt they oppose; they penetrate society for good as a kind of moral antiseptic. And they give a tang to life like salt to a dish of food." Morris. Hagner, having surveyed the various ways in which the phrase 'salt of the earth' might be understood, comments, "Since it is virtually impossible now to know which of its several associations would have come most readily to the minds of the disciples when they heard these words, it may be best simply to take the metaphor broadly and inclusively as meaning something that is vitally important to the world in a religious sense, as salt was vitally necessary for everyday life." Christians are to allow their influence to be felt in the world at large. They are not to become a 'sect'.

γη, γης f earth

ἐάν if

μωραίνω make foolish, make tasteless

"The unusual use of it [μωραίνειν] here to describe what has lost its saltiness goes back to the underlying Hebrew root, lpt, *tpl*, a word that has both meanings... A Greek translator then chose the Greek word μωραίνειν because it applied more readily to the disciples. For the disciples, the salt of the earth, to lose their saltiness was equivalent to becoming foolish. It would in effect be to lose their identity." Hagner.

The Christian's effectiveness depends on the Christian's distinctiveness.

ἀλισθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s ἀλιζω  
salt, restore flavour to (salt)

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

ἰσχω be strong, be able, be sufficient

ἔτι still

βληθὲν Verb, aor pass infin βαλλω trans  
throw, throw down

A great number of MSS (D W Θ f<sup>15</sup> TR) have βληθῆναι ἔξω και, 'to be thrown out and.'

The better text, however, is βληθεν ἔξω, lit.

'having been thrown out.'

ἔξω out, outside, away

καταπατεῖσθαι Verb, pres pass infin

καταπατεω trample on/under foot

#### Verse 14

Ἔμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου. οὐ δύναται πόλις κρυβῆναι ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη·

φως, φωτος n light

The phrase (or thought of being) 'light of the world' is used in several contexts: of Israel in Isa 42:6; 49:6; 51:4-5 (cf. Rom 2:19); of Jesus in Jn 8:12; 9:5; of Christians in Eph 5:8; Phil 2:15. Jesus' disciples share a part in his calling as the Servant of the Lord. See also 2 Cor 4:4. "If the world is not to be left in darkness, the disciples must fulfil their calling to represent the kingdom. They are now the light (cf. v.16), whose shining thus becomes the hope of the world." Hagner.

δυναμαι can, be able to

πολις, εως f city, town

κρυβῆναι Verb, 2 aor pass infin κρυπτω

hide, conceal, cover

ἐπάνω on, upon

ὄρος, ουσ n mountain, hill

κειμαι lie, be laid; stand, be standing

The metaphor has unavoidable associations with Jerusalem on Mount Zion. Cf. Isa 2:2-5.

#### Verse 15

οὐδὲ καίουσιν λύχνον καὶ τιθέασιν αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τὸν μῶδιον ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν λυχνίαν, καὶ λάμπει πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ.

καιω light, keep burning, burn

λυχνος, ου m lamp

τιθημι place, set, appoint

μῶδιος, ου m basket, bucket

λυχνια, ας f lampstand, stand

λαμπω shine, give light

οἰκια, ας f house, home, household

"The very purpose of being a follower of Jesus is to give light. Giving light is not an option, so to speak, which the disciple may or may not choose. It is part of being a disciple, just as much part of discipleship as giving light is of a lighted lamp." Morris

#### Verse 16

οὕτως λαμψάτω τὸ φῶς ὑμῶν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅπως ἴδωσιν ὑμῶν τὰ καλὰ ἔργα καὶ δοξάσωσιν τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν τὸν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

"This verse takes up the words 'shine,' 'light' and 'men' in the three preceding ones and is therefore Matthew's comment on the whole." Green.

οὕτως and οὕτω thus, in this way

λαμπω shine, give light

ἔμπροσθεν before, in front of

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἀν) that, in order that

"The ὅπως clause spells out the result of such a shining of the light and thus provides a most welcome aid to the interpretation of the metaphor. To let one's light shine is to live in such a way as to manifest the presence of the kingdom." Hagner.

ἴδωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ὄραω see, observe, perceive, recognise  
καλος, η, ον good, right, fine, beautiful  
δοξάσωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl δοξάζω praise, honour, glorify, exalt

The purpose is not that they should merely admire the good works of the Christian but that they should recognize the author of that goodness in the disciple. Contrast what is said of the Pharisees' desire to gain praise for themselves.

"God is referred to as πατηρ, 'Father,' forty-five times in Matthew, and in nearly half the occurrences (nineteen times) it is modified, as here, by the words 'in heaven' or 'heavenly.' ... The expression 'Father in heaven' is remarkable in that it combines the personal, or immanent, element of fatherhood with the transcendental element of God's otherness, 'in heaven.'" Hagner.

#### Postscript to verses 13-16

"The kinds of good deeds that enable light to be seen as light are now to be elaborated in the course of the sermon that follows. They are shown to be nothing other than the faithful living out of the commandments, the righteousness of the Torah as interpreted by Jesus." Hagner.

#### Day 665: Matthew 5:17-20

##### Verses 17-20

"This passage is placed here for a very important reason. The ethical teaching of Jesus that follows in this sermon, as well as later in the Gospel, has such a radical character and goes so much against what was the commonly accepted understanding of the commands of the Torah that it is necessary at the outset to indicate Jesus' full and unswerving loyalty to the law. Only when this is set clearly before the listeners or readers will they be in a position to understand correctly Jesus' teaching about the righteousness of the kingdom. This is especially the case given the six contrasts drawn in the remainder of this chapter, which begin with the words 'you have heard it said' (5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43). Jesus' corrections of the mistaken understandings involve the presentation of the true meaning of the Torah, not its cancellation as might at first seem to be the case." Hagner.

##### Verse 17

Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλύσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφήτας· οὐκ ἦλθον καταλύσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι.

νομίσητε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl νομιζω think, suppose, assume

Jesus opposes the false claims of the scribes and Pharisees that he is overthrowing the law. He has come to fulfil the law but to overthrow their traditions.

"He is in no way contradicting the Mosaic law, though he is opposed to the legalistic type of religion the scribes had built on it." Tasker.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἔρχομαι

Messianic overtones, cf. 10:34.

καταλύσαι Verb, aor act infin καταλυω destroy, tear down, do away with

Cf. the use of this verb in relation to the destruction of the temple, 24:2; 26:61; 27:40.

νομος, ου m law

ἢ or

'The law and the prophets' is shorthand for the entire Old Testament. It suggests that Jesus' relation to the law can only be understood adequately in the context of his relation to the OT as a whole.

πληροω fill, fulfill, accomplish

"The whole process of revelation in the Old Testament finds in Jesus its completion and validation – the ceremonial law and the moral law. No part of Scripture is abrogated."

Murray

"*To fulfill* has been understood in three main ways: (1) It may mean that he would do the things laid down in Scripture. (2) It may mean that he would bring out the full meaning of Scripture. (3) It may mean that in his life and teaching he would bring Scripture to completion. Each points to an aspect of the truth, and Jesus may well have meant that he would fulfill Scripture in more ways than one."

Morris.

Hagner thinks that the second of these is the meaning here, he writes, "Since in 5:21-48 Jesus defines righteousness by expounding the true meaning of the law as opposed to wrong or shallow understandings, it is best to understand πληρωσαι here as 'fulfill' in the sense of 'bring to its intended meaning' – that is, to present a definitive interpretation of the law, something now possible because of the presence of the Messiah and his kingdom. Far from destroying the law, Jesus' teachings – despite their occasional strange sound – penetrate to the divinely intended (i.e., the teleological) meaning of the law. Because the law and the prophets pointed to him and he is their goal, he is able now to reveal their true meaning and so to bring them to 'fulfilment.' This view is consonant with the expectation that the Messiah would not only preserve the Torah, but also bring out its meaning in a definitive manner." Hagner.

Oliver O'Donovan comments, "Two accounts of how 'fulfil' should be understood go back to St Augustine: performing all that the law requires; and adding to the law that which it falls short (*De sermone Domine* I.8). The interpretative question comes to be framed in this way because Augustine, like many commentators since, assumed that the verb 'fulfil' must make sense with 'law', standing on its own, as object. But in fact the text speaks of fulfilling 'the law and the prophets', a phrase which sums up the legacy of Israel's tradition as a whole. This encourages us to understand fulfilment in a third way: *expectation* is what Israel has inherited, *fulfilment* is the satisfaction of that expectation. In the strange saying that not a yod or a serif will pass from the law 'until all be fulfilled', the law itself is treated as a kind of promise. It anticipated a righteousness for which the faithful hungered and thirsted, a righteousness in which all would be subject to God's command. That promise is now to be made good, and the life of the new community is a demonstration of it. That life is an advance upon the bare text of the law and upon current interpretations of it (5:20)." *The Desire of the Nations*, pp. 108,109.

#### Verse 18

ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν, ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἓν ἢ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται.

ἕως ἂν until

παρέλθῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s

παρερχομαι pass, pass away

οὐρανοσ, ου m heaven

γῆ, γῆς f earth

Cf. 2 Pet 3:7, 13; Rev 21:1.

ἰῶτα n iota

εἷς, μια, ἓν gen ἑνός, μιας, ἑνός one, single

κεραια, ας f stroke (part of a letter)

"ἰῶτα ('iota') is the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet but translates an underlying reference to the smallest Hebrew letter, the yod (y). The κεραια ('tittle,' lit. 'horn' or 'hook') refers to minute markings of the written text, either those that distinguish similar Hebrew letters (as between h and j) or, more probably, the ornamental marks customarily added to certain letters." Hagner.

Jesus affirms the verbal inspiration of Scripture. Not even the smallest detail of the Old Testament will fail to come to fulfilment and be established in Christ.

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

On this final clause Hagner comments, "The explanation of Matthew's addition of a tautological clause is that the repetition emphasises a most important point for the evangelist: the law remains in place until the consummation of the age. We must reiterate, however, that the way in which the law retains its validity for Matthew is in and through the teaching of Jesus... Jesus is the goal of the law and the prophets, the bringer of the kingdom, and hence the final interpreter of the law's meaning. The law as *he* teaches it is valid for all time, and thus in effect the law is upheld." The stress of the last clause is again on fulfilment: it is not that the law and the prophets are simply swept away at the end of the present age, it is rather that all will have come to pass in fulfilment of what was written.

### Verse 19

ὅς ἐάν οὖν λύση μίαν τῶν ἐντολῶν  
τούτων τῶν ἐλαχίστων καὶ διδάξη οὕτως  
τοὺς ἄνθρωπος, ἐλάχιστος κληθήσεται ἐν  
τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν· ὅς δ' ἂν  
ποιήσῃ καὶ διδάξη, οὗτος μέγας  
κληθήσεται ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν.

ὅς ἐάν if anyone should, whoever  
λύση Verb, aor act subj, 3 s λυω loose,  
set aside  
ἐντολη, ης f command, order, instruction

Opinion varies over whether τῶν ἐντολῶν  
τούτων refers to:

- i) The commandments of the OT (so Hagner and most commentators); or,
- ii) The teaching of Jesus as given, for instance, in the following verses (so Banks, Lohmeyer, Schweizer)

Though Hagner thinks the former he, in effect, adopts a mediating position saying, "As in the preceding verse, a literal understanding is not consistent with Jesus' own treatment of the law, nor indeed with the emphasis of v.20. What is being emphasised in this way are not the minutiae of the law that tended to captivate the Pharisees but simply a full faithfulness to the meaning of the law *as it is expounded by Jesus*. Thus, the phrase 'the least of these commandments' refers to the final and full meaning of the law, but as taken up and interpreted by Jesus, as for example in the material that begins in v 21."

ἐλάχιστος, η, ον (superl of μικρος) least,  
smallest, insignificant  
διδάξη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s διδασκω  
teach

"The addition of the word διδάξη, 'teach,' in both halves of the verse stresses the responsibility of the disciples, not simply to observe the law as interpreted by Jesus but also to teach it faithfully. Teaching receives great emphasis in the Gospel of Matthew, and the evangelist obviously regarded it as of the highest importance for his church (cf. 28:20)." Hagner.

οὕτως and οὕτω thus, in this way  
κληθησεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s  
καλεω  
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

The one called great is not concerned simply with personal obedience while being tolerant of sin in others; he is concerned to encourage others to join him in obeying God.

### Verse 20

λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐάν μὴ περισσεύσῃ  
ὑμῶν ἢ δικαιοσύνη πλεῖον τῶν  
γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων, οὐ μὴ  
εἰσέλθῃτε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν.

ἐάν μὴ unless, except  
περισευω be more than enough,  
increase, excel  
δικαιοσυνη, ης f righteousness, what is  
right, what God requires

The righteousness spoken of here cannot be imputed righteousness since Jesus is here speaking of teaching and obeying the requirements of God. The 'righteousness' spoken of here is the *character of life* that is to mark children of the Kingdom. "Later in this sermon Jesus will emphasise the spirit rather than the letter of the law. The Pharisees put a tremendous emphasis on the letter of the law, but Jesus was looking for something very different from the Pharisaic standard. For them it was a matter of observing regulations (and softening them where possible) but for him it was keeping the commandments in depth; he taught a radical obedience." Morris.

"Jesus expects, as the antitheses to follow show, a new and higher form of righteousness that rests upon the presence of the eschatological kingdom he brings and that finds its definition and content in his definitive and authoritative exposition of the law... The larger context of the verse (e.g., the grace of the beatitudes) forbids us to conclude that entrance into the kingdom depends, in a cause-effect relationship, upon personal moral attainments. The verse is addressed, it must be remembered, to those who are the recipients of the kingdom. Entrance into the kingdom is God's gift; but to belong to the kingdom means to follow Jesus' teaching. Hence, the kingdom and the righteousness of the kingdom go together; they cannot be separated. And it follows that without this righteousness there can be no entrance into the kingdom (cf. 6:33)." Hagner.

πλειων, πλειον or πλεον more  
 γραμματευς, εως m scribe, expert in  
 Jewish law, scholar  
 εισερχομαι enter, go in, come in

#### Verses 17-20 Postscript

"As the Messiah, Jesus has come to bring both the law and the prophets to their intended fulfilment. Jesus' view of the law as valid until the end of time means that the fulfilment he brings is in true continuity with the past, a fulfilment toward which the law and the prophets pointed. God's purposes have a unity; yet a new stage in his purposes has been reached. Jesus alone and not the Pharisees can interpret the Torah finally and authoritatively. This is the explanation of the radical-sounding teaching of Jesus that cuts through the casuistry and mystification of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus' commitment to the whole law is no less serious than theirs, but he alone is in a position to penetrate to the intended meaning of the Torah. In this connection, it is absolutely important to note that the understanding of the Torah and the attainment of the righteousness of the law are thus vitally linked with the presence of the kingdom. Where the kingdom has come, there exists the possibility of the realisation of the righteousness of the law." Hagner.