

Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 136 – Matthew 7:1-8:4

Day 676: Matthew 7:1-6

Verses 1-6

"Jesus turns from a negative attitude in one's own affairs (worry) to a negative attitude in one's attitude to others (ensoriousness). He points to a bad habit all too characteristic of the human race, and instructs his followers not to be hasty in making negative judgements on their fellows. It is a dangerous procedure because it invites a similar judgement in return. And it is a difficult procedure because our own faults make it hard for us to see precisely what is amiss in our fellows." Morris.

Verse 1

Μὴ κρίνετε, ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε·

This does not forbid all acts of judgement (cf. John 7:24). It "is not a requirement to be blind, but rather a plea to be generous." Stott. "The meaning here ... is that unfair or uncharitable judgments should be avoided. A note of humility is suggested too by the immediate context (vv. 3-5): one should not judge others more harshly or by a different standard than one judges oneself." Hagner.

κριθῆτε Verb, aor pass subj, 2 pl κρινω
judge, pass judgement on, condemn

Morris thinks that the consequential judgement spoken of here is that of God.

Verse 2

ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίματι κρίνετε κριθήσεσθε, καὶ ἐν ᾧ μέτρῳ μετρεῖτε μετρηθήσεται ὑμῖν.

κριμα, τος n judgement, verdict

Cf. Rom 2:1.

μετρον, ου n measure, degree, quantity
μετρω measure, deal out

A number of MSS, followed by the TR, read ἀντιμετρηθήσεται rather than μετρηθήσεται – probably influenced by the parallel in Lk 6:38.

Verse 3

τί δὲ βλέπεις τὸ κάρφος τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου, τὴν δὲ ἐν τῷ σῷ ὀφθαλμῷ δοκὸν οὐ κατανοεῖς;

βλεπω see, look, be able to see

καρφος, ους n speck, small splinter

Perhaps 'sawdust.' The analogy reflects the familiarity of Jesus with the carpenter's shop, cf. Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3.

σοσ, ση, σον possessive adj. your, yours
δοκος, ου f log, beam of wood
κατανοεω consider, think of, notice,
observe

"What is a tiny flaw in another is seen so clearly by a censorious person, while ironically what is an outrageously huge failure in the latter is conveniently overlooked altogether. It is the self-righteous, censorious person who is particularly eager to correct the faults of others." Hagner.

Morris adds, "The meaning is not that in every case the person passing judgement is a worse sinner than the one he criticises. It is rather that what he finds wrong in his brothers is a very small matter compared with the sins God sees in him."

Verse 4

ἢ πῶς ἐρεῖς τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου, Ἄφες ἐκβάλω τὸ κάρφος ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ σου, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἢ δοκὸς ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ σου;

ἢ or

ἐρεῖς Verb, fut act indic, 2 s λεγω

ἀφιημι allow, tolerate

ἐκβάλω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἐκβαλλω
throw out, expel, cast out

Verse 5

ὑποκριτά, ἔκβαλε πρῶτον ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ σου τὴν δοκόν, καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις ἐκβαλεῖν τὸ κάρφος ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.

ὑποκριτης, ου m hypocrite

"Jesus is drawing attention to a curious feature of the human race in which a profound ignorance of oneself is so often combined with an arrogant presumption of knowledge about others, especially about their faults." Morris.

ἐκβαλε Verb, aor act imperat, 2s ἐκβαλλω
πρωτον adv. first, first of all
τοτε then, at that time
διαβλεπω see clearly

Verse 6

Μὴ δώτε τὸ ἅγιον τοῖς κυσίν, μηδὲ βάλητε τοὺς μαργαρίτας ὑμῶν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν χοίρων, μήποτε καταπατήσουσιν αὐτοὺς ἐν τοῖς ποσίν αὐτῶν καὶ στραφέντες ῥήξωσιν ὑμᾶς.

ἅγιος, α, ον holy, consecrated, set apart to/by God

κυων, κυνος m dog

μηδε negative particle nor, and not, neither
βάλητε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl βαλλω
throw, throw down, place

μαργαριτης, ου m pearl

ἔμπροσθεν prep with gen before, in front of

χοιρος, ου m pig

μήποτε lest, otherwise

καταπατήσουσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl

καταπατεω trample on

πους, ποδος m foot

στραφέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl

στρεφω pass turn, turn around

Probably "we should understand the construction as chiasmatic: the pigs do the trampling and the dogs tearing in pieces." Morris.

ῥήξωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ῥηγγυμι
and ῥησσω burst, tear in pieces

Note that this verse deals with *failure* to judge appropriately. It is applied by many commentators to the message of the Gospel.

"The gospel of the kingdom – in 13:45-6 the kingdom is a pearl – was to be preached to all; but its heralds were also instructed to shake the dust off their feet when they were not received into a house or town (10:14)." Davies & Allison.

"Staying on and on in the company of those who ridicule the Christian religion is not fair to other fields that are waiting to be saved, especially in view of the fact that the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few." Hendriksen.

"The issue here thus focuses on the lack of receptivity rather than on any intrinsic unworthiness of any individuals or group." Hagner.

Day 677: Matthew 7:7-12**Verses 7-11**

"Here he is simply making emphatically the central point, that prayer to a loving Father is effective. The point is not that human persistence wins out in the end, but that the heavenly Father who loves his children will certainly answer their prayers." Morris.

Verse 7

Αἰτεῖτε, καὶ δοθήσεται ὑμῖν· ζητεῖτε, καὶ εὕρησεται· κρούετε, καὶ ἀνοιγήσεται ὑμῖν.

αἰτεω ask, request, demand

"All three imperatives are present, underlining the importance of continuous action." Morris. Cf. Lk 18:1-8; 11:5-8.

δοθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s διδωμι

ζητεω seek, search for, look for

εὕρησεται Verb, fut act indic, 2 pl εὕρισκω

κρουω knock (at a door)

ἀνοιγω open

"All who serve God know what it is to be faced with 'doors' that are fast closed, and it means a lot that prayer will result in the opening of such doors. The three expressions underline the effectiveness of prayer. Look at it which way you will, it gets things done." Morris.

Verse 8

πᾶς γὰρ ὁ αἰτῶν λαμβάνει καὶ ὁ ζητῶν εὕρισκει καὶ τῷ κρούοντι ἀνοιγήσεται.

Verse 9

ἢ τίς ἐστὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν ἄνθρωπος, ὃν αἰτήσῃ ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἄρτον – μὴ λίθον ἐπιδώσῃ αὐτῷ;

"The rhetorical questions together with the negative constructions beginning with μη amount to affirmations. When a child asks for bread or a fish, no parent would respond with a stone or a snake." Hagner.

ἢ or

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food

λίθος, ου m stone, precious stone

ἐπιδίδωμι give, hand

Verse 10

ἢ καὶ ἰχθὺν αἰτήσῃ – μὴ ὄφιν ἐπιδώσῃ αὐτῷ;

ἰχθυς, υος m fish

ὄφις, εως m snake, serpent

"France holds that 'a snake might be taken for a fish, particularly the eel-like catfish of Galilee.' While Mounce sees in the *snake* 'some eel-like fish without scales that, according to Lev 11:12, was not to be eaten.' We cannot be sure which is correct, but clearly there was something that resembled fish but was not and that mocked hunger rather than satisfied it." Morris.

Verse 11

εἰ οὖν ὑμεῖς πονηροὶ ὄντες οἴδατε δόματα ἀγαθὰ διδόναι τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν, πόσω μᾶλλον ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς δώσει ἀγαθὰ τοῖς αἰτοῦσιν αὐτόν.

πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

"Throughout the New Testament, the solidarity of the race in sin is taken as a basic fact." Morris.

οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

δομα, τος η gift

ἀγαθος, η, ον good, useful, fitting

τέκνον, ου η child; pl descendants

ποσος, η, ον how much(?)

μᾶλλον adv more; rather

Cf. the parallel in Lk 11:13 which has πνευμα ἀγιον rather than ἀγαθα. Hagner thinks that "These 'good things' can be thought of as the eschatological blessings that accompany the presence of the kingdom (cf. Luke's 'Holy Spirit'), so that the work of the disciples in proclaiming the kingdom is primarily in view, or alternatively the more ordinary and ongoing needs of the disciples (cf. 6:32-33)." Cf. Jas 1:17

Verse 12

Πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἐὰν θέλητε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς· οὗτος γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται.

'Therefore' probably refers back to the whole of the preceding sermon – though our Father's care for us should act as a motive to careful concern for others. The lack of clarity concerning the connection with what precedes is probably responsible for the omission of οὖν from a few MSS (κ* L sy^p bo^{mss}).

ὅσος, η, ον as much as, how much,

ὅσος ἂν, ὅσος ἐὰν whoever

θελω wish, will

οὕτως and οὕτω thus, in this way

"The golden rule is found in some form or another in a variety of religions, mostly in the negative: 'Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you.' Jesus, however, enunciates this rule in positive form, and appears to have been the first to do so; his followers are to be active in doing good to others." Morris.

νομος, ου m law

"Elsewhere Jesus says that the law and the prophets 'hang' on the two commandments to love God and one's neighbour (22:40), which is another way of saying the same thing. Both ways of putting it totally exclude selfishness and stress a proper attitude of love and care for others. The person who constantly lives according to the golden rule is keeping all the regulations in Scripture directing one's conduct towards other people." Morris.

"It is from this saying and that of 22:37-40 that love became the dominant theme of the Christian ethic... If the ethics of the kingdom of God anticipate the coming future in the present, then this is especially true of the ethic of the golden rule, which is the distillation of kingdom ethics. If this teaching of Jesus were to be lived out in the world, the whole system of evil would be dramatically shaken. Even if it were to be manifested seriously in the Church, its impact would be incalculable. In this sublime command, so simple and yet so deep, we encounter a challenge central to the purposes of God and therefore one that is also eschatological in tone. No other teaching is so readily identified with Jesus; no other teaching is so central to the righteousness of the kingdom and the practice of discipleship." Hagner.

Day 678: Matthew 7:13-20**Verses 13-27**

"The concluding section of the sermon is taken up with impressing on the hearers the difference between real and merely nominal discipleship." Morris.

"Jesus began his sermon with unqualified tenderness, embracing in the Blessings those who felt least embraceable. He concludes with unqualified toughness, warning us that his sermon is not an intellectual option, a set of suggestions we may take or leave, one philosophy among many others, but that it is the exclusive way to life." FD Bruner.

Verse 13

Εἰσελάθε διὰ τῆς στενῆς πύλης· ὅτι πλατεία ἡ πύλη καὶ εὐρύχωρος ἡ ὁδὸς ἢ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ἀπωλειαν, καὶ πολλοὶ εἰσιν οἱ εἰσερχόμενοι δι' αὐτῆς·

εἰσελάθε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

στενος, η, ον narrow

πυλη, ης f gate, door

πλατυς, εια, υ wide

ἡ πύλη is omitted by a few MSS, including κ*
εὐρυχωρος, ον wide, roomy

NASV translates as 'easy' but this is not a good translation. The point is not that this way is easy but that it is easy to be found in this way.

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey
ἀπαγω lead
ἀπώλεια, ας f destruction, utter ruin
πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου
much, many

The relationship between the 'gate' and the 'path' or 'way' is the subject of much controversy. Some think that the gate is at the end of the path and is the entrance into glory. Others think that gate and path are poetic parallels for the same demand to go Christ's way. Bruner sums up the 'traditional' (see *Pilgrim's Progress*) and perhaps most natural interpretation. "Jesus is appealing *both* for an evangelical decision (the gate) *and* for an ethical endurance (the way). Taken together, then, the narrow gate and the tough way are simply the difficult choice for Jesus *and* the constantly challenging decisions for discipleship to him." Cf. Luke 13:24.

The metaphor of the 'two ways' was common in Jewish, Hellenistic and early Christian writings.

Verse 14

τί στενή ἡ πύλη καὶ τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδὸς ἢ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ζωὴν, καὶ ὀλίγοι εἰσὶν οἱ εὐρίσκοντες αὐτήν.

Instead of τι στενη, some MSS, followed by TR have ὅτι στενη. τι is probably "a Semitism (cf. Ps 139:17) not understood by some copyists who proceeded to add the omicron making ὅτι." Hagner.

ἡ πύλη is omitted by some MSS, though in this case by a number of cursives.

τεθλιμμένη Verb, perf pass ptc, f nom s
θλιβω press hard, crush

"The verb ... conveys the basic idea of pressing (which can lead to the thought of affliction); here it is that of compression and thus narrowness. The perfect points to a continuing state. It is not the obvious opposite to 'broad,' and perhaps we should detect an allusion to the persecutions that are part and parcel of the Christian life." Morris. Cf. Acts 14:22. Hagner says, "Given the context of the preceding ethical teaching of the sermon, the radical character of discipleship is in view."

ζωη, ης f life
ὀλιγος, η, ον little, small; pl. few

No-one drifts into this way by accident. "The way taught by Jesus, upon which the disciples are invited to travel, is inestimably superior despite the various demands it puts upon its travellers. If it is a rigorous way, it is unmistakably also a way of grace. The disciples are not to worry that they are the minority, the few over against the many. It is not the point of the passage to speculate over the number who are saved or lost. The concern is the challenge afforded by discipleship. But the disciples are not to worry that their path involves the rigours of discipleship as well as the experience of suffering, sacrifice and persecution. For they, by the grace of God, have found the way to life; they are the privileged." Hagner.

Verse 15

Προσέχετε ἀπὸ τῶν ψευδοπροφητῶν, οἵτινες ἔρχονται πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν ἐνδύμασιν προβάτων, ἔσωθεν δέ εἰσιν λύκοι ἄρπαγες.

προσεχω pay close attention to, be on guard, watch, watch out
ψευδοπροφητης, ου m false prophet

It is difficult to determine the nature of the false prophets mentioned here. Gundry thinks that they were Jewish Christians over zealous for the law while others argue that they were antinomian ultra-Paulinists. Hagner comments, "The designation 'false prophets' need not be taken in a narrow, technical sense as referring to a particular group. It is impossible to know what specific group, if any, the evangelist had in mind... The term can be applied generally to all who fulfil the description in 7:15-20, who bring forth 'bad fruit,' whether Pharisees (thus Hill), charismatic enthusiasts, libertines, or even hypocrites in the Church (Minear). Possibly the warning is general and has no specific group in mind."

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅ
τι who, which
ἐνδυμα, τος n clothing, garment
προβατον, ου n sheep

I.e they appear or masquerade as members of the flock.

ἔσωθεν adv. within, inside, inwardly
λυκος, ου m wolf

Cf. Acts 20:29.

ἄρπαξ, αγος grasping, greedy

Verse 16

ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιγνώσεσθε αὐτούς· μήτι συλλέγουσιν ἀπὸ ἀκανθῶν σταφυλᾶς ἢ ἀπὸ τριβόλων σῦκα;

Cf. Lk 6:43-44.

καρπος, ου m fruit, outcome
ἐπιγνώσεσθε Verb, fut midd dep indic, 2 pl
ἐπιγνώσκω perceive, understand,
recognise

A timeless or gnomic future.

μητι Negative particle, used in questions to indicate the expectation of a negative answer

συλλεγω gather
ἀκανθα, ης f thorn-plant
σταφυλη, ης f (bunch of) grapes
τριβολος, ου m briar, thistle
συκον, ου n fig

Verse 17

οὕτως πᾶν δένδρον ἀγαθὸν καρποῦς καλοῦς ποιεῖ, τὸ δὲ σαπρὸν δένδρον καρποῦς πονηροῦς ποιεῖ·

οὕτως thus, in this way
δενδρον, ου n tree
ἀγαθος, η, ον good, useful, fitting
καλος, η, ον good, fine, beautiful
σαπρος, α, ον bad, rotten, worthless
πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad

"δενδρον ἀγαθον, 'good tree,' in the context of the sermon and the Gospel, represents the disciples of Jesus, the people of the kingdom, and the καρπους καλους, 'good fruit,' the righteousness expounded in the teaching of Jesus. σαπρον δενδρον καρπους πονηρους, 'decayed tree, bad fruit,' refers, on the other hand, to those (false prophets) who only give the appearance of belonging to the truth and whose true character is revealed in their unrighteous deeds." Hagner.

Verse 18

οὐ δύναται δένδρον ἀγαθὸν καρποῦς πονηροῦς ποιεῖν, οὐδὲ δένδρον σαπρὸν καρποῦς καλοῦς ποιεῖν.

δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of

Verse 19

πᾶν δένδρον μὴ ποιῶν καρπὸν καλὸν ἐκκόπεται καὶ εἰς πῦρ βάλλεται.

ποιῶν Verb, pres act ptc, n nom/acc s
ποιεω

"Jesus does not speak of what the tree does, but of what it does not do; in the last resort it is not the tree that actually bears bad fruit that is condemned, but one that fails to produce good fruit." Morris.

ἐκκοπτω cut off, cut down, remove
πυρ, ος n fire
βαλλω throw, throw down

Cf the words of John the Baptist in 3:10 and Jesus' words in John 15.

Verse 20

ἄρα γε ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιγνώσεσθε αὐτούς.

γε enclitic particle adding emphasis to the word with which it is associated
ἐπιγνώσεσθε see v.16

Day 679: Matthew 7:21-27**Verses 21-23**

These verses provide a "striking illustration of the lesson given in vv 15-20." Hagner.

Verse 21

Οὐ πᾶς ὁ λέγων μοι, Κύριε κύριε, εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἀλλ' ὁ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

"Matthew's community can hardly have failed to think here of the primary Christian confession, that Jesus is Lord (cf. Rom 10:9; Phil 2:11; 1 Cor 12:3), and of the futility of empty profession (cf. the emphasis on 'doing' what is righteous in Rom 2:13; Jas 1:22, 25; 2:14; 1 John 2:17)." Hagner.

εἰσελεύσεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl
εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in
θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

"When the kingdom of heaven comes in all its fulness, it will not be people's professions that count, but their profession as shown in the way they live." Morris. Cf. Lk. 6:46.

Verse 22

πολλοὶ ἐροῦσίν μοι ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, Κύριε κύριε, οὐ τῷ σῶ ὀνόματι ἐπροφητεύσαμεν, καὶ τῷ σῶ ὀνόματι δαιμόνια ἐξεβάλομεν, καὶ τῷ σῶ ὀνόματι δυνάμεις πολλὰς ἐποιήσαμεν;

ἐροῦσίν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl λεγω
ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, he, she, it

For the phrase ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ cf. Amos 8:9; 9:11; Isa 2:20; Zeph 1:10,14; Zech 14:4, 6, 8, 13, 20, 21; 2 Thess 1:10; 2 Tim 4:8.

σος, ση, σον possessive adj. **your, yours**
 ὄνομα, τος n **name, title, authority**
 δαιμονιον, ου n **demon, evil spirit**
 ἐξεβάλομεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl
 ἐκβαλλω **throw out, cast out**

"God who is holy can do holy things with instruments that are not. The ability to drive out demons says nothing about the inner holiness of the broom which God may make use of. Obedience is more than miracles." Gutzwiller.

"To be active in religious affairs is no substitute for obeying God." Morris.

"Hill is correct, then, in characterising the activities of these persons as 'a continuation of that of Jesus himself ... in fulfilment of the apostolic commissioning' and as 'in no way abnormal in the life of the early church'...

These persons are thus not criticised for their charismatic activities but for their dependence upon them as a substitute for the righteousness taught by Jesus. We may conclude that charismatic activities, done apart from this righteousness, have no self-contained importance and are in themselves insufficient for entry into the kingdom of heaven."

Hagner.

Verse 23

καὶ τότε ὁμολογήσω αὐτοῖς ὅτι Οὐδέποτε ἔγνω ὑμᾶς· ἀποχωρεῖτε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν.

τοτε **then, at that time**
 ὁμολογεω **confess, declare**
 οὐδεποτε **never**

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 1 s **γινωσκω**

Cf. Jer 1:5; Amos 3:2.

ἀποχωρεω **go away, leave**
 ἐργαζομαι **work, do, perform**
 ἀνομια, ας f **wickedness, lawlessness**

The use of this particular word underlines their failure to submit and to obey. "Religion can never take the place of actual obedience to the teaching of Jesus. Matthew will return to this uncompromising view in chap 25, again in connection with the coming day of judgment." Hagner.

Verse 24

Πᾶς οὖν ὅστις ἀκούει μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους καὶ ποιεῖ αὐτοὺς ὁμοιωθήσεται ἀνδρὶ φρονίμῳ, ὅστις ὠκοδόμησεν αὐτοῦ τὴν οἰκίαν ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν.

ὅστις, ἥτις, ὁ τι **who, which, whoever**

"'Doing' words is a somewhat curious expression, but clearly it means that the person in view is not content with admiring outstanding teaching; he makes it his guide and models his life on it." Morris.

"The standard of orthopraxy, of righteousness, is the words of Jesus, not those of the Torah." Hagner.

ὁμοιωω **make like; pass resemble, be like**

A number of MSS read ὁμοιωσω αὐτον perhaps influenced by Lk 6:47.

ἀνηρ, ἀνδρος m **man, husband**
 φρονιμος, ον **wise, sensible**
 οἰκοδομεω **build, build up**
 οἰκια, ας f **house, home**
 πετρα, ας f **rock, solid rock**

Verse 25

καὶ κατέβη ἡ βροχὴ καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ποταμοὶ καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ προσέπεσαν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ, καὶ οὐκ ἔπεσεν, τεθεμελίωτο γὰρ ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν.

καταβαινω **come or go down, descend**

βροχη, ης f **rain**

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl **έρχομαι**

ποταμος, ου m **river, stream**

πνεω **blow (of wind)**

ἄνεμος, ου m **wind**

προσέπεσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

προσπιπτω **fall down, beat against**

Cf. Ezek 13:10-15; Isa 28:17.

ἔπεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s **πιπτω fall, fall down**

τεθεμελίωτο Verb, pluperf pass indic, 3 s

θεμελιωω **found; establish firmly**

Verse 26

καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀκούων μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους καὶ μὴ ποιῶν αὐτοὺς ὁμοιωθήσεται ἀνδρὶ μωρῷ, ὅστις ὠκοδόμησεν αὐτοῦ τὴν οἰκίαν ἐπὶ τὴν ἄμμον.

μωρος, α, ον **foolish; το μ. foolishness**

ἄμμος, ου f **sand, seashore**

"We should not understand a deliberate choice of sand, but a failure to take seriously the necessity for a solid foundation." Morris.

Verse 27

καὶ κατέβη ἡ βροχὴ καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ποταμοὶ καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ προσέκοψαν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ, καὶ ἔπεσεν, καὶ ἦν ἡ πτώσις αὐτῆς μεγάλη.

προσκοπτω **beat against; strike against**

πτωσις, εως f **fall**

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

"The expression points to complete ruin. For a house built on sand there is in the end no other fate than complete destruction. So it is with anyone who hears Jesus' teaching without heeding it. It is teaching with a strong undertone of warning as well as with much to comfort and inspire. We neglect the warning at our peril." Morris.

Verses 24-27 Postscript

It is easy to make this discourse, with its uncompromising concluding admonitions, into a new nomism, i.e., the pursuit of righteousness through the obeying of commandments (those of Jesus replacing those of Moses). But this conclusion, as plausible as it seems at first glance, makes the mistake of ignoring the larger context, not only of the sermon itself, with the opening, kerygmatic beatitudes, but also and more importantly of the whole Gospel within which this this discourse takes its place. There the announcement of the good news of the dawning kingdom has priority. This means above all a new era with a new experience of the grace of God. Any nomism, or law-centredness, must take account of this new era. Nevertheless, the teaching of Jesus is to be taken seriously, as even Paul would have insisted. And the Sermon on the Mount stands within the canon of the Church as a proper antidote to a Paulinism that (unlike Paul himself) champions a gospel of cheap grace. The gospel of the NT has room for the stern ethic of Jesus, without ceasing to be gospel. The Sermon on the Mount represents an emphasis not simply for Jewish Christians, who may have some lingering interests in satisfying the strictures of Moses, but also for all Christians, who cannot claim that name without interest in the righteousness of the kingdom." Hagner.

Day 680: Matthew 7:28-8:4

Verse 28

Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς λόγους τούτους ἐξεπλήρουντο οἱ ὄχλοι ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ·

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
γίνομαι

ὅτε conj when, at which time

τελεω complete, finish

ἐκπληροομαι be amazed

The imperfect suggests an ongoing effect.

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

"The plural, *multitudes*, indicates that this was not the impression of a tiny minority but of a large number of people. As we saw in 5:1, the sermon was addressed primarily to disciples, but there were others than disciples present. It is the reaction of these others that Matthew now relates. He does not give the impression that Jesus was simply another in a multitude of teachers, some slightly more acceptable than others. Jesus astonished people. There was no one like him." Morris.

διδαχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

Cf. Mk 1:22.

Verse 29

ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν.

διδασκω teach

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, power

γραμματευσ, εως m scribe, expert in
Jewish law, scholar; town clerk

Hagner comments, "The periphrastic construction ἦν διδάσκων, 'he was teaching,' draws attention to the repeated teaching that so astonished the listeners. The consistent element in this teaching that caused the astonishment was the ἐξουσια, 'authority,' it presupposed. Unlike οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν, 'their scribes,' who taught not with a sense of their own authority but in heavy dependence upon the traditions of earlier teachers and somewhat diffidently, Jesus set forth his teaching with unique conviction and authority (cf. 'But I say to you': 5:22, 28, 32, 39, 44; 'these *my* words': 7:24, 26). Nor does his teaching consist mainly of the exegesis of the text of the Torah; it is preeminently *his* own words that are authoritative. This unique ἐξουσια is, as the reader of Matthew knows, the result of the true identity of Jesus." Hagner adds that the verse, "has an unmistakable polemical tone reflecting the growing hostility between the synagogue and the church."

Matthew 8:1ff

Having focused on Jesus' wonderful teaching, Matthew now moves on to focus on Jesus' miraculous healing. 8:1 marks the beginning of a section recording Jesus' miracles (chapters 8-9), preparing for the answer to John the Baptist's question in 11:3-5 and culminating in Peter's great confession that Jesus is the Christ at the end of chapter 16. After this, Jesus' primary focus is on teaching the disciples the significance of his approaching death.

The current section begins with the healing of "persons excluded from full participation in Israel's worship" (Green), namely a leper, a Gentile and a woman.

Verse 1

Καταβάντος δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοί.

καταβάντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s
καταβαινω come or go down, descend
ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill
ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple
πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου
much, many

Verse 2

καὶ ἰδοὺ λεπρὸς προσελθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων, Κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι.

προσελθων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
προσερχομαι come or go to, approach
προσκυνεω worship, fall down and
worship, fall at another's feet

As with the use of the address 'lord', so with the verb used here it is uncertain whether it implies worship or simply an act of respect and of pleading. Hagner says that κυριε "is a confession of faith in Jesus as God's messianic agent but not necessarily belief in Jesus' deity. (Of course, Matthew's readers understand Jesus as one rightly worshiped as manifesting the very presence of God.)"

ἐὰν if
θελω wish, will
δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of

He recognised that Jesus had power to heal but was uncertain whether Jesus would choose to heal *him*.

καθαριζω cleanse, make clean, purify

Cf. Lev 13:45. "Leprosy was a terrible disease, but it was also a defiling disease. Those who had it were 'unclean.' Being freed from leprosy was different from being freed from, say paralysis. It was spoken of in terms of cleansing, not simply of cure." Morris.

Verse 3

καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἤψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων, Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι· καὶ εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα.

ἐκτεινω stretch out, extend
χειρ, χειρος f hand, power
ἄπτω midd. take hold of, touch

Many MSS read ἤψατο αὐτου ὁ Ἰησους

It may have been many years since any non-leprous person had touched this man. To touch him would be to become defiled. Cf. Lev 5:3.

λεπρα, ας f leprosy, skin disease

Verse 4

καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ὁρα μηδενὶ εἴπῃς, ἀλλὰ ὕπαγε σεαυτὸν δεῖξον τῷ ἱερεῖ, καὶ προσένεγκον τὸ δῶρον ὃ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς, εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς.

ὄραω trans see; intrans make sure, see to
μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing
εἴπῃς Verb, aor act subj, 3 s λεγω

Cf. 9:30; 12:16; 16:20; 17:9. Jesus did not want people to misunderstand his mission and for news to spread of him simply as a 'wonder-worker'.

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart
σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself
δειξον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s δεικνυμι
show, point out, reveal
ἱερεῖ Noun, dat s ἱερευς, εως m priest

Cf. Lev 14:1,2 also Lk 17:14. "Jesus is thus shown to be faithful to the stipulations of the Torah in spite of an infraction of the command not to touch." Hagner.

προσένεγκον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s
προσφερω offer, present
δωρον, ου n gift, offering
προστασσω command, order

Cf. Lev 14:10, 21-22.

μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness,
evidence

Verses 2-4 Postscript

"The unique authority of Jesus, just previously heard in his exceptional words, is now to be seen in a series of exceptional deeds. The first of them is recounted briefly and directly. There is a sense in which leprosy is an archetypical fruit of the original fall of humanity. It leaves its victims in a most pitiable state: ostracised, helpless, hopeless, despairing. The cursed leper, like fallen humanity, has no options until he encounters the messianic king who will make all things new. His simple confidence in the ability of Jesus to cure his disease is impressive. If only he wills to do it! But this precisely is the work of the Messiah: to restore the created order from its bondage to decay: 'I do want to do it!' The very presence of Jesus represents God's 'Yes!' to the leper of this poor man and to all who suffer. As Jesus reached out to the leper, God in Jesus has reached out to all victims of sin. The leper was cured immediately by only a word from Jesus. This same Jesus cures his people, the Church, from a whole host of maladies stemming from the fall, both spiritual and physical. Indeed it is the ultimate purpose of Jesus, as part of the future eschatological consummation, to heal every malady without exception." Hagner.