A Very Simple Survey of the Old Testament

Block #10 — Lessons 73–80

Block #10 · Lessons 73–80 | Keith R. Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Block

Block #10 (Lessons 73–80) follows the next 8 lessons in the Bible in Felt outline without alteration. Lessons 73–76, the four lesson survey of the Sermon on the Mount, equip the disciples to be 'doers of the law' in truth. The Lord is not telling people how to be saved; He is teaching saved Jews in Israel's program how to live, and so be rewarded in the kingdom when it is established. The centurion's healing confirms that God's program with Israel was then in effect; the parables of Matthew 13 pertain to that program and set forth "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"; the stilled storm shows the Lord's ability to deal with Leviathan's raging. The Lord teaches the remnant what they need to know and rely upon as Israel's program enters the fifth and final instalment of the fifth course of punishment. But God made a great dispensational change when the Lord Jesus Christ unexpectedly returned from heaven and raised up Paul.

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Lessons at a Glance

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Lesson Summaries

L73

Jesus Talks About God's Rules *Matthew 5:21–48 • Error exposed and correction given regarding the righteous commands of the Law*

Part One — The purpose, and the 'formula for correction'

- Psalm 15 asks, "LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" It is not talking about how to be saved; it speaks to saved Israelites, and those two privileges are issues of reward once the kingdom is established.
- Breaking the Law's commands after the Pharisees' example would cost them reward: "he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven" (5:19). Their righteousness needed to "exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees" (5:20), who only appeared righteous to men.
- The Lord uses a 'formula for correction': the command they have heard, the Pharisaical interpretation, His corrective doctrine, then the proper application. Five times He cites such a command (as in 5:21, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time").

Part Two — "Thou shalt not kill" (5:21–26)

- Commands that functioned as "the tenor" of the Law (Exodus 34:27) headed up lists of sins of the same kind. The Pharisees taught that the only sinful thing was the direct violation of one of these commands.
- "And whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment" is not attached to the command in the Law; the Pharisees attached it. Murder was the extreme outward expression of sins of the heart; 'being angry without a cause' was just as sinful.
- Two applications: "first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (5:24), for to God the most important thing is the upright heart; and "Agree with thine adversary quickly" (5:25), rather than contend with the Gentile authorities as the Pharisees did.

Part Three — "Thou shalt not forswear thyself" (5:33–37), and the other three commands

- The Pharisees taught degrees of oath making — swearing "by the temple" was nothing, but "by the gold of the temple" was binding (Matthew 23:16–19). This legitimized lying and perjury. The Lord taught, "Swear not at all", but "Yea, yea; Nay, nay" (5:34, 37).
- In brief, 5:27–32 deals with "Thou shalt not commit adultery", and 5:38–42 with civil judgments against assaults to one's person, where showing mercy ought to have been abounding.
- In 5:43–47, instead of teaching the 'agape love' of God, Israel's vain religious leaders taught a system of selective love and hate. After these five commands the Lord concludes, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (5:48).

Part Four — Alms-giving (6:1–4) and fasting (6:16–18)

- The Pharisees gave alms "before men, to be seen of them" (6:1), not out of genuine mercy and compassion. Fasting meant gladly going without out of love and mercy for others in need; Isaiah 58:1–7 is a major passage of corrective doctrine on it.

L74

Jesus Teaches How to Pray *Matthew 6:5–15 • The Lord's corrective doctrine on prayer, for the remnant of Israel*

Part One — Prayer and Israel's program; praying "that they may be seen of men"

(6:5–6)

- Verses 9–13, often called The Lord's Prayer, have nothing whatsoever to do with this present dispensation of Gentile grace. What the Lord teaches here pertains to God's program with Israel, especially the final instalment of the fifth course of punishment.
- We can benefit from what the Lord says about what prayer is. But what He teaches about what to pray for pertains only to Israel's program; praying after that manner today is not only foolish, it is downright disobedient and wrong.
- The Pharisees prayed "standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men" (6:5). In essence they were praying to men instead of God.
- Prayer is the issue of communing with God — a heart-to-heart talk with God as our Father about what He is doing in His plan and purpose. Its intimacy of fellowship needs privacy, so the disciples were to pray in their "closet" (6:6).
- For the children today, prayer is simply expressing to God their Father the matters and concerns of their hearts — such as giving Him thanks for the riches of His grace unto them in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Part Two — "Vain repetitions" (6:7–8), and intelligent prayer (6:9–15)

- Israel's leaders used "vain repetitions" of set phrases, as the heathen did to appease their gods, thinking that through "much speaking" God would hear them (6:7). It was an insult to Him to be treated like a heathen deity.
- "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven" (6:10): the hallowing of God's name in all the earth (Ezekiel 36:23) is what His purpose with Israel is designed to achieve, by the establishment of God's kingdom in Israel.
- With the Lord's day of wrath also "at hand," the disciples were to supplicate the Father to 'give them their daily bread,' as He had promised: "bread shall be given him; his waters *shall be* sure" (Isaiah 33:16).
- "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (6:12) was part of being a 'doer of the law in truth.' "Deliver us from evil" (6:13) looked to the temptations of the policy of evil against them in Israel's "last days".
- Our prayers today are to be the product of an intelligent understanding of God's program with us today. The portion of God's word that is expressly TO us and ABOUT us today is the epistles of the apostle Paul.

L75

God Cares for Us

Matthew 6:19–34 • The marvelous provisions God would make for the remnant in "the day of the Lord"

- Keith notes that the Bible in Felt title is "dispensationally incorrect": this present dispensation is not in view in Matthew 6. "A more accurate title for this lesson would be God's Care for the Remnant".
- God does certainly care for us in this dispensation of grace; the description of His care for us, with its provisions, is given to us in Paul's epistles.
- The tribulation of the "day of the Lord" would bring loss of possessions and employment, not being able to buy and sell, persecution, and having to flee — tempting the remnant to cave in and renounce the truth just to survive.
- The Pharisees were covetous and looked upon their riches as a sign of God's blessing. But "neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath" (Zephaniah 1:18).
- "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (6:20): by following the Lord's

corrective doctrine and being ‘doers of the law’ in truth, they would possess the true riches of reward from their Father when the kingdom was established.

- To have an “evil eye” meant to be envious and greedy, and it characterized Israel’s vain religious leaders. “Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (6:24): the disciples could not serve God and follow the example of the Pharisees.
- ‘Taking thought’ about food and raiment does not refer to a full pantry, but to the coming “day of the Lord”, when persecution would leave them destitute and tempted to change their minds about standing for the truth.
- “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (6:33) — just as Isaiah 33:15–16 promises the one “that walketh righteously”.
- Psalm 23 is a Psalm of the remnant in the “day of the Lord”, not just a pretty Psalm describing the Lord’s general care; Psalm 27 is a fourteen verse commentary on the exhortation to ‘seek first the kingdom.’
- This teaching is only the foundation; the Lord would eventually instruct them to sell all that they have, in preparation for Israel’s “last days.” Then they would know the truth of “Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof” (6:34).

L76

Wise Man and the Foolish Man

Matthew 7:12–29 • Three final matters of corrective doctrine, and the concluding illustrative exhortation

- This lesson begins at 7:12 instead of verse 24. In 7:12–23 the Lord sets forth 3 final matters of corrective doctrine, then concludes all of it in verses 24–27 with an illustrative exhortation and admonition.

“This is the law and the prophets” (7:12)

- Verse 12, often called The Golden Rule, summarizes everything in the law and prophets regarding the upright walk God wants Israel to have: valuing and esteeming others and treating them accordingly, just as they would want others to do to them.

The strait gate (7:13–14)

- The prophets declared that when the fifth course drew to its close only a remnant would be saved (Isaiah 1:9; 10:20–23). Only a “few” would find the “way, which leadeth unto life”; the majority’s “broad way” led to “destruction.”
- The majority influence factor would come to bear heavily on the disciples. They might be tempted to just go along with the rest, to avoid the ridicule and persecution of being unpopular.

False prophets (7:15–23)

- False prophets in “sheep’s clothing” would be false brethren operating by Satan’s policy of evil, infiltrating the remnant. The key to detecting them is listening to what they say: the “fruit” of a prophet is what comes out of his mouth.
- Counterfeit signs and wonders will abound in Israel’s “last days” (7:21–23). Even in Israel’s program, the performance of signs and wonders is no guarantee that the one doing them is of God.
- Satan’s method against us today is much the same — false ministers, often backed up with the supposed credentials of signs and wonders, the product of “seducing spirits,” so that Christians accept the “doctrines of devils” (see chapter 8 in Satan and His Plan of Evil).

The wise man and the foolish man (7:24–27)

- By the time He is ready to function as Israel's Redeemer, the remnant will be well established in the knowledge of the corruptiveness of Israel's vain religious system. The Lord ends the Sermon with an illustrative analogy, an admonition and warning.
- Those who heed the corrective doctrine will be "wise," fortified to withstand what is coming. Those who do not will be "foolish": they will cave in under the pressures of the tribulation time and not be rewarded when the kingdom is established.

L77

Jesus Heals a Soldier's Servant *Matthew 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–17 • A 'sign of the kingdom' in which a Gentile's servant is healed*

- The Lord's miracles verified that the "kingdom of heaven" was "at hand," giving Israel a foretaste of what it would be like when the kingdom was established. On this occasion a Gentile's servant is healed.
- The centurion, a Gentile, had no direct claim upon the Lord, who was sent only "unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel", as "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers".
- Paul describes our Gentile status in "time past": "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise" (Ephesians 2:11–12).
- The centurion knew the Abrahamic Covenant: a Gentile, to be blessed by God, needed to submit to Israel and bless Israel. So he sent his appeal through "the elders of the Jews" (Luke 7:3).
- The elders said he was worthy, "For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue" (Luke 7:5). In truth he had submitted to the Abrahamic Covenant.
- "Say in a word, and my servant shall be healed" (Luke 7:7): he knew who Jesus was — the Lord, Adonai Jehovah, come to Israel "set under authority" of His Father, to fulfill the mandates of the Davidic Covenant.
- "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Luke 7:9) was a stinging rebuke to Israel: this Gentile understood and believed more of what God was doing with Israel than did any in Israel.
- He was like the widow woman of Sarepta in the days of Elijah and Naaman the Syrian in the days of Elisha (Luke 4:25–27): they believed the truth in their days when Israel did not.
- Unless Israel changed their mind about Him and the "gospel of the kingdom," "the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness" (Matthew 8:12). Then the Lord healed the servant "in the selfsame hour" (8:13).
- The only other time the Lord dealt with a Gentile was "a woman of Canaan" (Matthew 15:21–28); once again the Gentile is dealt with only after submission to Israel is acknowledged.

L78

A Story About Seeds *Matthew 13:1–23 • Why the Lord began speaking in parables, and the first of the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"*

- Because of the failure to "rightly divide the word of truth" these parables are

commonly abused, though they have nothing to do with this dispensation of Gentile grace. From Matthew 13 the Lord speaks to the people in parables until He is rejected by Israel.

Part One — Two Fundamental Mistakes Corrected

- Two common ideas, that the Lord always spoke in parables and that He did so to make truths easily understood, are both fundamentally wrong. He did not use parables in the first part of His public ministry, nor in the Sermon on the Mount.
- The disciples asked, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" (13:10), for it was new. The Lord answered, "to them it is not given" (13:11): He spoke in parables so the people would NOT understand, but explained them to the apostles in private.

Part Two — The Reason for the Parables

- God has historically used parables with ones in rebellion against Him, as a rebuke: Balaam "took up his parable" before Balak (Numbers 22–24), and Ezekiel was to "utter a parable unto the rebellious house" (Ezekiel 24:1–3).
- What prompted the parables was the general negative response of the nation to "the gospel of the kingdom." In Matthew 11–12 the Lord upbraided the cities "because they repented not" (11:20), and declared, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" (12:39).
- "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (13:13). Having responded negatively to "the gospel of the kingdom," they were not given the knowledge of its "mysteries."

Part Three — What the Parables Are All About

- "The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" are issues about the kingdom that hadn't been spoken about before, not what Paul refers to as "the mystery of Christ". Instead of speaking about them to the prophets, God reserved them for the climactic stage.
- The Lord would "utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (13:35). The disciples were "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven", NOT unto "the dispensation of the grace of God", bringing forth "*things* new and old" (13:52).

Part Four — The Parable About the Sower

- The seed is "the word of the kingdom" — not the "gospel of God's grace". Those by the way side did not understand it, and Satan quickly took it away through his henchmen — the Pharisees, scribes, chief priests, etc.
- Only a remnant within the remnant would stay faithful. Some would be "offended" when "tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word"; others would cave in under "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches".

L79

Some Stories Jesus Told *Matthew 13:24–53 • The remaining six parables and the other fundamental "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"*

- The remaining six parables are only surveyed for the basic issue; much more could be taught about each of these additional "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven".
- The tares (13:24–30, 36–43): a tactic of Satan's policy of evil — impostors among the remnant, hard to detect. God would await the "harvest," "the end

of the world," when His angels "shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend".

- The mustard seed (13:31–32): the "at hand" stage had a meager beginning with only a very small remnant. In the fifth instalment it would grow in the "field" of the world, with a better response among the Gentiles than in Israel.
- The leaven (13:33): the complete corruptive effect of Israel's vain religious system. By the end of the Lord's three year ministry they would have "leavened the whole of Israel" with their opposition; the kingdom would be rejected, along with the Lord Himself.
- The treasure hid in a field (13:44), first of three parables spoken privately to the apostles: Israel had become hidden in the Adversary's field. The Lord would deal with the possessor of the field, then return to uncover His treasure.
- The pearl (13:45–46): the Lord would be like the "merchant man" "seeking goodly pearls" as He was 'making up His jewels' (cf. Malachi 3:16–17). The "one pearl of great price" was the believing remnant at this time.
- The net (13:47–50): by "the end of the world" the "gospel of the kingdom" will have been proclaimed in all the world. The just would enter the kingdom prepared for them; the wicked would be cast into "the furnace of fire" (13:50).
- Through these seven parables the Lord taught things about the "at hand" stage of the kingdom not previously set forth through the prophets. The disciples would couple this new information with what the prophets had already set forth.

L80

Jesus Stills the Storm

Matthew 8:23–27 • Jesus' Deity, and the Lord's ability to deal with Leviathan

- There were no less than 3 separate wonders on the Sea of Galilee. Matthew records the first; Mark and Luke a subsequent one. So only Matthew 8:23–27 is listed at the heading, though the Bible in Felt outline also gives Mark 4:35–41 and Luke 8:22–25.
- The Lord often repeated a miracle or wonder to reinforce its issue to the apostles. The popular but foolish system of harmonizing the Gospels has done much to destroy the ability to recognize this.
- The wonders involving the Sea of Galilee were for the most part only for the apostles, especially for their benefit and education.
- "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" (8:27). He was no mere man, but God Himself, the Creator of the winds and the sea; all He had to do was speak and they obeyed Him.
- But there was more than His Deity: He began manifesting His capacity and control over things, in view of the prophets, Satan's activities, and things yet to come in the fifth instalment of the fifth course of punishment.
- The raging of the sea is frequent terminology in the Psalms and Prophets: God "stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves" (Psalm 65:7); "Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them" (Psalm 89:9).
- After the flood Satan became Leviathan, the "dragon that *is* in the sea." The seas were recognized as his unique domain, from which he administered his policy of evil among the nations.
- God's ability to deliver Israel from Leviathan was manifested by His ability to

"rule the raging of the sea" — as at the Red Sea, Leviathan's 'home waters,' a foretaste of when He would "slay the dragon that *is* in the sea" (Isaiah 27:1).

- This was no regular storm: the "great tempest" was the activity of Leviathan in opposition to their presence on the sea. The Lord "rebuked the winds and the sea" because He knew they had been made to "arise" in opposition to Him.
- "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" (8:26). In the Lord's day, when Leviathan would rage far more than ever, the disciples would need implicit faith in His ability to fulfill Psalm 65:5–7; Psalm 89:8–9; Isaiah 27:1.

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

The Sermon on the Mount — Reward in the Kingdom, Not How to Be Saved

The Lord is not telling people how to be saved; He is teaching saved Jews in Israel's program how to live. If they follow the scribes and Pharisees, they will not be rewarded and will be called least in the kingdom. The Lord's words, "otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 6:1), show that this is what the sermon on the mount is all about.

The Lord's Prayer and Our Prayers Today

In Matthew 6:9–13 the Lord is dealing with the remnant of Israel as they faced the final and climactic instalment in the fifth course of punishment. It is not a 'model prayer' that God has given to us today. Through Paul's epistles God wants us 'intelligized' regarding His program with us today, and the distinction between His program with us and His program with Israel.

"The Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" and "The Mystery of Christ"

"The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" are formerly not made known issues about the climactic stage in Israel's program. People tend to assume they are the same as the revelation of "the mystery of Christ" that God gave unto Paul. To Paul God revealed "the mystery of Christ" and the bringing in of this present dispensation of Gentile grace. The parables do not describe anything pertaining to God's program with us, the church the body of Christ.

Gentiles in "Time Past" and in the Dispensation of Gentile Grace

When Christ came, Gentiles were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise," and no Gentile could expect anything from Him. A Gentile could be dealt with only after submission to Israel. The centurion's healing confirms that God's program with Israel was in effect, and not the dispensation of Gentile grace that He is now administering.

Key Scripture References

Exodus 34:27	“the tenor” of the Law — commands that headed up lists of sins of the same kind
Psalm 15	Not how to be saved: who among saved Israelites will abide in His tabernacle — issues of reward
Psalm 23; 27	Psalms of the remnant in the “day of the Lord”; Psalm 27 a commentary on ‘seek first the kingdom’
Psalm 65:5–7; 89:8–9	God “stilleth the noise of the seas”; “Thou rulest the raging of the sea” — promises to rely upon against Leviathan
Isaiah 1:9; 10:20–23	Only a remnant would be saved when the fifth course drew to its close
Isaiah 8:16; 42:21	“seal the law among my disciples”; “he will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable” — fulfilled by the disciples
Isaiah 27:1	“slay the dragon that *is* in the sea” — the Lord’s day against Leviathan
Isaiah 33:14–16	“bread shall be given him” — protection and sustenance for the remnant in the “day of the Lord”
Isaiah 58:1–7	Corrective doctrine on fasting, in contrast with Israel’s vain religious system
Ezekiel 24:1–3	“utter a parable unto the rebellious house” — parables as rebuke
Ezekiel 36:23	“I will sanctify my great name” — the hallowing of God’s name through Israel
Zephaniah 1:18	Silver and gold will not deliver in “the day of the LORD’S wrath”
Matthew 5:19	Least or great in the kingdom of heaven — reward
Matthew 6:9–13	Intelligent prayer for the remnant of Israel — not a model prayer for us today
Matthew 13:11	“the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” — given to the apostles, not to the people
Matthew 13:35	“things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world”
Luke 4:25–27	The widow of Sarepta and Naaman — a stinging rebuke to Israel
Luke 7:9	“I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel”
Romans 7:8	“all manner of concupiscence” — one command heads up a list of sins
Ephesians 2:11–12	Our Gentile status in “time past” — “without Christ”