

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

MATTHEW 5

Matthew 5

Matthew five is the first of three chapters known to us as the "Sermon on the Mount" and consists of a series of teachings of Jesus. It is life as it should be lived by those who have given their lives to Jesus. The messages have to do with what happens in the heart rather than merely outwardly keeping commandments. Jesus zeroed in on the heart. Immediately, the Lord began with pronouncements of "Blessings," and these blessings were more than wishes for happiness. He speaks of lives lived in the atmosphere and dominated by godly characteristics.

He speaks of those who follow Him as "salt" and "light." Salt was used as payment for services by the Roman army and those who served Rome. This is where the word "salary" originates, as well as a person who works as "being worth their salt." Salt was a valuable commodity. When salt "lost its seasoning," it was used by the Romans to mix with the soil to make a smooth surface on Roman roads. Hence, Jesus' words that when the salt had lost its primary purpose of "seasoning" and as a "preservative," then it was good for nothing but to be "trodden under the feet of men."

Jesus spoke of His disciples as a light on a hill on a dark night. When darkness comes, you light a lamp to brighten the darkness and light your path. So, believers are light in a dark culture and a generation of sinful behavior. The lamp's purpose is to dispel darkness, not to be lit and hidden away. From the western side of the Jordan River and the western side of the Sea of Galilee, the Jewish residents of Capernaum would watch as the citizens of the Decapolis city of Hippus/Susita would raise the torches and light the lamps on the eastern shore each night. Hippus is "set on a hill" for everyone to see. The analogy and metaphor were crystal clear to

those the Lord spoke to. Jesus used cities, salt, lamps, foxes, birds, plants, and other objects of creation and nature to teach spiritual truths.

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled." Matthew 5:17-18 NKJV

This verse is often misinterpreted to teach that Jesus fulfilled the law and it is no longer relevant to the followers of Jesus. That is simply not true. First, the Torah is not "the Law." Yes, it contains the "Law of God," but it is much more than that. The Hebrew word "Torah" does not mean law. It is best defined as "Instruction." The laws and instructions from God were never meant to be a way of salvation. No man can live up to the Law. We are born with a sinful nature; that is, we are born with an inclination or propensity to sin, and as soon as we are able, all men will choose to rebel against God. This is why we need a Savior. Salvation has always been by turning from ourselves and sinful ways and placing our trust in a loving, holy God who has provided the way of salvation through the Messiah/Christ Jesus. The Law, or instructions in the TNK, (T)orah, (N)evi'im, and (K)etuvim, we're given to show us God's nature, character, attributes, holiness, etc. The Law was designed to show us that we desperately need a Savior.

Jesus did not fulfill all the TaNaK/Old Testament upon coming to earth 2000 years ago. The majority of Scriptures related to the Messiah speak of what has happened since He came or what is yet to come.

The "Sermon on the Mount" is what life filled with and walking in the Holy Spirit looks like; certainly like what life will be like on earth when Jesus reigns.

Prayer and Action Steps

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord taught us how to walk with Him and how to treat each other. Dear God, please help us Love the Father and each other as you have shown us and taught us to do. Amen