

Bible Study 2022-2023

Class #20

2/21/23

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- **Matthew 5:27-42** *“You have heard it said,...and do not refuse him who would borrow from you”*
 - This does not mean that they should not stop evil from the land
 - It means that if someone is doing evil to you do not fight back with the same force
 - An eye for an eye was meant to limit retribution (if someone killed your son, you had a right to kill his son, but not wipe out the entire clan)

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- Jesus was implying that such a rule was like training wheels concerning retribution
- He even went further when He told them that if someone accidentally ran over your ox, why don't you just forgive him?
- If someone insulted you, how about blessing him in return?

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- *“Men of old” refers to Moses on Mt. Sinai*
- *Jesus clarifies these teachings with definitive statements such as:*
 - *You cannot divorce your wife at all*
 - *Do not swear at all; just say yes or no*
- Thus, we must look upon the teachings of Moses like training wheels on a bicycle as a means of stopping the escalation of violence
- There were, however, principles behind them

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- They gave the people of Israel a minimal taste; a kind of reality of the word of God
- Now, Jesus is giving his followers the **full message**
- So, when the Law says: “You shall not commit adultery,” what it really means is that you should not even “lust after a woman” (if you do not lust, you will not commit adultery)
- When the Law says: “You shall not kill,” what it really means is “you shall not be angry” (if you are not angry, you will not kill)

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- This was meant to show the people how to fulfill the Law and the prophets
- This again was how a righteous person could exceed the righteousness of the the Scribes and Pharisees
- “Sons of the father” is Semitic language meaning to be an “imitator of” someone

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- **Matthew 5:43-48** *“You have heard that it was said... You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect”*
 - Father suggested that these are the kind of sayings that would have gotten under the skin of the first century Jews
 - Tax collectors were Jews who agreed to collect the Roman taxes from their friends and neighbors (tarators)
 - With this in mind, listen to His comment that “even the tax collectors do the same”

Leviticus

Leviticus

- Moses, and the people of Israel, remained on *Mt. Sinai*
- It is not until we get to the **Book of Numbers** before we see Israel leave *Mt. Sinai*, and spend 40 years in the wilderness
- The people had just completed building the Tabernacle which was filled by the Glory Cloud (Shekinah)
- Although the covenant had been restored, it was a bit more brittle and weaker than before the Golden Calf incident

Leviticus (Cont)

- At this point, the tribe of *Levi* had been set apart from the other tribes because of what they had accomplished during the Golden Calf incident
- Their special role is discussed in the **Book of Leviticus**, which can be seen as the “sacramentary” for the Levitical priesthood
- Most likely, this would not have been given, or at least not in this much detail, had it not been for the Golden Calf incident
- They had already been given the entire sacrificial system in **Exodus 29 and 30**

Leviticus (Cont)

- As a reminder, the word Holy (*qadosh*) meant to be set apart, distinct, different
- The *Hebrew* people were supposed to be set apart, and different from all the other nations round about
- *Israel* had been called out of *Egypt* by *Yahweh* and set apart as a model for the other nations to follow
- Even the “sojourners” who were living among them and came out with them in **Exodus 12** were under parts of the “Holiness Code”
- Only in the “Holiness Code” do we find laws governing the “sojourners”

Leviticus (Cont)

- In fact, the sojourners did **not** even have to circumcise their sons, abstain from pork, or obey the *Kosher* laws
- But, every Israeli male had to obey **all** of the laws of the *Torah*, including those in the “Holiness Code”
- The “Holiness Code” will be extremely important when we look at what happened in **Acts 15**

Leviticus (Cont)

- Hopefully, they would keep them from backsliding into paganism
- They would prevent them from intermarriage, eating meals, or any other activities with members of other nations
- By living this very different lifestyle, there would be no way for them to get mixed up with their neighbors
- If the Israelites reverted to polytheism, then the whole thing would come to naught

Leviticus (Cont)

- The “Holiness Code” (**Leviticus 17-26**) is located at the center of the Book of Leviticus and at the center of the Torah
- It serves as a summary of Leviticus
- **Leviticus 19-22** contains the second half of the “Holiness Code”

Leviticus (Cont)

- **Leviticus 19**

- Defines the “Holiness of God”
- Declares that His people are a “holy people”
- Holy means “to be set apart” or “not for common use”
- Jesus will call Israel to not only be “holy,” but also to be “perfect as God is perfect”
- Jesus’ command to love your enemies as yourself is from the Holiness Code
- Acts 15 presents the 4 regulations for gentiles

Leviticus (Cont)

- **Leviticus 19:2**, as mentioned earlier, contained the climatic central verse, ***“you shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy”***
- Once again, the meaning of this was for them to be “set apart” or “distinct from the other nations” because Yahweh was holy and therefore distinct from other gods!
- These laws were to keep both the Israelites and sojourners living with them distinct and separate from the nations around them

Leviticus (Cont)

- The purpose of selecting Abraham and his descendants was so that all of the nations could be blessed and brought into the people of God
- The rest of the “Holiness Code” presents some other important statements, but for now we need to see its impact on the listeners to the Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 5-7**)

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- Once again, the idea that one must be perfect as their God was perfect came from the “Holiness Code” in (**Leviticus19:2**) where it says: *“You shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy”* (holy – to be set apart)
- Then, Jesus directed his listeners to be perfect, as their heavenly Father is perfect
- Remember, the Scribes and Pharisees were holy (set apart from the nations) in their promise to follow the Law perfectly

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- The Pharisees taught that by keeping the Law, the Jews would be distinct and set apart from those around them (the pagans)
- Here Jesus was saying that this was a good first step, but not enough
- He was calling them to be perfect like God, so they could reveal God to the nations (3rd Promise to Abraham)

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- Father said that this is the point of Mathew's entire Gospel
- The problem with Israel at that time was that they were a nation closed in on themselves
- The solution will be made clear as the very end of the Gospel, when Jesus called His Apostles to go and baptize all the nations!

Matthew 5 (Cont)

- God was not only “holy,” He was also “perfect”
- Thus, Jesus was calling His disciples to obedience of the Law beyond that of the Scribes and Pharisees!
- He calls them to be “perfect” as God was perfect
- Therefore, according to Jesus, they were to also keep the principles of the Law, and then they would fulfill the Law and the prophets
- We will now turn to **Matthew 6**