

**Dispensation of The Fullness of Times** - *a study for the Bible Institute*  
*at Gulf Coast Baptist Church Spring 2021* by Steve Thomas

**Master** - The Master of the Dispensation is God the Son. He will reside in the New Jerusalem with the Father (Rev 21:22). The Father will give to the Son the kingdoms of the Earth, and He will rule them. The New Jerusalem will descend from the heaven to light the earth (Matt 24:27-30 Ezek 37:27-28) He will then sit on His throne, instead of the right hand of the Father's throne. The Son will descend to the earth for various feasts and will receive the worship from the citizens of the earth (Zech 14:16, Ezekiel 44:4, 24;45:21). The New Jerusalem is described in Rev 21:10 and on. The city will enter eternity after the thousand years.

The Spirit is not in the new Jerusalem, because he has been poured out on all flesh and will be on the Earth. (Joel 2:28-29) The Holy Spirit will be on all flesh, no distinctions given. This will make it more difficult to sin, and easier to keep God's commandments.

**Steward** - The steward of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times is David. He will be resurrected to take the earthly throne (Ezek 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5). The OT believers will receive the Eternal Life they have been promised (Heb 11:39-40; Dan 12:2-3, 12-13). There will be many thrones and individuals to sit on thrones. The 24 Elders will sit on thrones with Christ, a group of martyrs will sit on thrones as well as stated in Rev 20:4. Christ will be the King of Kings, and there will be a united Israel, and David will rule under the rule of Christ as the steward on the earth.

**Household** - Resurrected Israel (The dry bones vision Ezek 37) will be part of the household. The One third remnant of Israelites who survived the tribulation period will also be a part of this household (Ezek 36:24-28; Matt 24:13; Rom 11:26). Also, believing Gentiles will enter the Kingdom from the Heavens having been sorted during the Sheep and Goats judgement (Matt 25:32). So any unbeliever not killed at the final battle of the Tribulation will be sent into eternal fire at this time. There will be only believing Jews and Gentiles beginning this dispensation.

**Rule of Life/Test** - the Kingdom from the Heavens is distinct from the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is all those who have ever been saved throughout time (John 3:3,5). It is an invisible kingdom made up of only believers. The Kingdom from the heavens however, is an earthly kingdom that is visible. It is made up of both believers and unbelievers. The unbelievers will be the children of those who entered the Kingdom. Both of these groups will be required to obey the law from the Heavens (Isaiah 2:3) Zion is the reference to the New Jerusalem. Part of this law was given during Christ's offer of the Kingdom to the nation of Israel while he was on earth, the Sermon on the Mount. This passage is greatly misunderstood by believers today. Many see it as a simple rearranging of the Mosaic Law. Others see it as the rule of life for believers today, both groups are incorrect. Notice the differences that are often allegorized away: Matt 5:21-22, 27-30, Matt 13:40-42, 49-50.

Isaiah 65:20 tells us that ages will be much greater during this time, nations will be required to come yearly to Jerusalem to worship. Those nations who do not come will receive consequences (Zech 14:17-19). Those who do will bring of their abundance and feast. God's presence will not cause everyone to obey. Many will be punished for disobedience and immediately be cast into the lake of fire. Satan will be bound in the abyss for the entire time (1000 years). He will not be able to deceive the nations (Rev 20:2-3, 2 Cor 4:3-4). Many of the nations who have been governed by God for the thousand

## Dispensation of the Fullness of Times

years will be deceived by Satan upon his release and will follow him (Rev. 20:7-9). Those who have been outwardly following God, but inwardly unbelievers will follow Satan being deceived by him.

God is showing man during this time that the elimination of two of their spiritual enemies will not guarantee success. Satan and his world system will be kept from tempting mankind during this time.

Only the sin natures of man will be present, but this is plenty. During Christ's Kingdom manifesto Matt 5-7 He lists many sins of the flesh: adultery, sexual lust, hating, avenging yourself, and divorce are results of sins of the flesh.

Even after 1000 years of instant justice, righteous rule, and earthly abundance, many will be deceived and follow Satan. Following the rapture, the Day of the Lord will begin (this includes the Tribulation and Millennial Reign of Christ). This period is called the Fullness of Times, because after this, time will be no more. Eternity will be ushered in. The Final battle between God and Satan will be fought (it will be a short one) and the Great White Throne judgement will take place. Those being judged there will be thrown into the Lake of Fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.

There will be a New Heaven and a New Earth described in Rev 21. The New Jerusalem will be transported to this place. 2 Peter 3:10-13 gives the church a proper mind-set looking forward to these things, thus enduring our daily routine in holiness and godliness. All of this now is temporary, God will destroy everything around us. What He has for us next is better.

# THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A STUDY OF DISTINCTIONS IN SCRIPTURE -Gulf Coast Baptist Church College and Career Class Spring 2019

The “Kingdom of the Heavens” (plural) is a title used only by Matthew. His message pertains to the offering of the kingdom by the King. It is the rule of the heavens over the earth. It is the kingdom that Christ will establish on earth at His Second Coming to earth when He sits upon the throne of David, cf. Lk. 1:30, 33.

Matthew uses the “Kingdom of the Heavens” 32 times. He uses the title “Kingdom of God” five times. The other Gospels use the “Kingdom of God” exclusively. Luke especially emphasizes the “Kingdom of God” as he uses the title 33 times. Mark uses it 15 times and John twice. It is clear that the two titles are different. Matthew alone uses both titles.

Does he use them interchangeably of the same kingdom? Are we to interpret them to be the same?

The Kingdom of the Heavens is an earthly kingdom fulfilling the promises given to the Nation Israel in the Old Testament, whereas the Kingdom of God is God’s rule from heaven over all beings who are saved.

The Kingdom of God is God’s overall rule over all the saved. This is the kingdom that includes unfallen angels, pre- Old Testament saints, Old Testament saints and New Testament saints. It will also include Tribulation saints and Millennial saints in the future.

Matthew refers to the Kingdom of God once in the sermon, when he says “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you,” Mt. 6:33, cf. Lk. 12:31.

## **Questions the believer should answer when studying Matt. 5**

Who was it given to?

Was it to the Church?

Was the Church in view?

Was the content of the sermon applicable for all times? Or

was it spoken to Jews living under the law in the context of the offering of the Kingdom of the Heavens to the Jews living at that time with application to those who will be living in the future when the kingdom will ultimately be established?

Does God ever take the promises to the Jews and apply them to the Church? If God doesn’t do this, should Christians apply those things that pertained to Israel to themselves?

Does the “Sermon on the Mount” fit under the “better things” for the Church?

### New Testament “Parallels” to the Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit (v. 3).	Having a meek and quiet spirit (I Pet. 3:4).
Blessed are those who mourn (v. 4).	Mourn and weep, the Lord will exalt you (James 4:9-10)
Blessed are the gentle (v. 5)	Do not brawl but be gentle (Titus 3:2)
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (v. 6)	We are to live to righteousness (I Pet. 2:24)
Blessed are the merciful (v. 7)	Show mercy with cheerfulness (Rom. 12:8)
Blessed are the pure in heart (v. 8)	Keep yourself pure (I Tim. 5:22)
Blessed are the peacemakers (v. 9)	Wisdom from above is peaceable (Jas. 3:17)
Blessed are the persecuted (v. 11)	Persecuted for the cross (Gal. 6:12)
Blessed are the reproached (v. 11)	For Christ we suffer reproach (I Tim. 4:10)
Your reward is in heaven (v. 12)	Inheritance received in heaven (I Pet. 1:4)

### The rich young man

In Matthew's Gospel we find a rich young man who asks the Lord this question, Mt. 19:16. He left grieving because he had many possessions. The Lord then explained to His disciples, "That with difficulty (A. V. "hardly") shall a rich man himself enter (future middle indicative) into the Kingdom of the Heavens," Mt. 19:23. A rich man could enter the Kingdom of the Heavens at that time if the kingdom was accepted but he could only enter with difficulty. But it was not so with the Kingdom of God for the Lord continued, "It is comparatively easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God," Mt. 19:24. In other words, it was impossible for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God at that time. The disciples understood the Lord was saying to them that a rich man could not be saved at that time. As a result, "...they went to being exceedingly astonished and asked, who then is able himself (Present middle indicative- so-called "deponent") to be saved?" Mt. 19:25. They clearly related the Kingdom of God to the realm of salvation. The Lord responded that "with men it is impossible but with God all things are possible," Mt. 19:26. A

rich man could enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens with difficulty but he could not enter into the Kingdom of God at that time. However, with God it was possible for a rich man to be saved and hence to enter into the Kingdom of God.

Kingdom of the Heavens

- Contains all those who profess to be a follower of God (hardly, with difficulty can enter)

Kingdom of God

- Must be actual believers (camel, eye of the needle- impossible for men but possible with God)

The Kingdom of the Heavens is presented in three time frames in Matthew.

The first was the kingdom as it was being offered during the Lord's earthly ministry.

The second is in view of the mysteries concerning the Kingdom of the Heavens as it involves the sphere of profession during this Dispensation of Grace.

The third time frame is when it will be offered at the end of the Tribulation and will then be established as the Millennial Kingdom in the future.

### **Reminders of truth for the believer today**

We are not under any kind of law but under grace, Rom. 6:15.

Law and grace do not mix, Rom. 11:6.

We are to be filled by means of the Spirit, Eph. 5:18.

We are to walk by means of the Spirit, Gal. 5:16, 17.

If we are led by the Spirit, we are not under any kind of law, Gal. 5:18.

Since we are not under any kind of law, why would we want to live under any law including the "Sermon on the Mount?" The sermon has to do with earth and an earthly kingdom, while our citizenship is in heavens, Phil. 3:20.

Our blessings are heavenly in Christ, not earthly, Eph. 1:3.

We have a better covenant based upon better promises, Heb. 8:6.

There is a better and enduring substance for Christians in heavens, Heb. 10:34.

God has foreseen some better thing for us, Heb. 11:40. Better is not the same.

Does this mean that we throw it out or that there is something wrong with the sermon on the Mount? No! It is part of Scripture. As part of the Word of God, we accept it where it is and we teach it where it is in its context. For us it is didaskalia, a (didaskalia), i.e. doctrine to be believed but not practiced. It was given in view of the offering of the Kingdom of the Heavens. It was offered to the Jews and its main application will be for the Jews in the future kingdom. The only others who will be bound by it are saved Gentiles

coming out of the Tribulation to enter the kingdom. We do not apply it to ourselves any more than we would apply the Mosaic Law to ourselves living under grace. To apply it to today is to attempt to mix law and grace. Those who want to live by the “Sermon on the Mount” today are just like those Jews in Galatia in Paul’s day who insisted on circumcision by the law. Paul told them that they were rendered inoperative from the Christ (the Head and the Body together, cf. I Cor. 12:12) whoever out from them was attempting to be declared righteous (tendential present) by any kind of law, they were fallen out from grace, Gal. 5:4. They were no longer living by grace but by rules. The law was a yoke of bondage to the Jews and they wanted to put the yoke upon the neck of the Gentile believers, a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear, Acts 15:10. It is through the grace from our Lord, Jesus Christ that Jew and Gentile are saved in past, present, and future tenses of salvation, Acts 15:11. To apply the “Sermon on the Mount” to grace believers today is like putting a yoke around the neck of the believer in present tense salvation and to do so is to fall out from living under grace. The law made nothing mature, but the bringing in of a better hope does mature, Heb. 7:19. To live by the “Sermon on the Mount” is to put one’s self under a quality of law. You cannot mature by trying to live by rules given to another group of people. You will be a stunted Christian by going back to such rules. Rules appeal to those who are carnal, cf. Rom. 7:7-11. We have liberty as Christians. We are free to please God, not to do as we please. We are not to use our liberty as a starting point for the flesh, but by love to serve one another as slaves in fulfillment of the New Commandment, Gal. 5:13; Jn. 13:34. When Spirit filled, we can direct love and the other parts of the fruit of the Spirit. We, by the Holy Spirit, do not need rules. We get out of the way and let the Holy Spirit make up for our lack as we frame our minds on things above, Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:1, 2. When we are walking or ordering our lives by the Holy Spirit, we will never ever fulfill the lusts of the flesh for the Holy Spirit will take up the fight and He will always win, Gal. 5:16, 17. If we set up rules, we will fail. Rules appeal to the flesh. The Christian life is not epitomized by trying to live by all or parts of the “Sermon on the Mount,” it is a Spirit filled life whereby the eternal life of the indwelling Christ can be reflected out, cf. II Cor. 3:18.

### **Further distinctions from the sermon on the mount**

There is a lack of any mention of the church or the Holy Spirit in the sermon on the mount.

The church is promised “better things”

The love mentioned in the sermon on the mount is different than the love that the church should love as mentioned by Christ in the upper room discourse.

The destination of those in the kingdom of the heavens is possession of this earth, but from the upper room, the grace believer is promised a place in heaven with Christ. John 14:2, 6, Phil 3:20

There is a distinction in how those in the Kingdom of the heavens experience the fruit of the Spirit with how grace believers experience the fruit.

# Distinctions between the Kingdom from the Heavens and the Kingdom of God

## *Kingdom from the Heavens*

- Rule of the heavens over the earth (Dan 4:17, 25, 32; Ps 2:2, 6)
- Christ will establish when He returns at His second coming to Earth (Zech 14:9, Rev 11:15)
- Entrance will be by the remaining believing Jews and the Sheep (of Sheep and Goats) from the tribulation period (Matt 25:32-33)
- Was promised to David (2 Sam 7:13-16; Luke 1:32-33)
- Offered to Israel by John the forerunner and by Christ through His disciples (Matt 3:2, 4:17, 4:23)
- Will contain believers and unbelievers (Rev 20:7,8; Matt 13:41-42;7:21-22)
- Is a visible Kingdom with Christ on the Throne and David as His prince (Ex 34:24, 37:25)
- Used by Matthew's gospel exclusively - 32 times
- Its inhabitants gained blessing by obedience and cursing from disobedience (Matt 5:21-48; Zech 14:17-19)
- Is difficult for a rich man to enter (Matt 19:24)

## *Kingdom of God*

- God's rule over all the saved
- Includes Spirit Beings, and saints from all time periods, with no unbelievers (John 3:3,5, Acts 8:12)
- Also refers to God's rule over his universe
- Relates to the rule over the sphere of salvation
- Is invisible along side the visible
- Was also being offered by the Messiah alongside the Kingdom from the heavens (Matt 6:33, Mark 1:14-15; Acts 1:3)
- Used by Matthew's gospel 5 times, Luke 33, and John twice
- Our acceptance by God is through Christ (1 Jn 2:1; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21)
- Entrance is by salvation through faith by God's grace. (Jn 8:24; Matt 21:31; 2 Cor 3:3; 1 Jn 5:11-13)
- Is impossible for a rich man to enter - but possible with God (Matt 19:24-26)