**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

**Sermon**

**The Incarnation – Part XIII**

***Blessings From God***

**February 25th, In the Year of Our Lord 2024**

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(Unless otherwise noted, NAS is quoted – New American Standard Bible)

Read and/or print sermon notes from our website – roundtopchurch.org

In the New Testament book of Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount is preached right after Jesus exposes the devil in the wilderness and calls His first disciples (Matthew ch:4,5). I see the sermon as God’s first major sermon to a large group of people. This is the one of many sermons and teachings given by the Incarnate God, as Jesus, the Messiah of Isaiah 53, that plainly spells-out His intention, design and plan He has for all of our lives. The sermon starts (verses 3-12) with what has been called the “Beatitudes” a word that means *Blessing*. Verses 3 -11 all start with the word “Blessed” (Greek: Makarios)

**Strong’s** 3107 μακάριος makarios

**Meaning**: blessed, happy **Origin**: from μάκαρ makar (happy)

**Usage**: blessed(1), blessed(46), fortunate(1), happier(1), happy(1).

**Notes**: 1 fortunate or prosperous, 2 those who are not spiritually arrogant

a Mat 5:3-12; Luk 6:20-23

b Mat 5:10; Mat 19:14; Mat 25:34; Mar 10:14; Luk 6:20; Luk 22:29f

It is obviously an intentional design of the Sermon on the Mount to start with **nine** “blessings” and a “rejoice”. The number nine (9) has great significance in Judaism. Jesus was a Jew speaking to a Jewish audience. From a human perspective, Jesus’ childhood afforded Him the experience of learning the Hebrew language and its meaning and nuances. Remember that Jesus’ family was faithful to travel to Jerusalem for Passover every year. Meaning that Jesus had been to thirty Passovers before He started His ministry years. This is telling in that it highlights the family’s commitment to learn and observe God’s teachings. But of course. . . Jesus is God Incarnate and possesses the knowledge of the Scripture. Jesus knew the Hebrew religious customs, beliefs and Scriptures. Therefore, when Jesus taught and preached, He incorporated elements into His addresses that the Jewish people could understand based upon their knowledge of God’s Word in application to their lives. Due to the Sermon on the Mount being Jesus’ first big address to a people that had seen Him heal many people and spoke with authority using Scripture, He opened His sermon with a traditional prayer of *Blessings* common to the worship of Hebrew people. There are many online resources detailing Jewish life and practice.

**“My Jewish Learning”** https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-amidah/

The Amidah is the core of every Jewish worship service, and is therefore also referred to as HaTefillah, or “The prayer.” Amidah, which literally means, “standing,” refers to a series of blessings recited while standing.

Using the image of master and servant, the Rabbis declared that a worshipper should come before his or her master first with words of praise, then should ask one’s petitions, and finally should withdraw with words of thanks. Thus, every Amidah is divided into three central sections: praise, petitions and thanks.

Originally, Jewish prayer was largely unstructured. Although the Rabbis eventually codified the format and themes of each of the blessings, it was initially left to the creativity of individual prayer leaders to generate the specific wording of the blessings.

**So, why nine (9) Blessings?**

Here is a study on the meaning and use of the number nine (9) in Hebrew writing and Jewish culture and tradition. I will highlight a few things and then encourage you to study the article yourself. I am not a mathematician but I see that numbers have meaning to the Jewish religious culture.

**The Meaning Of The Number Nine (Tet - ט) / By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)**

https://www.betemunah.org/nine.html

The first use of the Hebrew word for nine - תשע, tesha, is found in:

Bereshit (Genesis) 5:5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine (תשע) hundred and thirty years: and he died.

Tisha - תשע Strong’s: 08672 תשע tesha` tay'- shah or (masc.) תשעה tish`ah tish-aw'

The fact that we see the number nine associated with the creation of Adam (man) suggests more than just a passing relationship.

Mispar katan is a form of gematria that pursues the "root" of an idea by reducing a gematria to a number less than ten. This form of gematria is called small values; with all tens and hundreds reduced to 1 - 9 by summing the digits.

Consider that the summing the digits of the numbers represented by the Hebrew letters of the name “Adam” (אדם), results in the number nine. Nine is called the mispar katan (literally, "small number") of Adam, which alludes to the essential quality of man:

א = 1

ד = 4

ם = 40

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Total: 9

The Gemara teaches us that whoever prays on the eve of Shabbat and recites vayechulu, it is as if he is a partner with HaShem in the act of creation. It is noteworthy that the word vayechulu in mispar katan equals nine. Shabbat in mispar katan equals nine, and the word emet, truth, in mispar katan equals nine.

In maths, quite extraordinarily, a number can only be divided by nine if its digits add up to nine, or a multiple of nine. For example, in the number 459, 4+5+9 = 18 which is a multiple of 9, and therefore we know it is divisible by 9.

The number nine (9) in kabbalah represents the truths contained in the Torah.

The number 9 is a basic number, and stands for truth. How so?

Take any number, say 347.

Now add up the digits: 3+4+7=14.

Now take away 14 from 347. 347-14 = 333.

Now add up the digits of the answer. 3+3+3 = 9!

Pick a number and try it yourself. The answer is always 9!

**FALSEHOOD**

The word for falsehood (Sheker) Shin-Kuf-Reish is 300, 100, 200 respectively, which equals 600 = 6 in gematria katana) What is the opposite of falsehood? Truth. Which number is opposite of 6? - 9. (6 flipped over. not a coincidence). We learned that the word falsehood has value 6.

**TRUTH /** 9 = Truth in Hebrew.

The word for truth in Hebrew is Emet אמת The numerical value of each letter:

1 = א

40 = מ

400 = ת

Add the numbers 1+4+0+4+0+0=9

Thus, one who recites vayechulu is testifying to the truth that HaShem created Adam and the world in six days and that HaShem rested on Shabbat.

Unbelievably, we find that any number times nine equals nine (18, 27, 36, 45, 54, 63 etc), in mispar katan. For example, 9 x 3 = 27 = 2+7 = 9. Likewise, 9 x 7 = 63 = 6+3 = 9

For bigger numbers, 9 x 5552 = 49968 = 4+9+9+6+8 = 36 = 3+6 = 9 in gematria katana. Whatever number you give, the result will always be nine.

**Sermon on the Mount**

**Matthew 5**

**1** When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

**2** He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,

**3** "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Isaiah 57:15** For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite.

**Isaiah 66:2** "For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.

**Psalm 37:11** But the humble will inherit the land And will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

**Psalm 25:9** He leads the humble in justice, And He teaches the humble His way.

**Micah 6:8** He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

**4** "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

**Zechariah 12:10** "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; **and they will mourn for Him**, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

**Isaiah 61:2** To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; **To comfort all who mourn,**

**Isaiah 61:3** To grant those who **mourn** in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

**5** "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

**Proverbs 15:1** A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

**Proverbs 25:15** By forbearance a ruler may be persuaded, And a soft tongue breaks the bone.

**Proverbs 15:18** A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, But the slow to anger calms a dispute.

**6** "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

**Psalm 107:9** For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, And the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.

**Psalm 145:19** He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them.

**Amos 8:11** "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD.

**7** "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

**Proverbs 11:17** The merciful man does himself good, But the cruel man does himself harm.

**Proverbs 3:3** Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.

**Proverbs 14:31** He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker, But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

**8** "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

**Psalm 24:4** He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully.

**Psalm 51:10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

**Psalm 73:1** A Psalm of Asaph. Surely God is good to Israel, To those who are pure in heart!

**9** "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

**Romans 8:14** For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

**James 3:18** And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

**Isaiah 9:6** For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.  **7** There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

**10** "Blessed are those **who have been** persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**2 Chronicles 36:16** but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy.

**James 5:10** As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

**1 Thessalonians 2:15** who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men,

**Matthew 23:37** "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, **who kills the prophets** and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

**11** "Blessed are you **when** people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

**Revelations 2:10** Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, **and I will give you the crown of life.**

**Romans 8:35** Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

**2 Thessalonians 1:4** therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.

**12** "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Luke 6:23** "Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets.

**Acts 5:41** So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, **rejoicing** that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.

**James 1:2** Consider it all **joy**, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

**Hebrews 10:34** For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, **knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.**

**1 Peter 4:13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.**

**Colossians 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.**

It is important to note that Jesus constantly and thoroughly refers back to God’s leaders within Jewish history. Every single one of the “Blessings” are a direct restatement and clarification of what God has already spoken through His prophets and the Jewish people have already experienced.

Jesus quotes the most from (in order of most to least) Psalms, Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Exodus. Often Jesus’ response to questions He was asked, He would say. . . “It is written…” (Matthew 7 times, Mark 4 times, Luke 5 times, John 1 time).

Jesus responded to the devil in the wilderness with “It is written”. Therefore, witnessing to all of us how powerful Scripture is and that we need to rely upon God’s Word. We see specific examples of Jesus quoting Old Testament Scripture to the Jewish religious leaders. See Matthew 22:32, 37, 39, 44 for examples.

There are many online sources detailing Jesus’ quotes. Here is one.

<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/bible/why-is-isaiah-the-most-quoted-prophet-in-the-bible.html>

Regarding the prophet Isaiah, the Jews knew that he was God’s prophet who spoke words of comfort and hope and also the coming judgement. Which the Jews were fully aware of what happened during Isaiah’s time. But Isaiah gave words of comfort for those who were humble to God. Isaiah lived about 700 years before Jesus and warned the Southern Kingdom of Judah that God was going to judge them for their rebellion to Him.

By 586 B.C., God allowed the Babylonians to conquer Judah, destroy the Temple Solomon built and take captives back to Babylon. The Jews in Jesus’ day were living with the Temple built after the Jews returned from Babylon which was built after the Persian King Cyrus conquered the Babylonians and issued a decree (538 B.C.) releasing the Jews to go back to their homeland and rebuild their Temple (Ezra 1). But the Temple was not dedicated to God until 515 B.C. Therefore, the main Temple, not the expanded courts Herod built, had been standing for over 500 years when the Incarnation came.

As in the days before the Babylonian conquest when the Babylonians were the oppressors, the Romans were the occupying force when the Incarnation came. Therefore, the Jewish population was very sensitive to what Jesus said as they looked for a Messiah-deliverer. But the message Jesus had detailed that He was a suffering servant Messiah of Isaiah 53, and not one for conquest or deliverer. This was obvious when Jesus told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36).

In today’s sermon, I easily identified twelve (12) times where Jesus referred to God’s Word from the books of Psalms and Isaiah regarding the nine “Blessings”. I am sure there are more references to Old Testament Scriptures. The point being. . . that Jesus was confirming to the Jews God’s intent for them and that He was the Messiah they had been long waiting for but, again, not the Messiah who would defeat their temporal enemies.

The Sermon on the Mount Beatitudes (Blessings) speak for themselves. Remember these are the opening remarks of a long sermon where God Incarnate details the main teachings of what it is to be a member of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus speaks clearly for all the world to understand. There are no hidden theological truths within the “Blessings” except the significance of the Jewish understanding of numbers, as in the number nine.

In the Sermon on the Mount, God/Jesus clarifies His will and intent for the Jews, who misunderstood the application of the Law, and for all the people in the world.

**AMEN**