**The Sermon on the Mount -** Session three

**The meek shall inherit the earth**

The third beatitude tells us; “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matt. 5, 5).

**1) Inheriting the earth**

1a) People all want their share of the earth. Some end up with a bigger share than others.

1b) In this study we will take a brief look at the lives of 5 Biblical characters and see to what extent the way they lived determined how much they inherited the earth.

**2) Solomon**

2a) “The weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents (39,294 kg, worth £1.85 billion per year), not including the revenues from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the territories.

Then the king made a great throne covered with ivory and overlaid with fine gold. The throne had six steps, and its back had a rounded top. On both sides of the seat were armrests, with a lion standing beside each of them. Twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any other kingdom.

All King Solomon’s goblets were gold, and all the household articles in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. Nothing was made of silver, because silver was considered of little value in Solomon’s days…

King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart. Year after year, everyone who came brought a gift –articles of silver and gold, robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules.

Solomon accumulated chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he kept in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem. The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. Solomon’s horses were imported from Egypt …” (1 Kings 10, 14 – 29)

2b) Solomon was the pinnacle of human greatness and achievement in the Bible and probably in the whole of the ancient world. The greatest in human achievements, power, riches, knowledge and the one who experienced the greatest worldly pleasures of life. He had 700 wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines (1 Kings 11,3).

2c) From a worldy perspective, it looksd like Solomon was blessed by God and had inherited the earth. But God’s perspective is very different.

**3) God’s perspective on Solomon**

3a) In the law of God, there is just one passage that is specifically written for Kings.

• “The King must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself, he mustn't make the people go back to Egypt to buy them” (v. 16)

• “He must not take many wives” (v. 17)

• “He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold” (v. 17)

• He must not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites” (v. 20)

• When he becomes King, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of the law

• He is to read it every day of his life (v. 18) (Deuteronomy 17, 14-20;)

Nearly everything that was recorded about Solomon as greatness was actually forbidden in the scripture. What is great in the world’s eyes is wrong in God’s eyes.

3b) Solomon left a bad inheritance to the next generation. Within 5 years of his death, all the riches that he had saved up was carried off by Shishak, the king of Egypt (1 Kings 14, 25). 10 of the 12 tribes broke away from his Kingdom and formed a separate nation (Judah and Israel – 1 Kings 12), and the idolatry and worship of foreign Gods that Solomon had brought into a the mainstream of Israeli society through his foreign wives eventually became the issue that destroyed the nation and led to their exile.

3c) “God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble” (1 Peter 5, 5; James 4, 6; Luke 1, 52). It’s not the rich or the strong, or the powerful, not even the wise that will inherit the earth; but the meek.

**4) David**

4a) We’re just going to think about one incident in David’s life; the time when David brought the ark of God into Jerusalem. This was probably the greatest moment in David’s reign, maybe the greatest moment in the history of Jerusalem.

4b) The ark of the covenant was the most holy object in the nation, and that was where God’s presence dwelt, where God himself touched earth. David was bringing the ark of God, the very presence of God Himself into his capital city, into the one place on earth that God himself had chosen before the beginning of time to be his Holy city and the centre of his kingdom on earth. Because it was such a special event, David had brought all the army commanders, all the elders of the tribes, all the priests and “all Jerusalem” to come out to celebrate the arrival of the ark into the city. (1 Chron. 15, 25).

4c) Kings usually use such occasions to demonstrate their magnificence, to display their greatness, their riches and splendor, like at the queen’s funeral that we all watched recently. There’s great pomp, dignity and pageantry.

4d) David did the opposite. He removed all his Kingly robes and just wore his plain linen ephod – the ordinary garment that all the peasants wore. Then, instead of the royal dignity, the Bible tellsus that David was leaping and dancing before the Lord with all his might (2 Sam. 6, 14-16). It was so inappropriate that David’s wife told him that he had disgraced himself.

4e) But David knew something that she didn’t understand. Something that he himself had written in one of his psalms; “the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity” (Psalm 37, 11). He understood that victory would come not because of trusting in the number of your chariots or horses but through obedience to God (Ps. 20, 7).

4f) On that day, David deliberately chose to lower himself to the level of a common peasant, so that no-one would look upon him as the great King. In David’s eyes, there was only one king worthy of admiration and that was God Himself.

4g) He was a prophetic foreshadowing of the one who centuries later who would walk among men in the very presence of God, wearing simple peasant’s clothes. The one about whom it was said that he would have “no majesty to attract us to him” (Isaiah 53, 2). God himself, disguised in human flesh.

4h) The meek will inherit the earth. David is always remembered as the greatest king in Israel’s history, and a man after God’s own heart (1 Sam 13, 14 Acts 13, 22).

**5) What does the word “Meek” mean?**

5a) The greek word used for “Meek” in the Beatitudes is **Praeis**. This word could be translated as “gentle, submissive, unassuming, deferential, lowly, or unpretentious.

5b) It was the word that was used in the ancient world of a horse that had been tamed. A horse has great strength, but until the horse is tamed, the strength is of no benefit to its owner. The wild horse will never achieve his full potential.

5c) He’s talking about those who have learnt to yield to God, those who bow to His leadership, those who have been trained and nurtured so that they can reach their full potential.

**6) Nimrod**

6a) “Cush was the father of Nimrod, who became a mighty warrior on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord (better translated “a mighty warrior against the Lord”); that is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty warrior against the Lord.” The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Uruk, Akkad and Kalneh, in Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, and Resen... (Gen. 10, 8-12)

6b) Nimrod was a mighty warrior against the Lord. His name means “We will rebel”.

6c) The Antonyms of “Meek” is Disobedient, rebellious, pretentious, forceful, unyielding, emboldened, arrogant. That’s a perfect description of Nimrod.

6d) He was the first man recorded in the Bible as a King. He used his strength to assert his will over others. “The centres of his kingdom were Babylon and Nineveh in Assyria” – the two evil empires that were the enemies of God’s people throughout the Bible’s history.

6e) e first mention of war in the Bible was to do with Nimrod. “He was a mighty warrior against the Lord”.

6f) It was Nimrod who was behind the tower of Babel project. “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth”.

6g) This was the opposite of what God wanted. He had told Adam to “Fill the earth and subdue it”,

6h) Nimrod built these huge cities from bricks so they were much quicker and easier to build. At a time when people were still living in wooden huts, he built brick houses that were 3 stories high that we know from archeology had central heating in them.

6i) Rather than trust God for his future, He wanted to build his own security. As the grandson of Ham, son of Noah, in Nimrod’s day the memory of the flood was fresh in people’s minds at that time. One of the reasons behind the tower of Babel is said to have been so that if God ever decided to flood the earth again, the people could just go up into their tower and be saved. They weren’t going to trust God for their future. They wanted to be in control of their own destiny.

6j) Josephus writes about Nimrod; “Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham the son of Noah. He was a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it was through his means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage, which procured that happiness. He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power…(Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews Chapter 4:2)”

**7) Abraham**

7a) Abraham lived in the Ur of the Chaldeans. In Nimrod’s kingdom.

7b) God called him to “leave your country, your people and your father’s house and go to an land I will show you” (Gen. 12, 2). God challenged Abraham’s comfort and security. He had to spend the rest of his life living in a tent.

7c) God challenged Abraham’s control. Abraham had no idea where he was going, no idea how he would look after his family there, no idea what he would do for food, no idea if he would be safe where he was going.

7d) Through his life, Abraham had several tests of his obedience. In order to qualify for inheriting the earth his “meekness” or yielding to God had to be tested.

7e) Circumcision. As far as we know, Abraham was the first person in the world to be circumcised. If you had never heard of circumcision, and God asked you to be circumcised, would you do it? God wanted to make Abraham into a great nation. So he needed his sex life to be holy. I he marked his sex organs. You could say that they were made holy through the sacrifice of blood.

7f)God challenged Abraham regarding his money, asking Abraham to give a tithe to Melchizedek (Genesis 14, 20; Heb. 7, 4).

7g) Thinking of Abraham and Nimrod, which one inherited the earth? God brought confusion to Nimrod’s great kingdom and scattered his subjects all over the earth. He is barely remembered today. Whereas Abraham became the father of many nations, including the Jews and all the Arabic tribes. He’s also the father of all those who believe. And one of his descendants (Jesus) will become the King of the whole earth.

**8) Jesus**

8a) Jesus described himself as meek. He said “Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden. I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle (Praus) and humble in heart. And you will find rest for your souls” (Matt. 11, 29).

8b) The Jewish leaders didn’t recognize Jesus as the messiah because they were looking for a leader like Solomon, who would be powerful and strong and conquer all his enemies and rule over them with a rod of iron. There are many old testament scriptures that talk about the rule of the Messiah in those terms.

8c) They didn’t understand that the secret of God’s plan was that he would take up leadership of the earth in 2 separate stages, not one. In stage one, Jesus came meekly, living as a peasant among peasants, not taking an exalted position for himself. Then, centuries later, Jesus would come back for a second time, not as a meek, humble peasant but as a warrior king with power and glory and authority.

8d) If God had come to the earth just one time to fight against sin, we all would have been destroyed. Instead, he came humbly, like one of us, and he died on the cross to make us righteous. So that when he comes for the second time, in power and glory, those who are meek, who yield to his leadership, can be saved.

8e) Like Abraham, Jesus was tested to see if he would qualify to inherit the earth.

* As the Son of Almighty God, would you submit to laying aside your power, your knowledge, your majesty and be born as a human?
* As the king of kings, would you submit to being born in a stable
* Being so rich that even the streets of heaven are paved in gold, would you choose to live among the poor as one of them,
* As the commander of heaven’s armies, with tens of thousands of angels at your command, would you allow yourself to be led like a lamb to the slaughter
* if by the breath of his mouth, you could destroy the largest, best armed army that the world would ever see, all gathered together in a place called Armageddon – just with the breath of your mouth, would you allow yourself to be mocked and beaten and whipped, and then you lie still whilst a single Roman soldier to drives nails through your hands and feet?
* If you were the one who all the angels and all the redeemed gaze on in wonder, would you allow yourself to be hung up naked on a rough cross of would to die in front of the gaze of the whole of history?
* if you were the pure, spotless lamb would you choose to take upon yourself the filth and the guilt, the shame and the sin of the whole world?

8f) No person has ever been subjected to such a test. No other would have passed.

8g) Jesus, the Risen Christ conquered sin and death. He was the meek one who yielded completely to the will of His father. Consequently, God can entrust to him the greatest power and position in all of heaven.

8h) Let us imitate the “Meekness” of Christ so that God can give us influence and an inheritance in this earth.