

**I. The Crowded Congregation, 25.**

V. 25. *There followed Him great multitudes.* From Capernaum, the centre of His Galilean work, His fame had spread throughout the whole country, and great crowds came to hear Him. (Matt. 3 : 7, 8 ; Luke 6 : 17.)

**II. The Great Teacher, Ch. 5 : 1, 2.**

Ch. 5 : 1. *He went up ;* from the level plain on the side of the mountain to which He had descended (Luke 6 : 12, 17), to a position higher up the hill, where He could be seen and heard by the anxious crowds. *A mountain ;* "The mountain," Rev. Ver. (See Connecting Links.) *When He was set ;* the usual attitude of the Jewish teacher (Luke 4 : 20). *His disciples ;* not only the apostles, but all those of Luke 6 : 13, who, accepting Him as Messiah, were anxious for instruction in the truths of the kingdom. The Twelve would be nearest ; the other disciples would gather around them, whilst beyond were the crowds.

V. 2. *He opened His mouth ;* "A Hebrew expression prefacing a formal discourse." (Riddle ; see Dan. 10 : 16 ; Acts 8 : 35.) *Taught them ;* the disciples, as explained in v. 1 ; but the crowds also heard (7 : 28). Here follow the Beatitudes, so called from the Latin *beatus*, meaning happy.

**III. The Wonderful Sermon, 3-12.**

V. 3. *The poor in spirit ;* Not the poor-spirited, but those who are humble in heart, conscious of their spiritual need. *Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* The kingdom is where God rules. It is within (Luke 17 : 21) ; and can only be where pride and self have been thrust out. There is no room for God otherwise. "Only the noble think meanly of themselves."

V. 4. *Mourn.* All grief does not lead to blessedness, but only the grief that arises from a sense of spiritual need (2 Cor. 7 : 10). It is the "mourning" of the "poor in spirit." *Comforted.* The word suggests not only consolation but strength and encouragement.

V. 5. *Mek.* Meekness is that spirit that conquers pride, submits to God's will without a murmur, and patiently endures with-

out yielding to exasperation and revenge (Rom. 12 : 19-21). *Inherit the earth ;* a quotation from Ps. 37 : 11. Through the spirit of meekness, which keeps its possessor calm and trustful under all circumstances, he gains the truest enjoyment of earthly good, and that spirit shall yet supplant haughtiness and pride in the government of the world.

V. 6. *Hunger and thirst ;* implying the strongest longing. *After righteousness ;* all moral good—the soul's aspiration after holiness. *Filled ;* satisfied. It is a large promise ; but Christ can do large things. (John 6 : 35 ; Ps. 17 : 15.)

V. 7. *The merciful ;* Who have compassion for the suffering and the sinful and especially love towards their enemies. *Shall obtain mercy ;* from God (6 : 12) ; but man's mercy is not excluded. (7 : 2). The hard-hearted cannot claim God's mercy (18 : 23-35) ; and certainly will get none from men.

V. 8. *Pure in heart ;* not only chaste in feeling and in thought, but pure in motive. *Shall see God ;* in present experience (Ps. 34 : 8) ; in future glory (1 John 3 : 2). To "see" in the sense here used is to know, to understand. Crookedness and vileness of heart distort the vision. Moral simplicity clarifies it.

V. 9. *Peacemakers ;* promoting peace between man and man, and showing to others the way of peace with God. Peacemaking flows from the preceding virtues, and from the peace of Rom. 5 : 1. *Sons of God* (Rev. Ver.) ; because they participate in His nature and share in His favor (Rom. 8 : 14, 17).

V. 10. *Blessed are they that have been persecuted* (Rev. Ver.) ; a glance at the past to remind His hearers that the blessings of the kingdom have ever been associated with severest trials. (See Heb. 11.) *For righteousness' sake ;* the limitation of the blessing. There is no comfort for wrong-doers here. *The kingdom.* See on v. 3.

V. 11. *Blessed are ye.* A personal application of the truth just spoken. *Revile you ;* persecution by the malicious speech (Acts 2 : 13). *Persecute you ;* by act (Acts 4 : 1-3). *Shall say falsely ;* literally, lying accusations made to others (Acts 6 : 13). If the accusa-