

Beatitude 8 -- Persecuted

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

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

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

As we come to the last beatitude I chose not to tell a story. I want to consider the words Yeshua teaches those who follow Him. We have a great reward and are part of His kingdom as God's people. But in this world we can expect trouble. Yet God blesses his people in spite of how the world treats us. In fact, the Messiah teaches us that when people of the world say bad things about us or treats us badly because of our faith in Him that we are not the first people to experience such treatment. This beatitude teaches that we can expect people to insult us and say all kinds of evil things against us because of Him. He tells us that as we believe in Him that we will be treated like the prophets of old – most of whom people didn't like to listen to; and often times others were violent toward them when they spoke.

What does all this have to do with us? As we end this survey of the beatitudes it is very important to understand what it means to be a part of God's people. All throughout history God's people have suffered as they have held tightly to their belief in Him and His ways. Many people in the world get mad as they see God's people living in God's ways. The world we live in is not always friendly.

Parents we are living in a time of relative peace in America – we have our small portion of trouble but for the most part we have great liberties. We have freedom and privileges in our country and we dare not take them for granted. I want you to consider today the implications of these beatitudes. If we find ourselves in a time when people attack us and our families for our faith in Yeshua are we prepared to stand firm? Will we turn and run at the first sign of pressure? Within these verses are incredible promises about where our true rewards reside. The beatitudes speak of a people who are poor in spirit, are meek, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, are peacemakers, merciful and pure in heart. They are a people whom God considers blessed. Take some time and discuss this as a family this week.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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

Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

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

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

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

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

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

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

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

Matt 5:3-12

For Further Study: together as families read and consider these topics for discussion:

- 1) John 1:11-13 Consider the importance of family and how those who receive Yeshua become part of God's family. This is a foundational truth. How does this affect our being peacemakers? It's a family defining characteristic.
- 2) John 14:23-29 Yeshua taught his disciples – he prepared them in advance. Read and consider differences in what Yeshua gives and what the world gives – in regard to peace.