

Matthew 5:5 The Beatitudes Part 3 – Blessed are the Meek

Question #1: Who are the *meek*?

1) Lexical definition:

D. A. Carson observes that, “The word 'meek' (*praus*) is hard to define. It can signify absence of pretension (1 Peter 3:4, 14–15) but generally suggests gentleness (cf. 11:29; James 3:13) and the self-control it entails” (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 8, p. 133).

The *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* defines the word “as a mild and friendly disposition *gentle, kind, considerate, meek* (in the older sense of strong but accommodating” (Friberg #22838, BibleWorks).

The Greek word translated *gentle* or *meek* in this verse was also sometimes used with reference to an animal – such a horse – that had been tamed. The animal would still have all the strength it possessed before it was tamed. Only now the strength was *brought under the control* of its master.

2) Biblical examples:

Moses – Numbers 12:3 “Now the man Moses *was* very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth.” *But*, he was also very strong and capable of righteous anger – See, e.g., Exodus 32:17-29.

Jesus – Matthew 11:29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” *But*, He was also the strongest of men and capable of righteous anger toward sin – See, e.g., John 2:13-17.

Question #2: What does it mean that they shall *inherit the earth*?

It is clear that Jesus is alluding to the promise in Psalm 37:11a: “But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”

In order to better understand what Jesus means when He takes up this promise and applies it to those who are of the Kingdom of Heaven, we should consider the context of the verse in Psalm 37. For example:

verses 5-9

verse 22

verse 29

verse 34

Just as David looks to an ultimate fulfillment in which the wicked will finally be cut off and the righteous – the meek – will dwell forever in a future promised land, so also the author of Hebrews sees the promises regarding the land of Canaan as a *type* looking forward to a heavenly place:

Hebrews 11:8-16 (See also Revelation 21:1-4)

But we can also have some experience of what this means *now*. See Hebrews 12:22-24 (See also Philippians 3:20-21).