

QUEST 52

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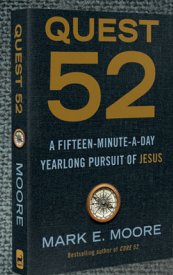


Beatitudes in OT and Rabbinic Literature

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For other “Beatitudes” see Tobit 13:14 (2nd cen. B.C.); Sirach 14:20–27; (c. 180 B.C.); 4Q525 (c. 50 B.C.); 2 Enoch 42:6–14 (c. 70–90 A.D.); *b. B. Mezia* 107a (c. 400–500 A.D.).

Beatitude	Parallel Sayings
<p>Poor in Spirit</p> <p>Cf. Psa 34:6; Prov 29:23; by contrast <i>Str-B</i> 1:190–93 shows the disdain later rabbis felt for the <i>Am-ha-aretz</i>.</p>	<p>Isa 61:1, “The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed.”</p> <p>Prov 16:19, “It is better to be of a lowly spirit among the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.”</p> <p>Isa 57:15, “I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with those who are contrite and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite.”</p> <p><i>Tg. Psa</i> 34:19, “The Lord is near to the broken hearted, and he saves the lowly of spirit.”</p> <p><i>m. ’Abot</i> 4:10 “Be humble before everybody.”</p>
<p>Mourn</p> <p>Isa 61:1–2 is the background of the beatitudes and a prediction of the coming Messiah.</p>	<p>Isa 61:2–3, “to proclaim the year of the LORD’S favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”</p>
<p>Meek</p> <p>Cf. <i>Jub.</i> 32:18–19</p>	<p>Psa 37:11, “But the meek shall inherit the land...”</p> <p><i>Enoch</i> 5:7, “But for the elect there shall be light and joy and peace, and they shall inherit the earth.”</p>
<p>Hunger for righteousness</p> <p>Notice the heavy emphasis on social justice, cf. Psa 9:8, 33:5; Isa 1:21, 27; 5:7, 16; 11:4; 16:5; 28:17; 32:1, 16; 33:5; 59:9, 14; Jer 9:24; Hos 2:19; Amos 5:7; 6:17; Hab 1:4; Zeph 3:5</p>	<p>1 Kgs 10:9, “Blessed be the LORD your God ... he has made you king to execute justice and righteousness.”</p> <p>Psa 89:14, “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.”</p> <p>Job 29:14, “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban.”</p> <p>Prov 29:7, “The righteous know the rights of the poor.”</p> <p>Isa 9:7, “He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness.”</p> <p>Amos 5:24, “But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”</p>



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<p>Merciful Cf. <i>y. B. Qam.</i> 8:6; <i>b. Sabb</i> 151b</p>	<p>In the OT only God is merciful. This is reflected in James 2:13, “For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.” See also the parable of the unmerciful servant, Matt 18:21–35 as well as the Lord’s prayer petition, Matt 6:14. <i>t. B. Qam.</i> 9:30, “So long as you are merciful, He will have mercy on you.” <i>Sifré Deut.</i> 13:18 § 96, “Rabban Gamaliel b. Rabbi says, ‘So long as you show mercy to others, Heaven shows mercy to you. If you do not show mercy to others, Heaven shows you no mercy.’”</p>
<p>Pure in Heart Job 4:17; Psa 51:10; Prov 20:9 speak of the difficulty of attaining a pure heart.</p>	<p>Psa 24:4–5, “Those who have clean hands and pure hearts...They will receive blessing from the LORD.” Psa 73:1, “Truly God is good to the upright, to those who are pure in heart.” Prov 22:11, “Those who love a pure heart and are gracious in speech will have the king as a friend.”</p>
<p>Peacemakers [The OT concept is primarily of national security due to Israel’s fidelity to Yahweh. For Christians and the Rabbis it applied to interpersonal relationships.]</p>	<p>Num 25:12, “I hereby grant him my covenant of peace.” Prov 16:7, “When the ways of people please the LORD, he causes even their enemies to be at peace with them.” Ezek 34:25, “I will make with them a covenant of peace.” (cf. 37:26) Rom 14:19, “Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.” (cf. Heb 12:14) <i>’Abot R. Nat.</i> 23a “Pursuing Peace. What does this mean? It teaches that a man should pursue peace in Israel among all men.”</p>
<p>Persecuted</p>	<p>Psa 119:157, Many are my persecutors and my adversaries, yet I do not swerve from your decrees.” <i>b. B. Qam.</i> 93a, “R. Abbahu said: A man should always strive to be rather of the persecuted than of the persecutors as there is none among the birds more persecuted than doves and pigeons, and yet Scripture made them alone eligible for the altar.” <i>b. Ber.</i> 61b, “When R. Akiba was taken out for execution, it was the hour of the recital of the <i>Shema</i>, and while they combed his flesh with iron combs, he was accepting upon himself the kingship of heaven.... A <i>bath kol</i> went forth and proclaimed: Happy art thou, Akiba, that thy soul has departed with the word <i>ehad</i>! The ministering angels said before the Holy One, blessed by He: Such Torah, and such a reward. ... A <i>bath kol</i> went forth and proclaimed: Blessed are you, R. Akiba, that you are destined for the life of the world to come.”</p>