August 21, 2022 **“*To Fulfill,*** Part A**”**  Pastor Billy Burchfield

**Matt. 5:17- 20**, **“***Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but* ***to fulfill****. 18“For* ***assuredly****, I say to you,* ***till*** *heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will* ***by no means pass from the law*** *till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven”.*

 This section presents the heart of Jesus’ message. It demonstrates His relationship to the Law of God. Jesus was not presenting a rival system to the Law of Moses and the words of the Prophets, **but** *a* ***true fulfillment*** *of* ***the Law*** *and* ***the Prophets***—in contrast with the Pharisees’ traditions.

 In the Law of Moses, God revealed **His standards** for holy living. The Pharisees defended the Law and sought to obey it. But Jesus said that ***the true righteousness that pleases God*** must ***exceed*** that of the scribes and Pharisees. To the common people, the scribes and Pharisees were the holiest men in the community! If *they* had not attained, what hope was there for anybody else?

 The Pharisees thought Jesus was destroying the law. His *authority* did not come from any of the recognized leaders or schools (**Matt. 21:23**, *Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, “****By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority***?”; Mark 11:27-28; Luke 20:1-2). Instead of teaching “from authorities” Jesus taught ***with*** *authority*, but also in His ***activity***, **Matt. 28:18**, “*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19Go therefore*…**”.**

Jesus explained His own attitude toward the Law. He deliberately healed people on the Sabbath. He paid no attention to the traditions of the Pharisees. Our Lord’s *associations* seemed contrary to the Law; He was the friend of publicans and sinners.

The Pharisees were destroying the Law! By their traditions, they robbed the people of the Word of God. By their hypocritical lives, they disobeyed the very Law they claimed to protect. In reality, they were *preserving* God’s Word: **embalming it** so that it no longer had **life**! Their rejection of Christ proved that the ***inner truth of the Law*** had not penetrated their hearts.

 ***I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil***; to **establish** the law and the prophets; to **unfold** them, to **embody** them in living form, and to **enshrine** them in the reverence, affection, and character of men.

***Jesus had come to honor*** (complete, fulfill) ***the Law*** and help God’s people love it, learn it, and live it. He would not accept the external masquerade, the artificial righteousness of the religious leaders. Their religion was a dead ritual, not a living relationship. It was artificial; it did not reproduce itself in others in a living way. It made them proud, not humble; it led to bondage, not liberty.

 **Jesus came to fulfill the OT** in the sense of ***bringing to completion its partial revelation***, in bringing to pass ***its messianic predictions***, and in giving ***the true interpretation to its moral precepts***.

 The Greek word used here refers to carrying something out. Jesus performed or upheld that which was required by the law and met the expectations of the predictions about Him in the writings of the prophets. In Him, the Law and the Prophets reached their fullest expression. **Strongs Gr. # 4137**

 **(IV)** **To fulfill**, bring to a full end, accomplish, complete.

 **(C)** By implication, **to fill out, complete, make perfect, accomplish an end** (**Matt.**

 **5:17**; Phil. 2:2; 2 Thess. 1:11). In the past., to be made full, complete (Luke 22:16;

 John 3:29; 15:11; 16:24; 17:13; 2 Cor. 10:6; 1 John 1:4; 2 John 1:12; Rev. 3:2).