

Matthew 8:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

Analysis

Jesus' statement that Gentiles from 'east and west' will sit with the patriarchs in the kingdom was shocking to Jewish listeners who assumed ethnic privilege guaranteed salvation. This prophesies the gospel going to all nations and Gentile inclusion in God's covenant people. The language of reclining at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob depicts the messianic banquet, the consummated kingdom. Faith, not ethnicity, determines covenant membership—anticipating Paul's doctrine that true Israel is defined spiritually, not ethnically (Romans 9:6-8).

Historical Context

Jewish theology generally assumed the messianic banquet would include only ethnic Israel. Jesus' prophecy that Gentiles would share this blessing while many Jews would be excluded reversed these assumptions, anticipating the gospel's expansion to all nations after Pentecost.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' prophecy of Gentile inclusion demonstrate that faith, not ethnicity or religious heritage, determines salvation?
2. What does the image of the messianic banquet teach about the joy and fellowship of the consummated kingdom?

Interlinear Text

λέγω	δὲ	ὕμῖν	ὅτι	πολλοὶ	ἀπὸ	ἀνατολῶν	καὶ	δυσμῶν
I say	And	unto you	That	many	from	the east	and	west
G3004	G1161	G5213	G3754	G4183	G575	G395	G2532	G1424
ἔξουσιν	καὶ	ἀνακλιθήσονται	μετὰ	Ἀβραάμ	καὶ	Ἰσαὰκ		
shall come	and	shall sit down	with	Abraham	and	Isaac		
G2240	G2532	G347	G3326	G11	G2532	G2464		
καὶ	Ἰακώβ	ἐν	τῇ	βασιλείᾳ	τῶν	οὐρανῶν		
and	Jacob	in	G3588	the kingdom	G3588	of heaven		
G2532	G2384	G1722		G932		G3772		

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 3:6 (Parallel theme): That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Malachi 1:11 (Parallel theme): For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

Luke 12:37 (Parallel theme): Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

Isaiah 59:19 (Parallel theme): So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

Acts 10:45 (Parallel theme): And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 11:18 (Parallel theme): When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Colossians 3:11 (Parallel theme): Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Matthew 24:31 (Parallel theme): And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.