

THE WORDS AND WORKS OF KING JESUS

PART 7: THE KING'S MIRACULOUS POWER

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MATTHEW CHAPTERS 8-9

"A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy."

(Matt. 8:2-3 NIV)

King Jesus had just finished teaching¹ his followers about the inner spiritual life and having improper (Pharisaical-like) motives when giving, praying, and fasting. He also taught how those belonging to his kingdom are to live outwardly in this world, especially about not judging (fault-finding) others.

Now King Jesus demonstrates his deity and Kingdom authority by performing miracles; healing the sick, calming a storm, showing his power over Satan and his

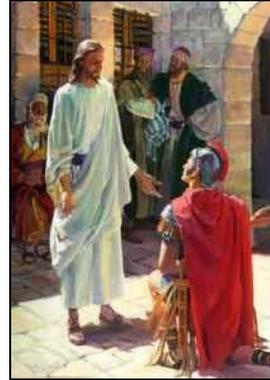
¹ This teaching session is often called "Discourse No. 1."

demons, and forgiving sinners. He taught with such authority the crowds that followed him were amazed.

I. SUMMARIZING THE TEXT

A. CHAPTER 8

In Chapter 8, Jesus demonstrates his Kingdom power by healing a leper, along with many others (8:1-4; 14-17), he applauds a Roman Centurion's faith (8:5-13), he calms a life-threatening storm on the Sea of Galilee (8:23-27), and he cast out demons from two possessed men (8:28-34).



- According to Jewish law and customs, one had to keep 6 feet (2 meters) from a leper, including family members.²
- If the wind was blowing toward a person from a leper, they had to keep 150 feet (45 meters) away.
- Had to wear black clothes that were torn, and his head bare so people recognized them as lepers.
- Had to cry, "unclean, unclean" (Lev. 13:45)
- They were judged as being dead.
- The only thing more defiling than contact with a leper was contact with a dead body.
- Leprosy might begin with the loss of all sensation in some part of the body; the nerve trunks are affected; the muscles waste away; the tendons contract until the hands are like claws.
- The hands and feet became ulcerated.
- Then comes the progressive loss of fingers and toes, until in the end a whole hand or a whole foot may drop off.
- The duration of that kind of leprosy is anything from twenty to thirty years.
- It is a kind of terrible progressive death in which a man dies by inches." (Barclay)
- Imagine the anguish and heartbreak a leper suffered being completely cut off from family, friends and society.³

B. CHAPTER 9

In Chapter 9 Jesus continues to demonstrate his Messianic power by healing a paralyzed man (9:1-8), by restoring a girl to life (9:18-19, 23-25), by healing a woman with a blood discharge (9:20-22), by healing two blind men (9:27-31), and by healing a man who was unable to speak (9:32-34).

² (Guzik Matthew 8)

³ (Leadership Ministries Worldwide 6)



This chapter also describes how the scribes accused Jesus of blasphemy by forgiving a paralytic's sins (9:3-6), how Jesus called Matthew to follow him (9:9), and Jesus responded to the Pharisees⁴ who questioned his eating with tax collectors and sinners (9:10-13).

Jesus also explained to John the Baptist's disciples why his disciples did not fast (9:14-17) It was because the kingdom of heaven had arrived giving reason for rejoicing, not mournful fasting.

Given the helplessness and the need of the crowds that followed him, Jesus' disciples are urged to pray fervently that the Lord would send laborers into his harvest since many were ready to receive the good news of the kingdom (9:35-38).⁵



II. DISCUSSING THE TEXT

1. Jesus had just finished teaching about the kingdom of heaven. Now, in Chapters 8 and 9 he heals the sick, drives out demons from two men, and eats with tax collectors and sinners. He also calls Mathew, a tax collector, to follow him. What would people learn about the kingdom of heaven from Jesus' actions?
 - The "unclean" (lepers) are welcome in his kingdom
 - Those in his kingdom are to have compassion for those who are suffering (leper)
 - Gentiles (Centurion) were welcome in his kingdom
 - Righteousness comes from faith, not from works (Centurion) as the Pharisees taught
 - Jesus has power over Satan and his demons
2. With what attitude and beliefs did the centurion approach Jesus (8:5-13)?
 - He humbled himself before Jesus
 - He recognized Jesus' great authority
 - He had great faith
3. How does Isaiah 53:4 relate to what Jesus did in Matthew 8:16-17? How would this have impacted the thinking of the Pharisees?
 - Isaiah 53:4 states that the Messiah (described as the 'suffering servant') would heal people of their sicknesses.
 - If they remembered the passage in Isaiah, they would have recognized Jesus as the Messiah.

⁴ Their name comes from the Hebrew and Aramaic *parush* or *parushi*, which means "one who is separated." It may refer to their separation from Gentiles, sources of ritual impurity or from irreligious Jews. "Pharisees" <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharisees>. Accessed January 13, 2021.

⁵ (ESV Crossway Bibles 1838-39, note for 9:36-38)

4. What did the Pharisees notice about Jesus and what was their complaint (9:10-13)?

- He was eating with tax collectors and sinners.
- Pharisees would have viewed sinners as those who didn't keep the law.
- Tax collectors were considered to be traitors since collecting taxes involved cooperating with the Roman occupiers of Palestine.

III. SUMMARY: CHAPTERS 8-9

1. Jesus displayed his Messiahship through amazing, compassionate **miracles**.
2. Jesus included a humble **Gentile** in his Messianic ministry.
3. Jesus dined with sinners not the **self-righteous**.
4. Jesus urged the disciples to **pray for workers**.

IV. CHALLENGE FOR NEXT WEEK



Read Matthew Chapter 10. What does Jesus teach us in verses 29-31? How can this help you when you feel that God doesn't answer your prayers?