

## THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW; YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH

Week 3 – The Authority of the King in the Natural Realm (continued)

Week 4 – The Authority of the King in the Supernatural Realm

February 15, 2022

### **WEEK 3 - THE AUTHORITY OF THE KING IN THE NATURAL REALM (cont'd)**

Matt. 8:3 - *Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, I am willing; be cleansed. Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.* How did the multitudes respond? I'm envisioning that they stood still and were struck with amazement as Jesus with a word and a touch transformed this dying man physically, emotionally – and perhaps spiritually! What a demonstration of Jesus' power! Did they hear Him say...

Matt. 8:4 - *See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.* This day, the day Jesus healed the Jewish leper, the priest on duty would have a most unique opportunity to see a Jewish man who had just been healed of leprosy by the Messiah Jesus! The priest was to validate the miracle and, most likely, give serious thought as to what it meant!

Acts 6:7 - *Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.* Is it any wonder that the priests... a great many of the priests... came to faith in Jesus? Jesus healed many Jewish lepers and, by so doing, identified Himself as the Messiah. The priests repeatedly witnessed the proof of Jesus' Messiahship!

Jesus deliberately sent the cleansed leper to the priesthood – because it was the law... AND, to get the Jewish religious leaders to begin investigating His Messianic claims and to come to a decision regarding those claims!

#### JEWISH RESPONSE:

Luke 5:12-16 – (parallel passage) Jesus healed a Jewish leper ...*and He charged him to tell no one, 'But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.'* <sup>15</sup> *However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.*

Luke 5:17 - *Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem.*

Why did the Jewish leaders from Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem come to Jesus following the healing of the Jewish leper? To investigate Him. This was their response to the first Messianic miracle. According to Sanhedrin law, if there was any kind of Messianic movement, the Sanhedrin had to investigate the situation in two stages. The first stage was called the “stage of observation.” If the movement was declared to be

significant, there would then be a second stage of investigation called the “stage of interrogation” when questions would be asked, and objections would be raised.

### A GENTILE CENTURION AND HIS SERVANT/SLAVE

Matt. 8:5-9 - *Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, <sup>6</sup> saying, ‘Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully*

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*tormented.’ <sup>7</sup> And Jesus said to him, ‘I will come and heal him.’ <sup>8</sup> The centurion answered and said, ‘Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup> For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.’*

Jesus ministered to a Gentile and his servant/slave. Some have suggested that the servant was Jewish. Who else would be a slave to a Roman? Another Roman? NO! Others have suggested that the Centurion’s servant is most likely Gentile. (I leave that for you to ponder).

What are your thoughts, from an historical/cultural perspective, regarding a powerful Roman officer, approaching Jesus, a Jewish Rabbi, asking for help? The powerful approaching the “powerless” – in the Roman mindset. Consider as well, a Jewish person’s feelings about the Romans. There would be a deep loathing on the Jewish side toward the Romans. BUT, this is Jesus Whom the Centurion approached!

The Centurion, the Gentile, came to Jesus on behalf of his servant. Under Roman law, a master had the right to kill his slave. And, it was expected that he would do so if the slave became ill or injured to the point where he could not work. The Centurion pleaded with Jesus on behalf of his servant.

If this is the same Centurion as recorded in Luke 7 where we read that the Centurion had a connection with the elders of the Jews who told Jesus that this Centurion loved Israel and built a synagogue. Perhaps the Centurion learned respect for Israel and the Jewish people from the servant...if the servant was Jewish!

Jesus’ response to the Centurion: *I will come and heal him.* Jesus did not hesitate to go to the Centurion’s house though it was completely against Jewish custom to enter a Gentile’s home. The Centurion wanted Jesus to heal his servant, but how could he expect Jesus to defile Himself by entering his home? The Centurion said, *Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.* The Centurion showed great faith in Jesus’ word. He understood that Jesus could heal with His word just as easily as with a touch. God had revealed to this Centurion Jesus’ power and authority and worthiness!

Matt. 8:10 - When Jesus heard the response from the Centurion, *He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!* Jesus praised the Centurion's faith stating that this Gentile's faith surpassed that of any Jewish person in Israel!

Matt. 8:11 - *And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven!* The Centurion received Jesus' promise of inclusion and fellowship! This was unimaginable. Jesus announced that there will indeed be Gentiles in the kingdom of heaven and that they will even sit down to dinner with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was unheard of to many of the Jewish people in Jesus' day. Most importantly, in the context of Matthew's account, it is not one's nationality/ethnicity that determines one's eternal destiny, but his faith.

Matt. 8:12 - *But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Jesus conveyed the truth that just as the Gentile's racial identity provided no automatic "in" to the kingdom, the Jewish people were not

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guaranteed entrance into the Kingdom of God based on their nationality. Entrance into the Kingdom of God is only by grace through faith in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus!

Matt. 8:13 – And, at that very moment, Jesus told the Centurion, ...*Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you. 'And his servant was healed that same hour.*

This Centurion, who sought the Lord's mercy toward his servant, came to Jesus on the basis of faith, and it is this faith which not only healed the servant, but also saved the Centurion.

#### PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW

Matt. 8:14-15 - *Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. <sup>15</sup> So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.*

The culture of the Middle East during Jesus' times regarded four groups of people as outcasts of society: lepers, Gentiles, slaves/servants, and women. In Jewish thinking, those who were excluded and unimportant: lepers, Gentiles, slaves/servants, and women. Whom did Jesus heal/transform? A leper, a Gentile, a Gentile's servant, and a woman.

OH, WHAT A WONDERFUL SAVIOR!

#### QUESTIONS:

What impacted you re: the Centurion?

Did you know about the Jewish religious leadership response to those who were claiming Messiahship and to Jesus in particular?

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## WEEK 4 - THE AUTHORITY OF THE KING IN THE SUPERNATURAL REALM

### WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

A miracle involves the direct and powerful action of God, transcending the ordinary laws of nature and defying common expectations of behavior. Miracles are extraordinary occurrences that can only be attributed to the supernatural work of God and demonstrate His involvement in human history. A miracle displays the greatness of God and causes people to recognize that God is active in the world.

What was the purpose for miracles? To glorify God and to authenticate the messenger and His message!

Our God has a plan and a purpose!

Yes, Jesus is a compassionate Savior.

He left heaven's glory, made Himself of no reputation, and laid down His life and suffered an excruciating death on the cross which was the death sentence for CRIMINALS!

In eternity past we find God the Father speaking to God the Son.... Isa. 53:10 (NASB) - *But the LORD desired to crush Him, causing Him grief; **if** He renders Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.*

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Miracles occurred first in the OT at the time of the Exodus. Through the miracles, God authenticated Moses as His messenger. The miracles were given to convince Israel that they should obey Moses, forsake Egypt, and follow Moses into the desert. The miracles were also designed to convince Pharaoh that the LORD was the true God and that he should submit to God's command. Ex. 9:1 - *Then the LORD said to Moses, Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.*

The second period in which miracles occurred in the OT was in the day of Elijah and Elisha. These two prophets ministered to an apostate nation being ruled by godless kings. The Hebrew prophets warned the kings and the nation of impending judgment if they did not repent. The miracles performed by the prophets authenticated them as God's messengers and demonstrated that their message was of divine origin.

The third period in which miracles occurred was during the earthly ministry of Jesus. The Messiah was sent as God's Messenger with God's message: the Messiah has come to redeem and to reign. The people were told to turn from sin, to turn in faith to the One

Whom God had promised, the Messiah, and to trust Him for salvation. Jesus' miracles were for the purpose of authenticating both God's Messenger and the message.

Not only did the miracles of Jesus authenticate His person and His message, they revealed the spheres in which He exercised authority. There were miracles in the realms of nature, demons, sickness, and disease, the physical and the emotional, and death.

By His miracles, Jesus demonstrated His authority in the realm in which He will one day rule as King in His kingdom.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, His miracles revealed conditions in the kingdom over which Jesus as Messiah will rule, the Millennial Kingdom. Through His miracles, Jesus was announcing Who He is and broadcasting the hope of restoration.

### THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Ezekiel chapters 40-48 speak of the Millennial Kingdom.

Eze. 47:9-10 - *And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.*

In the Millennial Kingdom there will be a very great multitude of fish. Isn't it "interesting" that Jesus called fisherman as His disciples and that He called them to lower their nets when all seemed hopeless re: catching fish. And the outcome? A great haul of fish (Luke 5:4-8). Did the Jewish people remember reading the Ezekiel scroll which spoke of God's Kingdom which would be established on earth?

The Millennial Kingdom will be a kingdom in which nature is subject to Jesus' authority (Psa. 2). It will be kingdom in which Satan is bound (Rev. 20:1-8).

Zech.13:2 - *It shall be in that day, says the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land.*

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### JESUS CAST OUT THE SPIRITS

Matt. 8:16 - *Now when evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were ill.*

WHY is there such an emphasis on those who were demon-possessed?

What is demon-possession? A demon would control the thinking, speaking, feeling, and actions of the individual in which the demon was living.

Was there more demonic activity on earth during Jesus public ministry? J. Dwight Pentecost, a former Professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, has written that demon activity was common in Israel in Jesus' days.

Pastor Erwin Lutzer, former Sr. Pastor of Moody Memorial Church in Chicago has written a book entitled, *The Serpent of Paradise*, which carries a subtitle: *The Incredible Story of How Satan's Rebellion Serves God's Purposes*. Lutzer's book is written *In honor of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Who 'disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him' (Colossians 2:15)*.

In *The Serpent of Paradise*, Lutzer writes that we need to think of why there was much demonic activity on earth during Jesus' public ministry. *Just think of it from the demonic point of view, Lutzer has stated. Jesus comes, the devil knows that He's the Son of God, and he wants to oppose all that Jesus is doing. I have no doubt that the devil began to concentrate his activity in Israel, where Jesus was, and maybe that's why every time Jesus turned around, it seems as if there was another demon that He had to confront.*

#### THE FIRST RECORDED ACCOUNT OF JESUS EXERCISING AUTHORITY OVER A DEMON

Mark 1:21-28 - *Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught. <sup>22</sup> And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup> Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, <sup>24</sup> saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" <sup>25</sup> But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" <sup>26</sup> And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. <sup>27</sup> Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new doctrine (teaching) is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." <sup>28</sup> And immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.*

When Jesus confronted this demon-possessed man, the demon immediately cried out in recognition of both the person and authority of Jesus. He acknowledged Jesus to be "the Holy One of God." He recognized the authority of Jesus when he asked, "Have you come to destroy us?" The demon recognized that Jesus was Judge and that the demonic world was under divine judgment. The demon knew that the demons would be destroyed! The violent convulsion and the loud shriek from the demon suggests that the demon was fiercely resisting the command of Jesus. The demon was unable to resist.

The deliverance from the demon was firstly, an authentication of Jesus' teaching. Secondly, the deliverance was evidence of Jesus authority! The response from the people is noted in vv. 27-28!

### QUESTIONS

What was new to you in the Week 4 section? How were you impacted?

Are you encouraged to dig deeper re: any of the topics in Week 4? If so – which one(s)?

Do you see the connection between Jesus' miracles and the Millennial kingdom? Can you explain the connection?

Can you think of one or more friends and/or relatives with whom you'd like to share what you've learned?

### SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 4's handout with the Bible references.

Jot down your observations and questions.

Begin writing a journal with your observations, questions, and answers (if you've started researching answers)

Share with at least one person what you have gleaned from Matthew 8:5-17.

Read Week 5 when you receive it.