

THE MIRACLE STORIES (CH. 8-10:4)

CHAPTER 8: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (W8)

(8:1-17) **THREE HEALINGS: The Leper, The Centurions Servant, Peter's Mother in Law**

After giving the Law, Jesus does as Moses did, and descended down the mountain. Because God has chosen to walk with us, to not only embody the Law or righteousness but to live it as the perfect Israelite; the obedient Son; the virtuous man.

1 When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. **2** And behold, **a leper came to him** and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." **3** And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. **4** And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

The leper remains isolated from the crowds. Jesus, breaks the command, by touching the leper, for only the giver of the Law may transcend it.

The gift to be offered (Lev 14:4, 10, 21-22) symbolizing the healing of sin is to remove the impediment unto righteousness. We are healed to worship and follow the commandments of the Great Healer who has removed us from the bondage of sin and the grip of death (1 Peter 2:9).

The Faith of a Centurion

5 When he had entered Capernaum, **a centurion came forward to him**, appealing to him, **6** "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly." **Luke** says; He was even ready to die. But I say, this is a sign of his having great faith, even much greater than theirs, who let one down through the roof (Luke 5:17;7:1). **NOTE** in both instances, the faith of another brings healing (baptism).

7 And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." 8 But the centurion replied, "Lord, **I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed.** 9 For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. 11 I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** in the kingdom of heaven, 12 while **the sons of the kingdom** will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

Jesus is not contradicting the OT in citing Abraham (Gen 17). He is saying, "Israel is my firstborn son"(Ex. 4:22), but sons are known by faith not by works of the Law (Rom 9; 4). This is the 'Israel of God' (Gal 6:16).

Jesus Heals Many

14 And when Jesus entered Peter's house, **he saw his mother-in-law lying sick** with a fever. 15 He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. 16 That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and **he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick.** 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases." (Isa 53:4)

The leper was healed unto worship. Peter's mother-in-law, unto service.

(Isa 53:4) Jesus is the promised Messiah, the suffering servant. He brings salvation to restore a people unto worship and service (thus fulfilling the great commandment) and in his person, provides the example of God with us (incarnational presence of his church).

The Cost of Following Jesus

18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. **19** And a scribe came up and said to him, “Teacher, **I will follow you wherever you go.**” **20** And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” **21** Another of the disciples said to him, “**Lord, let me first go and bury my father.**” **22** And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

Jesus is no seeker of the worlds or men's glory, and so he leaves the crowds.

After one has given himself to God, he ought not to turn back to the things of this life. Indeed one must honor one's parents, but God first. That this man's father was an unbeliever is evident from Jesus' words, "Let the dead," that is, the unbelievers, "bury their dead." If this man was not even permitted to bury his father, woe to those who after they have begun the **monastic** life turn back to worldly things! (Luke 14:26).

Jesus Calms a Storm

23 And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. **24** And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. **25** And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” **26** And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. **27** And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”

Jesus is fully man, and manifests his full divinity as well: he is Lord over creation. What lesson does Jesus' disciples through this event? He is Lord over the storm: both storms in the world and storms in the soul.

Jesus Heals Two Men with Demons

28 And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. **29** And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, **O Son of God?** Have you come here to torment us **before the time?**” **While the**

men in the boat were yet wondering what manner of man this was that even the winds and the sea obeyed Him, the demons come to proclaim the answer.

"before the time," to mean that they thought that Christ, not enduring their great wickedness, would not wait for the time of their punishment. But this is not so; for the demons are permitted to contend with us until the end of the world.

30 Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. **31** And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." **32** And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. The demons asked this so that they could drown the swine, and thus the owners would be grieved and would not welcome Christ. Christ granted the demons their request in order to show how great is their bitterness towards men, and that if they had the power, and were not prevented as they are by God, they would do worse things to us than they did to the swine. For God protects those possessed by demons so that they do not kill themselves.

33 The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. **34** And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

The inhabitants of the city begged Jesus to leave because they were grieved and thought that they would suffer something worse thereafter.

The Prodigal Son: the 'Swinish Life'. Jesus calls us from the swinish life of following after the prince of the Air (Eph 2:2).

Jesus is recognized at varying degrees: 1. The Leper, Centurion, & Peter know Jesus can heal, and yet, they do not see clearly, that is the Son of God. 2. The Demons know exactly who he is. 3. The herdsmen, only see this teacher as a threat.

We see two contrasting responses to healing: 1. (Leper, Centurion, Peter's Mother in Law): salvation unto worship and service; 2. (the Herdsmen) rejection and fear. Again, there are ultimately two responses to Christ: belief or rejection. Yet, our Lord patiently reveals himself time and time and again, as he does to the twelve, as he travels with them doing the works of the Kingdom.