

## Matthew Chapter 8

Verses 1-4: "Make me clean." According to the Law of Moses, to be leprous was to be ceremonially unclean (see Lev. 13:45-46). "Jesus ... touched him," which instead of bringing uncleanness to Jesus caused the total cleansing of the leper!

The purpose of Jesus in giving the command to "tell no man" was to draw attention away from the miracle itself and to appeal to the spiritual need in man. In the Gospels the crowds were often attracted by Jesus' miracles, but not always by His message. "Show thyself to the priest," that is, in obedience to the Mosaic Law regarding cleansing.

"Offer the gift that Moses commanded:" These gifts are found in (Leviticus 14:2-32), where they are typical of Christ's atonement and the cleansing it provided. "For a testimony unto them:" that is, as evidence to the priest that the leper had indeed been cleansed.

**Matthew 8:1 "When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him."**

This "mountain" here, was on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had just finished the Sermon on the Mount. A "multitude" was probably over 1,000 people, and since the Scripture included "great", then it could have been several thousand.

**Matthew 8:2 "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."**

A "leper" was an outcast from the community. They had to cry, "unclean", when anyone came near them. This, they thought, was contagious. Also, they felt that leprosy was a curse from God. Why a leper would even be allowed to be with this multitude was a mystery in itself. We could learn a lot from this "leper".

He had no doubt about Christ's power, only His will (Mark 1:40-45).

The first thing he did, before he asked for anything, was worship Jesus. He called Him, "Lord". Then he said, with no doubt in his heart, You can heal me. He knew beyond a shadow of a doubt, that Jesus could heal him. He had either heard from friends about Jesus healing people, or else he had been an eye witness of Jesus healing someone.

When Jesus healed, He said, "Your faith has made you whole".

**Matthew 8:3 "And Jesus put forth [his] hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."**

It just takes one touch from Jesus to heal. His answer was always, "I will". This man did not have to wait and hope. He was "immediately" healed. The statement "be thou clean" showed that the man had to accept the healing.

**Matthew 8:4 "And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."**

“Tell no man”: Publicity over such miracles might hinder Christ’s mission and divert public attention from His message. Mark records that this is precisely what happened. In this man’s exuberance over the miracle, he disobeyed. As a result, Christ had to move His ministry away from the city and into the desert regions (Mark 1:45).

“The gift that Moses commanded”: A sacrifice of two birds, one of which was killed and the other set free (Lev. 14:4-7). “As a testimony to them”: The priests.

When a leper was clean, the priest had to say he was clean, before he could take his place back in the community. This priest would certainly know there had been a miracle. This man was to follow the law, by giving an offering of thanks for the healing.

Verses 5-9: A “centurion” ranked between an officer and a noncommissioned officer (somewhat equivalent to that of a modern sergeant major). It was a position of great responsibility in the Roman occupation force. (See the most complete account in Luke 7:2-10).

“Servant (Greek pais), means “child” or “servant” and “Sick of the palsy” means to be paralyzed and greatly afflicted. The centurion was impressed with Jesus, whom he likened to himself as one “under authority.” He recognized that in dealing with the realm of sickness and death Jesus had all the power of God behind Him.

**Matthew 8:5 "And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,"**

“Centurion”: A Roman military officer who commanded 100 men (verse 9). Luke indicates that the centurion appealed to Jesus through intermediaries (Luke 7:3-6), because of his own sense of unworthiness (verse 8; Luke 7:7). Matthew makes no mention of the intermediaries.

**Matthew 8:6 "And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented."**

Capernaum was the home of Peter, near the Sea of Galilee. Jesus would later on tell the people of Capernaum that they had very little faith. This particular Roman had much faith.

"Palsy" is a disease of the central nervous system, and there is really no cure for it. This would have to be a miracle. Hundreds of years have passed, and there is still no cure for palsy, outside of a miracle from God. This disease is tormenting. It causes you to shake out of control.

**Matthew 8:7 "And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him."**

The answer that Jesus always gave was, "I will", as we have said before Jesus is never too busy. He was willing to go to this servant. A servant has the same importance as a king to Jesus. Notice Jesus did not say, I will try to heal him, but rather, "I will".

**Matthew 8:8 "The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."**

“I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof”: Jewish tradition held that a person who entered a Gentile’s house was ceremonially defiled (John 18:28). The centurion, undoubtedly familiar with this law, felt unworthy of having Jesus suffer such an inconvenience for his sake. He also had faith enough to know that Christ could heal by merely speaking a word.

**Matthew 8:9 "For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this [man], Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth [it]."**

Even though this man had great worldly authority, he was fully aware that compared to Jesus, he was unworthy. In fact, we are all unworthy. It is only through grace that we are saved. He recognized the fact that everything and everybody was subject to the command of Jesus. There was no question about the authority of Jesus.

Verses 10-13: The words “from the east and west”, are taken from (Psalm 107; with allusions also to Isaiah 49:12; 59:19; Mal. 1:11). Here Christ is referring to the ingathering of the Gentiles through the preaching of the gospel, culminating in their final gathering at the time of His second coming.

“The children of the kingdom” refers to those to whom the kingdom really belongs. “Outer darkness” refers to the condemnation of the second death. “There shall be ... gnashing of teeth.” There (in that place), is used emphatically to draw attention to the fact that such severe punishment is in fact a reality.

Even though he was a Gentile, the servant was healed because of the faith of the centurion. The contrast to this incident drawn by Jesus emphasizes the foolishness of Israel’s rejection of Him as the Messiah.

**Matthew 8:10 "When Jesus heard [it], he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."**

This centurion understood Jesus’ absolute authority (verses 8:9). Even some of Jesus’ own disciples did not see things so clearly (verse 26).

Jesus was very impressed that someone, who had never studied the Scriptures, would believe. The learned scholars (scribes and Pharisees), were the worst doubters of all. Jesus came to the house of Israel, but when they refused Him, He created a spiritual Israel based on faith alone.

**Matthew 8:11 "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."**

“Many ... shall come from the east and west”: Gentiles in the kingdom with Abraham, will enjoy salvation and the blessing of God (Isa. 49:8-12; 59:19; Mal. 1:11; Luke 13:28-29).

The spiritual children of Abraham shall be from all the nations of the world. Their faith, like Abraham's, will be the saving factor.

Galatians 3:28-29 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

**Matthew 8:12 "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."**

“Children of the kingdom”: The Hebrew nation, physical heirs of Abraham.

“Shall be cast out”: This was exactly opposite to the rabbinical understanding, which suggested that the kingdom would feature a great feast in the company of Abraham and the Messiah, open to the Jews only.

Just because a person is Jew by birth, does not mean that he or she will go to heaven. This Scripture above is saying, regardless of whom your parents or grandparents are, without belief in Jesus Christ, you will wind up in hell.

Darkness is the absence of light. Just to know total separation from Jesus would cause great anguish ("weeping and gnashing of teeth"). This expression describes the eternal agonies of those in hell.

God does not have grandchildren, only children. Each person is expected to have his own faith and act upon it.

**Matthew 8:13 "And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, [so] be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour."**

“As thou hast believed”: Sometimes faith was involved in the Lord's healings, in this case not by the one being healed as (in 9:2; 15:28); other times it was not a factor (verses 14-16; Luke 22:51).

We can expect miracles according to the amount of faith we have. If we don't believe, nothing will happen. The bottom line was, this "servant was healed".

**Matthew 8:14-15 "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever." "And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them."**

Peter's home, as we have said before, was here in Capernaum. Jesus probably went there to rest from the crowd. The Scripture does not state the cause of the fever. She was sick enough to stay in bed. Just one touch of Jesus' hand, and the fever fled. It was such a miracle; she immediately went to work seeing to their physical needs.

**Matthew 8:16 "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with [his] word, and healed all that were sick:"**

“Possessed with devils”: This means “demonized,” or under the internal control of a demon. All the cases of demonization dealt with by Christ involved the actual indwelling of demons who utterly controlled the bodies of their victims, even to the point of speaking through them (Mark 5:5-9), causing derangement (John 10-20), violence (Luke 8:29), or rendering them mute (Mark 9:17-22).

The Bible explains in detail, how Jesus got rid of the evil spirits that possessed the bodies they were in. An evil spirit can come into a non-Christian, and actually control that person. I do not believe that a Christian can be possessed by a devil. There is no example in the Bible of a Christian being possessed by a devil.

A demon possesses darkness. A Christian is filled with Light. Light does away with darkness. A Christian, who is full of the Light of Jesus, cannot be consumed by the darkness of the devil. I do believe a Christian can be tormented from without, but not inside. Take note here, that the Word got rid of evil spirits. That should tell us something. Stay full of the Word of God.

Take note also, that sick people are spoken of separately. He "HEALED the sick, and "CAST OUT" the evil spirits. Notice also, that He healed "ALL". Let me say one more time, that because Christians are filled with the Light of Jesus, they cannot be possessed with devil spirits. They can be oppressed, but not possessed.

**Matthew 8:17 "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare [our] sicknesses."**

“Spoken by Isaiah the prophet”: Matthew was citing that passage here. Christ bore both the guilt and the curse of sin (Galatians 3:13). Both physical healing and ultimate victory over death are guaranteed by Christ’s atoning work, but these will not be fully realized until the very end (1 Cor. 15:26).

Isaiah prophesied that the Savior would not only save our souls, but would heal our bodies. He actually took our diseases on His body on the cross. His "healing touch" did not just help way back then, but is still healing people today.

John 14:12-14 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

You see, Christians can pray to the Father in the name of Jesus, and He will hear and answer our prayers. The difference is Jesus healed in His own name. We heal in Jesus' name. It is the power of Jesus (not our name). We just touch and allow His power to flow through us. Pray and believe in the name of Jesus and expect miracles.

### **Matthew Chapter 8 Questions**

1. Where was the mountain located where Jesus taught the sermon on the Mount?
2. Describe a multitude.
3. What did a leper have to cry when near others?
4. What was the first thing the leper did when he saw Jesus?
5. What, besides a physical sickness, did most believe leprosy to be?
6. What name did the leper call Jesus?
7. How did Jesus answer him?
8. What does "be thou clean" show us?
9. Why did Jesus send him to the priest?
10. A Roman centurion was over how many men?
11. What type of disease is palsy?
12. Compared to Jesus, what was the centurion?
13. What and who are under Jesus' authority?
14. Why was Jesus amazed at the centurion's faith?
15. When physical Israel rejected Jesus, who did He create?
16. Where will Abraham's spiritual children come from?
17. Where, in the Bible, do we learn there is no male or female with God?
18. Where is outer darkness?
19. Does birth into a Jewish family insure your residence in heaven?

20. Will your mother's or father's faith save you?
21. How many great miracles can we expect?
22. What was the bottom line about the centurion?
23. Where was Peter's home?
24. What was Peter's mother-in-law healed of?
25. Can a Christian be possessed of the devil?
26. Tell what darkness represents.
27. What one thing did Jesus use to free a person from devil spirits?
28. Are sickness and demon possessions the same?
29. Is healing for today?
30. What Scripture answers this question?
31. Whose name must we use?