

Ministry of Grace

Matthew 8

¹When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. ²And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." ³And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴And 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."

⁵When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, ⁶"Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly." ⁷And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." ⁸But 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. ⁹For 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." ¹⁰When 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. ¹¹I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹²while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." ¹³And 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.

¹⁴And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. ¹⁶That 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. ¹⁷This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

¹⁸Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. ¹⁹And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." ²⁰And 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." ²¹Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²²And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

²³And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." ²⁶And 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. ²⁷And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

²⁸And 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. ²⁹And 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?" ³⁰Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." ³²And 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. ³³The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

Parallel Passages

Mark 1:40-45

⁴⁰And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." ⁴¹Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean." ⁴²And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them." ⁴⁵But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.

Mark 4:35-41

³⁵On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." ³⁶And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. ³⁸But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Mark 5:1-20

¹They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. ²And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." ⁸For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" ⁹And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." ¹⁰And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, ¹²and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." ¹³So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the pigs, and the herd,

numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea. ¹⁴The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ¹⁶And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. ¹⁷And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. ¹⁸As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. ¹⁹And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

Luke 5:12-15

¹²While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." ¹³And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴And he charged him to tell no one, but "go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them." ¹⁵But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. ¹⁶But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Luke 8:22-39

²²One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, ²³and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. ²⁴And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?"

²⁶Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me." ²⁹For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) ³⁰Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him. ³¹And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. ³²Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. ³³Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. ³⁴When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ³⁶And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. ³⁷Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart

from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. ³⁸The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

Luke 9:57-62

⁵⁷As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

⁵⁸And 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." ⁵⁹To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ⁶⁰And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." ⁶²Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Notes

General

Having given his account of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew now describes 5 miracles that Jesus performed afterward. They include:

- The healing of a leper
- The healing of the Centurion's servant
- The healing of Peter's mother-in-law
- The calming of the storm
- The healing of the Gadarene Demoniac

Between the third and fourth miracle He explained the cost of discipleship to two would-be disciples. Then, in the next chapter we will read about five more miracles that Jesus did.

Why did Jesus perform these miracles? Was it to attract a bigger following? I don't think so, since he repeatedly told those He healed not to tell others how they were healed. And, according to [John 6:15](#), when the people came to make Him their king as a result of the miracles, he went away from them and headed up to a mountain to be alone. He was not looking for fame.

I think Jesus had three reasons for healing people. The first was to demonstrate the compassionate love of God for all people. The second was to prove that He was the Messiah. His miracles fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah (see [Isaiah 29:18-19](#), [Isaiah 35:4-6](#), and [Isaiah 53:4](#)). Bear in mind that Satan can also perform miracles and even appears as an angel of light. In fact, the religious leaders of Jesus' time accused Him of performing miracles by the prince of demons ([Matthew 9:34](#), [Matthew 12:24](#), [Mark 3:22](#), and [Luke 11:15](#)).

The third reason for performing miracles was so that He could reveal saving truth to the people. In spite of these miracles, however, the people refused to believe (five of the miracles were performed in Capernaum, but the city still rejected Him). Therefore, we see that the miracles that He performed were actually judgments against the people due to their unbelief, especially the religious leaders.

As we read about these miracles, think about these three reasons:

- He wanted people to see what He is (compassionate, especially to the humble)
- He wanted people to recognize who He is (The Messiah, The Son of God)
- He wanted humble followers who believed and who were ready to follow Him in spite of the hardships it might cause them (total commitment)

Matthew 8:1-4

¹When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. ²And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."

³And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴And 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."

Jesus' first miracle in this chapter of Matthew's gospel account was the cleansing of a leper. It was believed at the time that this disease (not the same as what we call leprosy today) was highly contagious. The law required a leper to stay at least twelve cubits (about 18 feet) from others and to proclaim, "Unclean, unclean, unclean," whenever they were around other people. The law forbade them from approaching anyone else and no one wanted to touch them for fear of getting the disease. Thus, they lived the life of an outcast, without physical contact and without fellowship of any kind (except with other lepers).

The first thing we see here is an indication of this man's faith. He was so sure that Jesus could heal him that he boldly approached Jesus even though it was illegal. The expression "**knelt before him**" is translated from the verb *proskuneō*, which is made up of *pros*, meaning "to or toward" and *kuneō*, which means "to kiss" or "to adore." The image is of a worshipper approaching a "holy" man and kneeling to kiss his hand. It is an act of humility as well as an act of adoration. The leper was not being presumptuous or doing this just for appearance sake. He was not a proud worshipper, just the opposite, in fact. He approached the Lord as a humble worshipper needing something that only Jesus could provide.

His words to Jesus only serve to reinforce the humility with which he approached. He said, "**Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.**" The word "**will**" is from the Greek word *thelō*, meaning "to decide" or "to determine." The leper was not saying "If you find it in your heart to bless me in this manner ..." Rather, he is saying "If you decide to cleanse me ..." Not only was the leper certain that Jesus was able and desirous of cleansing him, he knew that all Jesus had to do was to determine that he should be clean and it would be so. The leper recognized that he, himself, could do nothing about his condition; it was all up to Jesus. Is this not a perfect picture of salvation through faith? When we got saved, we had to come knowing that we were without hope apart from God's grace, knowing that salvation is wholly of Him and nothing that we have done. It is also a picture of how we should come to Him in prayer, humbly, recognizing our both lack of worth and His ability and willingness to answer our prayers, if He so determines.

Jesus reached out and touched him saying, in effect, "Yes, I decide to make you clean."

Notice what the text says next, “And gradually his leprosy was cleansed.” – NOT! It says, “And immediately, his leprosy was cleansed.” When Jesus heals or cleanses, it happens immediately, it doesn’t require time to become fully effective.

“**See that you say nothing to anyone ...**” – Jesus does not seek praise for His miracles, as we noted above. Jesus’ love is a perfect love that seeks the best for the object(s) of His love. His focus (as ours should be) is on those in need, not on Himself.

Pay particular attention to the fact that though it was Jesus who performed the miracle, it was the leper’s faith that saved him. He would not have been healed if he had not believed so strongly that he was willing to break the law to worship at the feet of the Messiah.

Matthew 8:5-13

⁵When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, ⁶“Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.” ⁷And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” ⁸But 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. ⁹For 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.” ¹⁰When 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. ¹¹I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹²while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ¹³And 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.

We don’t really know where the mountain was located that Jesus just came down from, but we do know where He went next, to Capernaum, on the Northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. He spent much of His ministry in and around this area.

“**centurion**” – The Greek word means “an officer over a century.” We think of a century as meaning one hundred, however a century in the Roman army was 80 soldiers. Its interesting to not that every centurion mentioned in the Gospels and Acts was a gentleman of high character and sense of duty.

“**servant**” – This is the word *pais*, which could mean “a young child” or “a male servant.” We don’t know for sure which he was referring to, although if the centurion was referring to his young son, he would more likely have said the Greek word *huios*, meaning “son.” Since he didn’t use this word, we will assume that it was a servant of his.

The centurion’s servant was paralyzed and was said to have been suffering terribly (grievously tormented). Like the leper, this centurion would not have associated with Jesus under normal circumstances. The centurion was a man of war and Jesus was a man of peace. The centurion was a Gentile and Jesus was a Jew. There is no indication that the centurion believed Jesus to be the Messiah. He may not have even known what a Messiah was, but he believed Jesus could heal his servant. Also notice, like the leper, the centurion came to Jesus in humble faith. When Jesus offered to go to the centurion’s house to heal the boy, he replied, “**Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed.**” Although an officer in the Roman Army, this man was humble in the presence of a Jewish Rabbi. And – what

he said next was even more amazing. In effect, he said, “Jesus, you don’t need to come to my house to heal my servant. All you need to do is say the word and he will be healed.” Do you think the centurion really believed that Jesus could heal his servant remotely? He certainly did!

Upon hearing this, Jesus was amazed. The Greek word is *thaumadzō*, meaning “to wonder, to marvel, or to be struck with admiration or astonishment.” What was Jesus amazed about? It was the depth of the centurion’s faith. And, as a result of the unwavering faith of the centurion, Jesus healed his servant right then and there!

But – notice what Jesus said before the healing:

I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

What Jesus was telling His followers was that there will be many Gentiles in the Kingdom, while there will be many Jews who will be cast out. In other words, He told them that entrance to the Kingdom was not dependent on their heritage (being a descendant of Abraham), but on their faith. Likewise, there will be many who claim to be believers (Christians) who will not be admitted to the Kingdom. Remember what we read in the previous chapter?

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' (Matthew 7:21-23)

Matthew 8:14-17

¹⁴And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. ¹⁶That 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. ¹⁷This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

This series of healings includes the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law. This occurred on a Sabbath, immediately after Jesus and His disciples returned from the service at the Synagogue where Jesus had cast out an unclean spirit (see **Mark 1:21-29**). There are two things to notice here. The first is that there is no scriptural evidence that anyone asked Jesus to heal Peter’s mother-in-law. The healing was apparently motivated solely by Jesus’ compassion for her and her family. The second is what she did immediately upon being healed. She served! She did not fall on her knees thanking Him for the blessing He bestowed on her, although that would have been appropriate. Instead, being fully aware of His blessing on her life, she repaid His kindness by serving Him and the others who were with Him.

I wonder how many of us would have done the same. First of all, how many of us even recognize the many blessings God bestows on us? And, we tend to accept His blessings on our lives with little or no recognition of His part in them and then simply go on about our life with little or no gratitude.

Later that evening, Jesus was thronged by people wanting to be healed and people who were oppressed by demons. Notice that Jesus cast out some of the demons and healed a lot of them who were sick. – Is that what it says? No! It says that he cast out the demons with a word and healed **all** who were sick. The implication is that He cast out all the demons in addition to healing ALL who were sick.

Matthew tells us that this fulfilled prophecy about the Messiah:

Surely He has borne our sicknesses, and He carried our pain; yet we esteemed Him plagued, smitten by God, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4) [LITV]

Although many interpret this as a reference to what He did on the cross, Matthew makes a point of the fact that in fulfilling this prophecy, He is a help to us even in the events of our daily lives. Some mis-translate this to say that He took away our sickness and pain and they use this verse to justify their belief that Jesus provides bodily healing for all who come to Him in faith. That simply cannot be substantiated by this verse.

Matthew 8:18-22

¹⁸Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side.

¹⁹And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

²⁰And 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." ²¹Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²²And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

We now have a brief interlude to Matthew's account of Jesus' miracles of healing. He focuses now on Jesus' interactions with a couple of would-be disciples. The first is a scribe, a teacher of the Law. Perhaps he was impressed with Jesus' teaching style (with authority, not as the Scribes, **Matthew 7:29**) or perhaps he was impressed with the large crowds that followed Jesus. If either of these was the case, then the scribe's motivation for following Jesus was selfish, wanting something for himself. Notice that he, a teacher of the Law, referred to Jesus as "Teacher" in an apparent attempt to join himself to a fellow teacher. Jesus, perceiving that the scribe was not yet ready to be a true disciple, pointed out to him that the road would be difficult and there would be few of the comforts of life along the way. This was not the way that the scribes were used to being treated. They enjoyed the recognition from others and the comforts that accompanied it. After this encounter, there is no further mention of this scribe. Apparently, he wanted more than just to be a follower.

The second disciple, when asked to be a follower (see **Luke 9:59**), also, was not willing to make the sacrifice necessary to do so. He said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." What, exactly, did he mean? The first thing we need to determine is whether this disciple's father was already dead. Since the custom of the Jews was to bury a person's body on the day that the death occurred, it is unlikely that this man's father was already dead. After all, if he had just died, this man would not be out with the crowds following Jesus. He would have been taking care of his father's body. It is more likely that his father was old, perhaps even near death, and this man was saying that he needed to go be with his father until his father died (and he received his inheritance) and then he would follow our Lord. Jesus' response indicates that this was the more

likely scenario. He said, in effect, "Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead." This man apparently was also not ready to be a follower of Jesus, because we hear no more about him.

Matthew 8:23-27

²³And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." ²⁶And 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. ²⁷And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

The Sea of Galilee is about thirteen miles long and eight miles wide, lying some 690 feet below sea level. It's bordered on the north by Mt. Hermon at an elevation of 9,200 feet and by the Golan Heights to the northeast at an elevation of about 3000 feet, with steep ravines leading down to the Sea from the north and the east. As a result, it is not uncommon for cold winds to suddenly rush down these funneling valleys, producing strong winds and stormy waves on the water.

The disciples' first reaction to the awful storm was fear. Several of them were fishermen (at least Peter, Andrew, James, and John). Surely they knew that the storm would pass and they would be OK, yet they were fearful for their lives. And just as surely, Jesus knew that this storm was coming and wanted His disciples to go through it with Him. Were the disciples being disobedient or sinful and needed to be chastened? Is that why Jesus took them into a storm? If not, then why did Jesus want them to suffer through the storm?

- Was it to teach them something?
- Was it to prove to them that He really was the Messiah?
- Was it to strengthen their faith (He called them "little faiths")?
- Was it to show them that He would take care of them?

What did they say as soon as Jesus had miraculously calmed the storm? "What sort of **man** is this?" They did not yet recognize who He really was.

Matthew 8:28-34

²⁸And 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. ²⁹And 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?" ³⁰Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." ³²And 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. ³³The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

If we compare Matthew's account with those of Mark and Luke we see that only Matthew indicates that there were two demoniacs. Both the other accounts only mention the one man. Also, Matthew says they went to the country of the Gadarenes (the city of Gadara), while Mark

and Luke say the country of the Gerasenes (the city of Gerasa). The confusion arises from the fact that these two cities were located close to each other (to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee) and the inhabitants of the area were referred to variously by either name.

This man was possessed by a legion of demons. A Roman Legion was from 3,000 to 4,000 soldiers, so we can assume that this man had thousands of demons in him. And – according to [Mark 5:13](#), there were about 2000 pigs that drowned after being demon possessed, so there were at least that many demons in this man.

What can we learn about the theology of demons from this passage? First, they recognize the deity and power of Jesus, the Son of God. Secondly, they know what will happen in the end times ([have you come here to torment us before the time?](#)) They were afraid of becoming disembodied spirits ([If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs](#)). Lastly, we know that the demons pray to God!

Afterward, the former demoniac wanted to follow Jesus, but He would not let him. In [Mark 5:20](#) we discover that he became a preacher in the area of the Gerasenes and the Gadarenes (the Decapolis).

So What?

What do we learn about Jesus in this chapter?

Jesus has power over Disease (Leprosy), is not hindered by distance (Centurion's servant), can take away fever, has power over nature, and is supremely powerful in the physical world as well as the spiritual world. Jesus loves and helps those who are outcasts and who have nothing to offer (leper, demoniac) in return. He allows storms in our lives and occasionally he leads us **into** storms.

What do we learn about the Leper in this chapter?

He knew Jesus could heal him. He came humbly before Jesus and showed his faith.

What do we learn about the Centurion in this chapter?

In spite of his position of power and authority, he humbled himself before Jesus and pleaded a case for his servant to be healed. His faith in Jesus was strong and he expected his servant to be healed.

What do we learn about Peter's Mother-in-law in this chapter?

She recognized God's blessing on her life and in return did the only thing she knew how to do – she served Jesus and His disciples. Are we this aware of God's blessings on our lives? What do we do in gratitude?

What do we learn about the Gadarene Demoniac in this chapter?

He was so grateful about being healed that he became a preacher in his neighborhood.

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