

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

RLJ-1917

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PART 22: LEPER & CENTURION

ASTONISHED BY HIS DOCTRINE

The Jewish people were astonished at the way Jesus taught. The scribes constantly referred to the Talmud – a commentary on the Old Testament – and would always say that this is what rabbi so-and-so said.¹

Since Jesus is the God of the Old Testament, He did not quote the rabbis, but stated the doctrine He had given to Moses and the prophets. Jesus went beyond what was written in the Old Testament and instituted additional doctrine with the authority that came from being part of the Godhead. **Matthew 7:28-29**

CLEANSING A LEPER

The apostles did not write down every miracle performed by Jesus or the names of all the people from which he cast out demons since the God-man ministered to tens of thousands. **John 21:24-25**

Jesus encountered a leper when He came down from the mountain after teaching what has become known as “The Sermon on the Mount.” The man approached Jesus and started to worship Him. In doing so, the leper violated a law governing the diseased since they were supposed to live outside the population and not approach healthy people. Jesus did not rebuke him when the man asked the Son of God to supernaturally heal him. The God-man said, “I will, be thou clean,” and the leper was instantly healed. Jesus told him to see a priest, who also served as a health inspector, so he could be reintroduced to society. **Matthew 8:1-4; Leviticus 14:1-11**

THE NEW TESTAMENT

It is important to understand that Jesus did not write down anything He taught. There are two plausible reasons why the God-man did not write anything down about Himself and His teachings:

1. His ministry only lasted for some 3.5 years and He was sought after by the people with no time for Himself.
2. His writings would have been used against Him by the Jewish authorities.

The Holy Spirit recorded all the words and actions of Jesus and the third person of the Godhead later moved upon the writers of the four Gospels to put in writing the story and the teachings of the incarnated Son of God. **2 Peter 1:16-21**

¹ In the 1st century, scribes and Pharisees were two largely distinct groups, though presumably some scribes were Pharisees. Scribes had knowledge of the law and could draft legal documents (contracts for marriage, divorce, loans, inheritance, mortgages, the sale of land, and the like). Every village had at least one scribe. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jesus/Scribes-and-Pharisees>



THE ROMAN CENTURION

When Jesus descended from the mountain, He walked toward the city of Capernaum with thousands of people following. The accounts of Matthew and Luke differ on what took place at the beginning of the story with the centurion.

- ❖ Matthew said the centurion came to Jesus and asked for help. **Matthew 8:5-6**
- ❖ Luke said the centurion did not go directly to Jesus, but made his request known to the elders of the Jews. **Luke 7:1-3**



The motive for Matthew omitting the involvement of the elders could have been because what they had done to Jesus in Jerusalem when they demanded His death. I am going to use Luke's account and compare it with Matthew's version.

The elders met with Jesus and pleaded on behalf of the centurion. They told Jesus that this Gentile was worthy of help despite the fact that he was a Roman army officer and part of the occupation force of Judah. He loved the Jewish people and used his position to get a synagogue built in Capernaum. **Luke 7:4-5**

It is important to note that Jesus did not reach out to the Gentiles during this time of ministry. **Matthew 10:5-6; 15:22-28**

Jesus agreed to heal the servant and followed the elders, but on the way, the centurion sent word that he was not worthy for Jesus to come into his home. Then this man made a great statement of faith. **Luke 7:6-8**

Matthew records that the centurion personally came to Jesus and declared his faith. **Matthew 8:7-9**

Whether the centurion showed up personally or sent word to Jesus, the man had great faith in the God-man, who was suitably impressed by the centurion. **verses 10-12; Luke 7:9**

Matthew's account features Jesus telling the centurion that his servant would be healed. **Matthew 8:13**

Luke's account states the group sent by the centurion returned to his house and found the servant had been healed. **Luke 7:10**

SUMMARY

We have examined two healings in this message. The leper and the paralyzed man with tremors. Both diseases were incurable and led to an early death and both men were healed by the words of Jesus.

This brings us to the power of the spoken word. Jesus provided a vivid illustration of the power of the spoken word and what it means to the believer in Christ. **Mark 11:12-14; 20-24**

The Son of God said the power of the spoken word is directly tied to forgiveness.
verses 25-26

There are two obstacles a Christian must overcome:

1. Not being able to forgive people who have hurt them.
2. Fear that it won't work. Many Christians are afraid that God won't answer if they declare something by faith. What would people think if nothing happens?
3. Having prayed and got no response from God.

Elijah prayed seven times for rain. **1 Kings 18:41-46; James 5:17-18**

Thomas Edison worked to develop a light bulb; it took 10,000 attempts before he managed to produce a filament that did not burn out.

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?