

Matthew Chapter 8 The Lord, the Master, the sovereign one.

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From chapter 1 to 7 Matthew lays the foundation of his argument. The genealogy and birth of Jesus confirming Him, legally as the Messiah prophesied about in the Old Testament, the fulfillment of fundamental prophecies through His birth, His baptism and temptation confirming His moral qualities, He announced the nearness of His kingdom through His teachings and manifestation of great miracles as confirmation of who He was.

1 When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.

2 And behold (see, pay attention, look), a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord (Sir, Master), if You are willing, You can make me clean."

- Why did he say if you are willing?
- He recognized Jesus as the Lord, the master, and the one with great authority. The one with the will power to do whatever He wanted.
- "You can make me clean". Lepers were considered unclean. They were outcasts. He needed God to cleanse him so he could be restored into society, re-established, renewed, freed, cleared.

3 Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

- Jesus put out His hand and touched him. A sign of connection, compassion, a personal touch from God.
- He was not afraid of the leprosy. He was above it. He was Jehovah Rapha the Healer.

He wasn't afraid to associate with the outcast publically. The leper's faith was as that of a child, knowing that God was able to heal even leprosy. He came for such as these. (***"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."***)

- ***“I’m willing; be cleansed”***. God is always willing to heal our diseases but he chooses when and how. The will remains His, as the leper had recognized.
- God is sovereign. The sovereignty of God represents the ability to exercise His holy will or supremacy.
- God is the only one with the power to truly and fully cleanse completely.
- ***4And Jesus said to him “See that you tell no one;***
- Why did Jesus tell the cleansed leper to "tell no one" about his cleansing? Dr. Thomas Constable believes that probably Jesus did not want the news of this cleansing broadcast widely because it would have attracted multitudes whose sole interest would have been to obtain physical healing .In other words, He wanted to limit His physical ministry's appeal, since He came to provide much more than just physical healing.
- ***But go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”***
- Jesus was encouraging the man to obey the Mosaic Law concerning the cleansing of lepers (Lev. 14:2-8). However, by sending him there to do that, Jesus was notifying the religious authorities in Israel that someone with messianic power was ministering in Galilee.
- ***5Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum***
- Capernaum was a town in Galilee. It was an important Roman garrison, a permanent military post.
- ***, a centurion (Leader of a hundred Men) came to Him, pleading with Him, 6saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed (afflicted, immobilized, unable to function properly) dreadfully tormented (tried, tested, having or suffering evil, possessed demonically).” 7And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”***
- ***“I will come and heal him.”*** A good Roman soldier with a pure heart had moved the heart of God.
- A so-called oppressor of God’s people was able to stand as a man a believer in the true God in spite of whom he worked for.
- The Jews saw an oppressor; an evil man working for an evil entity but God had compassion on him and on his servant regardless of what people saw or thought.

- God will always respond positively to a pure and sincere heart. 1 Tim. 1:3-5.
- Matthew was also trying to show the Lord's shift from ministering to the Jews to ministering to the gentiles in this story of the centurion.
- **8The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy (deserving, honourable) that You should come under my roof.**
- The Roman centurion shows great humility not only for a man representing an oppressive regime but a for a gentile. An heathen to the Jews.
- A mere mortal and sinful man whom God wants to visit. He knew his place before God.
But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.
- You are the Lord, the Master. You are Jehovah Rapha the healer. You are the sovereign Lord.
- When we exhibit purity in our hearts we are able to see God for who He truly is, His power, His might, His sovereignty. Matt. 5:8.
- **9"For I also am a man under authority (under orders, accountable, under the will of someone else),** Somehow, maybe by divine revelation or maybe because He had hear Jesus say that he had been sent by the Father, the centurion knew that Jesus was accountable to the father. He was about the Father's business. Luke 2:49.
- ***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."***
- He was a man of great authority yet he humbled himself before Jesus.
- By creating a comparison between his office and the office of the Messiah, He was able to discern a biblical truth about the authority of the Messiah, which few had seen.
- **10When Jesus heard it, He marveled (was filled with wonder, astonishment, amazement),**
- 'Wonder' cannot apply to God, for it arises out of what is new and unexpected: but it might exist in Christ, for he had clothed himself with our flesh, and with human affections."

- ***and said to those who followed, “Assuredly (certainly, with great confidence), I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!***
- The greatness of the centurion's faith was due to his perception of Jesus' relationship to God. It was not that he believed Jesus could heal from a remote distance. Moreover the centurion was a Gentile who evidently lacked the knowledge of Old Testament revelation about Messiah. No Jew that Jesus had met had shown such insight into His person and authority.
- ***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.***
- All the Jews would be gathered from all corners of the earth to feast in the kingdom with their Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- The Jews imagined that because of their unique position as the chosen ones, the kingdom of heaven was only reserved for them.
- Jesus was showing them that even gentiles who believed would also be welcomed in the kingdom as well.
- ***12“But the sons of the kingdom (the unbelieving Jews) will be cast out into outer darkness (misery, Gehenna, hell). There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Immense suffering).***
13Then Jesus said to 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.

Conclusion

We need to recognize the sovereignty of God and His workings in every situation at all times. But only the pure of heart will see God and the workings of His great power and might. Let us constantly meditate on who God is, let us read His word to be reminded of all that He did and is capable of, and then we will eventually see what He can do in our lives. We don't need great faith like the Roman Centurion. Faith like a mustard seed will suffice.