

A Study of Matthew 8

I. Outline.

1. The Leper is Cleansed (Matthew 8.1-4).
2. The Centurion's Servant is Healed (Mt 8.5-13).
3. Peter's Mother-in-Law is Healed (Mt 8.14-17).
4. Demands of Discipleship (Mt 8.18-22).
5. The Sea is Stilled (Mt 8.23-27).
6. Demons are Cast into Swine (Mt 8.28-34).

--NKJV Headings

II. Summary.

The King passed down from the mountain and from teaching in order that He might bring the Kingdom nearer to His people, and give them examples of its benefits. What a wondrous application of His power; leprosy, palsy, fever, all fly before Him, and mark the cosmopolitanism of His giving—a leper, a Roman, a woman, all the despised in the Jewish mind. In that wonderful evening, when the crowds gathered, and the King took their infirmities and bore their diseases, what a radiant revelation He gave them of the power and love of His heart, and therefore of the privilege of entering His Kingdom. A time of sifting and testing followed. Men who would follow Him, but... They have had their successors all down the years, as also have the Gadarenes, who, when He interfered with their illicit trading, formally requested Him to depart, notwithstanding that He had left on their shores a man whom by His coming He had transformed from the curse of the countryside into a law-abiding citizen. Even the disciples most closely associated with Him had so little confidence they did not believe in His power unless they saw Him at work. They must wake Him to still the storm. In grace, He stilled the tempest, but He also rebuked the disciples' lack of faith.

--G. Campbell Morgan, *Exposition on Bible*, an e-Sword Module

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Christ.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

Matthew 8.3... AND IMMEDIATELY HIS LEPROSY WAS CLEANSED—"The leper had spoken of *his* being cleansed, and Jesus had commanded that the *leper* be cleansed. But now we're told that 'the *leprosy* was cleansed.' This shift stresses the departure of the leprosy, and its departure stresses a cure by Jesus over a priest's declaration of ritual cleanness" [Gundry, R. H. (2010). *Commentary on the New Testament: Verse-by-Verse Explanations with a Literal Translation* (p. 30). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers].

Matthew 8.4... SHEW THYSELF TO THE PRIEST, AND OFFER THE GIFT THAT MOSES COMMANDED—"Although Jesus devastated the hypocritical, superficial, and unbiblical standards and practices of the

scribes and Pharisees, He did not want the people to think He was violating the requirements of God's law—which He had just declared He came to fulfill, not destroy (5:17). In addition to that, when the priest declared the man clean—as he would have to do because of the obvious healing—Jesus' miracle would be officially confirmed by the Jewish establishment. It is likely also for this reason that Jesus told the man not to tell anyone else before he presented himself to the priest for examination. If word that his healing was done by Jesus reached Jerusalem ahead of the man, the priests would no doubt have been reluctant to verify the cleansing" [MacArthur, John F (2004-01-06). *Matthew 1-28 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Four Volume Set (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series)* (Kindle Locations 13815-13820). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition].

Matthew 8.5... CENTURION—"A *centurion* was a noncommissioned officer in the Roman army or one of the auxiliary territorial armies, commanding a *centuria* of (nominally) 100 men. The responsibilities of centurions were broadly similar to modern junior officers, but there was a wide gap in social status between them and officers, and relatively few were promoted beyond the rank of senior centurion. The Roman troops stationed in Judea were auxiliaries, who would normally be rewarded with Roman citizenship after 25 years of service. Some of the centurions may have served originally in the Roman legions (regular army) and thus gained their citizenship at enlistment. Others may have inherited it, like the apostle Paul did" [Biblical Studies Press. (2006). *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Mt 8:5). Biblical Studies Press].

Matthew 8.6... GRIEVOUSLY TORMENTED—"He is described as paralysed, but the words 'grievously tormented' point to more acute suffering than is common in that form of disease, and imply either something like rheumatic fever, or tetanus, or the special kind of paralysis which benumbs the muscles only, and affects the nerves of sensation with sharp pain" [E.H. Plumptre, *A Bible Commentary for English Readers*, an e-Sword Module].

Matthew 8.8... NOT WORTHY THAT THOU SHOULDEST COME UNDER MY ROOF; BUT SPEAK THE WORD ONLY, AND MY SERVANT SHALL BE HEALED—"The *centurion* and his *servant* were non-Jewish soldiers in the army of occupation. Behind the man's reluctance to be visited by Jesus is the problem of relations between Jews and Gentiles: a Jewish teacher could not be expected to defile himself by entering a Gentile house. His simple acceptance, however, in soldier's jargon, of Jesus' practical authority over illness is evidence of a *faith* beyond that of *anyone in Israel*" [Carson, D. A., France, R. T., Motyer, J. A., & Wenham, G. J. (Eds.). (1994). *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 915). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press].

Matthew 8.10... I HAVE NOT FOUND SO GREAT FAITH, NO NOT IN ISRAEL—"The nature of the faith we have already seen. Israelites who sought our Lord's healing work, craved for presence, or touch, even if it were only the hem of the garment; sometimes, as in the case of the blind, and dumb, and deaf, for yet more material signs. Here was one who believed in the power of the word of the Christ, and asked for nothing more" [E.H. Plumptre].

Matthew 8.11-12... MANY SHALL COME FROM THE EAST AND WEST, AND SHALL SIT DOWN WITH ABRAHAM, AND ISAAC, AND JACOB, IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. BUT THE CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE CAST OUT INTO OUTER DARKNESS—"By including Jesus' striking saying in v 11–12 (*cf.* Lk. 13:28–29), Matthew draws out the implications of this contrast for the future development of the people of God. *Many will come from the east and the west* (and this Gentile 'believer' is a prototype of them) and join the Jewish patriarchs at the Messianic banquet, which all Jews expected to enjoy as of right. At the same time, however, the Jewish *subjects of the kingdom* who did not share

this Gentile's faith would find themselves *outside*, in the place which popular belief assigned to the Gentiles. The basis of acceptance in *the kingdom of heaven* would no longer be racial origin but faith" [*New Bible Commentary*, p. 915]. ||||| The NET Bible has: *I tell you, many will come from the east and west to share the banquet*—"Grk 'and recline at table,' as 1st century middle eastern meals were not eaten while sitting at a table, but while reclining on one's side on the floor with the head closest to the low table and the feet farthest away. The word 'banquet' has been supplied to clarify for the modern reader the festive nature of the imagery. The banquet imagery is a way to describe the fellowship and celebration of being among the people of God at the end" [Biblical Studies Press. (2006). *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Mt 8:11). Biblical Studies Press]. ||||| "It is clear that our Lord saw in the centurion the first-fruits of the wide harvest of the future. Like the words of the Baptist in Matthew 3:9, what He now said contained, by implication, the whole gospel which St. Paul preached to the Gentiles. 'East and west,' even without the formal addition of 'north and south,' which we find in the parallel passage of Luke 13:29, were used as limits that included all the nations of the earth" [E.H. Plumptre].

Matthew 8.14... HIS WIFE'S MOTHER LAID, AND SICK OF A FEVER—"Grk "having been thrown down." The verb βεβλημένην (*beblēmenēn*) is a perfect passive participle of the verb βάλλω (*ballō*, "to throw"). This indicates the severity of her sickness" [NET Bible]. ||||| "The first thing many male Jews did every morning was to pray, '**Lord, I thank Thee that I was not born a slave, a Gentile, or a woman.**' In the first two miracles of Matthew 8, Jesus showed mercy and compassion not only to an outcast leper but to an outcast Gentile and his slave. Now He shows mercy and compassion to a woman. The proud, self-righteous Jewish men could not have missed Jesus' point: physical health, race, social status, or gender made no difference to Him. None of those things in itself was an advantage or disadvantage as far as His ministry and message were concerned" [MacArthur, loc13954].

Matthew 8.17... HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES, AND BARE OUR SICKNESSES—"Matthew cited Is 53:4 as fulfilled in the healing ministry of Jesus. That Matthew understood this fulfillment in the light of the larger, atonement context of Is 52:13–53:12 is made clear in Mt 20:28 (see Heb 9:28; 1 Pt 2:24)" [Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (p. 1418). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers]. ||||| More accurately, BOTH the acts of physical healing Jesus performed AND His atonement for our sins are the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy regarding the coming Messiah, according to the inspired Matthew.

Matthew 8.20... FOXES HAVE HOLES, AND THE BIRDS OF THE AIR HAVE NESTS; BUT THE SON OF MAN HATH NOT WHERE TO LAY HIS HEAD—"The 'Son of Man' became one of the titles of the expected Christ. The Targum or Paraphrase of the Psalms (probably earlier than our Lord's ministry) explains even such a passage as Psalms 80:17 ('the son of man whom thou madest so strong for thine own self') as referring to the Christ. So when the crowd at Jerusalem are questioning in their hearts whether Jesus was the Christ, they are not startled at this application of the name, and their question, 'Who is this Son of Man?' is the utterance of their wonder that things so unlike what they expected of the Christ should be predicted of One who claimed the title (John 12:34). It was accordingly, with these ideas attached to it—involving at once fellowship with the lowest of the heirs of our humanity, and yet also participation in the eternal glory of the Highest—that our Lord claimed the title, and used it with such marvellous frequency. We might almost say

that it serves as the chief connecting-link between the teaching of the first three Gospels and the fourth. It appears thirty-two times in St. Matthew, fourteen in St. Mark, twenty-six in St. Luke, and twelve times in St. John. It is remarkable that it never passed into the current language of the Apostolic Church, nor into the theological or liturgical phraseology of Christendom. It is not used in any one of the Epistles. Outside the Gospels it is found only in the exclamation of Stephen (Acts 7:56), with a manifest reference to Daniel 7:13, and possibly in the visions of the Apocalypse (Rev 1:13; Rev 14:14). The minds of believers loved to dwell on the glory of the risen Christ, and apparently looked on this as belonging rather to the time of His humiliation. Its absence from the other books of the New Testament, and its presence in the Gospels is, at all events, an indication that the latter were not the after-growth of a later age” [E.H. Plumptre].

Matthew 8.22... BUT JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME; AND LET THE DEAD BURY THEIR DEAD—“*But* is adversative: far from the course the man suggested, he should follow Jesus immediately. “*Follow me*” is a firm imperative. If the present tense is to be pressed, it means ‘keep following me,’ that is, do not let even family obligations stand in the way. It is not easy to understand how *the dead* are to bury other dead people if we take the expression in the usual way, of the physically dead. But the expression may mean those who are soon to die (as in 9:24 Jesus says that Jairus’s daughter lives when she is about to leave the realm of the dead). The meaning then is that those who are preoccupied with the issues of death are the ones to concern themselves with burials. ... What Jesus is saying in this striking expression is ‘The claims of the kingdom are absolute and immediate’ (Nixon)” [Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 203). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press].

||||| “There are several options for the meaning of Jesus’ reply *Leave the dead to bury their own dead*: (1) Recent research suggests that burial customs in the vicinity of Jerusalem from about 20 B.C. to A.D. 70 involved a re-interment of the bones a year after the initial burial, once the flesh had rotted away. At that point the son would have placed his father’s bones in a special box known as an ossuary to be set into the wall of the tomb. Thus Jesus could well be rebuking the man for wanting to wait around for as much as a year before making a commitment to follow him. In 1st century Jewish culture, to have followed Jesus rather than burying one’s father would have seriously dishonored one’s father (cf. Tobit 4:3–4). (2) The remark is an idiom (possibly a proverbial saying) that means, “The matter in question is not the real issue,” in which case Jesus was making a wordplay on the wording of the man’s (literal) request (see L&N 33.137). (3) This remark could be a figurative reference to various kinds of people, meaning, “Let the spiritually dead bury the dead.” (4) It could also be literal and designed to shock the hearer by the surprise of the contrast. Whichever option is preferred, it is clear that the most important priority is to *follow* Jesus” [NET Bible, Emphasis mine, DRL].

Matthew 8.24... AND BEHOLD, THERE AROSE A GREAT TEMPEST IN THE SEA, INSOMUCH THAT THE SHIP WAS COVERED WITH THE WAVES: BUT HE WAS ASLEEP—“Matthew’s word for *storm* is unusual; it more commonly refers to an earthquake or the like (the addition *in the sea* makes it clear that a storm is meant). It is a vivid word and, reinforced with *great*, brings out the magnitude of the turbulence. Luke calls this sheet of water a ‘lake,’ but Matthew always refers to it as a *sea*. It is about 700 feet below sea level, and the winds sweep down through the steep ravines that run into it to whip up tumultuous and sudden storms. On this occasion the storm was such that the boat *was covered by the waves*, the only place in the New Testament where a boat is said to be

covered by waves... The meaning is that when the boat was in the trough between the waves, those waves towered over it, completely concealing it from view” [Morris, p. 205].

Matthew 8.26... WHY ARE YE FEARFUL, O YE OF LITTLE FAITH—“His word is often used in the sense of ‘cowardly’ or ‘timid’ (*REB* has ‘Why are you such cowards?’); it indicates more than a slight nervousness. Some of these people were fishermen, well versed in the storms on the sea of Galilee, and the fact that they were so afraid indicates the magnitude of the tempest. It is also significant that, when the skill of the sailors was unavailing, they called on one whose training had been in the carpenter’s shop; clearly He had impressed them so greatly that it was natural to turn to him in a crisis” [Morris, p. 206]. ||||| **THEN HE AROSE, AND REBUKED THE WINDS AND THE SEA**--“Who has authority over the seas and winds is discussed in the OT: Ps 104:3; 135:7; 107:23–30. When Jesus *rebuked the winds and the sea* he was making a statement about who he was” [NEB Bible].

Matthew 8.27... WHAT MANNER OF MAN IS THIS—These fishermen were GREATLY impressed by what their eyes had just seen. Here was Jesus in their normal place of employ and He so obviously RULED that place. They no doubt had a great respect for the wind and knew well that it NEVER behaved in such a way as Jesus had just commanded.

Matthew 8.28... EXCEEDING FIERCE, SO THAT NO MAN MIGHT PASS BY THAT WAY—“They were dangerous. Mark and Luke mention but one, and probably the one that they mention was the more ferocious of the two, and they direct attention to the most dangerous one. Some of the ancient tombs were like caves and other places of abode, hence one would be well sheltered in the tombs; this was a very suitable place of resort for demoniacs. The case of these two demoniacs is closely allied to the wild raving insanity known in every insane asylum. It was dangerous for one to come in contact with such characters” [H. Leo Boles, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew*, Gospel Advocate, p.].

Matthew 8.29... ART THOU COME HITHER TO TORMENT US BEFORE THE TIME—“The demoniacs know that right now they have come face to face with their great Antagonist, the One to whom the final judgment has been committed, and they are afraid lest even now—that is, ‘before the appointed time’ —he might hurl them into ‘the abyss’ or ‘dungeon’ where Satan is kept (cf. Rev 20:3). What adds to their fear is the fact that almost immediately upon meeting, Jesus had ordered the demons to depart from these men (Mark 5:8; Luke 8:29)” [William Hendriksen, *Baker’s New Testament Commentary*, An e-Sword Module].

Matthew 8.32... AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, GO—“Why did Jesus allow this to happen? Was it, as has been suggested, because Jews were not allowed to have swine, so that these Jewish owners were being punished for disobeying a regulation regarding unclean animals? Neither the context nor the character of the region where all this occurred (see on verse Mt 8:28 and on Mt 4:12-16) favors this explanation. As I see it, the reasons were these: *a.* negatively: Jesus knew that the demons were right in implying that the time of their final consignment to hell had not yet arrived; and *b.* positively, he also knew that there was one lesson which the inhabitants of this region needed to learn more than any other, namely, that people—in the present case the two demoniacs—are of more value than pigs, that is, that human values surpass material values by far. That the men of this region were actually in need of this lesson is shown in verses Mt 8:33-34” [Hendriksen, *BNTC*].

V. Lessons & Applications.

Matthew 8.10... WHEN JESUS HEARD IT, HE MARVELLED—“Jesus ‘marveled’—was amazed or astonished—at the faith of the centurion, who had not had equal opportunity with the Jews, to whom he had been sent rather than to the Gentiles. He had ‘not found so great faith, no, not in Israel’—not among those who had been God’s chosen people for approximately fifteen hundred years. But he predicted a reversal—that many Gentiles, because of their faith, would come from all over the world into the kingdom of God, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, ancestors of the Jews and hosts, as it were, of the eternal banquet in the light of heavenly glory, while many Israelites, born to kingdom privileges, would because of unbelief, be cast out of the palace of the King, into the darkness of eternal night, where they would weep and grind their teeth in hopeless grief and rage. ... **This should be a warning to professed Christians, that nominal membership in the church is not sufficient. It has to be coupled with zealously obedient faith**” [Author unknown, *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1981-1982, pp., 119-20, emphasis mine, DRL].

Matthew 8.16ff... MANY THAT WERE POSSESSED WITH DEMONS—“While we do not know very much about demons, we do know: (1) that the Bible teaches that demons or evil spirits did dwell in some people and (2) that they were frequently driven out by the power of Christ. There is no Bible proof that people are afflicted with the same type of spirit today. ‘We do not know when they began to dwell in people, or when they ceased to do so; but we have the word of God to tell us that men were thus afflicted in New Testament times’ (Thomas). The prophecy which is quoted in verse 17 is from Isaiah 53.4. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost; that is, to save them from their sin (Matthew 1.21; Luke 19.19). However, he first had to convince them that he was the Christ, the Son of God—the Messiah (John 20.30-31). Therefore, it is clear that the purpose of the miracles performed by Jesus was to prove: (1) that he was the Son of God, and (2) that God was with him. The miracles were performed, therefore, not so much for the benefit of the people who had physical maladies, but primarily in order to present evidence that he was the Son of God (John 20.30-31)” [Thomas B. Warren, *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentaries*, 1973, pp., 49-50].

Matthew 8.32... AND WHEN THEY WERE COME OUT, THEY WENT INTO THE HERD OF SWINE—“Jesus has been criticized severely for the destruction of this property. Seemingly, they never blame Satan and his demons for the role they played. As God, Jesus is owner of all (Psalms 24.1; 50.10-12). He may do with His own as He deems wise. He had the same right to do this as to curse the fruitless fig tree on Monday of the final week (Mt 21.18ff). In both cases lessons needed to be taught. Mosaic law prohibited Jews from eating pork or keeping in their flocks hogs or swine. If these were Jews who owned the hogs, they violated the laws Jesus came to honor. If they were Gentiles living among Jews, they placed strong temptations before God’s people. They no doubt preferred sausage to souls or hogs to holiness” [Robert R. Taylor, Jr., *Companion*, 1993-94, pp., 79-80].

VI. Questions.

True or False

- 01. ____ The man with leprosy was healed in stages.
- 02. ____ The centurion's faith was highly complimented by Jesus.
- 03. ____ Peter was never married.
- 04. ____ One of the scribes told Jesus he would follow Him wherever he went.
- 05. ____ Jesus slept during the storm.

I Found it in Verse(s)

- 06. ____ Certain ones asked Jesus to leave.
- 07. ____ Someone was grievously tormented.
- 08. ____ Someone mentions a roof.
- 09. ____ Peter's mother-in-law ministering.
- 10. ____ Men marveled at Jesus.

Short Answer

- 11. There was a herd of many of them feeding: _____
- 12. The leper was to show himself to this person: _____
- 13. The hour the centurion's servant was healed: _____
- 14. Let the _____ bury their _____.
- 15. The devils asked Jesus if He had come to do this to them: _____

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Matthew 7 Questions... **01**—True (16-17); **02**—True (21); **03**—True (24); **04**—False (4); **05**—True (11); **06**—12; **07**—20; **08**—28; **09**—5; **10**—6; **11**—strait, narrow (13); **12**—knew, depart (23); **13**—sand (13); **14**—clearly (5); **15**—son, father (9).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL

V F L O R D J E S U S E
 A A R O S E N F Y P A B
 M A N Y D V M O S O I C
 V D I S C I P L E S T A
 T B E H O L D L R S H S
 H E A L M S W O V E E T
 C G C A M E H W A S R O
 O C L E A N E A N S E R
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|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| AROSE | BEHOLD | CAME | CAST | CENTURION |
| CLEAN | COME | COMMANDED | DEVILS | DISCIPLES |
| FOLLOW | GREAT | HEAL | HERD | JESUS |
| LORD | MANY | PERISH | POSSESSED | SAID |
| SAITH | SERVANT | SICK | SWINE | THERE |
| TORMENT | WHEN | | | |

IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...

Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!

W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?

W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...

W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...