

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 9 (PART 2)

MATTHEW 9:14-17 - JESUS' MINISTRY IS NEW & DIFFERENT

JESUS' MINISTRY WAS AN INTERESTING MOVEMENT. THERE WAS A SERIOUSNESS, SOBRIETY, AND NARROW FOCUS ON WORK HE HAD BEEN SENT TO DO WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THERE WAS JOY, CELEBRATION, AND RANDOMNESS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORK. JESUS, THE KING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD (AKA THE MESSIAH) WAS DEMONSTRATING THE POWER AND EXPERIENCE OF THE AGE TO COME AS HE INTERACTED WITH THE WORLD. JOHN THE BAPTIST ON THE OTHER HAND HAD A DIFFERENT CALLING AND MINISTRY FOCUS - HE DID NO RECORDED MIRACLES, ATE AT NO BANQUETS AND LIVED AND PREACHED IN THE WILDERNESS RATHER THAN THE CITIES.

JESUS IS BRINGING SOMETHING NEW AND DIFFERENT. THOUGH THERE IS A FAMILIARITY TO HIS PREACHING AND HE'S NOT IN OPPOSITION TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES, WHAT HE IS DOING CAN'T BE PUT IN THE SAME BOX AS ANYTHING THAT HAS COME BEFORE. TO USE HIS OWN LANGUAGE - IT'S A GARMENT, BUT A NEW ONE, IT'S WINE BUT NEW WINE THAT NEEDS A NEW CONTAINER.

LEVITICUS 15:19-33 - LAWS REGARDING DISCHARGES OF BLOOD

MATTHEW 9:18-26 - JESUS HEALS SYNAGOGUE LEADER'S DAUGHTER & WOMEN WITH HEMORRHAGE

JESUS' HEALING MINISTRY CONTINUES AND NOW AFFECTS THE DAUGHTER OF "A SYNAGOGUE OFFICIAL" AND A WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN SUFFERING WITH A BLOOD HEMORRHAGE (ESV: "DISCHARGE OF BLOOD"). PRESUMABLY THE SYNAGOGUE OFFICIAL WOULD HAVE BEEN DEVOTED TO THE LAW AND KEPT HIMSELF CLEAN AND PURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WOMAN WITH THE HEMORRHAGE WOULD HAVE BEEN FORCED TO LIVE OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY UNTIL HER DAYS OF DISCHARGE HAD ENDED BECAUSE SHE WAS CONSIDERED CEREMONIALLY UNCLEAN.

SO IN THE SAME RECORD JESUS IS GOING TO ENGAGE WITH A MAN WHO IS RESPECTED BY THE COMMUNITY AND MAINTAINS HOLINESS AND A WOMAN OSTRACIZED FROM THE COMMUNITY AND UNABLE TO BE CLEAN.

AND SHE RISKS A LOT TO COME TO JESUS AND TOUCH HIM, BUT IT IS THIS VERY ACT OF FAITH IN GOD'S POWER THAT HEALS AND CLEANSSES HER.

AND IRONICALLY, JESUS THEN TRAVELS TO THE MAN'S HOUSE AND TOUCHES HIS DEAD DAUGHTER. THIS WOULD HAVE NORMALLY MADE SOMEONE CEREMONIALLY UNCLEAN TOO!

NUMBERS 19:11 - 'THE ONE WHO TOUCHES THE CORPSE OF ANY PERSON SHALL BE UNCLEAN FOR SEVEN DAYS.

AND YET TOUCHING HER IS WHAT BRINGS HER BACK TO LIFE (THUS SHE ISN'T A CORPSE ANYMORE)! THE BOUNDS OF CLEAN/UNCLEAN ARE BEING CHALLENGED BECAUSE OF JESUS AND HIS COMPASSION FUELED MINISTRY. HE CARES ABOUT OTHERS MORE THAN HOW IT MIGHT AFFECT HIM. FOR SURE, JESUS NEVER BECOMES UNCLEAN OR UNHOLY AND YET IS ABLE TO ENTER THESE SPACES AND BRING HOLINESS AND CLEANSING. HOW APPROPRIATE THAT HE JUST QUOTED THE FOLLOWING TO HIS AUDIENCE EARLIER IN THIS CHAPTER:

MATTHEW 9:12-13 - BUT WHEN JESUS HEARD THIS, HE SAID, "IT IS NOT THOSE WHO ARE HEALTHY WHO NEED A PHYSICIAN, BUT THOSE WHO ARE SICK. 13 "BUT GO AND LEARN WHAT THIS MEANS: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' FOR I DID NOT COME TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS."

MATTHEW 9:27-31 - JESUS HEALS TWO BLIND MEN

Q - WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE QUESTION THAT JESUS ASKS THE BLIND MEN?

THIS IS ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT THAT THERE ISN'T ONE WAY THAT JESUS IS HEALING. IN THE CASE OF THE SYNAGOGUE RULER'S DAUGHTER, JESUS GOES TO THE HOUSE AND RAISES HER FROM THE DEAD. IN THE CASE OF THE WOMAN WITH THE HEMORRHAGE, SHE COMES TO HIM AND BY TOUCHING HIM SHE IS HEALED. HERE THE BLIND MEN COME TO JESUS AND HE ENGAGES WITH THEM ABOUT THEIR FAITH AND TOUCHES THEM. IN THE RECORD THAT WILL FOLLOW, JESUS WILL HEAL A MUTE, DEMON-POSSESSED MAN WITHOUT ENGAGING IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE MAN AT ALL.

A REASONABLE TAKEAWAY IS THAT THERE ISN'T A FORMULA FOR HEALING AND DELIVERANCE. WE OUGHT TO PRAY FOR HEALING, HAVE FAITH THAT GOD CAN HEAL AND THEN TRUST IN HIM TO DO WHAT HE KNOWS IS BEST. WE KNOW THE GENERAL INGREDIENTS INVOLVED IN HEALING (FAITH, PRAYER, EC), BUT WE DON'T ALWAYS KNOW HOW IT ALL COMES TOGETHER.

MATTHEW 9:32-34 - JESUS HEALS A MUTE, DEMON POSSESSED MAN

Q - WHY DO YOU THINK THE PHARISEES RESPONDED LIKE THIS?

JESUS IS DOING GOOD WORK AND CONFOUNDING THE EXPECTATIONS AND OPINIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS. AS A RESULT THEY PUSH BACK AGAINST HIS MINISTRY WHILE THE COMMON FOLKS OF THE REGION ARE REJOICING. JESUS IS LOOKING AT THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE, THE PHARISEES ARE LOOKING AT HOW JESUS IS DOING WHAT HE IS DOING AND EVEN NOW ACCUSE HIM OF WORKING FOR THE DEVIL! THEY DON'T DENY THAT HE HAS POWER, THEY DENY THAT HIS POWER COMES FROM GOD.

MATTHEW 9:35-38 - THE SHEPHERD'S PERSPECTIVE

"DISTRESSED" (<4660> **σκούλλω** *SKULLŌ*) - TROUBLED - ALSO TRANSLATED HARASSED (ESV, NIV), CONFUSED (NLT), BEWILDERED (NET), FAINTED (KJV), WEARY (CSB)

"DISPIRITED" - (<4496> **ρίπτω** *RHIPTŌ*) - TO BE THROWN OR CAST - HELPLESS (ESV, NLT, NET), SCATTERED ABROAD (KJV), WORN OUT (CSB), DOWNCASSED (NAS)

WHILE JESUS IS MINISTERING AND MEETING NEEDS, HE ALSO RECOGNIZES THAT THE NEEDS OF THE REGION, NOT TO MENTION THE WORLD, ARE GREATER THAN EVEN HE CAN MEET DURING HIS TIME. AND SO HE TELLS HIS DISCIPLES THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR MORE LABORERS. AMAZINGLY, IT WILL BE THESE DISCIPLES WHO WILL EVENTUALLY CONTINUE THIS MINISTRY WORK OF PREACHING, LOVING AND HEALING AND THEN PASS THE BATON OF "GATHERING THE HARVEST" TO SUCCESSIVE GENERATIONS OF THOSE WHO CONFESS JESUS AS THEIR LORD.

JESUS SEES NEEDS AND PEOPLE IN DISTRESS AND IS MOVED WITH COMPASSION. HE ISN'T IRRITATED BY THEIR ANNOYANCES OR LACK OF FAITH. INSTEAD, HE RECOGNIZES THAT THE NEEDS ULTIMATELY STEM FROM HUMANITY'S NEED TO BE SHEPHERDED AND WHEN LEFT TO WANDER ON THEIR OWN THEY ARE TROUBLED.

MAY WE NOT ONLY BE THE ANSWER TO THIS PRAYER FOR MORE LABORERS, BUT ALSO BE MOVED WITH COMPASSION TO CARE FOR THE LOST SHEEP ALL AROUND US.