

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 8 (PART 1)

MATTHEW 5-7 RECORDS JESUS' FOUNDATIONAL PRIMER ON DISCIPLESHIP - IT OUTLINES THE WAY OF JESUS. YET, JESUS IS NOT A GOOD TEACHER AND RABBI ALONE - AND MATTHEW'S GOSPEL QUICKLY TRANSITIONS TO THE OTHER SIDE OF JESUS' MESSIANIC MINISTRY - MIRACULOUS AND POWERFUL WORKS. AND EVEN IN HIS MIRACLES, WE SEE THE HEART AND LOVE OF CHRIST ON DISPLAY.

MATTHEW 8:1-4 - LEPER HEALED

WHAT IS LEPROSY? LEPROSY IN THE BIBLE IS A SUMMARY STATEMENT OF A VARIETY OF CONTAGIOUS SKIN DISEASES. THE MOSAIC LAW HAD EXTENSIVE INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO HANDLE SUCH DISEASES TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF INFECTIONS IN THE CLOSE-KNIT COMMUNITY. AS A RESULT, LEPERS WERE REMOVED FROM THE COMMUNITY UNTIL THE LEPROSY WAS GONE, AT WHICH TIME CONFIRMATION OF THE LACK OF LEPROSY WAS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE PRIESTS.

V. 3 - JESUS TOUCHED HIM

V. 4 - "TELL NO ONE..."

V. 4 - GO TO THE PRIEST AND PRESENT THE OFFERING

LEVITICUS 13:1-46 - CONCERNING LEPROSY

V. 45-46 - LEPERS WERE SEPARATED FROM SOCIETY

LEVITICUS 14:1-32 - OFFERINGS FOR LEPROSY

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF REASONS WHY JESUS MAY HAVE INSISTED UPON THOSE HE HEALED NOT TELLING ANYONE. FIRST, HE COULD BE CONCERNED THAT HIS FOLLOWING GROWS ONLY AS A RESULT OF HEALINGS AND MIRACLES, AND NOT BY THOSE WHO ARE COMMITTED TO FOLLOWING HIS TEACHINGS. SECONDLY, HE IS MINDFUL OF THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CLIMATE THAT EXISTS AND ANY PREMATURE RUMBLINGS OF THE APPEARANCE OF A POTENTIAL JEWISH MESSIAH WOULD GET THE ATTENTION OF BOTH JERUSALEM AND ROME. JESUS WILL EVENTUALLY MAKE HIS WAY THERE, BUT HE WILL BEGIN HIS MINISTRY IN POWER AND YET ASK FOR PRIVACY.

YET, FOR LEPERS, BLIND AND LAME WHO ARE HEALED, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFICULT TO STAY QUIET.

MATTHEW 8:5-13 - CENTURION'S SERVANT HEALED

HERE WE HAVE A CONTRAST IN THE HEALING - JESUS TOUCHED THE LEPER AND NOW ONLY SPEAKS A WORD AND THE CENTURION'S SERVANT IS HEALED. WE WILL SEE A DIVERSITY OF METHODS IN JESUS' HEALINGS AND MIRACLES WHICH TEACHES US THAT HEALING (EVEN TODAY) IS NOT FORMULAIC BUT DEPENDENT ON JESUS.

THE FIRST PERSON HEALED IN THIS CHAPTER WAS A LEPER, OSTRACIZED FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITY. AND NOW THE SECOND IS THE SERVANT OF A ROMAN CENTURION. WHILE THE SERVANT MAY HAVE BEEN JEWISH - BUT THE CENTURION CERTAINLY WASN'T.

MATTHEW 8:14-17 - PETER'S MOTHER IN LAW HEALED, MANY OTHER TOO

AND THE FINAL SECTION WE WILL LOOK AT INVOLVES A GOOD JEWISH MOTHER IN LAW BEING HEALED AND THE LARGE NUMBERS THAT CAME AFTER THAT. JESUS CARES ABOUT ONE PERSON AND HE CARES ABOUT THE MASSES.

A LEPER. A ROMAN'S OFFICER'S SERVANT. A DISCIPLES' MOTHER, SICK AT HOME. AND MANY WHO WERE AFFLICTED BY DEMONS AND SICKNESS → JESUS CARES!

AND IN THIS, HE IS FULFILLING THE MESSIANIC CALLING PROPHESED ABOUT GENERATIONS BEFORE IN ISAIAH 53. THE MESSIAH IS NOT JUST A CONQUERING MILITARY HERO, BUT A SERVANT WHO CARES.