

02-08 Lesson: Matthew Chapter 8

Jesus's Authority and Miracles

Date: 2026-02-08

Location: First Baptist Church, Tallassee Alabama

Instructor: Sid Edwards

Summary

This lecture delivers an in-depth examination of Matthew chapter 8, centered on the question voiced by Jesus's witnesses: "What manner of man is this?" It traces Jesus's authority and character through ten miracles Matthew records to validate His divine power and messianic identity for a primarily Jewish audience. The content organizes these events around two themes—salvation from sin and the security found in the Savior—covering Jesus's healing of a leper, a centurion's servant, and Peter's mother-in-law, His control over nature in calming a storm, and His authority over the demonic realm by sending demons into a herd of pigs. Throughout, the lecture contrasts rising faith in figures like the Gentile centurion with the fear and unbelief of others, including Jewish religious leaders and the people of the Gadarenes.

Knowledge Points

1. Introduction to Jesus's Ministry in Matthew 8 • The

Central Question: "What Manner of Man Is This?"

- Those who followed Jesus after the Sermon on the Mount were initially attracted by miracles, then astonished by His singular teaching and unprecedented power.
- The lecture explores this question through the themes of salvation from sin and the security found in Jesus as Savior.
- Unlike with ordinary people, the closer one draws to Jesus, the more awe and wonder increase.

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• Context of Jesus's Ministry

The events in Matthew 8 occur immediately after the Sermon on the Mount (end of chapter 7), as Jesus descends the mountain and crowds follow. ○ Jesus resumes ministry among the people, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies (e.g., Isaiah 53) that the Messiah would heal the blind and deaf —evidence His power was from God, not Satan.

• Matthew's Purpose and Method

- Matthew's Gospel primarily addresses Jewish readers, aiming to persuade them that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah.
- To do so, Matthew spotlights ten of Jesus's miracles to demonstrate His power and affirm He is the Son of God.

2. Miracles Demonstrating Jesus's Authority Over Disease

• Healing of the Leper (Matthew 8:1-4)

- As Jesus descended the mountain, a leper approached, expressing faith: "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."
- Leprosy, the most dreaded first-century disease, caused social isolation and was often viewed by Jews as a picture of sin.
- Jesus showed compassion and power by stretching out His hand and touching the leper—an act that would make a Jew ceremonially unclean—offering profound significance to someone long deprived of human touch. ○ Jesus instructed the healed man to tell no one, but to show himself to the priest and offer the Mosaic Law's sacrifice as testimony, since crowds were hindering His ministry.
- Mark records the man publicized the miracle widely despite the instruction.
 - The required offering for a healed leper was modest (a small lamb, a couple of birds, oil, and flour), reflecting their lower social status.

• Healing of the Centurion's Servant (Matthew 8:5-13)

- In Capernaum, Jesus's new ministry base, a Roman centurion (a Gentile soldier) implored Him to heal his paralyzed, tormented servant.
- The centurion displayed exceptional faith, deeming himself unworthy for Jesus to enter his home (which would defile a Jew) and believing Jesus could heal from a distance by merely speaking.
- He likened Jesus's spiritual authority to his own military command, recognizing the power of Jesus's word.

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- o Jesus marveled at his faith, declaring He had not found such great faith even in Israel.

Jesus predicted many Gentiles ("from the east and the west") would feast in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while the unbelieving "sons of the kingdom" (unbelieving Jews, particularly religious leaders) would be cast into "outer darkness."

- o Jesus healed the servant instantly by speaking—a rare distance-healing in Scripture (cf. the Canaanite woman's child in Matthew 15).

• **Healing of Peter's Mother-in-Law (Matthew 8:14-17)**

- o In Capernaum, Jesus entered Peter's home and found his mother-in-law bedridden with a fever.
- o He healed her with a compassionate touch; she immediately rose and served them.
- o This demonstrates Jesus's authority over common ailments like fever, not only incurable diseases like leprosy—the miracle's magnitude is secondary to His capability and willingness.
- o This is the only biblical reference to a spouse of any disciple, implying Peter was married.
- o That evening, many demon-possessed and sick people were brought, and He healed them all, fulfilling Isaiah 53: "He himself took our illnesses and carried away our diseases."

3. The Demands of Discipleship

• **The Cost of Following Jesus (Matthew 8:18-22)**

- o As Jesus sought relief from overwhelming crowds to pray and teach His disciples, a scribe volunteered to follow Him anywhere.
- o Jesus highlighted His itinerant life: "Foxes have holes and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head," discouraging a scribe seemingly seeking self-advancement rather than sincere discipleship.
- o Another disciple asked to first bury his father—implying the father was not yet dead and the man wished to wait until his passing.
- o Jesus replied, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead," stressing immediate commitment on His terms. Discipleship demands prioritizing spiritual work over personal ties.

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4. Jesus's Authority Over Nature and Demons

• Calming the Storm (Matthew 8:23-27)

- Jesus and His disciples entered a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. A violent, geographically common storm arose, threatening to swamp the vessel. The storm was unusually severe, panicking even seasoned fishermen among the disciples.
- Jesus slept amid the squall, displaying His humanity (fatigue) and divine peace.
- The disciples cried, "Save us, Lord! We are perishing." Jesus rebuked their "little faith," then rebuked wind and sea, producing instant, perfect calm.
- The lecturer notes Jesus had said, "Let us go and we will arrive on the other side" (Mark 4:35), assuring their safety—yet they failed to trust His word.
- Amazed, the disciples asked, "What kind of man is this, that even winds and sea obey Him?" still struggling to grasp His identity as the Son of God.

• Casting Out Demons into Pigs (Matthew 8:28-34)

- Arriving in the country of the Gadarenes (a Gentile region), they met two extremely violent, demon-possessed men living among tombs.
- The demons recognized Jesus as the "Son of God" and feared He had come to "torment us before the time," acknowledging future judgment.
- They begged to enter a nearby herd of pigs; Mark notes 2,000 pigs. Jesus said, "Go," and the demons entered the pigs. The herd rushed down a steep bank into the sea and drowned—revealing demonic depravity and instructive for any Jews present, since pigs were unclean.
- The herdsmen fled to the city and reported it. Townspeople came, saw Jesus, feared, and pleaded for Him to leave their region.
- Their response was fear rather than faith; unwilling to abandon pagan ways, they effectively asked Jesus to return at a more "convenient time."

Assignments

- [] 1. Review the "takeaways" on the provided handout for the coming week.