

# Matthew Survey — Section Two

## Historical Record #1

Matthew 8:1 -- 9:38

### Topical Study Overview

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## About This Section

This section records the Lord's extensive sign ministry throughout Galilee as the climactic stage of Israel's program gets fully underway, documenting both the profuse hallmark signs of the kingdom that certify the gospel of the kingdom and the growing negative response that fulfills Isaiah 53:4. It is structured in five parts built around sets of three -- three special miracles, three encounters with Jesus's divine authority, three confrontations with negative responders, three more special miracles, and a closing preparation for the next phase -- each designed to impact specific categories of people within Israel and advance the edification of the believing remnant.



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## Topics at a Glance

Topic	Core Content
<b>P1: Three Special Miracles</b>	Three pointed miracles for Israel's three categories (Matt 8:1-17)
<b>P2: Three Encounters with Divine Authority</b>	Master, Lord of Hosts, Son of Most High (Matt 8:18-34)
<b>P3: Three Confrontations with Negative Responders</b>	Scribes, Pharisees, John's disciples (Matt 9:1-17)
<b>P4: Three More Special Miracles</b>	Fame covers all Galilee -- accountability factor complete (Matt 9:18-35)
<b>P5: The Harvest and the Laborers</b>	Lord prepares intensification of testimony (Matt 9:36-38)

## Topic Summaries

P1

### Three Special Miracles -- Pointed Impact on Israel's Three Categories *Matt 8:1-17 -- Lessons 3-5*

- By Matthew 8, great multitudes already follow the Lord from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea, and beyond Jordan -- the accountability factor is in effect and the land is bathed in the light of the gospel of the kingdom.
- Three categories now exist in Israel: the persistent apostate element headed by the religious leadership, the believing remnant, and the twelve apostles as the core of that remnant -- three specially selected miracles address each.

#### Miracle 1 -- The Leper (vv. 2-4): directed at Israel's apostate religious leadership

- The cleansed leper is commanded to offer the gift Moses commanded for a testimony unto them -- the elaborate prescription in Leviticus 14 parallels national cleansing in Ezekiel 36, making it a pointed testimony to the priests. The word is testimony, not sign.

#### Miracle 2 -- The Centurion's Servant (vv. 5-13): directed at the believing remnant

- A Roman centurion demonstrates great faith -- understanding the power of God's word better than anyone in Israel. The Lord marvels: I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. Great faith has two components: (1) a deep appreciation of who God is and the power of his word, and (2) a clear understanding of the program God has in effect.

#### Miracle 3 -- Peter's Mother-in-law (vv. 14-15): directed at the twelve themselves

- She is incapacitated by fever (a picture of delirium preventing ministry); healed, she arose and ministered unto them -- commencing an ongoing edification of Peter regarding servant-hearted ministry.
- Verse 16-17 confirms general hallmark signs continued profusely, fulfilling the first half of Isaiah 53:4. The Holy Ghost has Matthew cite only the first half, signaling that the second half -- yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted -- is now about to become the historical issue.

P2

### Three Encounters with Jesus's Divine Authority -- Edification of the Remnant *Matt 8:18-34 -- Lessons 6-8*

- With Isaiah 53:4 first half fulfilled, the Lord gives commandment to cross to the other side -- three encounters designed to edify his disciples in his divine authority as (1) their Master and Lord, (2) the Lord God of Hosts, and (3) the Son of the Most High God.

#### Encounter 1 -- Jesus as Master and Lord (vv. 18-22)

- Two disciples are confronted with the cost of discipleship: bearing rejection with him (no place to lay his head), and complete disassociation from apostate Israel even over family ties -- a theme running through Matthew 10:34-38.

#### Encounter 2 -- Jesus as Lord God of Hosts (vv. 23-27): the tempest calmed

- A great tempest arises; the Lord rebukes his disciples: O ye of little faith. This is designed to click with Psalm 89:9 -- Thou rulest the raging of the sea -- building appreciation of his authority over the earth the twelve will need in the fifth installment.

- Their response -- What manner of man is this? -- reflects the same astonishment David expressed in 2 Samuel 7:19 concerning the Davidic covenant: the Son of David is Adonai Jehovah in human flesh.

### **Encounter 3 -- Jesus as Son of the Most High God (vv. 28-34): the Gergesene demoniacs**

- The country of the Gergesenes was a Satanic stronghold rooted in the idolatry of Dan (Judges 18:30-31). Satan -- as the strong man possessing Israel -- had armed himself there with at least two thousand devils in two men. The Lord enters deliberately and spoils the strong man's armour on display before his disciples.
- The whole city asks Jesus to depart -- the first recorded negative response in this historical record -- fulfilling Isaiah 53:4b: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

P3

### **Three Confrontations with Negative Responders -- Corrective Doctrine Given** *Matt 9:1-17 -- Lessons 8-11*

- The Lord returns to his own city -- already saturated with testimony -- and confronts three categories of negative responders, each given corrective doctrine and an opportunity to go to the scriptures and change their minds.

#### **Confrontation 1 -- The Scribes (vv. 1-8): failure to understand the doctrine of the Son of man**

- When the Lord says thy sins be forgiven thee, the scribes charge blasphemy. His response -- that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins -- directs them to search out the doctrine that the Son of man is David's son and David's Lord (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:42-45).

#### **Confrontation 2 -- The Pharisees (vv. 9-13): the doctrine of natural righteousness**

- Eating with publicans and sinners offends the Pharisees who hold the doctrine of natural righteousness -- believing themselves naturally born of God as Abraham's seed. The Lord directs them to Hosea 6:6: go ye and learn what that meaneth, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE.

#### **Confrontation 3 -- John's Disobedient Disciples (vv. 14-17): failure to make the required transition**

- These disciples had not made the expected transition from John to the Lord when John began to decrease (John 3:27-30). The Lord corrects: new cloth is not put on an old garment, nor new wine in old bottles -- complete disassociation from Israel's vain religious system is non-negotiable.

P4

### **Three More Special Miracles -- The Fame of the Lord Covering All Galilee** *Matt 9:18-35 -- Lesson 11*

- This final set mirrors the opening set (8:1-17) in structure but shifts emphasis to the fame factor: each account ends with a declaration that his fame went abroad into all that land or all that country.
- All three individuals who come to the Lord are positively contrasted with the negative responders just confronted: a ruler who worships him, a woman who says If I may but touch his garment I shall be whole, and two blind men who cry Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.

- Verse 35 gives the summary: Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease -- the entire Galilean area has been completely bathed in the light of the testimony.
- The Pharisees immediately counter: He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils -- digging in their heels and beginning to disseminate their opposition propaganda in earnest.

P5

## **The Lord Prepares for the Next Phase -- The Harvest and the Laborers** *Matt 9:36-38 -- Lessons 11-12*

- Seeing the multitudes, the Lord is moved with compassion: they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd -- an indictment of the apostate religious leadership (Ezekiel 34) and a recognition that the believing remnant needs intensified shepherding.
- The harvest terminology connects directly to John the Baptist's declaration in Matt 3:12: the fan is now in the Lord's hand; wheat and chaff must be separated. The intensification is designed to force that division.
- Two needs require the next phase: (1) intensification of the testimony to force division between the believing remnant and the apostate element; and (2) intensification of edification through additional laborer-teachers.
- Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest (v. 38) -- the provision for this prayer is the commissioning in Matthew 10, where the twelve are empowered with the two hallmark signs and sent out independently.
- Matthew 10 is not merely about the immediate intensification -- the Lord educates the twelve in their role throughout the entire climactic stage, making it foundational to all subsequent commissionings.

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## **Key Doctrinal Distinctions**

### **Three Categories of People in Israel -- Why Signs Are Not All Equal**

Once the climactic stage is underway, the Lord distinguishes three categories: the persistent apostate element, the believing remnant, and the twelve as the core of that remnant. Certain miracles serve as general signs of the kingdom; others are utilized in a more pointed way for a specific audience. Applying a pointed sign to the wrong audience -- or failing to recognize which audience it addresses -- is as problematic as failing to rightly divide the word of truth.

### **The Difference Between a Sign and a Testimony**

In Matthew 8:4, the Lord instructs the cleansed leper to offer the gift Moses commanded for a testimony unto them -- the word is testimony, not sign. A sign certifies the gospel of the kingdom to the nation

generally and builds the accountability factor; a testimony goes further, bearing witness to specific doctrinal content for a specific audience.

### Isaiah 53:4 -- First Half Fulfilled, Second Half Now the Issue

Matthew 8:17 quotes only the first half of Isaiah 53:4 -- Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses -- because abundant testimony has been given. By stopping at the midpoint (as the Lord did in Luke 4:19 at Isaiah 61:2), the Holy Ghost signals that the second half -- yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted -- is now about to become the dominant historical issue.

### Great Faith vs. Little Faith -- Two Essential Components

Great faith, as demonstrated by the Roman centurion (Matt 8:10) and taught from Romans 4 (Abraham), has two necessary components: a deep and clear understanding of who God is and the power of his word, and a deep and clear understanding of the program God has in effect. Where these two factors are weak, little faith results -- as was the case with the Lord's own disciples, rebuked in verse 26.

## Key Scripture References

<b>Matt 8:17 / Isaiah 53:4</b>	Structural hinge: first half fulfilled, second half (growing negative response) now becomes the historical issue
<b>Leviticus 13-14</b>	Leper cleansing prescription -- parallels national cleansing (Ezek 36); makes Matt 8:4 a pointed testimony to Israel's priestly leadership
<b>Isaiah 61:1-2</b>	The Lord's mid-verse stop in Luke 4 as the interpretive pattern for Matt 8:17 -- unfulfilled portion becomes the issue
<b>Psalms 89:9</b>	Thou rulest the raging of the sea -- the calming of the tempest designed to click with this Psalm (Avenger section)
<b>John 5:39-47</b>	Moses accuseth you -- in connection with Matt 8:4, Moses bore witness against Israel's leadership who refused his writings
<b>Romans 4:17-21</b>	Abraham's great faith: two components -- deep appreciation of who God is and certainty of his program
<b>Matt 12:29 / Luke 11:21-22</b>	Binding the strong man -- the Lord's entry into Gergesenes was deliberate; Satan as strong man being spoiled of his armour
<b>Hosea 6:4-6</b>	I will have mercy, and not sacrifice -- the Lord directs the Pharisees to a passage that indicts the vain religious system
<b>John 3:27-30</b>	He must increase, I must decrease -- John's own instruction to his disciples, making their persistence with Pharisees a clear disobedience
<b>Matthew 9:36-38 / Matt 3:12</b>	Harvest, fan, wheat and chaff -- the labourers sent in Matt 10 fulfill the fanning purpose: forcing separation of wheat from chaff
<b>Judges 18:30-31</b>	Dan's idolatry -- explains the strategic Satanic significance of the country of

	the Gergesenes as a long-standing stronghold
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