

(Matt. 8:1) - When the Lord finished His sermon on the mount, He came *“DOWN FROM THE MOUNT,”* and *“GREAT MULTITUDES FOLLOWED HIM.”* These people were not all true believers in Christ. Most of them saw no glory in Jesus as God in the flesh and the Redeemer and Righteousness of His people. They followed Jesus as a great teacher, healer, miracle-worker, and prophet, but most did not know Him as the Savior of sinners by the sacrifice of Himself (1 Tim. 3:16; 1:15). Here and there, when a multitude was gathered before Him, there were some who were drawn by the Spirit to believe in and worship Him.

(Matt. 8:2) - *“AND, BEHOLD, THERE CAME A LEPER AND WORSHIPPED HIM, SAYING, LORD, IF THOU WILT, THOU CANST MAKE ME CLEAN.”* Leprosy was a common disease in that day. It was considered a disease sent by the Lord in judgment (Num. 12:10; 2 Kings 5:27; 2 Chron. 26:19). What leprosy is to the physical body, sin is to the soul, and sin brings both physical death and spiritual, eternal death. This man who came to the Lord for healing is typical of a sinner coming to the Savior for cleansing from sin. The leper worshipped Jesus and called Him *“Lord.”* He had faith in the Lord’s ability to heal him, and he recognized Christ’s sovereign authority and will to heal or not to heal him. Only Christ can save sinners from sin, and it is according to His will (Rom. 9:15). God makes His elect willing in the day of His power (Psa. 110:3), but the salvation of His people is all conditioned on HIS will and not ours.

(Matt. 8:3) - *“AND JESUS PUT FORTH HIS HAND, AND TOUCHED HIM, SAYING, I WILL; BE THOU CLEAN”* - Touching a leper was forbidden under the law because it would defile the person who touched the leper (Lev. 5:2-3). So, how could Christ touch this man without breaking the law? He could do this because the leper could not defile Him, and His touching the leper would heal the man. This is an example of the grace, power, and goodness of Christ. Christ could not be defiled by the disease He came to heal. All it took was His Word, *“I will, be thou clean,”* *“AND IMMEDIATELY HIS LEPROSY WAS CLEANSED.”* The Lord spoke, and the man was healed. This is an illustration of how Christ heals us of our spiritual leprosy (sin) without defiling Himself. It takes the blood of Christ to save us from sin. He was made sin by God imputing our sins to Him, legally charging Him with the debt of our sin, without defiling or corrupting Him with our disease. He knew no sin and had no sin (2 Cor. 5:21a). In the same way, all for whom He died are made righteous in Him by God imputing Christ’s righteousness to them (2 Cor. 5:21b). He died on the cross in our place and put away our sins. Just as Christ was willing to heal this leper, He is willing to save His sheep for the glory of His Father.

(Matt. 8:4) - *“SEE THOU TELL NO MAN; BUT GO THY WAY, SHEW THYSELF TO THE PRIEST, AND OFFER THE GIFT THAT MOSES COMMANDED, FOR A TESTIMONY UNTO THEM”* - It was not that the miracle could be concealed, but rather than speaking of the healing, Christ instructed the man to go directly to the priest to be examined and pronounced clean according to the law. Christ came not to destroy the law but to honor it (Matt. 5:17; cf. Lev. 14). A two-fold offering was required for the pronouncement of cleansing from leprosy, on the first day and the eighth day. The law always kept before them the necessity of blood sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins as a type of the blood of Christ to cleanse us from our sins. The man did not obey the Lord but told everyone of Christ healing him (Mark 1:45).

(Matt. 8:5-7) - As the Lord came to Capernaum, a Roman officer, came to Him begging Him to heal his servant who was at home *“SICK OF THE Palsy, GRIEVOUSLY TORMENTED.”* Luke tells us that this servant was *“dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die”* (Luke 7:1-10). The servant was paralyzed, unable to plead for himself, and unable to come to the only one who

could heal him. This servant pictures a sinner who is unable to come to the Savior because of spiritual inability (John 6:44,65). When the centurion approached Christ for His healing mercies, he did not come pleading the merits of himself or his servant. Neither he nor his servant had any reason to claim they deserved Christ's mercy. He simply spoke of the servant's misery. As the leper before him pictured our awful spiritual disease of sin, this man, in his paralysis, portrays our helpless to come to Christ for salvation and righteousness. Left to ourselves we cannot and will not come to Him and seek His powerful healing grace. The Lord was willing to go to the man and heal him. The Lord is ready and willing to save any and all sinners who come to Him seeking salvation by God's grace in and by Him (John 6:44).

(Matt. 8:8-9) - The centurion admitted his own unworthiness. He knew it was the Lord's sovereign mercy that would bring healing. He also had complete confidence in Christ to cure his servant if Christ were willing - *"SPEAK THE WORD ONLY, AND MY SERVANT SHALL BE HEALED."* This shows his belief in Christ as God manifest in the flesh. He knew that Christ only had to speak a word to heal. This illustrates how the Gospel empowered by the Spirit is *"the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"* (Rom. 1:16). There is life in God's Word because the power of God Who is that Word.

(Matt. 8:10) - This is one of two instances in the New Testament where we are told that our Lord *"MARVELLED."* Here, He marvelled at *"SO GREAT FAITH"* in this man (cf. Luke 7:9). In Mark 6:6, *"He marvelled because of their unbelief."* Most attribute this to the human nature of Christ as they recognize that as God, He could never be taken by surprise. Faith is not natural to fallen sinners, and it is God Who gives faith to believe in Christ (Eph. 2:8-9). His marveling over this man's faith is His taking note of these things for the purpose of showing the necessity of faith in salvation (Heb. 11:6).

(Matt. 8:11) - One of the promises of the New Covenant was *"THAT MANY SHALL COME FROM THE EAST AND WEST."* This refers to the salvation of God's elect among Gentiles. This had already been proven by the Samaritan woman and further proven by this Roman centurion. To *"SIT DOWN WITH ABRAHAM, AND ISAAC, AND JACOB, IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"* signifies true faith in and fellowship with Christ in the kingdom along with the patriarchs, all saved by grace and justified by the righteousness of Christ.

(Matt. 8:12) - *"BUT THE CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE CAST OUT INTO OUTER DARKNESS: THERE SHALL BE WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH."* The unbelieving Jews were "children of the kingdom," but only in a temporal, ceremonial sense under the Old Covenant. One would think that the most likely people to inherit the spiritual kingdom of heaven would be the Jews, but, as a whole, they rejected Christ (Rom. 9:31-10:3). On the other hand, one would think that the least likely ones to receive Christ, the Gentiles, would be brought into the kingdom. By way of revelation, the Gospel came first through the Jews, but it has gone out to the Gentiles in a great way according to the will of God. The blood of Christ saves both Jews and Gentiles and makes us all one people in Him (Eph. 2:11-22).

(Matt. 8:13) - Christ told the centurion, *"GO THY WAY; AND AS THOU HAST BELIEVED, SO BE IT DONE UNTO THEE."* It is made clear that *"HIS SERVANT WAS HEALED IN THE SELFSAME HOUR."* It was all done as Christ spoke His word of power.