

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW; YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH

Week 16 – JROC - “Blessed is he who is not offended in Me”

September 4, 2022

The Blind SEE

Matt. 9:27 - *When Jesus departed from there (from the home of Jarius), two blind men followed Him (WHY?), crying out and saying, ‘Son of David, have mercy on us!’* It appears that Jesus did NOT heal them immediately. WHY? What was occurring?

It was not easy for these blind men to follow Jesus, but they did. They were determined to follow Him. WHAT pushed them forward? WHY did they persevere?

“Son of David” they called out! “Son of David” was a messianic title. WHY is “Son of David” considered Messianic? The Messiah was promised to come through King David’s lineage. These physically blind men recognized that Jesus was the Messiah!!

The two blind men were asking for mercy – loving kindness.

Matt. 9:28a - *And when He (Jesus) had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. The blind men followed Jesus into a house!! They were DESPERATE!*

Matt. 9:28b - *And Jesus said to them, ‘Do you believe (to be persuaded of; to place confidence in) that I am able to do this?’*

I am – WHAT is Jesus stating?

Jesus is *I am*. Jesus is GOD! God told Moses from the burning bush, *This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.* (Exodus 3:15)

Do you believe I am able to do this? Jesus demanded faith in WHO HE IS and His ability to rescue, deliver, redeem, to transform lives!

They said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord.’ “Truly; assuredly”; “Lord” – Master, Owner, Sovereign!

These men placed confidence in Jesus as Messiah/as God (Psa. 2) and in His work.

Jesus answered their crying out to Him.

Matt. 9:29-30a - *Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.” ³⁰ And their eyes were opened.*

Jesus knew their hearts – Jesus knew they were truly crying out to HIM, the MESSIAH – by FAITH. And, Jesus removed their blindness.

Matt. 9:29-30b - *And Jesus sternly warned (to charge with earnest admonition; directly; charging them with an obligation)...Jesus sternly warned them, saying, “See that no one knows it.”* Did the healed blind men comply? NO!

Matt. 9:31 - *But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him (made Him known) in all that country (land).*

Was it the excitement regarding Jesus and His words and works/miracles that drove others to tell the blind men? They heard and sought Him, experienced His power of healing and they were driven to tell others. What about us?

WHY did Jesus tell the two men, *See that no one knows it (the healing)?* Perhaps rejection of Jesus was increasing!

CONSIDER: this miracle is not only a revelation of the person of the Messiah (Isa. 35:5-6) but also indicates what Messiah came to do for Israel. The Jews were spiritually blind

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and did not know God. Messiah came to reveal God to them.

“It was never seen like this in Israel!”

Matt. 9:32-33a - *As they (the formerly blind, NOW SEEING men??) went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed.³³ And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke.* Exorcising a demon from a mute person was considered a Messianic miracle. The rabbis of that day thought that the first step in exorcising a demon from its host was to speak with them. If a person was mute – there would be no communication.

Matt. 9:33b - *And the multitudes marveled, saying, ‘It was never seen like this in Israel!’* Of course, they hadn’t. This was a Messianic miracle! The Messiah had recently announced Himself to Israel! This miracle proclaimed not only the complete authority of Jesus over the demonic realm, but also the weakness of the rabbis’ traditions.

Rejection of Jesus Increases

Matt. 9:34 - *But the Pharisees said, ‘He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.’* In attributing this work of Jesus to the power of Satan (!?!?!), we see that the Pharisees and other religious leaders blatantly continuing their rejection of Jesus and His work.

The Offering of the Kingdom is Extended/Expanded

Matt. 9:35 - *Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*

Matt. 9:36 - *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary (harassed) and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.*

OBSERVATIONS:

But (a change is noted by this word) *then when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion* – this is the strongest word for pity in the Greek language. It describes the compassion which moves a person to the deepest depths of his being. It means to be moved as to one's bowels as the bowels were thought to be the seat of love and pity!

...they were weary (harassed; fainting) *and scattered* (downcast; thrown down; utterly helpless; forsaken)

...like sheep having no shepherd

In Phillip Keller's book, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, Keller describes how sheep can get turned over on their backs and not be able to get up by themselves! Such sheep are called "cast" or "cast down" sheep. These sheep flail at the air with their legs. But they can't get back on their feet without the aid of the shepherd. Sheep left in this condition, helpless and vulnerable to their enemies, will die after a few hours or days.

Unfaithful Shepherds

In the 597 BC timeframe, what did God tell the prophet Ezekiel to declare to the religious leadership, the scribes and Pharisees? Eze. 34:2-5 – *...Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the*

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shepherds: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? ³ You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. ⁴ The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. ⁵ So they were scattered because there was no shepherd;

Jesus' Response

Matt. 9:37-38 – Upon being moved with the deepest compassion, Jesus said to His disciples, *The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*

Jesus saw the greatness of human need as an opportunity, as a harvest that is plentiful. But it was a harvest that needed laborers. And so Jesus told the disciples and us to pray that God will send out laborers into His harvest.

The Greek word for "send out" speaks of God **PUSHING FORWARD – THRUSTING THEM OUT.**

Commissioning the Disciples

In view of the need, Jesus called His twelve disciples (students/learners), His twelve apostles (sent ones), and conferred upon them the same messianic authority that He Himself had been demonstrating. HOW SO? The Holy Spirit came upon prophets, priests, and kings in Israel's history prior to the Church to empower them! I'm suggesting that God the Holy Spirit gave the disciples the power!

Instructions

Matt. 10:1, 5-8 - And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease...⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: 'Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. ⁶ But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' ⁸ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

OBSERVATIONS:

Restrictions

Before Jesus dismissed the disciples/apostles, He told them to whom they were to minister. Their ministry was to be exclusively to the lost sheep of Israel. WHY were those within the nation of Israel called "lost sheep"?

Jer. 50:6 - My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray; they have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; they have forgotten their resting place.

WHY did Jesus tell the disciples NOT to go into the way of the Gentiles and not to enter a city of the Samaritans? The preaching the disciples were to engage in was POINTED, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." This was a message for the nation of Israel based

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on God's promises to them. Israel was the nation with which God had entered into a covenant through Abraham...which was repeated throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

II Sam. 7:23-24 - ²³ And who is like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name—and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land—before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? ²⁴ For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, LORD, have become their God. The nation of Israel needed to come to faith. The disciples were to announce to the nation of Israel that their King had arrived.

Worthy Households

Matt. 10:11-14 - *Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. ¹² And when you go into a household, greet it. ¹³ If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it (the household would be blessed). But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. (don't extend blessing to them) ¹⁴ And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.*

When they entered a village, they were to seek out one who had a good reputation and request hospitality. Once they found a suitable home, they were to stay there even though another might offer them greater convenience or comfort. If they came to a village and no hospitality was extended, they were to move on to another village.

...*shake the dust from your feet* – an expression of disdain (Neh. 5:13).

Judgment

Matt. 10:15 - *Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!* Jesus told the disciples that the people's lack of hospitality would show their indifference to, or rejection of, the message that the disciples declared re: the significance of the Kingdom of God!

Persecution

Matt. 10:16 - *Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves.* Jesus prepared the disciples for persecution! Persecution will come!

Matt. 10:17-23 - speak to the future – going beyond the disciples' mission at this time. (Compare to Matt. 24:9ff)

Matt. 10:22 - *And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved* (endured to the end – tribulation verbiage – Matt. 24:13 – physically endured).

And, we know from the OT that the prophecies concerning end times concern Israel and those prophecies speak of the tribulation and the physical Second Coming and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. There are no Scriptures regarding the rapture of the CHURCH in the OT!

John the Immerser

Matt. 11:1-3 - *Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities (in Galilee). And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his*

disciples ³ and said to Him, 'Are You the Coming One or do we look for another?' John had been imprisoned because he blasted Herod for his immorality. Herod was living in adultery with his brother Philip's wife, Herodias.

John was in prison. God hadn't rescued him. Instead of God triumphing, Herod remained in power!! John needed reassurance and clarification.

John had spoken of Jesus as the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29), and that He would judge sin...that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire (He would purge/judge), and that He would "gather His wheat into the barns but would burn the chaff"

John wondered if he should look for another to bring the judgment of God upon a wicked world and fulfill the prophecies of the glorious reign of Messiah. John was in prison and reports were coming to him re: the works of Jesus which were acts of mercy rather than acts of divine judgment.

The answer...for us today: the time of God's judgment has not yet come. BUT the final triumph is CERTAIN!

John was in prison and reports were coming to him re: the works of Jesus which were acts of mercy rather than acts of divine judgment.

Matt 11:4-6 - *Jesus answered and said to them, Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: ⁵ The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.* How was this an answer to John's question about His, Jesus', Messiahship?. Jesus told the two disciples of John to...

Tell John...you know the Scriptures. Isaiah the prophet told our brethren, the Jewish people, that when the Messiah comes He will heal the blind and the lame and cleanse the lepers, and the deaf will hear and the dead will be raised up. And the poor/the spiritually bankrupt will hear the good news of forgiveness of sin.

Tell John. . .those who are not OFFENDED (who do not stumble, who do not distrust, who are not displeased/indignant [resentful] because of Me – are BLESSED. God's divine favor is showered upon them.

Matt. 11:20-22 – *Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. 'Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you....*

Turning from words of judgment to praise for supernatural revelation (Matt. 11:25-30), Jesus then extended a personal invitation...

Matt. 11:28-30 – *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*