

## Episode #737 Matthew 9 Part 1-Two Sick Men

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. When the Lord faced two demon-possessed men after crossing the sea. The begged Him to allow them to enter a nearby heard of swine, and the Lord allowed it. When the swine destroyed themselves by running off a cliff into the sea, the people of the region asked him to leave. We take up the story from there, to see the Lord deal with two kinds of sick men.

III. The Healing of the Paralytic. Matthew 9:1-8.

- A. Matthew 9:1. This boat is the one mentioned in chapter 8. His Own city is Capernaum, since Nazareth had rejected Him. See Matthew 4:13.
- B. Verse 2. The “bed” was a couch for carrying sick people on. He saw faith both in the paralytic and in the ones who brought him. “Son” = *teknon*, a child. This man was not a representative of the Lord so He would not call him a “son.” Only the Lord says “be of good cheer,” 7 times in the gospels and once in Acts (to Paul). All illness is caused by the fact that sin is in the world, though there may not be a specific sin that caused any one illness, since time and chance happen to everyone. The kingdom will take care of sin and illness. This man’s sins are loosed off, sent far away, remitted. All these ideas are in the word “forgiven.”
- C. Verse 3. Wherever He is, scribes are present. Notice their immediate assumption when a man claims to forgive sins. But Jesus proved His claim by demonstrating His authority! Yet do we think “blasphemy” the same way when any claim to be able to forgive sins today, unless they too can miraculously reveal their authority?
- D. Verse 4. Evil is *poneros*, literally bad things, bad thoughts.
- E. Verse 5. It is easier to say “your sins are forgiven,” since none can prove whether this has really taken place or not, so many say this. But Christ demonstrated His power to forgive sins by His power to heal diseases. We should demand a similar standard!
- F. Verse 6. “Power” is *exousia*, meaning delegated authority. He had received this from His Father. He is to arise, roll up his pallet, and carry it away to his house.
- G. Verse 7. Notice that his response and obedience was immediate. Anyone who claims to have the power to forgive sins should back that up like the Lord did.
- H. Verse 8. The multitudes marveled like the disciples did when He calmed the sea. Again “power” is *exousia*, that He had delegated such authority to men.

IV. Matthew the Tax Collector. Matthew 9:9-13.

- A. Matthew 9:9. This seemingly casual meeting was by the will of God.
  - 1. Matthew is the Greek *Maththaios*, from the Aramaic, “Gift of Jehovah.”
  - 2. This is a striking exhibition of the grace of God. Tax collectors were more hated than foreigners and far more despised than the sinners. The Roman government did not collect taxes directly; they farmed this out to citizens, who gathered it for this foreign government. An assessor would buy a district and then gain his wealth by overtaxing the people and keeping the extra for himself. They were really traitors, and yet God used a traitor such as this as the author of the book of Matthew!
  - 3. By “follow” He did not mean a little ways, but joining Him as an attendant.

4. Perhaps Matthew had previously been to the baptism of John and submitted to it. Luke 3:12-13. Had he been following these instructions since? Now he proves himself after-minded.
- B. Verse 10. Tax collectors and sinners had been hated so long they were doubtless tired of it. They found out life did not consist in the amount of wealth possessed! Sinners were those who were disfellowshipped by the scribes and Pharisees, not necessarily worse sinners than any other men. No one would hire them, buy from them, or sell to them if they could help it. Now these ate together or feasted together with Him. More than on food; they enjoyed the great grace of God!
- C. Verse 11. The Pharisees tasked themselves with making sure everyone followed their decisions on excommunication. To sit down to eat with someone in that day was a sign of close companionship, the highest possible social significance. Now the Lord is eating with these despised, outcast people! “Teacher” is the Greek *didaskalos*, meaning a master-teacher who had disciples, devoted followers. This is its second occurrence, 8:19, the man who said he would follow Him wherever He went. Notice they call it eating, whereas Matthew calls it feasting.
- D. Verse 12. The Lord was always ready to answer when the cowardly leaders took their complaints to His disciples rather than to Him. This man was sick, but a different kind of sick from the lame man. The Pharisees took pride in condemning this kind of sick, but the Lord was the Great Physician who dealt with sickness of the heart.
- V. Conclusion: The Lord healed the lame man, but first He forgave his sins. The scribes thought this was blasphemy, and it would have been if He had not had the power to back it up. Yet He proved He did have that power by healing him afterwards. Then, he called the traitorous tax collector Matthew to follow Him as His disciple. The Pharisees objected to this, but the Lord revealed that this man too was sick, and needed His help. Do we recognize, not just the sicknesses of our bodies, but those of our hearts as well? Do we realize that we need the Great Physician to heal our sinful condition and give us new life?