

Jesus – The King of the Jews #19

Curing Peter's Mother-In-Law

Matt 8:14-22

Introduction:

1. The first thing many male Jews did every morning was to pray, "Lord, I thank Thee that I was not born a slave, a Gentile, or a woman."
2. In the first two miracles of [Matt 8](#), Jesus showed mercy and compassion not only to an outcast leper but to an outcast Gentile and his slave.
3. Now He shows mercy and compassion to a woman.
 - a. The proud, self-righteous Jewish men could not have missed Jesus' pt
 - b. Race, social status, or gender made no difference to Him.
 - c. None of those things in itself was an advantage or disadvantage as far as His ministry and message were concerned.
4. That the disadvantaged more often received His blessing was due to their more often being humble and aware of their need.
5. Likewise, that the advantaged more often failed to receive His blessing was due to their more often being proud and self-satisfied.

I. THE CURING OF PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW – vs 14-18

- The miracle in this text in Matthew is the first of eight miracles in which Peter is personally associated with in Scriptures.
- Peter was associated with more miracles than any of the other twelve disciples of our Lord.

A. The Site of the Curing – vs 14

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

- Where this miracle occurred is instructive
 1. The place of the site - *"Peter's house"*
 - a) From other Scripture we know this was in Capernaum.
 - b) When Christ called Peter he was living in Bethsaida about 5 miles from Capernaum
 - c) After Peter became a disciple, he and his family moved to Capernaum and his house became the dwelling place of Christ when Christ was in Capernaum ([Mark 2:1-6](#)).
 2. The poverty in the site -- *"His wife's mother laid"*
 - a) Peter's house was not a place of affluence.
 - b) His wife, his mother-in-law and his brother Andrew all lived in the same house ([Mark 1:29](#)).
 - c) Though they lacked affluence, they did not lack affection for Christ; and that affection brought more blessings than affluence
 3. The piety in the site
 - a) Peter's home welcomed Jesus Christ.
 - b) Not many homes welcomed Christ, but this home did.
 - c) Though poverty was in the home, so was piety. Everyone in the home was devoted to Christ.
 - d) And this piety brought great blessings—a miracle of healing
 - e) When He is revered in the home, He will bless the home with valuable blessing.

B. The Sickness for the Curing – vs 14

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

- The sickness says good homes /good people are not exempt from trials
 1. The person with the sickness – “His wife’s mother”
 - a) The sick person was Peter's mother-in-law.
 - b) That Peter had a mother-in-law refutes Roman Catholic dogma—they claim Peter was the first pope, and they also insist that their popes not marry
 - c) Peter was married—you can't have a m-i-l without being married

BYZ **Matthew 8:14** Καὶ ἐλθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Πέτρου, εἶδεν τὴν πενθερὰν αὐτοῦ βεβλημένην καὶ πυρέσσουσαν,
Lying sick of a fever (biblēmēnē kai pyressousan). Two participles, bedridden (perfect passive of ballō) and burning with fever (present active). Derived from pur - fire. Our word fever comes through the German feuer.

2. The power of the sickness -- "*Laid.*"
 - a) *Sickness was great enough that it put Peter's mother-in-law in bed*
 - b) *Luke described the sickness as a "great fever" (Luke 4:38), which was a medical term (Luke was a physician)*
 - c) *We do not know the cause of the fever, but the fact that it was high and that the woman was too sick to get up suggest an extremely serious and probably life-threatening illness.*
 - d) *The demands of everyday living did not allow most people in that day the luxury of going to bed whenever they felt bad.*
 - e) *Physical pain and discomfort were a regular part of life, and, unless they were severe, did not normally interfere with a person's responsibilities.*
3. The perception of the sickness – “He saw”
 - a) *Other Gospels indicate that others informed Christ of this sickness*
 - b) *Matthew informs us that Christ was also cognizant of the sickness.*
 - c) *He is omniscient and knows all. Sometimes, in our trials, we think God does not know or care.*

C. The Specifics of the Curing – vs 15

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

1. The passion for the miracle -- "*He touched her hand.*"
 - a) *This act, as noted in the healing of the leper, denotes compassion*
 - b) *Today, we hear the language of "reach out and touch someone" which speaks of compassion.*
2. The parting in the miracle -- "*The fever left her.*"
 - a) *This is the language of instantaneous healing.*
 - b) *The quickness of the healing was important to give proof that Christ did the healing.*
 - c) *If a long time was required for the healing, critics would say it was no miracle.*
 - d) *The quickness of the healing shuts the mouths of the critics.*
3. The power from the miracle -- "*She arose.*"
 - a) *Not only did the fever leave her immediately, but the effects of the fever also left instantly, for she immediately arose from the bed.*
 - b) *Normally after a fever has subsided, that person is still weak and requires considerable time for convalescence to recover strength.*
 - c) *But when Christ healed, it was instant in every aspect of the affliction. This shows the great power of Christ in the healing.*

D. The Serving After the Curing – vs 15

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

- Service followed the miracle.
 - When healed, Peter's mother-in-law immediately "ministered"
1. The proof in the serving -- "*She arose, and ministered unto them.*"
 - a) *The serving gave proof that a miracle had taken place in her life.*
 - b) *Likewise, when a person experiences the miracle of salvation, there will be proof in the changed conduct*
 - c) *When a person claims to be saved but shows no change in conduct, the salvation claim is bogus.*
 - d) *If Peter's mother-in-law claimed to be healed but continued to lay in bed unable to get up, one could question the healing claim.*
 2. The power for the serving – “He touched her hand”
 - a) *Before the touch, Peter's mother-in-law could not serve*
 - b) *God healed her and she used that healing to "minister unto them."*
 - c) *Blessings from God should be used to serve Him.*
 - d) *When we are blessed of God, too often we ponder how to use the blessing for our own selfish use instead of pondering how to use the blessing for service for Him.*
 - e) *Peter's mother-in-law used her blessing of healing to serve; may we all use our blessings likewise.*

BYZ **Matthew 8:15** καὶ ἤψατο τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς, καὶ ἀφῆκεν αὐτὴν ὁ πυρετός· καὶ ἠγέρθη, καὶ διηκόνει αὐτῷ.
 Ministered (diēkonei). "Began to minister" (conative imperfect) at once to Jesus at table in gratitude and love
 ἤψατο verb ind aor mid dep 3ps from ἄπτομαι (1) active, of a fire *light, kindle* (AC 28.2; LU 22.55); (2) middle; (a) literally *touch, take hold of, hold* (JN 20.17); of food *touch, eat* (CO 2.21); (b) figuratively and euphemistically ἄπτεσθαι γυναικός literally *touch a woman*, i.e. *have sexual intercourse with a woman* (1C 7.1); with the implication of conveying divine blessing or power through physical contact *touch* (MK 10.13; LU 8.46); in a negative sense *harm* (1J 5.18)

3. The place of the servicing
 - a) *She served in the home.*
 - b) *She ministered to Christ in the home by doing home duties.*
 - c) *Women can indeed serve Christ honorably in home duties.*
 - d) *The world despises the importance of home duties, God does not*
4. The position in the serving
 - a) *The work that Peter's mother-in-law did was lowly service.*
 - b) *It was not done on a stage with bright lights. In fact only the people in the house would see her service.*
 - c) *Much service is humble service.*
 - d) *If you are not willing to be humble, you will not serve God much.*
5. The perpetualness of the serving -- "**Ministered.**"
 - a) *The word translated "ministered" is in the imperfect*
 - b) *This means it was continuous service.*
 - c) *She did not do a little then quit and watch TV. So much service today is temporary.*
 - d) *We need more faithfulness that will serve steadfastly*

E. The Sequel to the Curing – vs 16-18

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

1. The moment in the sequel -- "*When the even was come*"
2. The miracles in the sequel – “possessed with devils”
 - a) Count of the miracles – “many”
 - b) Great was the proof that Christ had the power of God in Him.
 - c) It was not a few miracles here and there, but a multitude.
 - d) Unbelief has no excuse. The evidence is overwhelming.
 - e) Character of the miracles. *Two main works are reported. They have to do with demons and diseases.*
 - f) Completeness of the miracles - "*Healed all that were sick.*"
 - (1) No disease or demon was too much for Christ. He had power over all of them.
 - (2) The “all” refers particularly to the diseases, but it is evident it could refer to the demons, too.
3. The message about the sequence – vs 17

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

 - a) *Once again Matthew emphasizes that the ministry of Christ fulfilled OT prophecies*
 - b) *This particular incident was a fulfillment of [Isaiah 53:4](#).*
 - c) *Matthew wrote with the Jew especially in mind, and the reference to the fulfillment of prophecy would especially relate to them.*
4. The moving in the sequence – vs 18

18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

 - Jesus moved from Capernaum after working many miracles.
 - a) Prompting of the move. "*great multitudes about him.*"
 - (1) It will be a shock to many church promotional ideas that a crowd does not always help the cause of Christ.
 - (2) Christ left the multitudes because His popularity was not for the message but for the miracles, which was to them very entertaining—genuine healing miracles and the exorcising of demons was indeed special.
 - (3) They were not interested in spiritual and eternal matters but chiefly in physical and temporal matters.
 - (4) Though completely God, he was also human and needed occasional rest and respite from the never-ending demands of those who came to him for help
 - b) Precept for the move. "*to depart unto the other side.*"
 - (1) The commandment was given to His disciples, especially to those who had a boat, for "the other side" referred to the Sea of Galilee—Capernaum was on the north shore of the lake.
 - (2) The command was necessary, for the disciples were impressed with the crowd, too.
 - (3) It is hard to leave a crowd, but Christ sometimes commands His disciples to move to smaller crowds.

Ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δαιμονιζομένους πολλούς· καὶ ἐξέβαλεν τὰ πνεύματα λόγῳ, καὶ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ἐθεράπευσεν·

δαιμονιζομένους verb ptc pres mid or pass dep amp from **δαιμονίζομαι** - of demon possession or oppression *be possessed by, be tormented or vexed by, be demonized* (MT 4.24)

17 ὅπως πληρωθῆ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου, λέγοντος, Αὐτὸς τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ἔλαβεν, καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν.

Bare - This translation is correct. The word does not mean "he took away," but "he bore," as a burden laid upon him. This passage is the corner-stone of the faith-cure theory, which claims that the atonement of Christ includes provision for bodily no less than for spiritual healing, and therefore insists on translating "took away." Matthew may be presumed to have understood the sense of the passage he was citing from Isaiah, and he could have used no word more inadequate to express his meaning, if that meaning had been that Christ took away infirmities.

ἐβάστασεν. verb ind aor act 3ps from **βαστάζω** (1) *take up, lift up, pick up* (JN 10.31); (2) *carry, bear* (MK 14.13); figuratively, of anything burdensome or difficult *bear, endure, put up with* (MT 20.12); (3) *bear away, remove* (JN 20.15); figuratively, of healing disease (MT 8.17); (4) *steal, pilfer, carry off* (JN 12.6); (5) figuratively, of serving as a source of supply *support, provide for* (RO 11.18)

BYZ Matthew 8:18 Ἴδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς πολλοὺς ὄχλους περὶ αὐτόν, ἐκέλευσεν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὸ πέραν. **ἐκέλευσεν** verb ind aor act 3ps from **κελεύω** - *command, order, direct*, usually followed by an infinitive to indicate what is expected as a response

II. THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP – vs 19-22

- Periodically Christ spoke about the cost of discipleship.
- In the incident before us, an inquiry about following the Lord inspired Christ's comments about the cost of discipleship.
- Christ never presented an easy path for discipleship.
- He was not like so many today who tell only the glory part of a career but never the difficult part.
- Churches today are advertising their services with such words as "fun," "food," and "convenience"; but there was none of that talk by Christ in regards to discipleship.
- If you are going to choose a church because of "fun," "food," "convenience," or other carnal reason, you will not be much of a disciple.
- In this incident in Matthew, two specific costs of discipleship are emphasized. They are the poverty cost and the priority cost.

A. The Poverty Cost – vs 19-20

- One of the costs of being a disciple of Christ is poverty.
 - This can be a lack of possessions, pay, of a nice dwelling place.
1. The promise that was ignorant of poverty – vs 19
19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.
 - a) Person making the promise - "A certain scribe."
 - (1) He was already a disciple, for two verses later it says "another of his disciples" ([Matthew 8:21](#)) spoke to the Lord.
 - (2) For a **scribe** to address Jesus as *didaskalos* (**Teacher**) was therefore a considerable concession in itself
 - (3) Unlike many Christian churches and organizations today, who are eager to embrace any famous personality who makes a profession of Christ, Jesus knew that a strong profession does not necessarily reflect strong commitment. Even without knowing men's hearts as He did, Christians today can benefit from taking that truth into account.
 - b) Pride in the promise - "I will follow thee ...goest."
 - (1) This was not a request to be a disciple but a promise of a great performance.
 - (2) It sounded like a wonderful promise, but the obvious pride in it comes out in the informing of the man of his ignorance about the cost.
 - c) Presumption in the promise
 - (1) The scribe presumed he knew the cost and could pay it.
 - (2) But he did not know the cost.
 - (3) He was ignorant of the poverty of the lack of good housing.
 2. The proclamation that informed of poverty
20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.
 - a) *This response was a humbling response for the scribe*
 - b) *It disclosed to the scribe his great ignorance - ignorance of the lack of nice housing for disciples as well as for Christ.*
 - c) *Jesus had fewer physical comforts than many animals*
 - (1) He spent time in Peter's house in Capernaum
 - (2) He spent time with Mary, Martha and Lazarus
 - (3) We never hear of him going home – he had none
 - d) *The scribe is like many who volunteer for Christian service.*
 - (1) He didn't know that there would be self-denial and sacrifice
 - (2) There might even be suffering
 - e) *They get emotionally excited and are ignorant of the cost.*

BYZ **Matthew 8:19** Καὶ προσελθὼν εἰς γραμματεὺς εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Διδάσκαλε, ἀκολουθήσω σοι ὅπου ἔαν ἀπέρχῃ.

BYZ **Matthew 8:20** Καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς ἔχουσιν, καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσκει· ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνει.

Nests - Only here and in the parallel, Luke 9:58. Nests is too limited. The word, derived from σκηνή, a tent, has the more general meaning of shelter or habitation. In classical Greek it is used of an encampment. The nest is not to the bird what the hole is to the fox, a permanent dwelling-place, since the bird frequents the nest only during incubation. The Rev. retains nests, but puts lodging-places in the margin.

B. The Priority Cost – vs 21-22

- To be a good disciple requires priority for discipleship.
 - This is a hard requirement which few are willing to pay.
1. The request denying priority – vs 21

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

 - a) *This request sounds reasonable*
 - (1) The Jews did not practice embalming
 - (2) A dead body had to be quickly prepared and buried
 - b) *The problem here is not in burying one's father, but the "me first" attitude.*
 - (1) There is no indication that the father was already dead
 - (2) The phrase was a common Near Eastern figure of speech that referred to a son's responsibility to help his father in the family business until the father died and the inheritance was distributed. Obviously such a commitment could involve a long period of time, thirty or forty years or more if the father was relatively young.
 - (3) Since a man's inheritance was customarily lost or reduced if he did not fulfill his expected responsibilities to the family, the phrase "I must bury my father" was frequently equivalent to "I want to wait until I receive my inheritance."
 - c) *That attitude is unacceptable for discipleship.*
 - d) *"Me first" destroys more service for the Lord than anything else. It is a priority problem.*
 - e) *No one will prosper in the matter of Christian living with a "me first" attitude.*
 2. The rebuke demanding priority

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

 - a) *Christ demanded priority in following Him.*
 - b) *This does not mean you cannot attend your father's funeral or help prepare and plan for it.*
 - c) *What it means is that following Christ demands priority or you will not be a good follower.*
 - d) *Everything must be given less priority than Christ.*
 - e) *It is a hard lesson to learn but it has to be learned, if you are to be a good follower of Jesus Christ.*

BYZ **Matthew 8:21** Ἄλλος δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Κύριε, ἐπίτρεψόν μοι πρῶτον ἀπελθεῖν καὶ θάψαι τὸν πατέρα μου.

BYZ **Matthew 8:22** Ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ἀκολουθε μοι, καὶ ἄφες τοὺς νεκροὺς θάψαι τοὺς ἑαυτῶν νεκροὺς.