

## Matthew Lesson 13

For the past few weeks, we have studied the Sermon on the Mount given by Yeshua. He taught about what it means to be a citizen of the Kingdom; and He taught the true intent of the law or the instructions of G-d. He taught about how to pray as a Kingdom citizen. He let it be known that the true believer who wants to hallow the name of G-d is willing to give His life to sanctify the name of G-d.

He showed us that the motives of our hearts have to be the central concern, for those with pure hearts will be blessed. He taught us that we must pursue righteousness and be salt and light in the world, and so much more.

This Sermon was about How to be a Kingdom citizen.

The people realized that Yeshua taught as one with authority and not as the scribes whose teaching had become polluted by traditions of men.

**Matthew 7:28,29** When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, because He taught as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

**Mark 7:8** You have disregarded the commandment of God to keep the tradition of men.

**Matthew 8:1** When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.

1. Why would crowds have followed Yeshua after the Sermon on the Mount?

Like us, they were living in times of political corruption; power was foremost in the minds of many leaders, and the people were **looking for and expecting the Messiah.**

Now here is this one, who teaches with authority, and addresses the heart issues of the Law. He is not like any other Rabbi, and the people know it.

**In our study today, Matthew will begin to lay out evidence and will lay out proof that Yeshua can actually do what the Messiah is expected to do.**

Today we will see Yeshua begin to fulfill Messianic prophecies that the Jewish people had known and were looking for in the long awaited Messiah.

**Isaiah 35:5-6a** Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing.

1. What are four things Isaiah lays out that the Messiah will do?

In **Matthew 11:2-5** Yeshua adds to this list saying<sup>2</sup>And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 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.

2. What did Yeshua add to the list of miraculous things the Messiah would do?

Matthew is showing how Yeshua's actions are supporting the claims of the true Messiah.

And Matthew begins with this incident:

**Matthew 8:2-4** And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean. Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, I am willing; be cleansed. Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.

Because of the seriousness of this disease, lepers were suppose to be separated from the community. If they came in to close contact with others, they were to shout out "Tamey! Tamey! - meaning Unclean! Unclean!"

**II Kings 15:5** And the LORD afflicted the king (Uziah) with leprosy until the day he died, so that he lived in a separate house while his son Jotham had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land.

But notice that this leper did not do this. It is likely that he had heard the Sermon on the Mount and believed that the Kingdom had arrived. If this One who had spoken was the long-awaited Messiah, then He would possess the power to heal.

This man appears desperate, even possibly at the point of death, and kneels before Yeshua - showing honor and respect, saying, You can make me clean.

And without hesitation, Yeshua reaches out toward this man and touches him!.

In telling this man to go present himself to the priest, Yeshua is following the law and He is proclaiming to the priest, that the MESSIAH HAD ARRIVED! because He had just healed leprosy.

It is not just happenstance that Matthew chose to write about **this particular miracle**. Both the religious leaders of the Jews and the Jewish people understood Messiah would heal lepers. This was a clear sign that the Messiah had arrived.

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And Yeshua travels on to Capernaum.

**Matthew 8:5-9** Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented. And Jesus said to him, **"I will come and heal him."** The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this *one*, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he does it.

Capernaum was a Jewish town under Roman occupation, and here we encounter the first time Yeshua publicly addresses the problem of a non-Jew. This particular Roman officer loved the Jewish people and the G-d of the Jews.

3. Do you see how incredibly Yeshua is living out "Our Father"? He is excluding no one - even a Gentile.

Matthew also shows us by this centurion's words, that he understands that Yeshua is a man with great authority and believes His spoken word will be enough to bring about the healing,

and he understands the position He would be asking Yeshua to place Himself in if he were to enter the house of a Gentile.

Luke 7:3- When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to ask Him to come and heal his servant. They came to Jesus and pleaded with Him earnestly, "This man is worthy to have You grant this, for he loves our nation and has built our synagogue.....

and Matthew continues

**Matthew 8:10-13** When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

Yeshua is strongly affirming this Gentile man's faith in the G-d of Israel. He is not making the faith of a Gentile second class by any means, but again confirming G-d is **OUR Father**, too.

**FAITH IS THE GREAT EQUALIZER** - Just like the faith of Abraham - who was a Gentile when he first believed!

And He is also showing us the **incredible power of faith in Yeshua** - as that very hour the servant was healed.



**Mark 1:29-31** As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever,

and they immediately told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

Jewish people gathered at the synagogue on Shabbat. So if they had just arrived home after the Shabbat services, Yehsua would have healed this lady on the Sabbath.

And Matthew says:

**Matthew 8:15** So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.

According to Jewish sources, men were not to touch the hand of a woman. And here we have a Jewish Rabbi holding this woman's hand!

He is portraying compassion - one of His 13 attributes which He proclaimed at Sinai after the Golden Calf incident.

If He can be compassionate after His people worship another god, can He be compassionate to this woman who is very ill?

**Matthew 8:18-22** When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. Jesus replied, **Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.**

Another disciple said to him, Lord, first let me go and bury my father.

But Jesus told him, **Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.**

Yeshua is making clear that there is a cost to follow him and be His disciple. It is not always easy, nor is it convenient. He ends this thought with the words, and let the dead bury the dead. We know for sure that the Lord is not telling this man to break the commandment about honoring parents, so we conclude this Hebrew idiom is telling this teacher of the law not to wait for the perfect time. Most people who discuss this idiom believe the father is still alive, so the inference is made that this is just not a convenient time. In addition to this, when a Jewish person died, they were buried within 24 hours, so this would not have required delay.

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Also, in the villages and towns, people knew each other and would have taken care of his father's burial if it had become necessary while he was away, as they watched out for each other in this way. Other family members or neighbors would have stepped in and covered for him.

In the burial practices of this day, after a body was in a tomb for a year, the family would go and gather the bones and deposit them in a box with other family members' bones.

If this man is referring to transferring the bones, this could have been easily done by others in the family or someone assigned.

The bottom line is Yeshua was saying, don't delay in following Me.



**Matthew 8:23-27** Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us! But He said to them, Why are you fearful, O you of little faith? Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Here we see the Lord rebuking the disciples for their lack of faith. They had witnessed the miracles He had done, but they are still afraid.

This storm must really have been a whopper as these were experienced fishermen, used to the conditions on the Kenerret (Sea of Galilee).

A hint that this was an unusual storm is in the Greek word used to describe "tempest" which is **seismos**, a word normally associated with earthquake.

And these disciples realize on yet another level, that this is not the usual rabbi. He controls all environments!

Our Father is ruler of Heaven and earth!

\*\*How is our faith affected in dangerous times even though we know that Yehsua is Lord of all?

**Matthew 8:28-34** When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the (burial) tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time? Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine. And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what *had happened* to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region.



The area of the Gergesenes (Gaderenes) was a predominantly Gentile region where people raised pigs! We see that there were two demon possessed men who hung out in the burial caves, and they were violent.

Now we see Yeshua confront the demonic realm. He takes it in stride and even converses with the demons. The demons seem to know that there is a set time coming when they say "Have you come to torment us before the time?" And they knew Yeshua had power over them as they said, "If you cast us out..... and then they asked permission.

Amazingly, he granted their request, and at Yeshua's word they entered the herd of swine who immediately dove off of a steep cliff and died.

Now the people of the town hear about this and what is their attitude?

They all come to see the man who has delivered the two demonic men...

Do they want Him to stay?

Are they thrilled for this man who has been delivered?

NO !! THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR LIVIHOOD!

They begged Him to leave!

\*\*\*\*\*What lessons do we learn from this incredible story?\*\*\*\*\*

**What principle has come out of Matthew chapter 8 that you can build your faith on?**