

Study 1 - Matthew 8:1-17

Q1 - What does it say?

Note that in the midst of these accounts of physical healing there is a great emphasis on what Jesus SAYS. This becomes especially obvious if you compare the narratives here in Matthew to the same story in Mark or Luke. Jesus authority continues to be exercised through his word.

Q2 - What does it mean?

Immediate context:

Read 7:28-29 - Note that the same authority that has been revealed previously through Jesus' teaching is now being demonstrated through his healing ministry.

In Matthew:

- Matthew has chosen, condensed, and arranged these particular narratives with very specific intent. Matthew summarizes the pattern of Jesus' ministry we see played out here in bookends to this passage - 4:23 and 9:35.
- Each of these three healing interactions was a much bigger deal than we realize in our current cultural context.
 - The Leper - Read Leviticus 13,14
 - The Centurion - A Gentile. Contact between Jew and Gentile also led to ritual defilement.
 - The Mother in law - For a woman to be seen and attended to with this kind of intimacy and compassion was highly unusual.

Elsewhere in scripture:

- Verse 4 - Read Leviticus 14:2-32
- Verse 11,12 - Read Isaiah 25:6-12
- Verse 17 - See note above re: Matthew 4:23 and 9:35, Read Isaiah 53:4.

What do you think Matthew is trying to emphasize by the way he has chosen and arranged the narratives in this passage?

Q3 - What has been revealed about Jesus through this passage?

Why do you think Matthew chose to end this grouping of narratives with a quote from Isaiah 53:4? What does that quote highlight for us about Jesus' identity and mission as seen here that we might have overlooked otherwise?