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August 23, 2026

The Leper's Prayer

(Leviticus 14:1-32; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16)

This chapter of events is located in and around the city of Capernaum. The Hebrew meaning of this city name can mean either the “city of Nahum” or the “city of the comfort”.

A little back story on Capernaum.

We are going to spend a bit of time learning about the actual city of Capernaum as it is where Jesus spent a good deal of time ministering and lived there after departing Nazareth.

Isaiah 9: 1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Isaiah prophesied this about the coming Messiah and Galilee area in about 733 BC, nearly 760 years before Jesus began His ministry in Galilee. It was called the Galilee nations due to having a number of Non-Jewish people living in the area.

1When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

Isaiah 9: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

The Messiah was prophesied about how He would bring Light into the world and it would start in Northern Israel the area of Galilee.

Northern Israel the tribes of Naphtalia and Zebulan were the first tribes conquered by the Assyrians. All of Israel had been warned about their adultery with other gods, and these two tribes were especially sinful in that respect. So, God allowed the Assyrian ([2 Kings 15:29](#)) under Tiglath-Pileser to destroy and remove the Jewish presence from this area which would include the area of Galilee and the town listed in 2 Kings 15.

Capernaum was built in the 2nd Century BC and was finally abandoned in the 11th Century AD so it did not exist when the Assyrians attacked Northern Israel.

Now onto our study of Matthew 8:

This moment that Jesus came down from the mountain was after what is known as the “Sermon on the Mount” also called the “Teaching of the Beatitudes”. The reputation of the Messiah was spreading rapidly, and the crowds were growing. Among the

growing crowds were those seeking physical healing. It was a light beginning to shine on Israel, the Ministry of Jesus the Messiah.

The mountain behind Capernaum makes a bowl, a natural amphitheater. The prevailing breeze from on top of the mountain would carry the voice of a speaker without yelling toward Capernaum, so a large number of people could hear without Jesus having to yell.

2And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

The Leper's Faith

The leper's words are a declaration of faith. He does not question whether Jesus has the power to heal him; he is convinced that Jesus can make him clean. The only question he brings is whether Jesus is willing.

Trusting God's Will

That same question remains with us today. Jesus can heal every physical ailment and overcome every form of spiritual unbelief. Yet whether He chooses to heal in a particular moment belongs to His Wisdom and Will. We can ask in faith, knowing He is able, and then entrust the answer to God.

I have come to believe that God, who knows the beginning from the end, also knows what lies ahead for each person. In mercy, He may sometimes choose to bring someone home rather than allow them to endure further pain. I reach this conclusion because, with my limited understanding, I cannot fully explain why some are healed and others are not. What I can do is trust that God's will is greater than my understanding.

3And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

It was God's Will to heal this man at this moment. Healing was complete and immediate, showing the power of the Will of God. Jesus's simple declaration; "***I will; be thou clean***" was Jesus's clear answer to the question asked: "***Lord if thou wilt***".

4And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

At this point in time, Israel was still under the Law given to Moses. The prescribed legal response to one healed of leprosy was to go to the Priest, give the required gift and do what instructions were given by the Priest according to the Law. Jesus did this as the Law was the prevailing rule the Jews still being under Law not under Grace.

The Centurion's Great Faith *(Luke 7:1-10; John 4:43-54)*

5And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

Capernaum was where Jesus moved his family and spent a lot of time with many of disciples as they lived there as well.

The Romans had placed a garrison in Capernaum as a protective force. Capernaum set at a crossroads on the Roman road from Egypt to Damascus called the Via Maris. The Romans also employed a tax collector there. So, there was a lot of money that passed through this town of Capernaum. With the Roman guard stationed there they had as a leader a Centurian.

22 minutes with

Amir Tsarfati: Israel Unveiled Volume 1: Capernaum

Very in-depth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5PcT0M2jMw>

Somewhat in-depth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIxYFrqrv4>

Shorter but very informative

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrt7JPBha18>

Just a note on Synagogue. A Synagogue was never established by God in either the Old Testament or New Testament. It is a Jewish religious creation started in the Babylonian Exile 6th Century BC. It was a religious replacement to the temple and remained even today as there is no “Temple” to carry out the required Old Testament sacrifices and worship. Jesus did not dispute the Synagogue as He would teach in them during His ministry. Likewise Paul would teach in Synagogues.

6And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

It was of course a rare thing that a Roman official especially a military commander would ask anything of a Jew. Even more rare is this Centurian had either heard or seen some of the healing that Jesus had done in Capernaum.

Secondly, a Roman servant would not be considered of high value to the Roman's as they would take those they conquered and make the slaves or servants to the Roman mechanism. So, this Centurian was filled with compassion for his servant.

7And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

Jesus taught us to “love your enemies”, we are to “pray for our enemies”. The Jewish nation was indeed looking for a Messiah, but they wanted a King Messiah that would remove the yoke of

oppression from their necks by the Romans. So, in the view of the Jews in Capernaum Jesus is being asked to do something that is for not only a non-Jew but the enemy of the State of Israel.

8The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. 9For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

What more can be said about Faith, Belief, Conviction than what this Centurian has said. All at the beginning of Jesus's ministry, and this Centurian already has a jump on the doctrine of Faith and Belief in God as a gentile.

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10When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

When Jesus says this to and about a gentile it is even more evidence that even though sent to the Jews, Jesus Ministry would eventually include the gentile world which is everyone that is not a Jew by heritage.

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

What exactly is Jesus declaring in vs 11?

The east and west are directions that have no terminus point, in other words, the entire world would have the opportunity to come and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Heaven. It was a declaration by Jesus that His Ministry was to the whole world. Even though we know Salvation is for the entire world we also know that few will be that find the narrow gate to Heaven.

2 Timothy 2:4 *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

Matthew 7: 13 *Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14* **Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

This conversation Jesus is having in front of the Centurian with His Disciples is to make a simple point. Heritage is not the issue of Salvation. Salvation comes only through One Door, One Way, Jesus the Messiah.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-believers.html>

Now I know that Abraham was credited with “righteousness”, but does righteousness and salvation equal the same thing in God’s Word.

Acts 4: 11 *This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12* *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

1Ti 2:5 *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

John 10:9 *I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*

Matthew 27:51-53 *Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, 52 and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*

Ezekiel 37:12-14 *Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 13 Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. 14 I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it,” says the Lord.’ ”*

The Descent and Liberation

- Timing: Theologians generally agree that Jesus descended to the "blessed side" of Sheol (also called Paradise or Abraham's Bosom) during the three days between His death and resurrection.
- Purpose: During this time, He proclaimed victory and liberated the righteous souls who had died before His sacrifice.
- Ascension: After rising from the dead, Jesus did not return to Sheol. Instead, He ascended to Heaven, "leading a host of captives" (Ephesians 4:8) who were then transferred from the waiting place of the dead into God's presence.

Current State of Old Testament Saints

- Location: Old Testament saints are no longer in Sheol; they reside in the presence of God in Heaven.
- Transformation: The righteous compartment of Sheol was transformed into Paradise, and its inhabitants were released to join the "great cloud of witnesses" in Heaven (Hebrews 12:1).

12But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

What kingdom is Jesus speaking of here in vs 12?

He is speaking of the Jewish Kingdom. This from the Berean Bible Study:

“Israel received God’s covenants, law, worship, and messianic promises. Yet physical descent from Abraham could not secure entrance into the kingdom apart from faith in Christ. Jesus warned that many Gentiles would believe and join Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the kingdom banquet, while unbelieving Israelites would forfeit blessings they presumed were theirs.

Mat 13:38 The field is the world, and the good seed...

Mat 21:43 Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God.....

Rom 9:7-8 Nor because they are Abraham’s descendants...

will be thrown into the outer darkness,

God’s judgment will exclude all who reject His King from the joy, light, and fellowship of His kingdom. Outer darkness portrays irreversible separation from God’s favor and the blessed assembly of the redeemed.

Matthew 22:11 *And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: 12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.*

Mat 25:30 *And throw that worthless servant into the outer darkness...*

2Pe 2:17 *These men are springs without water and mists...*

where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Weeping portrays grief under divine judgment, and gnashing of teeth conveys anguished rage and despair. Jesus repeatedly used this sober description to affirm the dreadful and eternal consequence of unbelief.”

Mat 13:42 And they will throw them into the fiery furnace,...

Mat 13:50 and throw them into the fiery furnace,...

Luk 13:28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth...

13And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

Many will make the case that it is all about Faith for a healing to take place. It was a critical issue in this instance, but I think it is a mistake to make a doctrine out of this single verse. We saw earlier that God's Will is the dominate factor in all things including healing. Why He Heals or What His Will is on any given request will only become apparent as it ends, either in healing or in death in the case of deaths door.

Jesus Heals at Peter's House *(Mark 1:29-34; Luke 4:38-41)*

14And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. **15**And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them. **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: **17**That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

Healing in general is absolutely within Jesus' power, He is God and He created all that exists including every human being.

A fever in these days could prove fatal and there were various types of herbal remedies that were used. Those apparently if used had been ineffective. However, the simple touch of the Creator God was all that was needed. We are not told if Jesus asked her if she believed, He simply touched her. Like the woman that had been sick for years and touched the hem of Jesus's cloak and was healed. Jesus knew at once that someone had touch HIM. Based on other verses related to healing, faith is a part in almost every case. Faith by either the one asking, or the one acting on God's behalf. But Faith is not the sole determiner of healing as we have seen in our own lives. The ultimate authority of healing is; God's Will.

On the issue of Faith; if it is Faith in our Faith, it is likely useless. If it is Faith in Jesus, then that is where God wants us to be.

The Cost of Following Jesus

(Luke 9:57-62; Luke 14:25-33; John 6:60-65)

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

We have spoken about Obedience and Jesus commandments. This is an example of a commandment from Jesus that was

specific to a time and place and not of a general nature for everyone for all time. It was directed at His disciples, and the aim was to leave the large gathering and go to the other side of the lake. We are not told why, but as a command directed at His disciples they simply carried it out.

19And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

From Strong's Concordance:

“Pronunciation: gram-mat-YOOS

Phonetic Spelling: (gram-mat-yooce')

KJV: scribe, town-clerk

NASB: scribes, scribe, town clerk”

So, we have a scribe; one who writes and or records for a living, telling Jesus he will follow Him.

20And 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. **21**And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. **22**But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

The Cost of True Discipleship

Jesus is making the cost of discipleship plain: to follow Him, the things of this life must take a distant second place. Comfort,

convenience, and earthly obligations cannot become greater than obedience to Christ.

His words teach that following Christ is not a casual decision. It requires a willing heart, a surrendered life, and a readiness to endure hardship. The path of discipleship is not for those who seek only ease, but for those who are committed to Him above all else.

Jesus Stills the Storm *(Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25)*

23And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. **24**And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

This was no small tempest. The storm was strong enough to threaten the boat and frighten men who had spent their lives on this very sea. These disciples were experienced fishermen, familiar with sudden storms and rough water, yet this storm brought them to the point of fearing for their lives.

This storm was not a test for Jesus. As Creator, He is not troubled by His creation. Rather, the storm became a test for the disciples. Would they respond only in fear, or would they turn to Christ in faith? God often allows trials to reveal what is in the heart and to

teach His people where their trust truly rests. *“Fear is a natural thing, but to continue in fear is a choice.” Berean Bible Study*

1 Peter 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

The Lesson Jesus Was Teaching

Jesus was teaching the disciples to stand on what He had already shown them. He had given them authority, and they needed to learn that the power entrusted to them came from Him, not from themselves.

In this moment, God’s will was not for them to perish in the storm. Instead, He wanted them to trust what Jesus had taught and respond in faith in Jesus and the power He had given them. Their fear revealed that they had not yet fully grasped that lesson, which is why Jesus rebuked them as being “of little faith.”

25And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. **26**And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. **27**But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

Psalms 56:3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

“Fear is natural; remaining in fear is a choice.” Quoted from
Berean Bible Study

The Point Jesus Was Making

Jesus was teaching His disciples how to overcome fear by returning to faith in Jesus and His power. In this moment, they needed to remember what He had already spoken, what He had taught them, and what they had seen Him do.

The lesson may be understood in two connected ways: first, they were to stand firmly on the word of Jesus; second, they were to trust Jesus Himself, the Creator of all things, and act in confidence under His authority. They had seen Jesus heal a leper, drive out demons and heal the sick. Fear had drawn their attention to the storm, but faith was meant to draw their attention back to Christ.

Matthew 14:27

But Jesus spoke up at once: “Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid.”

Mark 5:36

But Jesus overheard their conversation and said to Jairus, “Do not be afraid; just believe.”

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give

to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid.

Mark 4:40

“Why are you so afraid?” He asked. “Do you still have no faith?”

Luke 8:25

“Where is your faith?” He asked. Frightened and amazed, they asked one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him!”

Luke 12:32

Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.

Demons Cast into Pigs

(Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39)

28And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

This “country of the Gergesenes” is what was in Decapolis. A Greek word meaning 10 cities.

The ten cities typically included Damascus, Scythopolis (Beth Shean), Hippos, Gadara, Pella, Gerasa (Jerash), Philadelphia (Amman), Dion, Canatha, and Raphana.

This area was known for its pig farming thus avoided by Jews as God had declared Pigs and unclean animals. Additionally, a

demon possessed man came from the local graves or tombs to meet Jesus. The dead and grave yards made a practicing Jew unclean according to the Law. This man filled with demons did not come to Jesus seeking salvation, it was the demons that drove him to seek Jesus, for fear of what judgement Jesus may have for them.

There are demons (fallen angels) that have been sequestered in chains in hell, and these demons apparently did not want to be held in chains. So, they inquire of the Creator God what His intentions are with them.

2 Peter 2:4 4For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

Jude 1:6 6And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

29And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

Is there a difference between Faith and Knowledge?

There is a difference between knowledge and faith. Knowledge is often built on visible evidence, tangible facts, and proven

principles. It rests on what can be observed, tested, measured, or demonstrated.

In the Christian life, knowledge of God's Word will lead to faith if it is a wholehearted acceptance of Jesus and His Power. As we hear, believe, and trust what God has spoken, faith grows even when the physical evidence is not visible. The demons knew who Jesus was and they were afraid of what He might do to them when He cast them out from the man at the Tombs.

For Believers, knowledge of God's Word which is Christ, brings the committed Christian to an intimate relationship with Christ; it trusts Him, submits to Him, and believes His Word.

30And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding.

Leviticus 11:3 And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you.

God set up some of His Creation to be clean and some unclean. So, what is unclean and clean by definition:

Strong's Concordance Greek Lexicon

Unclean:

Pronunciation: tah-MAY

Phonetic Spelling: (taw-may')

KJV: defiled, + infamous, polluted(-tion), unclean

Clean:

Pronunciation: tah-HOHR

Phonetic Spelling: (taw-hore')

KJV: clean, fair, pure(-ness)

It is still unclear to me what was the reason God would create an animal that was unclean in the first place? However, here is a short video description from Got Questions, of the method God gave man how to figure out what was clean and what was unclean.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/animals-clean-unclean.html>

Understanding without knowing why God did something is putting us again in a place of simply Believing that God had a reason and He has not shared that with us.

As God said evil begets evil and evil seeks evil, we know see these demons prefer to be cast into an unclean animal rather than being cast into the pit.

31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. **32** And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Like Satan, their master, the demons share his destructive purpose: to steal, to kill, and to destroy.

Demon possession was a long understood strategy of Satan. However, I can find no references in the Old Testament to any casting out of demons by any prophet or judge of Israel. The sole exception is David and his harp in a far different manner, being only temporary relief from a demon.

1 Samuel 16:23 And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

As a reminder when Saul was picked by God to be the first King of Israel God had His Holy Spirit come upon Saul. Saul however had continued to sin before God, God removed the Holy Spirit from him, and allowed a demon of depression to occupy Saul.

So, with little experience in seeing an exhortation those who minded the pigs were of course afraid. The fear is likely due to the word used; “**fled** and went their ways into the city”

33And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen

to the possessed of the devils. 34And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.

As with any reported miracle the curiosity of the people would draw them to the scene. Jesus's notoriety continued to grow.

As a side note, this entire event shows us that Jesus was in the land of the gentiles. We know that due to the location and the knowledge that the Jews would not have anything to do with unclean animals such as pigs.

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