

All Manner of Sickness and Disease

Matthew 9:14 – 10:8

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~ Our last report from our Spiritual Safari just about made me sick to write. It was so personally convicting, spiritually rich and supernaturally sweet that it was hard to digest so many words all at one time on the subject of demonic activity. If you haven't read our previous report and, indeed, all fourteen reports thus far from the Gospel of Matthew, then I highly suggest you go back and do so now. This is not a good time to let any sickness slow us down, because we're moving from talking about demon-possessed evil people to talking about the religious fasting crowd in this report. John the Baptist leads off the conversation and John is, actually, the last of the Old Testament prophets; even though we find him in the New Testament - and he was just about equally as out of place in his personal life in that day as his place in Scripture is today, you may be sure. John is the only person who walks out onto the pages of New Testament Scripture directly from the Old Testament where Malachi had prophesied of him to be the messenger of Christ. John arrived for the sole purpose of making the announcement that the Messiah had come. Well, some of John's disciples are a little disturbed at this time because the One Whom John had announced isn't doing things quite the way John did them....

IX

14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

~ Fasting certainly has a value for individuals and for the church's edification when prayed about completely, taught properly and applied correctly. However, we have no commandments from God about fasting at all. We should rejoice in the presence of Christ; whereas, fasting is an act of

mourning. Well, God never gave His people anything but feast days. Fasting, when done properly, is a demonstration of contrition by frustrating ourselves before God and bowing down to the Father asking for mercy, pity and compassion; all while revealing we need Him to provide His help and His comfort in every breath we take. Just make sure you don't tell anyone you're fasting or God will not accept it. Fast, smile, be happy – and study to be quiet while you're at it. So, in light of all that, Jesus now Personally explains the change in dispensations from the Old Testament dispensation of Law to the New Testament dispensation of Grace....

16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

~ The dispensation of Law was ending at the time in which we are studying. It had become tiring and wearisome to the Lord – like an old worn out shirt. Jesus said He's not coming to patch things up. This was very radical theology. See, Jesus isn't taking His bride to marriage counseling for some outside reparations. No, friends, He says He is going to make all things new. That means a total regeneration for me – and you – and let's thank Him for that! The new garment is a robe of righteousness that is given to those who do no more than simply trust in His Name. The law was given by Moses but all things are made new in the Lord Jesus Christ. The wineskin was the wine bottle of that day and putting wine into wineskins was called "...bottling." That bottle would expand with the fermenting of the wine. An old wine bottle that had reached the place of maximum expansion couldn't work twice. Well, Christ didn't come to sew up our old filthy clothes or put something new in this old container - He came to bring us a new wardrobe; a whole new way of dressing, presenting ourselves and appearing before God – clothed in His righteousness and filled with His Holy Spirit....

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples.

20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

~ Jesus sure gets laughed at a lot right before a miracle, doesn't He? We'll see this again and again, so, it is probably the umpteenth million time that the crowds laughed at Him. He always has the last laugh, though. That was also the eighth and ninth miracle we just read; two that go together. God brings our Spiritual Safari to a tremendous scene now; and both of these events have to do with healing. One of them involves raising the dead. The child we just read about was sick unto death. We're also being laughed at now as Jesus goes to her, but He's interrupted, and by the time He gets there the servants come and tell Him she has died. Maybe they were laughing because Jesus was sidetracked? We're only going to mention the

basics of this miracle in this report but other Gospel writers will bring out much deeper observations.

Now, this woman who interrupted His movement to the little girl had been dealing with an awful problem for a very long time. She was likely not going to live much longer without divine intervention. Her miracle represents twelve years of darkness - and then light finally breaking in. We could say we have night and day in this miracle. Luke is going to tell us that she touched Him. All the other miracles He has done have been done by Him doing the touching. Well, either way, she was healed, too! Then, Jesus gets to the home of this ruler and we have the first account of raising the dead. There will be three accounts of these miracles, each more meaningful than the preceding, in Matthew, Mark and Luke – the synoptic Gospels. Jesus loves children – His children – me - and you. Only Christ can bring us back from beyond the grave, friends! This little girl’s family was already having her funeral when Jesus went in to her. Later, Luke recalls Jesus saying to this little girl, “little lamb, wake up!” ~

27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.

~ Alright, this brings us miracle number ten. Jesus instructs both of them not to tell anyone – but they do. Well, one reason is that it caused the crowd to throng in on Him and made it extremely difficult for Him to function. The crowd hindered His work. Of course, no one is going to be silent when they’re healed from blindness or leprosy – so – the crowds came. If you’ve ever been to a major Orlando area tourist attraction in the

middle of summer – or just a rock concert - you would know the types of mind-boggling crowds we're talking about. One man would have actually been in great danger in such a crowd....

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

~ Here we go again with more demonic out-casting activity. We can't seem to get away from evil right now. This is our third encounter with demons and the last report was dark, very dark. Well, here we have outright blasphemy. See, these Pharisees didn't deny that the miracle had been done; what they denied is that God had any part of it. The Pharisees and religious rulers didn't deny that the crippled were healed and that they could leap and walk – because they couldn't deny it. Denying Christ has no credibility whatsoever. To tell an atheist anything other than they are sinners who need a Savior and that Christ died for their sins is a total and complete waste of time. Arguing with them about science and law and seeming Biblical contradictions will ALWAYS be a losing proposition for you – because that can never glorify Christ Jesus....

35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

~ I do not believe the gift of healing is applicable to us today according to Scripture for several reasons. I have been to many faith healing services, personally, and I have always looked very closely for a psychological healing to come along; but it never has. The physical was never real and, if it was real, it wasn't anything substantial; and, if it was claimed to be substantial, it was never substantiated; such as an invalid abandoning a wheelchair or a true remission of pancreatic cancer or something like that. This account says there were thousands who were healed. That means all manner of disease and sickness. Why doesn't a so-called mega-preaching-faith healer just swing by the cancer institute at Orlando Central Regional Medical Center and get down to some real business? Of course, if you have one sign gift you have all of the sign gifts so, while they're there, they can head down into the morgue and make many people very happy by raising the dead. Friends, stop PLAYING with Jesus! Take this as YOUR WARNING! The Lord Jesus does the healing. Any credible doctor will tell you they don't know why some live and some die. We should desire for Him to have the credit anyways. Only Christ can have compassion on the multitudes; and He concludes this chapter with love and compassion. They were as sheep with no shepherd. That broke His heart. Pray the Lord will give your safari guide the heart of a shepherd, flock. Pray that YOU will have compassion and love and patience with the lost, too....

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

~ With this statement the Lord Jesus sends His disciples out. When you pray for something it's always best if you are willing to do it yourself. If you pray for a crop then say "....a-men" with a hoe in your hand while you plant, 'ya dig? When Jesus asks here for them to pray that laborers would go forth into the harvest, guess who He was planning on sending? Jesus was sending the very men that were to pray about it! This was the end of THEIR age – not YOURS! So, our movement with Matthew continues as we arrive at the tenth chapter. We have seen Jesus give the ethic, came down from the mountain, demonstrated that He had the power to supply our

ethic with a dynamic by performing these miracles; and now these apostles are commissioned to go to the nation Israel to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom.

John the Baptist was a forerunner, and these will be after-runners, so to speak. Jesus Himself gives them credentials so they can perform miracles. John the Baptist never performed miracles, we should note. We also need to note the title has changed from “disciple” to “apostle.” Just about every single peculiar ministry and questionable conduct starts right here in this chapter in the Bible. Instructions for a Christian life are not found in this chapter where every confused Christian is looking for them. These are to be considered in the light and under the circumstances which they were given so that we can accurately interpret this Scripture. Accurate means a very clear and succinct interpretation. May I say clearly: this is written to the nation Israel in Matthew’s day....

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1 And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

~ There is simply no way this can be to you today as you read this report because the instruction is to NOT go to the Gentiles. This is to Jewish men

in Israel at this time in which we're studying in history in the Gospel of Matthew. To call yourself an apostle or an "...anointed man of God" when Christ hasn't physically laid His physical hands and His physical eyes upon you physically in this physical world is blasphemous, kids. You had better be glad all manner of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven because you will beg for it one day, I promise you that. Are we sure it says not to go to the Gentile's here? ~

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

~ If you want to limit yourself to being an apostle under this statute then the first thing you better do is pack your bags and leave wherever you are now and get to Israel as quickly as possible. If you want to be correct and flip over to Acts chapter one at verse eight you'll find we are to BEGIN at Jerusalem and then go out from there to Samaria. Here – they are to keep out of Samaria. There, we are to go to the ends of the earth. That is just not here, friends....

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

~ How was the Kingdom at hand? The Kingdom was at hand because Jesus was in their midst. I cannot stress the importance of picking up that little jewel of knowledge and wisdom as it will serve you very well in this Spiritual Safari. That kingdom begins in our hearts and that's where Jesus builds His Kingdom. Modern day apostles and prophets – all fake and phony – all talk about building a Kingdom. Well, that just isn't found in the Word of God – HE will build the Kingdom – not YOU!!! I intentionally bear down on that fact until my pencil lead may break because it's very, very, very important....

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

~ If you are going to claim to perform any sign gifts today then you MUST be able to perform all four of them. Don't kid yourself friends. If just one person is raised from the dead then I'll be there to witness it. Write to me and tell me when and where. Until I hear from you I will be suspicious, I

must warn you again. The Lord Jesus Christ is our Great Physician - the only doctor I recommend. His medicine is His Word. There is no other way; but you can walk into His office right now and climb up on His examination table - and be made whole ~

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