

# The Gospel of

# MATTHEW

## CHAPTERS 8-9



### SECTION 1:

#### THE KINGDOM FOR ALL OF LIFE

Jesus comes to us. This is the astounding theme in the chapters that follow the Sermon on the Mount. In his sermon, Jesus described the kingdom of God in words. In chapters 8-9, he demonstrates the reality of the kingdom in action. In other words, the kingdom of God is not just a theory, but a reality that brings restoration to all kinds of people.

**“And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.” (Matthew 9:35)**

Jesus pursued all people without distinction—the social outcasts, the sick, the needy, the ceremonially unclean, and even the demon-oppressed. Jesus brought the kingdom to sinners. He healed people physically and restored them spiritually from the devastating effects of sin. What about you? Do you feel as if you're beyond the redemptive reach of Jesus? The life of Jesus can become more than just a story to you. Jesus has brought the kingdom to all people. Jesus has brought the kingdom to you.

### The Structure of Matthew 8-9

Leper  
(8:1-4)

Stormy Seas  
(8:23-27)

Dead girl/sick woman  
(9:18-26)

Centurion's Servant  
(8:5-13)

Teaching on  
Discipleship (8:18-22)

Demonized Men  
(8:28-34)

Teaching on  
Discipleship (9:9-17)

Two Blind Men  
(9:27-31)

Sick Mother  
(8:14-17)

Paralyzed Man  
(9:1-8)

Mute Man  
(9:32-34)

## SECTION 2:

### JESUS BRINGS THE KINGDOM IN ACTION

Great leaders lead by example. Nobody wants to follow a hypocritical leader who demands one thing but does another. Jesus is a great leader who practices what he preaches. In his great Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told us what the Kingdom is like and how to live in that Kingdom. In ch. 8-9 he is bringing the power of the Kingdom into the lives of hurting and broken people, not just in words, but in action. By performing miracles and caring for the marginalized, He demonstrates that the Kingdom of Heaven is truly here and invites people to join him in his mission.

## SECTION 3:

### THE KINGDOM IS FOR ALL PEOPLE WITHOUT DISTINCTION

Jesus' life and ministry makes it clear: the kingdom of heaven is for all people without distinction. Jesus cared for the people that society had cast out, interacting with them in ways that no one else would. He touched lepers, spoke with those oppressed by demons, and ate with sinners in their own homes. He met them where they were.

But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matthew 9:12-13)

All of them had been abandoned by their own society, but these are the very people that Jesus came to rescue and heal. These people, the unclean and sinners, were exactly the kind of people that needed the kingdom most, and Jesus brought it to them first.

Lepers	Demon Oppressed	Tax Collectors
Matthew 8:1-4	Matthew 8:28-34	Matthew 9:9-13
<b>Significance:</b> Lepers were considered "unclean" in Jewish law, and had to be avoided if one wanted to stay ritually clean.	<b>Significance:</b> Jesus could have avoided this encounter; instead, he chose to go directly to these men living in tombs and among pigs.	<b>Significance:</b> Tax collectors were Jews that had joined the Romans in oppressing their own people; they were seen as traitors.

SECTION 4:  
**CLEANNES AND HOLINESS**

If you mix a glass of clean water and a glass of dirty water, the dirty water will defile the clean water and both will be unclean. Uncleaness defiles anything it touches.

**“Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleaness, lest they die in their uncleaness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.” (Leviticus 15:31)**

Parts of Old Testament law seem to have a strange focus on disease and death. Even though talking about those things may seem uncomfortable to us, they were very helpful for Israelites. God desired to be close to his people, but bad things would happen if anything unclean came into his presence in the tabernacle. In order to protect the tabernacle from defilement, God set up rules for the people that distanced the unclean to protect the other Israelites from their defilement. He also laid out processes for how the people could become clean again so their closeness with God could be restored.

Jesus did something remarkable in Matthew 8:1-4. Instead of separating himself to preserve his cleanness, he reached out and touched a leper. Lepers were not supposed to be touched because the disease would be spread, but Jesus touched him so the cure could be spread. He also cared for a woman with a discharge, corpses, and men with unclean spirits—all ceremonially unclean. Instead of these peoples’ uncleaness defiling Jesus, Jesus made them clean. Jesus’ holiness is an active, contagious power that overcomes uncleaness and invites people to draw near to God.

Uncleaness	Scripture
Skin diseases	Leviticus 13–14
The dead	Numbers 19:11-13
Woman with discharge of blood	Leviticus 15:25-30

#### SECTION 5:

#### WHO WAS MATTHEW?

In Matthew 9:9, Jesus called Matthew, a tax collector, to follow him—the same Matthew who wrote this gospel account. To understand the significance of this calling, we have to first understand who tax collectors were, and what they represented to the Jewish people. When Rome gained control over a region, they would recruit locals to be tax collectors, and gave them the right to take as much money from the people as they wanted. Tax collectors were seen as traitors who sold themselves out to the oppressive Roman government for personal gain; they were enemies of the Jewish people, in a sense. For Jesus to call this person to be a disciple was a radical act of forgiveness, showing his commitment to love his enemies and to ultimately die for them.

#### SECTION 6:

#### THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

Jesus knows us. He can look us in the face and see right to our heart. He knows our idols and the control they have over our lives. Jesus seems to discourage certain people from following him because he knows it would be too hard for them. A scribe came to Jesus and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” But Jesus' response is far from what anybody would expect. He told him,

**“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” (Matthew 8:20)**

When we become followers of Jesus, life does not become easy and comfortable. Jesus warns that following him will be uncomfortable and testing. We must count the cost. Becoming a disciple of Jesus requires giving our full allegiance to him. This means that whatever the cost, whatever difficult circumstance we encounter, we will resist compromise and follow Jesus. Are we willing to follow Jesus through anything, even if it means joining in his suffering and being treated like he was?