

"Kingdom Breaking In"

Matthew 8:1-17

Overview



It's been a long, wearying Covid season these past months. Most of us are completely fed up with re-organizing our lives around endless restrictions and trying to minimize the risk of contracting a dangerous virus.

Being in a lockdown for a sustained period can be deadening to the soul. A certain numbness can set in, leaving us nostalgic for a life that once was, a life we realize now we did not appreciate enough when we had it.

Maybe that's why we can get a soul-lift when we read about Jesus bringing a new reality into being, one that replaces frustrations with hope and promise. Who's ready for a new kingdom?

Getting Started

Changing Things Up



1. What's one thing you are looking forward to once all Covid restrictions are removed?
 2. In what way has this last period of wrestling with Covid been a blessing to you? What are you thankful for?
 3. What do you think God has been working to accomplish over the last while? What divine purpose (if any) do you see in the pandemic?
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The Text



When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him.

² A man with leprosy ¹ came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

³ Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. ⁴ Then Jesus said to him, "See that you don't tell anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

⁵ When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. ⁶ "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly."

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?"

⁸ The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. ¹¹ I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

¹³ Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that moment.

¹⁴ When Jesus came into Peter’s house, he saw Peter’s mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

¹⁶ When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

“He took up our infirmities
and bore our diseases.”

Matthew 8:1-17 (NIV)

The Video (optional) “Kingdom Breaking In” – Matthew 8:1-17 – by Kyle Corbin, Sept. 19/21
(view at www.immanuelonline.ca).



NOTES: _____

Understanding



1. Review the context of this account. Where has Jesus been and what has He been doing prior to the events of this chapter (see Matt. 5:1, 7:26)? What is the impact of His activity (Matt. 7:1)?
2. What is the medical condition of the person that approaches Jesus in verse 2? What else would he have to suffer besides his medical challenges (see Lev. 13:45-46)? What do the leper’s actions tell us about how he viewed Jesus?
3. What is Jesus’ instruction to the leper after he is healed (vs. 3-4)? Why would following the prescription for cleansing (seen in Lev. 14:1-9) be important to Jesus? Does the leper follow that instruction (see Mark 1:43-45)? What is the impact of the leper’s actions?

4. Who approaches Jesus in verse 5? What is his concern and request (vs. 6)? Why does he reject Jesus' offer to come and perform a healing at his house (vs. 8-9)? What does his reasoning suggest about his opinion of who Jesus is?
 5. What larger truth about Jesus' mission is Matthew hinting at in his description of Jesus' interaction with the centurion (vs. 10)? Consider also Matthew 28:28:16-20.
 6. What types of healings are listed by Matthew in verses 14-18? Matthew describes these events as a fulfillment Scripture (see Isaiah 53:4). What is the prophet talking about in Isaiah 53 (see 53:1-6)? Is Matthew talking about the same thing or something slightly different?
 7. What do the main characters in these three healing accounts have in common? What is Matthew trying to tell us by grouping these accounts together in his narrative?
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Applying



1. What conditions or life circumstances might cause the same societal rejection today as leprosy did in Jesus' time? How is Jesus' treatment of the leper significant for those suffering societal rejection? (Consider the fact that Jesus physically touched the leper (see also Mark 1:40-41))?
2. Why would the leper ask Jesus if He was willing to heal him (vs. 2)? Are there ever situations where people would actually rather not be healed? What would you say to the person today who questions Jesus' desire to bring healing?
3. Why would Jesus seemingly want to keep his cleansing of the leper secret (vs. 4)? Does this not work counter to His mission to offer the Good News? Consider Matthew's explanation of this later on in Matthew 12:15-21. Consider also the time frame for cleansing (Lev. 14:8-9) and if Jesus is actually asking the leper to **never** say anything.
4. Does the church tend to treat some people as lepers in our society today? Who are they? How might we change that attitude? How would Jesus want us to treat such people and act towards them?
5. How does the account about the centurion emphasize Jesus' power (vs. 13)? Are there things in your life that you need to seek solutions for in Jesus and His power? What are they?
6. Jesus undoubtedly upset some of His Jewish hearers with His comments about the centurion's faith and the ultimate fate of some of the descendants of Abraham (vs. 10-12). Are there those today who you think need to be especially challenged because they imagine themselves part of the Kingdom of God (but they are in fact outside of that Kingdom)? What is the best way to challenge them?

7. How do Jesus' actions in each of these three healings bring about a newness of life to those involved? How are the lives of the people Jesus encountered changed (in the short term and in the long term)?

8. In this series of accounts – who do you identify with the most – the leper, the centurion or the woman? Why? How has Jesus ministered to you in the midst of your struggles? Where do you most need to see his Kingdom break through into your reality today?

Memory Verse(s)



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Matthew 8:17 (NIV)

Extra Resources



- ❖ “*Kingdom Breaking In*” – *Matthew 8:1-17* – by Kyle Corbin, Sept. 19/21 (sermon, view at www.immanuelonline.ca). Pastor Kyle comments on the way Jesus' power to heal introduces people to a new and better Kingdom.
- ❖ “*The Centurion: Faith That Made Jesus Marvel*” - by Jon Bloom (article at www.desiringgod.org, June 1, 2010). Bloom reflects on the importance of a heart that humbly puts its faith in Jesus.
- ❖ “*How Do I Know God Is For Me?*” – by Sinclair Ferguson (article at www.ligonier.org, June 23, 2021). Ferguson addresses a question people in need of healing may ask - is God on my side?