

MATTHEW - CHALLENGING THE KING

(Matt 8 - 16)

A. INTRODUCTION [TURN TO MATTHEW 8]

1. Matthew presents Jesus coming as the King

a. Jesus had ministered to the people of Israel

- 1). Mixed acceptance
- 2). Religious leaders had confronted, then rejected Him
- 3). People were becoming infected by the leaders' attitude against Him

b. Jesus changed His approach to preparing His disciples for ministry after

- 1). Spoke in parables as teaching tool for first time
- 2). Objectives:
 - a). Continue to teach His followers in kingdom facts & principles
 - b). Avoid letting the willful skeptics learn the truth

2. So what led up to that situation in Jesus' ministry ?

- a. Represents the bigger picture of the last push in His ministry
 - 1). He was bringing things to a deliberate head
 - 2). And He continued to address Israel as His people

B. THE KING PRESENTS HIS CREDENTIALS

1. To be accepted, He must be verified as genuine

a. Had been many prophecies of the works of the Messiah and King

- 1). He would bring good news (Isa 9.1-2, 61.1-2)
- 2). He would work signs and wonders
 - a). Deaf, blind, mute & lame healed (Isa 35.5-6)
 - b). The dead raised (Isa 26.19)
 - i. Not a direct prophecy, but connected by Hebrew scholars to Isa 35.5-6
 - ii. Jesus quoted it as such in Matt 11.1, and when mentioning raising the dead in Matt 10 and John 5

3). (Isa 6.9-10) He would teach in parables

b. Prophecy is important because it is a testable miracle !!

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2. Credentials showing His **POWER OVER** the entirety of creation

A. POWER OVER NATURAL AFFLICTIONS of men:

1). (8.1-15) Power over Disease

a). Healed a man with **leprosy**

i. vs 2: the leper acknowledges Jesus' authority ("Lord")

i). He expresses faith in that Jesus had to merely "will" it

ii). Consider the difficulty of this

.. He has likely heard of Jesus' prior miracles

.. But it is unlikely that he fully understands that he is talking with God > the One with full authority !

.. Yet he believes that Jesus is able to will it to be

- A wonderful example of faith in Jesus meeting a need

ii. Note vs 3: Jesus actually touched the leper ! > Prohibited !

i). This is ceremonial defilement per Lev 5.3

ii). His authority shown over the disease itself

iii. The leper was immediately cured

i). Told leper to show himself to the priest first

.. No record in Israelite history of leper healed, other than Miriam

.. Priests would HAVE to investigate His claims !

.. Jesus wanted the healing validated before others heard

ii). This would become a testimony to what He could do

b). Healed the centurian's servant of **paralysis**

i. Wasn't even in the servant's presence

i). The centurian understood this as one who had the authority to give orders and they would be obeyed wherever he was

ii). He believed Jesus had that same authority to heal

ii. The servant was healed solely by the word of His authority

iii. Jesus then indicated how He wished Israel had such faith in His authority

- c). Healed Peter's mother-in-law of **fever** by a simple touch
 - i. When one is healed of a fever, the body is usually weak and needs healing time
 - ii. The woman was immediately up and waiting on Jesus and His followers
 - i). The miracle included restoring her health fully

- d). Healing of the unclean woman (Matt 9.20-22)
 - i. Met on the way to Jairus' house
 - ii. She had suffered many years under many physicians
 - i). Spent all she had
 - ii). Note no spiritual attempts mentioned
 - iii). Man-made "solutions" seem to always be tried 1st

 - iii. Woman had faith that Jesus could heal her
 - i). All she needed was to touch His cloak
 - .. She was aware that, under ceremonial law, no one could touch someone with the disease she had
 - .. So her initial intent might have been that, but her faith was so strong that she believed that she didn't need for Him to speak

 - ii). Jesus perceived her faith in Him, and healed her
 - .. Jesus asked who touched Him
 - He had perceived the power inherent in Him (**do**-nam-is) had flowed out to the toucher
 - .. The disciples said anyone in the crowd could have
 - .. But Jesus had perceived His "virtue" gone out to her, and meant someone had touched Him in that way of reaching out to Him in faith

- e). Why this emphasis on the healings ?
 - i. Follows the Sermon on the Mount
 - i). Mathew appears to emphasize that the kingdom of God isn't just about words, but also about actions

 - ii). Jesus' ministry is both doctrinal and a profound application of that doctrine

 - ii. Jesus' works authenticate His words !

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2). (9.18-19, 23-26) Power over Death

- a). Healing of Jairus' daughter
 - i. A ruler of the synagogue
 - i). But yet Jairus fell at Jesus' feet and worshipped Him
 - ii. While Jairus was talking with Jesus, the child died
 - iii). But Jairus believed that Jesus could resurrect her
 - i). Being a ruler of the synagogue, this type of faith was huge among those skeptics
 - iv). Jesus dismissed the mourners at the house
 - i). Note that the mourner's validated that she was dead
 - ii). Mark tells us that Jesus took only Peter, James and John, and her parents into the house with Him
 - .. Again, He is limiting who can see His miracles earlier to prevent a rushed timetable in His ministry
 - v). Jesus then took the girl by the hand and raised her to life
 - i). She immediately responded
 - ii). He told her parents to give her some food to eat, a sign that He had healed her to full life
 - iii). The miracle worked because of her father's faith that Jesus had the power and authority to heal her

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3). (9.27-31) Darkness

- a). Two blind men followed Him
 - i. Called Him "Son of David" = Messianic title
 - ii. Had faith in Him based on this belief > Savior
 - iii. Note their persistence in following Him to the house (they are blind !)
- b). Jesus healed them based on their faith in His identity
 - i. They affirmed His deity by calling Him "Lord"
 - ii. He declared they would be healed based on their faith, and it occurred as such

4). (9.32-34) Dumbness

- a). People brought a demon-possessed man, unable to speak
- b). Jesus cast out the demon, healed him, and he spoke
 - i. Crowd said no record in Israelite history of such
- c). Religious leaders reaction
 - i. He is employing Satan to do these healings

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B. POWER OVER SPIRITUAL AFFLICTIONS of men > Demonic forces

- 1). (8.16-17) Over many **demon-possessed people**
 - a). Demon-possessed people brought to Jesus for healing while He was staying in Peter's home
 - b). Jesus demonstrated His power over Satan, demons' leader
 - i. Ultimately demonstrated on the Cross

- 2). (8.28-34) The two violent **demon-possessed men**
 - a). Forced out of the city, living in tombs
 - i. Possessed by thousands of demons
 - ii. Made them extremely uncontrollable

 - b). Demons recognized Jesus and His power over them
 - i. They asked that He cast them into a herd of 2,000 swine
 - ii. Jesus allowed them to transfer and they drove the swine into the sea
 - i). Why did they make this request and then kill the swine ?
 - ii). Possibly to turn the people against Him

 - c). Note reaction of the towns people
 - i. He freed them from the influence of the violent men
 - ii. But they feared His power more
 - i). Demoniacs were contained, understood, avoidable
 - ii). Jesus' power was obviously superior > was it a danger to them ??
 - iii). They were of the Decapolis, not Israelite, so it is unlikely they had heard the prophecies
 - iv). More of the beginning reaction against His kingship

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C. POWER OVER CREATION ITSELF :

- 1). (8.23-27) **Nature**
 - a). Storm rowing across the Sea of Galilee
 - b). Disciples fearful, Jesus was asleep
 - c). Jesus spoke and the storm stilled, waves calmed immediately
 - i. Usually waves continue to chop after wind dies
 - ii. He rebuked them for their lack of faith
 - i). Here again, we see the King's power is exercised for those who believe in His ability and authority

 - d). Disciples amazed at His complete power over nature

3. Credentials showing His power Over MAN'S TRADITIONS

a. (9.10-13) Dinner with sinners

1). Pharisees question His eating with tax collectors

- a). Hated by Israelites
- b). Showed total lack of compassion toward sinners

2). Jesus stated that He ministered to those with a need

- a). He gave analogy of doctors tending to the sick, not the well
- b). Pharisees would never admit that they were sick and needed the Physician

3). vs 13 shows Jesus' mission more than physical healing

- a). 1st He is indicating by "...I came to call sinners..." of His own pre-existence
- b). 2nd that He was particularly commissioned to save those who were far from God

b. (9.14-17) His disciples not fasting

1). John the Baptist's disciples asking why not

2). Jesus' reply:

- a). Kingdom = a great feast
- b). You fast while waiting for the King to arrive
- c). The King has arrived, no need to fast

3). Jesus' further comment on prevailing tradition:

a). John = reformer calling for repentance under Law

- i. Jesus trying to teach people to gain salvation under the Law would be analogous to a new patch or a new wineskin

b). Jesus = leading out of Judaism into the kingdom of God

- i. Based on Him and His righteousness
- ii. Not based at all on the Law

- c. So the King broke illegal/ineffective traditions where He found them to assert the King's kingdom principles

4. Credentials showing His AUTHORITY

a. (9.1-8) Authority To **forgive**

- 1). Jesus returns to Capernaum
- 2). Paralytic on mat brought to Him
 - a). Jesus forgave him his sins & healed him
 - i. It is probable that his paralysis was due to sin
 - ii. Jesus makes the connection between healing the physical and the spiritual
 - b). Religious leaders called it blasphemy
 - i. This was His 1st opposition from the religious leaders
 - i). They had not charged Him with this before
 - ii. Only God can forgive sins
 - iii. They weren't doing their homework !
 - i). Signs of Messiah = this Man's works ??
 - ii). They did not discern His divine character
 - c). Jesus challenged the leaders' charge
 - i. Easier to heal him or forgive sins ??
 - ii. Forgive would be "easier" = not provable
 - iii. Jesus healed (tough), proved His authority to forgive
 - d). The crowd reacted in awe, recognizing His **authority**

b. (9.35-38) Authority To **DELEGATE authority**

- 1). After all His work, Jesus sees the need of the people
 - a). The people were maligned by the religious leaders
 - i. They were "dispirited" > **hrip-to** > thrown down
 - ii. They were like helpless, wandering sheep
 - iii. They needed truth, guidance, leadership toward truth
 - b). He had been:
 - i. Teaching and preaching
 - ii. Healing, to authenticate His ministry
 - iii. Showing God's compassion toward them
 - c). Who will now do the same after He leaves ??
- 2). He urges the disciples to beseech God for workers
 - a). He would delegate authority for them to carry on His message
 - b). We see this in Acts after He ascends

c. In 10.1-11.1 Jesus instructs His disciples

- 1). (10.1) He gives them authority to work in His Name
- 2). (10.5a) He instructs how to carry on His work when He's gone
- 3). The fact they have been delegated power to work for Him
- 4). Warnings that there will be severe reactions against them

- 5). (11.1) Jesus returned to Galilee to teach and preach

C. THE KING'S AUTHORITY IS CHALLENGED

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1. Now note the trend occurring beginning in 11.2-3
 - a. Jesus has effectively authenticated His position
 - 1). He is the Messiah
 - 2). He is the King
 - 3). He has returned to Israel as promised
 - b. What will the nation do about this ?
 - 1). They REJECT Him !
 - a). He doesn't fit their prejudiced view of the Messiah & King
 - b). He is a threat to the established religious rulers
2. HESITANCE of **John the Baptist**
 - a. John is now in prison
 - 1). He sends disciples to ask if Jesus is the One (11.2-3)
 - a). "...the One Who was to come..." = messianic (Ps 40.7, 118.26)
 - b). At least He was open to the possibility !
 - 2). He is probably skeptical because he expected more of a King
 - a). Wickedness overcome
 - b). Sin judged
 - c). Kingdom brought in
 - d). Don't find fault !! What do WE expect now ??
 - b. Jesus sends back His reply (11.4-6)
 - 1). Not a direct yes or no
 - 2). Instead, He says to tell John what they saw
 - a). His works should indeed indicate that He is the Messiah

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3. Challenges by The Cities (the People)

a. (11.20-24) Jesus denounces their sin

1). He names specific cities with sinful demeanor

- a). They were ones in which His most significant miracles occurred
- b). They were also Israelite cities, vs. Sodom, Gomorrah, Tyre, Sidon

2). He pronounces judgement on them

- a). The danger of rejecting the truth in greater enlightenment
- b). You can challenge His authority, but you lose !

b. (11.25-30) Jesus then gives them the alternative to their condemnation

- 1). You must come to Him in childlike faith
- 2). You can't come to God except through Him (27b)
- 3). You can lay down your weariness with this life by trusting Him
 - a). (vs 29) "...take My yoke upon you ..."
(= accepting HIS AUTHORITY !)

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4. In Chapter 12, we see **POINTED CONTROVERSIES** over His authority

a. Over the **SABBATH**

1). (12.1-8) **Working** on the Sabbath

- a). His disciples were picking/cleaning wheat to eat it
 - i. Pharisees defined as working (threshing) on the Sabbath

b). Jesus disputed their conclusion through illustrations

i. **David, fleeing from Saul**

- i). He ate the tabernacle's consecrated bread
- ii). David believed preserving his life > a technicality

ii. **Temple priests** work on the Sabbath

- i). Work that must be done
- ii). They were regarded as blameless

iii. **Jesus** is Lord of the Sabbath

- i). He controls what can be done on it = authority
- ii). He did not condemn His disciples
- iii). Summary = Pharisees had no compassion for the people
.. They were abusing their authority !

- 2). (12.9-14) **Healing** on the Sabbath
- a). Jesus comes into the synagogue on the Sabbath day
 - b). Pharisees put up man with shriveled hand to trap Jesus
 - i. Ask question if it is lawful to heal on Sabbath
 - ii. Again, challenging His authority (this case re. the Sabbath)
 - c). Jesus' "answering" question
 - i. Wouldn't one save his sheep from a put on the Sabbath ?
 - ii. Is this not an act of mercy ?
 - iii. Isn't a person more valuable than a sheep ? > Conclusion !

3). Sabbath controversies in total

- a). Note the intent
 - i. Jesus made the truth evident in each case > was being ignored
 - ii. Plot is growing to remove the Presenter of truth
 - iii. What's different from today ??
- b). Note Jesus' reaction to these efforts
 - i. He worked to avoid the publicity of His miracles
 - i). He knew it would only bring earlier opposition
 - ii). He is showing His compassion to not stir rebellion

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b). Over accusations of **WORKING WITH SATAN**

- 1). (12.22-24) Healing of the demon-possessed man
 - a). Both blind and mute > difficult communications
 - b). Jesus healed the man
 - i. Crowd stunned, began to wonder if Jesus wasn't the Messiah
 - ii. Pharisees thinking Jesus' power was coming from Satan
 - c). Jesus gave three arguments about HIS authority in answer
 - i. If true, then Satan was working against himself in healing this man
 - ii. They believed current exorcists worked by God's power
 - iii. He was proving He is greater than Satan by driving out the demon
- 2). Jesus then invited the people to decide who's side they were on (12.30-31)
 - a). He was ready to forgive anyone who had some doubt = natural
 - b). They should believe the power He showed as evidence of His authority
 - c). He showed the Pharisees as false leaders by contrasts
 - i. A good tree produces good fruit (12.33)
 - ii. He showed their hearts were evil, they couldn't produce good

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- c. Desire to see **SIGNS** from Jesus = another authority challenge
- 1). Religious leaders asked Him for a miraculous sign (12.38)
 - a). Were they sleeping so far ?? !
 - b). No - they were REJECTING what they had seen so far

 - 2). Jesus' reply (12.39-42)
 - a). Faith doesn't depend on signs > faith necessary to please God
 - b). One more sign coming > Sign of Jonah
 - i). Jonah was in whale's belly 3 days and 3 nights
 - ii). Messiah would likewise be in the grave 3 days and 3 nights
 - i). Jews saw any part of a day as 1 day

 - iii). Jesus is signalling:
 - i). He will be killed = they will reject His authority & Him
 - ii). He was greater than Jonah & Solomon, and they were rejecting Him

 - iii). The nation is finished (for the moment) in His coming

 - iv). By the time they would realize His only sign was true, it would be too late for them to accept Him as King

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D. IN 13.1-52 HIS REACTION TO CHALLENGES: CHANGE IN THE KINGDOM PROGRAM

1. His shift represents a major turning point in His ministry

2. Jesus turns to a focus in instructing His disciples instead of nation/people
 - a. Began to use parables for the first time in Matthew's Gospel
 - b. Jesus gave three reasons too His disciples for using parables
 - 1). (13.11a) - To communicate the truth to them
 - 2). (13.11b)- To hide the truth from unbelievers/skeptics
 - 3). (13.13) - To fulfill Isa 6.9-10
 - a). God had told Isaiah at the beginning of his ministry that the people would not understand him
 - b). This was regarded as prophetic of Jesus, as well

- c. The intention is to encourage His disciples to carry on
 - 1). Doesn't want them to be discouraged by the mix of results coming
 - a). Relatively few believe
 - b). Some believers turn out to be false
 - 2). Wants them to take courage in goal they are building
 - a). The church
 - b). Individual believers
 - c). His Second Coming preparations

E. FORMAL REJECTION OF THE MESSIAH/KING'S AUTHORITY

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- 1. **Religious confrontation with the King**
 - a. (21.23) Chief priests & elders demanded by what authority He did these things
 - 1). Triumphant entry into the city
 - 2). Reception of the people's praise
 - 3). Clearing of the temple
 - 4). Healing of the blind and lame
 - 5). Certainly THEY didn't give Him the authority to be the Messiah !
 - b. Jesus refuses to answer question, gives three responses instead
 - 1). In 21.28-32 Parable: Two sons requested to work in a vineyard by their father
 - a). One refuses, then works anyhow
 - b). One agrees immediately, then doesn't show up
 - c). Pharisees are like the second one
 - i. Heard John, feigned obedience, but didn't do it
 - 2). In 21.33-39 Parable of the landowner
 - a). Rented land (the nation) to others (Pharisees as caretakers)
 - b). Sent servants to get crops, beaten and killed
 - c). Sent son expecting respect, they killed him too
 - d). Israel often spoken of as God's vineyard
 - i. Pharisees failed to be faithful caretakers
 - ii. Will kill His son
 - 3). In 22.1-7 Parable of the Wedding Feast
 - a). Wedding = the Millennial age
 - b). Guests refused to come to the wedding feast
 - i. His servants even murdered
 - c). King sent His army to destroy the killers

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2. **National** rejection of the King

a. Jesus has now proven the RELIGIOUS leaders to be wrong

1). (23.1-12) He warned the disciples & the crowds about their falsehoods

a). Gave seven denunciations of their false religion

i. Their teachings were to be respected

ii. Their practices denounced them as false leaders

b. But He knows the nation is rejecting Him

1). (23.37-39) His lament over Israel and Jerusalem

F. CONCLUSIONS

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1. Final point

a. Look at all the indications that Jesus was Messiah and King

b. Messiah's kingdom ready to happen, then rejected
by the nation

2. Is anything different today from this picture ?

a. Jesus continues to work miracles, indicates His kingdom is coming

b. Countries & societies would rather challenge His authority

c. Individuals would rather challenge His authority

d. But His authority needs to be accepted

1). Is it REALLY "Thy will be done" that we want ?

2). Takes much effort, self-sacrifice, as He indicated