

The Gospel of Matthew

Booklet 11 – Three Lessons

Lesson 26 - Matthew 9:1-9

Lesson 27 - Matthew 9:10-17

Lesson 28 - Matthew 9:18-38

The Growth of Opposition



International ESL/Bible Lessons
Intermediate to Advanced Level

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Much of the material in these lessons come from *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. I*, by William Barclay. Daily Study Bible Series. Other content comes from Bible Commentaries, Dictionaries and on-line sources. All pictures are from Google Images.

The Gospel Of Matthew

The Chapter on Opposition

Material for this section is from William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew: The Daily Study Bible Series*. The Westminster Press. Philadelphia. 1975. Matthew's Gospel is carefully designed.

Chapter 8 shows the Miracles of Jesus.

Chapter 9 shows the growing opposition to Jesus

1. Accused of blasphemy (Matthew 9:1-8)
2. Accused of immorality (Matthew 9:10-13)
3. Accused of slackness in piety (Matthew 9:14-17)
4. Accused of being in league with the devil (Matthew 9: 31-34)

Lesson 26 - Matthew 9:1-9

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

⁹ Jesus stepped into a boat, / crossed over / and came to his own town. / ² Some men brought to him / a paralyzed man, / lying on a mat. / When Jesus saw their faith, / he said to the man, / "Take heart, / son; / your sins are forgiven."

³ At this, / some of the teachers of the law / said to themselves, / "This fellow is blaspheming!"

⁴ Knowing their thoughts, / Jesus said, / "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? / ⁵ Which is easier: / to say, / 'Your sins are forgiven,' / or to say, / 'Get up and walk'? / ⁶ But I want you to know / that the Son of Man has authority on earth / to forgive sins." / So

he said to the paralyzed man, / “Get up, / take your mat / and go home.” / ⁷ Then the man got up / and went home. / ⁸ When the crowd saw this, / they were filled with awe; / and they praised God, / who had given such authority to man.

Vocabulary

1. Paralyzed: A person or thing made unable to move.
2. Blasphemy: Disrespect for religion
3. Mat: Piece of carpet. Floor covering.
4. Awe: Mixture of wonder and awe. Amazement. Surprise.

Related Words

Adjective	Noun	Verb	Adverb
Paralyzed	Paralytic	To paralyze	Paralytically
	Blasphemer Blasphemy	To Blaspheme	

Questions

1. How did the paralyzed man get to Jesus?
2. What kind of friend or relative would go to so much trouble to carry a heavy man to Jesus?
3. What would this healing mean to the people of Capernaum who knew the paralyzed man?
4. Why were the religious teachers of the law always present in the crowds?

Notes

1. Blasphemy was a serious crime in the world and time of Jesus. To insult God was quite dangerous. To ridicule or make fun of religious faith and of God is blasphemy. In many countries, even today, where there is a state religion, blasphemy is in the criminal code and people are punished for that.
2. Capernaum is now the center of the work of Jesus. A group of friends brought or carried the paralytic to Jesus. Without the help of friends, the man would have had no way to get to Jesus.
3. In Palestine, it was the universal belief that all sickness was the result of sin, and no sickness could be cured until the sin was forgiven. It makes sense then that Jesus had to convince him that his sins were forgiven.
4. At this time, the religious people began to follow Jesus and report on all that he was doing. They were upset that Jesus would himself forgive the sin, for that was the prerogative of God.
5. So Jesus joined with them in a debate. Which was easier to forgive sins or to make the man walk? So Jesus demonstrated that he could heal the man.
6. Perhaps it is always true that man can never be truly well or healed without forgiveness for his soul. Health of the body and the mind go hand in hand.
7. In verses 4-8, we see Jesus standing up in his power. He used the language of authority. Read these verses with authority, or as I generally say, *power English!*

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Lesson 27 - Matthew 9: 9-17 The Calling of Matthew

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, / he saw a man named Matthew / sitting at the tax collector's booth. / "Follow me," / he told him, / and Matthew got up / and followed him.

¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, / many tax collectors / and sinners / came and ate with him and his disciples. /

¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, / they asked his disciples, / "Why does your teacher / eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹² On hearing this, / Jesus said, / "It is not the healthy / who need a doctor, / but the sick. / ¹³ But go and learn what this means: / 'I desire mercy, / not sacrifice.' / for I have not come / to call the righteous, / but sinners."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

¹⁴ Then John's disciples came / and asked him, / "How is it / that we and the Pharisees fast often, / but your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁵ Jesus answered, / "How can the guests / of the bridegroom / mourn / while he is with them? / The time will come / when the bridegroom will be taken from them; / then they will fast.

¹⁶ "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth / on an old garment, / for the patch / will pull away from the garment, / making the tear

worse. / ¹⁷ Neither do people pour new wine / into old wineskins. / If they do, / the skins will burst; / the wine will run out / and the wineskins will be ruined. / No, / they pour new wine / into new wineskins, / and both are preserved.”

Vocabulary

1. Booth: Small tent or stall. Small partitioned enclosure.
2. To fast: To abstain from eating for religious or health reasons.
3. Bridegroom: Man at his wedding. Husband-to-be.
4. Mourn: Express sadness at someone’s death. Grieve.
5. To shrink shrank, shrunk or shrunken: To make or become smaller.

My 100% cotton shirt shrinks in a hot clothes dryer.

(A shrink is also a psychiatrist.)

6. To tear: Slit. Pull or come apart. Separate something by force.
7. Wineskin: Wine container made from animal skins.

Related Words

Adjective	Noun	Verb	
Shrinkable	A shrink Shrinker	To shrink	
Tearable Tearful	A tear A tear (fluid)	To tear (apart), tore, torn To tear (up) [same as to cry]	

Questions

1. What did Matthew know about Jesus before he said, "Follow me."?
2. How do people feel about tax collectors in the USA? In your country?
3. What is generally the reason for fasting?
4. People generally don't sew or make their own clothes today. How is this example relevant to modern life?

Notes

1. Here Jesus is being accused of immorality. To eat or spend time with a tax collector was forbidden in Jewish rulings. "By Jewish law a tax-gatherer was debarred from the synagogue; he was included with things and beasts unclean. Leviticus 20:5 was applied to him; he was forbidden to be a witness in any (law) case: 'robbers, murderers and tax gatherers' were classed together.
2. Jews were fanatic nationalists and only God should rule or accept taxes for only God was king. Caesar and Herod were both hated.
3. Other translations call tax collectors *publicans*. The *publicani* were called this because they dealt with public money and with public funds.

4. At the time of Jesus, there were three principal taxes: 1.

Ground tax was $1/10^{\text{th}}$ of his grain and $1/5^{\text{th}}$ of his fruit and vine to the government in cash or kind. 2. Income tax: 1% of a man's income. 3. Poll tax: paid by every male between 14 and 65 and every female from 12 to 65. But there were many other taxes also: duty on imports, travel on roads, to cross a bridge, taxes on wheels and axels of carts, purchase taxes, etc.

5. No one knew the amount of the taxes. The government hired a collector and told him to bring in X amount of money. He then was free to increase this amount. It was basically extortion, and there was nothing the people could do to stop it. They never really knew what they owed.
6. The Roman Army conquered all the lands around the Mediterranean Sea. Caesar Ruled. But each land had its king and its religion. Herod was king in Judea and Galilee. When Jesus left those areas, and crossed into the Decapolis across the Sea of Galilee, he was out of the land of Herod. Matthew probably worked for Herod.
7. Matthew left or lost his job. He found his destiny. He invited Jesus to eat with him, and Jesus did that. In the eyes of the religious people, he chose to eat with sinners. It was a most shocking procedure.

8. In Palestine, people were divided into two sections. The *orthodox*: rigidly kept the law in every petty detail both written and oral. The *people of the land*: those who did not keep the petty regulations. It was forbidden for the orthodox to go on a journey with the people of the land, to do any business with them, to entertain them in your home or their home.
9. Jesus simply said he went where the need was greatest. Barclay says that in this compressed saying Jesus really meant, “ I did not come to invite people who are so self-satisfied that they are convinced they do not need anyone’s help; I came to invite people who are very conscious of their sin and desperately aware of their need for a savior. It is only those who know how much they need me who can accept my invitation.” (Barclay, p. 334)
10. The three great works of the Jewish religious life were almsgiving, prayer and fasting. No one fasted during a wedding feast of 7 days. So here Jesus compares himself to the groom. How could they be sad at such a time of joy? He also let us understand that no joy lasts forever. He would not always be with them.

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Lesson 28 - Matthew 9:18-38

¹⁸ While he was saying this, / a synagogue leader / came and knelt before him / and said, / “My daughter has just died. / But come and put your hand on her, / and she will live.” / ¹⁹ Jesus got up / and went with him, / and so did his disciples.

²⁰ Just then a woman / who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years / came up behind him / and touched the edge of his cloak. /

²¹ She said to herself, / “If I only touch his cloak, / I will be healed.”

²² Jesus turned and saw her. / “Take heart, / daughter,” / he said, / “your faith has healed you.” / And the woman was healed at that moment.

²³ When Jesus entered the synagogue leader’s house / and saw the noisy crowd / and people playing pipes, / ²⁴ he said, / “Go away. / The girl is not dead / but asleep.” / But they laughed at him. /

²⁵ After the crowd had been put outside, / he went in / and took the girl by the hand, / and she got up. / ²⁶ News of this / spread through all that region.

Jesus Heals the Blind and the Mute

²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, / two blind men followed him, / calling out, / “Have mercy on us, / Son of David!”

²⁸ When he had gone indoors, / the blind men came to him, / and he asked them, / “Do you believe / that I am able to do this?”

“Yes, / Lord,” / they replied.

²⁹ Then he touched their eyes / and said, / “According to your faith / let it be done to you”; / ³⁰ and their sight was restored. / Jesus warned them sternly, / “See that no one knows about this.” / ³¹ But they went out / and spread the news about him / all over that region.

³² While they were going out, / a man / who was demon-possessed and could not talk / was brought to Jesus. / ³³ And when the demon was driven out, / the man / who had been mute / spoke. / The crowd was amazed / and said, / “Nothing like this / has ever been seen in Israel.” /

³⁴ But the Pharisees said, / “It is by the prince of demons / that he drives out demons.”

The Workers Are Few

³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns / and villages, / teaching in their synagogues, / proclaiming the good news of the kingdom / and healing every disease and sickness. / ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, / he had compassion on them, / because they were harassed and helpless, / like sheep without a shepherd. / ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, / “The harvest is plentiful / but the workers are few. /

³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, / therefore, / to send out workers / into his harvest field.”

Vocabulary

1. Synagogue: The name for the Jewish church
2. Kneel, knelt: To bend down on one knee. Genuflect
3. Bleeding: A flow of blood. Hemorrhage.
4. Pipes: Flutes
5. Sternly: Very firmly. Strictly. Strongly.
6. Compassion: Kindness. Sympathy. Consideration.
7. Harvest: Season in which crops are gathered. *The apple harvest is coming in now.*

Questions

1. Can a man actually perform miracles? Do we see miracles daily?
2. What does it take for an important and famous man to ask for help?
3. Compare funereal customs today with those taught here.
4. What is an American Christian funeral like?

Notes

1. This passage has three miracle stories in it. The healing of the ruler's daughter, the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, and the healing of the two blind men are all an example of

inadequacies. First are inadequate motive, then inadequate faith and finally, the inadequate conception of who Jesus was. Each vignette has a great deal of background and meaning.

2. The ruler came to Jesus because he had tried everything else. He came in desperation. This story is also told in Mark 5:21-43 and in Luke 8:40-56. There we discover that the ruler's name was Jarius, and he was the head person or ruler of the synagogue.
3. Jesus went with Jarius and found the whole house was in mourning and in pandemonium of death. It was very important to obey the rules of mourning and especially when the family was rich and famous.
4. The first obligation or custom was the *rending of garments*. The clothing was ceremonially torn and many rules were written as to how to do that.
5. The second obligation was *wailing for the dead*. Professional wailers were hired and they made a great deal of crying and distressing noises to show the sorrow and grief of the family. This custom still exists in many parts of the world.
6. Finally, there were *the flute-players*. The flute music was especially associated with the dead. This constant high-pitched wailing of the flutes was limited by law to a maximum of 10 flutes. Therefore, when Jesus entered the house the sound and noise and atmosphere was loud and terribly sad.

7. The people did not believe Jesus when he said the girl was sleeping, but the Greek word he used was for actually sleeping, or perhaps for a coma. Because people were buried so quickly in the Middle East because of the heat, many were actually buried alive. So perhaps part of the miracle here was Jesus's divine diagnosis.
8. The second miracle has to do with the woman who touched the hem of Jesus's cloak or garment. From the point of view of society, this woman was unclean, so she could go nowhere. Any person who touched her was also made unclean, so the limits of society were really serious.
9. So, the woman slipped behind Jesus and touched the hem of his garment. This part of the cloak had hyacinth blue threads sewn into it and then the threads were knotted a specific number of times. This met the law as found in Number 15: 37-41. We can clearly see in these passages that the Jews had many rules and laws for everything.
10. The most moving part of this passage is that Jesus knew, stopped, and healed that woman. She was not a part of the crowd, but she was an individual with a serious problem. Her faith was inadequate, for she surreptitiously reached out to touch just the hem of his cloak.

11. In Swansboro, NC, there is a great and very large charity shop called

The Hem of His Garment. It takes donated things of all types, and resells them at a very reasonable price for the poor people of Eastern NC. It is operated by 4 or 5 churches and associations and staffed by retired people who want to help the poor.

12. The two blind men called Jesus the *Son of David* and that was the title of the expected savior or messiah. David was the ancient King who brought the Israelites or Jews into a kingdom and land. He is like out George Washington, in a way.

13. It seems that people could not be neutral about Jesus. He healed sick, blind and mute people, but was called *demon-possessed* by others. It is true, that any person who does good will be called many names, both good and bad. For leaders, nothing they can do will satisfy all people.

14. Verse 35 tells us the three-fold purpose of Jesus. He was to *herald* or to tell people about God; he was to heal the sick; and he was a teacher. This continues throughout his work.