



*MIRACLES
of JESUS

Miracles of Jesus

Cross Church Bible Group Study
Guide

Lessons 1–8: Selected Miracles from
Matthew

Miracles of Jesus in Matthew

*“We exist to make Jesus known by creating a
movement of multiplying churches that are
biblical, relevant, and missional.”*

Series Introduction

Purpose of the Series

This eight-week study explores selected miracles of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. These miracles are not merely demonstrations of supernatural power or acts of compassion. Matthew intentionally presents them as messianic signs that reveal the identity and authority of Jesus.

Throughout Matthew's Gospel, miracles answer the central question raised by the disciples:

Matthew 8:27 "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him!"

By the end of the miracle narratives, the answer becomes unmistakable: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and the King whose authority extends over every realm of creation.

Matthew's Structure of the Miracle Narratives

Matthew organizes many miracles in structured groupings to emphasize the expanding authority of Jesus.

In Matthew 8–9, miracles appear in three sets of three (often called triads), separated by short teaching sections on discipleship.

First Miracle Triad — Authority over Disease

Matthew 8:1–17

- cleansing the leper
- healing the centurion's servant
- healing Peter's mother-in-law

These miracles show that Jesus has authority over sickness and impurity.

Second Miracle Triad — Authority over Chaos

Matthew 8:23–9:8

- calming the storm
- casting out demons
- healing the paralytic

These miracles demonstrate authority over:

- nature
- evil spirits
- sin

Third Miracle Triad — Authority over Darkness

Matthew 9:18–34

- raising Jairus' daughter
- healing the woman with bleeding
- healing the blind and mute

These miracles reveal Jesus' authority over:

- death
- impurity
- spiritual blindness

The Progression of Jesus' Authority

Across Matthew's Gospel, miracles progressively reveal Jesus' authority over every dimension of the fallen world.

Authority	Miracle	Scripture
Creation	Calming the storm	Matthew 8:23–27
Demons	Gadarene deliverance	Matthew 8:28–34
Sin	Healing the paralytic	Matthew 9:1–8
Death	Jairus' daughter	Matthew 9:18–26
Impurity	Woman with bleeding	Matthew 9:20–22
Law	Healing on Sabbath	Matthew 12:9–14
Provision	Feeding 5000	Matthew 14:13–21
Glory	Transfiguration	Matthew 17:1–13

Matthew is demonstrating that Jesus is not simply a miracle worker but the Messianic King who restores God's rule over creation.

Jesus Greater Than Elijah and Elisha

Matthew also presents Jesus as greater than the great miracle-working prophets of the Old Testament.

Elijah and Elisha performed remarkable miracles:

Prophet	Miracle	Scripture
Elijah	raises widow's son	1 Kings 17
Elisha	raises Shunammite's son	2 Kings 4
Elisha	multiplies bread	2 Kings 4
Elisha	heals leprosy	2 Kings 5

However, there is a crucial difference.

The prophets prayed for God to act.

Jesus commands miracles directly.

He rebukes storms, commands demons, forgives sins, and raises the dead by His own authority. This demonstrates that Jesus is not merely a prophet but the divine Messiah.

The Transfiguration later confirms this truth when the Father declares:

Matthew 17:5 “This is my beloved Son... listen to him.”

Old Testament Messianic Expectations

Matthew’s miracle narratives also echo Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah.

Isaiah 35:5–6

“The eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer.”

Isaiah 53:4 “He himself bore our sicknesses.”

These passages describe the restoration that would accompany the arrival of God’s kingdom. Matthew presents Jesus’ miracles as evidence that these promises are being fulfilled.

1

The King Who Commands the Storm

Matthew 8:23–27

Lesson 1: The King Who Commands the Storm

Matthew 8:23–27

Theme: Jesus demonstrates divine authority over creation, revealing that He is the Messiah and Lord of all.

■ Full Scripture (CSB)

23 As he got into the boat, his disciples followed him.

24 Suddenly, a violent storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves—but Jesus kept sleeping.

25 So the disciples came and woke him up, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to die!”

26 He said to them, “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

27 The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him!”

🧊 Ice Breaker — “Storm Stories”

- Have you ever been caught in a severe storm?
- What emotions did you feel during that experience?

Why do storms often become symbols of fear, chaos, or crisis in life?

The disciples in today's passage experienced a terrifying storm on the Sea of Galilee. What happens next reveals something extraordinary about Jesus.

Optional media introduction:

Show the calming the storm scene from *The Chosen* (Season 3 depiction of the miracle).

Historical / Biblical Background

Matthew's Structure of Miracles

Matthew chapters 8–9 contain a carefully organized section demonstrating Jesus' authority.

Matthew groups miracles into three sets of three miracles, separated by teaching about discipleship.

This miracle begins the second miracle triad.

Triad 2 demonstrates Jesus' authority over:

- nature (calming the storm)
- demons (Gadarene demoniacs)
- sin (healing the paralytic)

Matthew is showing that Jesus has authority over every realm of the fallen world.

The Sea in Biblical Thought

In the Old Testament, the sea often represents chaos and danger.

The people of Israel believed only God had authority over the sea.

Psalm 107:29 "He stilled the storm to a whisper, and the waves of the sea were hushed."

Job 38:8–11

God describes His power over the sea during creation.

Therefore, when Jesus rebukes the storm, Matthew’s readers would immediately recognize the implication:

Jesus is doing what only God can do.

The Sea of Galilee

The Sea of Galilee sits in a basin surrounded by hills. Sudden storms can form quickly when cold air descends from the mountains and meets warm air rising from the lake.

Experienced fishermen like Peter and Andrew would have known this danger well.

The storm described here was not minor—it was severe enough to frighten seasoned fishermen.

Jesus Greater Than the Prophets

The Old Testament prophets Elijah and Elisha performed great miracles, but they always prayed for God to act.

For example:

1 Kings 17:20–22 Elijah prays before the widow’s son is raised.

In contrast, Jesus simply commands the storm.

He does not ask God to calm the sea. He rebukes it directly.

This reveals that Jesus possesses divine authority, not merely prophetic power.

■ Cross References

Psalm 107:28–29

Job 38:8–11

Jonah 1:4–16

Mark 4:35–41

Luke 8:22–25

Main Points

1. Following Jesus Does Not Remove Life’s Storms

Matthew 8:23 “As he got into the boat, his disciples followed him.”

The disciples were obeying Jesus when the storm occurred.

Following Christ does not guarantee an easy life.

Faithful believers still encounter trials, fears, and unexpected crises.

In fact, sometimes storms arise because we are following Jesus.

2. Fear Reveals the Limits of Our Faith

Matthew 8:25

“Lord, save us! We’re going to die!”

The disciples believed Jesus could help, but their fear revealed their limited trust.

Jesus responds: (Matthew 8:26) “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?”

Jesus does not condemn them for coming to Him.

He challenges them to trust Him more deeply.

3. Jesus Commands Creation

Matthew 8:26 “He rebuked the winds and the sea.”

The word rebuked is the same word used when Jesus rebukes demons.

Creation itself obeys Jesus. Immediately the storm stops.

Matthew emphasizes the result: “There was a great calm.”

The sea does not gradually settle. It instantly becomes calm.

4. The Miracle Reveals the Identity of Jesus

Matthew 8:27 “What kind of man is this?”

This is one of the most important questions in Matthew’s Gospel.

The miracles are meant to answer it.

As the Gospel progresses, the disciples move toward the final confession:

Matthew 14:33 “Truly you are the Son of God.”

Reflection & Application

1. Why do you think the disciples were so afraid even though Jesus was with them?
2. What kinds of “storms” do people experience in life today?
3. What does this miracle teach us about Jesus’ authority?
4. How can remembering this story help us trust God during difficult situations?
5. When you face fear, what practical steps help you turn to Christ?

Prayer Focus

Spend time praying for:

- trust in Christ during difficult circumstances
- peace during life's "storms"
- faith that Jesus is truly Lord over every situation.

Share personal prayer requests related to challenges you are currently facing.

Family Engagement

Activity

Fill a clear bowl with water. Have a child gently blow across the water to create waves.

Explain that storms can make the water dangerous. Then ask the child to stop blowing.

Explain: When Jesus spoke, the storm stopped immediately.

Discuss: Why were the disciples amazed?

Family Discussion Questions

- What made the disciples afraid?
- What did Jesus do?
- What does this story teach us about Jesus?

Pray together with your family during the week, asking Jesus to help you all trust Him during difficult situations.



2

The King Who Defeats the Power of Evil

Matthew 8:28–34

Lesson 2: The King Who Defeats the Power of Evil

Matthew 8:28–34

Theme: Jesus demonstrates absolute authority over demons and the kingdom of darkness, revealing that He is the Messiah, the Son of God, and the stronger King.

■ Full Scripture (CSB)

28 When he had come to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him as they came out of the tombs. They were so violent that no one could pass that way.

29 Suddenly they shouted, “What do you have to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?”

30 A long way off from them, a large herd of pigs was feeding.

31 “If you drive us out,” the demons begged him, “send us into the herd of pigs.”

32 “Go!” he told them. So when they had come out, they entered the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the water.

33 The men who tended them ran off, went into the town, and reported everything, especially what had happened to those who were demon-possessed.

34 At that, the whole town went out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

Ice Breaker — “Fear, Evil, and What Controls Us”

What kinds of things tend to create the deepest fear in people: sickness, death, evil, loss of control, or something else?

Why do people seem both fascinated by and afraid of evil or darkness?

In today’s passage, Jesus confronts not merely human suffering or natural chaos, but personal spiritual evil. Matthew wants us to see that the authority of Jesus extends beyond storms and sickness to the kingdom of darkness itself.

Historical / Biblical Background

This miracle comes immediately after Jesus calms the storm on the Sea of Galilee. That sequence matters.

Matthew is not stringing stories together randomly. In Matthew 8–9, he is presenting Jesus’ miracles in a deliberate theological order. The calming of the storm shows Jesus’ authority over nature. The casting out of demons shows Jesus’ authority over evil spirits. The healing of the paralytic then shows His authority over sin. Matthew is progressively revealing that Jesus has authority over every realm of the fallen world.

This miracle belongs to the second miracle triad in Matthew’s structured miracle section:

- Calming the storm — authority over nature
- Casting out demons — authority over evil
- Healing the paralytic — authority over sin

This miracle is not simply about two miserable men being helped. It is about the Messiah confronting the kingdom of darkness.

The Region of the Gadarenes

Matthew says Jesus came to “the region of the Gadarenes.” This was an area associated with the Decapolis, a largely Gentile region east or southeast of the Sea of Galilee. The presence of a large herd of pigs confirms that this is non-Jewish or heavily Gentile territory, since pigs were unclean animals to the Jews.

That matters because Jesus is now displaying His authority not only in Jewish settings but also in territory viewed as spiritually and culturally unclean. The Messiah’s authority extends everywhere.

Tombs, Uncleaness, and Disorder

The two men live among the tombs. In Jewish thinking, tombs represented uncleaness, death, isolation, and defilement. Everything about this scene communicates disorder:

- unclean spirits
- unclean place
- unclean animals
- violent men
- social destruction
- fear in the community

Matthew is painting a picture of what evil does. Evil dehumanizes. Evil isolates. Evil destroys peace. Evil makes human life unlivable.

These men are not merely troubled. They are enslaved and ruined by demonic power.

The Old Testament Background

While the Old Testament does not often narrate demon possession the same way the Gospels do, it clearly presents the reality of spiritual rebellion, hostile powers, and the coming victory of God over evil.

One foundational promise is:

Genesis 3:15 — the seed of the woman will crush the serpent’s head.

That early promise sets the trajectory of Scripture: evil will not have the final word. God will send One who defeats the serpent and reverses the ruin sin has brought into the world.

In addition, the Old Testament repeatedly emphasizes that the Lord alone has absolute sovereignty over all spiritual powers. The nations may fear the gods, idols, and dark forces, but the God of Israel rules above all.

When Jesus commands demons and they obey immediately, Matthew is showing that the promised victory over evil is breaking into history.

Matthew’s Christological Point

Notice that the demons know something before the crowd does. They call Jesus: “Son of God.”

That title is crucial. The people in the town do not yet understand who Jesus is. The disciples are still learning. But the demons know exactly who He is and fear Him.

This is one of Matthew’s striking themes: sometimes the spiritual enemies of Jesus recognize His authority more clearly than the human observers around Him.

The demons also ask: “Have you come here to torment us before the time?”

That line reveals something important: the demons know judgment is coming. They know there is an appointed time when God will fully and finally condemn evil. Their fear shows that Jesus is not one spiritual power among many. He is the One who stands over them as Judge.

Jesus Greater Than Elijah and Elisha

Elijah and Elisha confronted idolatry and false worship in Israel, but here Jesus goes further. He does not merely challenge false religion. He directly confronts personal demonic evil.

And unlike the prophets, Jesus does not pray, struggle, chant, or perform a ritual.

He gives one command: “Go!”

That is all.

The brevity is the point. Jesus does not negotiate with demons. He does not battle them as an equal. He commands and they obey.

This reveals that Jesus is greater than the prophets, greater than any exorcist, and greater than all dark powers. He is the Messiah and Son of God.

Meaning in Matthew’s Flow

This miracle follows the storm for a reason. Matthew is showing that Jesus is Lord over both:

- the chaos outside us
- the evil against us

The storm revealed that creation obeys Him. This miracle reveals that demons obey Him.

The conclusion is unavoidable: Jesus is not merely a teacher of wisdom or a worker of wonders. He is the King whose authority extends over all creation and the entire unseen realm.

Cross References

Genesis 3:15

Deuteronomy 32:16–17

Psalms 106:37

Isaiah 49:24–25

Matthew 12:28–29

Mark 5:1–20

Luke 8:26–39

Colossians 2:13–15

1 John 3:8

Main Points

1. Evil Dehumanizes and Destroys

Matthew 8:28

The two men come out of the tombs, violent and terrifying. They are not living normal human lives. They are isolated from society, associated with death, and dangerous to everyone around them.

This is what evil does.

Evil does not liberate. Evil destroys. Evil does not empower. Evil enslaves. Evil does not humanize. Evil disfigures the image of God in human life.

Matthew gives very few details, but the details he gives are enough to show how severe the situation is. These men are under domination they cannot break by their own strength.

Application: Sin and evil always promise more than they deliver. What begins as fascination can end in bondage. What begins as indulgence can end in destruction. The enemy's work is always to steal, kill, and destroy.

2. Evil Recognizes Jesus' Authority Immediately

Matthew 8:29 The demons cry out: "What do you have to do with us, Son of God?"

There is no confusion here. The demons do not ask whether Jesus has authority. They assume it. They know who He is.

This is deeply revealing. Many people in the Gospel hesitate, question, or misunderstand Jesus. The demons do not. They recognize both His identity and His authority.

They also say: "Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

This shows that evil is already living under sentence. The demons know final judgment is coming. Their question is not whether Jesus can judge them, but whether the appointed moment has arrived.

Application: Jesus never meets evil as a helpless observer. He meets it as sovereign Lord. Believers do not need to pretend evil is unreal, but neither should they fear as though Christ were weak.

3. Jesus Defeats the Powers of Darkness with a Word

Matthew 8:30–32

The demons beg. Jesus commands. That contrast is important.

The demons do not challenge Him successfully. They do not resist Him effectively. They plead for permission. Jesus is in complete control of the encounter from beginning to end.

His command is astonishingly brief: “Go!”

That is enough.

The Son of God does not need ceremony to prove authority. His word is authority.

This echoes the broader pattern in Matthew:

- He rebukes the storm and it obeys.
- He commands demons and they obey.
- He forgives sins and proves it by healing.

All this reveals that Jesus is the stronger King.

This also helps explain Matthew 12:28–29, where Jesus says that if He drives out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come, and that one must first tie up the strong man before plundering his house.

That is what is happening here. Jesus is plundering Satan’s territory because He is stronger.

Application: This miracle is not merely about one moment of deliverance. It is a sign that the kingdom of God has arrived and that Jesus is overthrowing the dominion of darkness.

4. People Must Decide Whether They Want Jesus More Than Their Familiar World

Matthew 8:33–34

The town hears what happened. They see Jesus. And they ask Him to leave.

That is one of the most tragic responses in Matthew.

Why would people ask the liberator to depart?

Probably because Jesus disrupted their normal order. He exposed spiritual reality. He brought power that they could not manage. He cost them something. The loss of the pigs may also have shaped their reaction.

That is still a live issue today. Many people are willing to admire Jesus from a distance, but not welcome Him when His presence disrupts their idols, comforts, profits, assumptions, or control.

Perhaps they preferred manageable normalcy to the holy authority of Jesus. Or perhaps they were simply terrified.

Application: Every miracle in Matthew presses the same question: What will you do with Jesus? His power is not neutral. His authority demands a response.

5. This Miracle Reveals Jesus as the Messiah, Son of God, and Stronger King

This is the major theological point of the lesson.

Jesus is not presented here merely as compassionate healer. He is the conquering Messiah.

He fulfills the ancient promise of victory over the serpent. He demonstrates the arrival of the kingdom. He exposes evil as doomed. He reveals Himself as Son of God and Lord over the unseen realm.

The miracle therefore contributes to Matthew's unfolding answer to the question:

“What kind of man is this?”

Answer: He is the Messiah who is stronger than Satan, stronger than evil, stronger than every dark power, and worthy of trust, worship, and obedience.

Reflection & Application

1. What details in this passage most clearly show the destructive nature of evil?
2. Why do you think Matthew records that the demons recognized Jesus as the Son of God?
3. What does Jesus' one-word command reveal about His authority?
4. Why do you think the townspeople asked Jesus to leave instead of welcoming Him?
5. In what ways do people today sometimes resist Jesus because He disrupts their comfort or control?
6. How does this miracle strengthen your confidence in Christ when facing fear, temptation, or spiritual opposition?
7. What does this passage teach us about the kingdom of God?

Prayer Focus

Pray together for:

- confidence in the authority of Jesus over all evil
- freedom from fear and spiritual oppression
- discernment and faith when facing temptation
- courage to welcome Jesus fully, even when His authority disrupts our comfort
- Pray not in panic about evil, but in confidence because Jesus is Lord.

Family Engagement

Family Activity: Flashlight Rescue Challenge

Materials

- flashlight
- blanket or dark room
- small object or toy
- Bible

Activity

Hide a small toy or object in a darkened room or under a blanket. Give a child a flashlight and ask them to find it.

After they find it, explain: Darkness can feel scary because we cannot see clearly. But when light comes in, darkness does not fight back. It gives way.

Then connect that truth to Jesus: In today's story, Jesus met real evil and darkness, and the darkness had to obey Him. Jesus is stronger than evil.

Read Together

Read Matthew 8:28–34 as a family.

Family Discussion Questions

- Why were the men in the story so troubled?
- What did the demons call Jesus?
- What happened when Jesus gave the command?
- What does that teach us about who Jesus is?
- When do people feel afraid today?
- Why can we trust Jesus when we are afraid?

Family Prayer

Ask each family member to name one fear or worry.

Then pray: “Jesus, thank You that You are stronger than evil, stronger than fear, and stronger than anything that tries to control our hearts. Help us trust You and follow You. Amen.”

Optional Family Follow-Up

Have children draw two pictures:

1. the men before Jesus’ command
2. the freedom and peace that came after Jesus acted

Use the drawings to talk about the difference Jesus makes.



3

The King Who Forgives Sin

Matthew 9:1–8

Lesson 3: The King Who Forgives Sin

Matthew 9:1–8

Theme: Jesus reveals His divine authority to forgive sins, demonstrating that He is the promised Messiah and the Son of Man who possesses God’s authority on earth.

Full Scripture (CSB)

1 So he got into a boat, crossed over, and came to his own town.

2 Just then some men brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, “Have courage, son, your sins are forgiven.”

3 At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, “He’s blaspheming!”

4 Perceiving their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why are you thinking evil things in your hearts?”

5 For which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?

6 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—then he told the paralytic, “Get up, take your stretcher, and go home.”

7 And he got up and went home.

8 When the crowds saw this, they were awestruck and gave glory to God, who had given such authority to men.

Ice Breaker — “The Real Problem”

If you could instantly remove one major problem from the world, what would it be?

What do you think is the deepest root problem behind all the brokenness in the world?

In today’s miracle, people bring Jesus a man with a physical problem—paralysis. But Jesus addresses something even deeper first: sin.

This miracle shows that Jesus did not come only to heal bodies but to restore humanity’s relationship with God.

Historical / Biblical Background

Matthew tells us that Jesus returned to “his own town,” referring to Capernaum, which had become the center of Jesus’ Galilean ministry (Matthew 4:13).

At this point in the Gospel, Jesus has already demonstrated extraordinary authority:

- authority over disease
- authority over nature
- authority over demons

Now Matthew presents an even more astonishing claim: Jesus has authority to forgive sins.

To understand why this moment is so dramatic, we must understand the Jewish worldview.

Only God Forgives Sin

In the Old Testament, forgiveness ultimately belongs to God alone.

Isaiah 43:25

“I sweep away your transgressions for my own sake.”

Psalms 103:3

“He forgives all your iniquity.”

The temple sacrificial system existed because sin separated people from God, and only God could remove guilt.

So when Jesus tells the paralytic: “Your sins are forgiven,” the religious leaders immediately recognize the implication. They conclude that Jesus is committing blasphemy—claiming authority that belongs only to God.

Matthew is intentionally highlighting this conflict.

The miracle is not primarily about paralysis. It is about authority.

The Title “Son of Man”

Jesus says: “so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.”

This title is drawn from Daniel 7:13–14, where the Son of Man receives authority, glory, and an eternal kingdom from God. By using this title in connection with forgiveness, Jesus is identifying Himself with the divine ruler described in Daniel’s prophecy.

Matthew’s Jewish audience would understand the significance: Jesus is claiming to be the Messianic King with divine authority.

Healing as Proof

Jesus then heals the paralytic.

Why?

Because forgiveness cannot be physically verified. Anyone could say “your sins are forgiven.” But a miraculous healing provides visible evidence that Jesus truly possesses the authority He claims.

The logic is: If Jesus can perform the visible miracle, then His invisible claim is also true.

This miracle therefore becomes one of the clearest demonstrations in the Gospels that Jesus possesses divine authority.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:25

Psalms 103:2–3

Daniel 7:13–14

Isaiah 53:5

Mark 2:1–12

Luke 5:17–26

Colossians 2:13–14

Main Points

1. Faith Brings People to Jesus

Matthew 9:2 “Seeing their faith...”

Matthew highlights the faith of the men who brought the paralytic to Jesus.

Their faith is not merely intellectual belief; it is active trust. They are convinced that Jesus has the power to help their friend, so they bring him to Jesus.

Faith often expresses itself through action.

Application: Sometimes people encounter Jesus because faithful friends bring them. Our willingness to help others encounter Christ can change lives.

2. Sin Is Humanity's Deepest Problem

When Jesus sees the paralytic, He does not begin with physical healing.

Instead He says: "Have courage, son, your sins are forgiven."

This statement reveals something important: Jesus addresses the man's greatest need first.

Physical suffering is real and painful, but it is not humanity's deepest problem. Our deepest problem is separation from God caused by sin

Jesus came not merely to improve earthly circumstances but to deal with the root cause of human brokenness.

Application: Many people seek Jesus primarily for relief from life's difficulties. But the greatest gift Jesus offers is reconciliation with God.

3. Jesus Knows the Thoughts of the Heart

Matthew 9:3–4 The scribes accuse Jesus of blasphemy—but they do so silently, "to themselves."

Yet Jesus immediately responds to their thoughts.

This reveals another dimension of His authority: Jesus possesses divine knowledge.

In Scripture, God alone truly knows the human heart.

1 Samuel 16:7 “Humans do not see what the Lord sees, for humans see what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart.”

Jesus demonstrates this same knowledge.

Application: Nothing in our hearts is hidden from Christ. This truth can be sobering, but it is also comforting. The One who knows us completely also offers forgiveness and restoration.

4. The Miracle Confirms Jesus' Authority

Jesus asks the scribes:

“Which is easier: to say ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or ‘Get up and walk?’”

The point is not which statement is easier to say but which claim is easier to prove.

Forgiveness cannot be seen. Healing can.

So Jesus heals the paralytic to prove His authority to forgive sins.

And the result is immediate.

The man stands, takes his stretcher, and walks home.

This visible miracle confirms the invisible truth: Jesus truly has authority to forgive sin.

5. The Crowd Responds with Awe

Matthew 9:8 The crowd is “awestruck” and glorifies God.

However, Matthew also hints that their understanding is incomplete. They praise God for giving “such authority to men,” suggesting that they have not yet fully grasped the unique identity of Jesus.

Throughout the Gospel, people gradually move toward the full recognition that Jesus is not merely a man empowered by God but the Son of God Himself.

Reflection & Application

1. Why do you think Jesus addressed the man’s sin before his physical condition?
2. What does this miracle reveal about the true mission of Jesus?
3. Why did the scribes consider Jesus’ statement to be blasphemy?
4. How does the healing of the paralytic confirm Jesus’ authority?
5. What difference does it make to know that Jesus has the authority to forgive sin?
6. How can believers help others encounter Jesus the way the paralytic’s friends did?
7. In what ways do people today misunderstand Jesus’ mission in the same way the crowd did?

Prayer Focus

Pray together for:

- gratitude for the forgiveness offered through Christ
- deeper understanding of the gospel
- courage to bring others to Jesus
- humility and repentance where sin still needs to be confessed

Encourage the group to spend time thanking God specifically for the forgiveness found in Christ.

Family Engagement

“Helping Friends Reach Jesus”

Family Activity — The Carrying Challenge

Create a simple activity to illustrate the faith of the paralytic’s friends.

Materials

- blanket or large towel
- lightweight object (stuffed animal or pillow)

Activity

Have two or four family members carry the object across the room using the blanket or towel.

Explain that the paralytic could not walk, so his friends carried him to Jesus.

Family Discussion

Ask children:

- Why did the friends bring the man to Jesus?
- What did Jesus say first when He saw the man?
- Why is forgiveness important?

Explain that the greatest gift Jesus gives us is forgiveness.

Family Prayer

Invite each family member to thank Jesus for forgiving sins and helping people start fresh with God.



4

The King Who Conquers Death

Matthew 9:18–26

Lesson 4: The King Who Conquers Death

Matthew 9:18–26

Theme: Jesus demonstrates His authority over death itself, revealing that He is the Messiah who brings life where death reigns.

Full Scripture (CSB)

18 As he was telling them these things, suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him, saying, “My daughter has just died. But come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.”

19 So Jesus and his disciples got up and followed him.

20 Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his robe.

21 For she said to herself, “If I can just touch his robe, I’ll be made well.”

22 Jesus turned and saw her. “Have courage, daughter,” he said. “Your faith has saved you.” And the woman was made well from that moment.

23 When Jesus came to the leader’s house, he saw the flute players and a crowd lamenting loudly.

24 “Leave,” he said, “because the girl is not dead but asleep.” And they laughed at him.

25 After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up.

26 Then news of this spread throughout that whole area.

Ice Breaker — “When Life Feels Hopeless”

What situations in life tend to feel the most hopeless to people?

Why does death feel like the ultimate defeat?

In today’s passage, Jesus confronts the greatest enemy humanity faces—death itself. Matthew shows that the authority of Jesus extends even over the grave.

Historical / Biblical Background

This miracle occurs in the third miracle triad in Matthew 9. These miracles progressively reveal Jesus’ authority over the deepest consequences of the Fall.

The triad includes:

- raising Jairus’ daughter — authority over death
- healing the bleeding woman — authority over impurity
- healing the blind and mute — authority over spiritual darkness

Matthew deliberately places these miracles together to demonstrate that Jesus brings restoration where sin has brought devastation.

The Synagogue Leader

Matthew refers to the man simply as “one of the leaders.” Mark and Luke identify him as Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue.

A synagogue ruler was responsible for organizing worship, reading Scripture, and maintaining order in the synagogue. This means Jairus was a respected religious leader in the community.

For such a man to kneel before Jesus shows both desperation and faith.

His request reveals extraordinary trust: “My daughter has just died. But come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.”

Jairus believes Jesus has authority even over death.

Mourning Practices

When Jesus arrives at the house, Matthew describes professional mourners and flute players. In first-century Jewish culture, mourning was public and loud. Even poor families were expected to hire musicians and mourners to lament the death.

The presence of these mourners confirms that the girl is truly dead.

When Jesus says the girl is “asleep,” He is not denying her death but speaking from His authority over it. In Scripture, sleep sometimes becomes a metaphor for death because resurrection is possible through God’s power.

Jesus Greater Than Elijah and Elisha

The Old Testament records two remarkable resurrections performed by prophets.

Elijah — 1 Kings 17:17–24 Elijah prayed earnestly and stretched himself over the child three times before God restored life.

Elisha — 2 Kings 4:32–37 Elisha also prayed and stretched himself over the boy before the child revived.

Both prophets depended on God to act.

Jesus does something different. He simply takes the girl by the hand, and she rises.

There is no extended prayer, no ritual, no struggle.

Jesus exercises authority directly.

Matthew is demonstrating that Jesus is greater than the prophets. He does not merely ask God to raise the dead. He commands life.

The Deeper Meaning

This miracle is not only about one child restored to life. It points forward to the ultimate victory of Christ over death.

Death entered the world through sin (Genesis 3). Every funeral reminds humanity of the brokenness of creation.

But Jesus' ministry begins to reverse that curse.

Every resurrection miracle is a sign that the kingdom of God has come and that death will not have the final word.

This miracle anticipates two greater events:

- the raising of Lazarus (John 11)
- the resurrection of Jesus Himself

Through Christ, the final enemy—death—will ultimately be defeated.

■ Cross References

1 Kings 17:17–24

2 Kings 4:32–37

Isaiah 25:8

Hosea 13:14

Matthew 11:5

John 11:25–26

1 Corinthians 15:54–57

Revelation 21:4

Main Points

1. Desperate Faith Comes to Jesus

Matthew 9:18 Jairus kneels before Jesus and pleads for help.

For a respected synagogue leader, this act is significant. Some religious leaders oppose Jesus, but Jairus humbles himself before Him.

Desperation often brings clarity. When faced with the loss of his daughter, Jairus recognizes that Jesus is his only hope.

Application: Many people only seek Jesus when life collapses. Yet moments of desperation can open hearts to genuine faith.

2. Jesus Is Not Intimidated by Death

When Jesus arrives, the mourners are already grieving loudly. They assume the situation is final.

But Jesus says: “The girl is not dead but asleep.”

The crowd laughs at Him. From their perspective, death is irreversible. But Jesus sees death differently. For Him, death is not the end but an enemy He has the authority to overcome.

Application: Human perspective often sees situations as hopeless. Jesus sees possibilities beyond human limits.

3. Jesus Brings Life with a Simple Touch

Matthew 9:25 Jesus takes the girl by the hand. Immediately she rises.

Matthew records the event in a simple sentence because the power lies not in dramatic description but in the authority of Jesus.

Just as Jesus commanded the storm and demons, He now commands life itself.

Application: This miracle reminds believers that Jesus possesses authority over the greatest enemy humanity faces.

4. The Miracle Points to the Greater Victory Over Death

The girl eventually died again later in life. This miracle was not the final defeat of death.

Instead it was a preview of the coming victory.

Jesus' resurrection would demonstrate once and for all that death does not have the final word.

Because Christ lives, those who trust Him will also live.

Application: Christians face death with hope because Jesus has already conquered it.

Reflection & Application

1. What does Jairus' response to Jesus teach us about faith?
2. Why do you think the mourners laughed at Jesus?
3. What does this miracle reveal about Jesus' authority?
4. How does this miracle point forward to the resurrection of Jesus?

5. In what ways does the hope of resurrection change how believers face grief and loss?
6. How can Christians bring hope to others who are facing death or despair?

Prayer Focus

Pray together for:

- comfort for those grieving loss
- renewed confidence in Christ's power over death
- hope rooted in the resurrection
- faith that trusts Jesus even in the darkest circumstances

Encourage participants to thank God for the promise of eternal life through Christ.

Family Engagement

“Jesus Gives Life”

Family Activity — The Seed Illustration

Materials

- small seeds (beans or flower seeds)
- soil
- small pot or cup

Activity

Plant a seed together as a family.

Explain that when a seed is buried in the soil, it looks like it has died. But after some time, new life grows from it.

Use this to explain that Jesus has power to bring life where death seems final.

Family Discussion

Ask children:

- Why were people crying in the story?
- What did Jesus do for the girl?
- What does this teach us about Jesus

Explain that Jesus has power over death and promises eternal life to those who trust Him.

Family Prayer

Pray together: “Jesus, thank you that you are stronger than death. Help us trust you and remember that you give life forever to those who follow you.”



5

The King Who Restores the Unclean

Matthew 9:20–22

Lesson 5: The King Who Restores the Unclean

Matthew 9:20–22

Theme: Jesus restores those whom society and religion had declared unclean, revealing that the Messiah brings healing, dignity, and restoration to the outcast.

Full Scripture (CSB)

20 Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his robe.

21 For she said to herself, “If I can just touch his robe, I’ll be made well.”

22 Jesus turned and saw her. “Have courage, daughter,” he said. “Your faith has saved you. And the woman was made well from that moment.”

Ice Breaker — “Feeling Left Out”

Have you ever experienced a time when you felt excluded, overlooked, or treated as though you didn’t belong?

Why does rejection or exclusion hurt so deeply?

In today’s passage, we meet a woman who had lived in isolation and shame for twelve years. Her encounter with Jesus shows that the Messiah restores those whom society has pushed aside.

Historical / Biblical Background

This miracle occurs in the middle of the story about Jairus' daughter. Matthew compresses the narrative, but Mark and Luke provide additional detail. Matthew's purpose is theological rather than chronological—he is highlighting the authority of Jesus over impurity.

The Law and Ritual Impurity

The woman had suffered from bleeding for twelve years. According to Leviticus 15:25–27, a woman with a continual discharge of blood was considered ceremonially unclean.

This meant:

- she could not participate normally in worship
- anyone who touched her became ceremonially unclean
- objects she touched became unclean

In practical terms, this condition would have led to social isolation and deep personal shame.

For twelve years she had likely experienced:

- physical suffering
- social rejection
- religious exclusion

Matthew's readers would immediately understand how devastating her condition was.

Desperate Faith

Mark's Gospel adds that she had spent all her money on physicians without improvement (Mark 5:26). Her situation was not only painful but hopeless.

Yet she believed that if she could simply touch Jesus' robe, she would be healed.

This belief reflects faith in Jesus' authority and power.

The Significance of the Robe

The phrase “the end of his robe” likely refers to the tassels (tzitzit) worn by Jewish men in obedience to Numbers 15:38–39.

These tassels reminded Israel of God's commandments.

Ironically, the woman who had been excluded from normal religious life now reaches out to the One who perfectly fulfills the law.

Reversal of Uncleanness

In the Old Testament system, uncleanness spread outward. If an unclean person touched someone, the uncleanness transferred.

But in Jesus' ministry something remarkable happens. Instead of uncleanness contaminating Him, His holiness overcomes impurity. The direction of influence reverses.

Instead of Jesus becoming unclean, the woman becomes whole.

This moment illustrates the transformative power of the kingdom of God.

Why Jesus Stops

In Mark and Luke, Jesus pauses and asks who touched Him. Matthew shortens the account but preserves the most important moment: Jesus speaks directly to the woman.

He calls her “daughter.”

This is the only place in the Gospels where Jesus addresses a woman this way. The word communicates tenderness, restoration, and belonging.

After twelve years of isolation, she is publicly restored.

Meaning in Matthew's Gospel

This miracle reveals that the Messiah does not avoid the unclean. He restores them.

The prophets foretold that the coming kingdom of God would bring healing and renewal.

Isaiah 35:5–6 “Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer.”

Jesus' miracles demonstrate that this promised restoration has begun.

■ Cross References

Leviticus 15:25–27

Numbers 15:38–39

Isaiah 35:5–6

Mark 5:25–34

Luke 8:43–48

Malachi 4:2

Hebrews 4:14–16

🌱 Main Points

1. Long Suffering Often Produces Desperate Faith

Matthew 9:20 The woman had endured twelve years of suffering. Twelve years of illness. Twelve years of rejection. Twelve years of hope fading.

Yet suffering sometimes drives people to the only place where real hope exists: Jesus.

Application: Many people come to Christ not through comfort but through hardship. Trials can become the doorway to faith.

2. Faith Reaches Toward Jesus

Matthew 9:21 “If I can just touch his robe...”

The woman does not demand attention or recognition. She approaches quietly, hoping that even the smallest contact with Jesus will bring healing. Yet she does not want to make Him unclean.

Application: Faith is not measured by public display but by trust in Christ’s power and mercy.

3. Jesus Sees the Invisible

The woman attempted to remain unnoticed in the crowd.

But Jesus stops and turns toward her. In a society where she had likely been ignored or avoided, Jesus sees her completely.

Application: Many people feel invisible or forgotten. Jesus notices those whom others overlook.

4. Jesus Restores Both Healing and Dignity

Matthew 9:22 “Have courage, daughter.”

Jesus not only heals her physically; He restores her socially and spiritually.

Calling her “daughter” publicly affirms her place in the community.

The miracle is therefore not only physical healing but personal restoration.

Application: Jesus does not merely remove problems; He restores identity and dignity.

5. Faith Connects People to the Saving Power of Christ

Jesus says: “Your faith has saved you.”

The Greek word used here can mean healed or saved, suggesting that something deeper than physical healing is happening.

The miracle illustrates a spiritual truth: faith connects people to the saving work of Christ

Application: The same faith that brought healing to this woman brings salvation to those who trust in Jesus today.

Reflection & Application

1. What challenges had the woman faced for twelve years?
2. Why do you think she approached Jesus secretly rather than publicly?
3. What does Jesus’ response reveal about His character?
4. How does this miracle show the difference between ritual purity laws and the compassion of Christ?

5. In what ways do people today experience exclusion or shame similar to this woman?
6. How can believers reflect the welcoming compassion of Jesus toward those who feel marginalized?
7. What does this passage teach us about the role of faith in approaching Christ?

Prayer Focus

Pray together for:

- people who feel isolated or rejected
- those suffering from long-term illness
- deeper faith and trust in Christ's power
- compassion toward people who feel overlooked or marginalized

Encourage participants to ask God to help them notice and care for people who may feel invisible in their community.

Family Engagement

“Jesus Sees Everyone”

Family Activity — The Hidden Person Game

Materials

- blanket or large towel
- small flashlight

Activity

Have one family member sit quietly in a corner while others pretend not to notice them.

Then turn off the lights and shine the flashlight to “find” them.

Explain that sometimes people feel invisible or forgotten, but Jesus sees everyone.

Family Discussion

Ask children:

- Why did the woman try to stay hidden?
- What did Jesus call her when He spoke to her?
- How did Jesus make her feel?

Explain that Jesus cares deeply about people who feel left out or forgotten.

Family Prayer

Pray together: “Jesus, thank you that you see us and care about us. Help us show kindness to people who feel lonely or forgotten.”



6

The King Who Is Lord of the Sabbath

Matthew 12:9–14

Lesson 6: The King Who Is Lord of the Sabbath

Matthew 12:9–14

Theme: Jesus reveals that He is Lord of the Sabbath and that God’s law was always intended to promote mercy, restoration, and life.

Full Scripture (CSB)

9 Moving on from there, he entered their synagogue.

10 There he saw a man who had a shriveled hand. In order to accuse him, they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”

11 He replied to them, “Who among you, if he had a sheep that fell into a pit on the Sabbath, wouldn’t take hold of it and lift it out?”

12 A person is worth far more than a sheep; so it is lawful to do what is good on the Sabbath.”

13 Then he told the man, “Stretch out your hand.” So he stretched it out, and it was restored, as good as the other.

14 But the Pharisees went out and plotted against him, how they might kill him.

Ice Breaker — “Rules vs. Compassion”

Have you ever seen a situation where someone followed a rule but completely missed the spirit or purpose behind it?

Examples might include:

- enforcing a rule without compassion
- prioritizing policy over people
- following procedures that cause harm instead of help

Why do rules sometimes become more important to people than helping others?

In today's passage, Jesus confronts religious leaders who had turned God's law into a rigid system that ignored compassion. This miracle reveals not only Jesus' power to heal but His authority to interpret and fulfill the law.

Historical / Biblical Background

By Matthew 12, tension between Jesus and the religious leaders has grown significantly. Earlier miracles amazed the crowds, but they also unsettled those who felt their authority threatened.

This healing takes place in a synagogue on the Sabbath, the weekly day of rest commanded by God.

The Purpose of the Sabbath

The Sabbath command originates in the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20:8–10 “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

The Sabbath was meant to be a gift—one day each week when God's people rested from labor and remembered that God was their provider.

It was a rhythm of trust, rest, and worship.

Pharisaic Interpretations

Over time, Jewish teachers developed extensive traditions to define what counted as “work” on the Sabbath.

These rules were intended to protect the commandment, but they gradually became rigid systems that overshadowed the heart of God's law.

By the first century, many religious leaders believed that healing could only occur on the Sabbath if a person's life was in immediate danger.

Since a withered hand was not life-threatening, they believed healing should wait.

The Trap

Matthew tells us the Pharisees asked their question "in order to accuse him."

They were not seeking truth. They were trying to trap Jesus.

If Jesus refused to heal, He would appear unmerciful.

If He healed, they could accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath.

But Jesus refuses to accept the false choice.

Instead, He exposes their misunderstanding of God's law.

The Sheep Illustration

Jesus asks a simple question: "If a sheep falls into a pit on the Sabbath, would you rescue it

Everyone in the synagogue would answer yes.

Even strict Sabbath interpreters allowed rescuing animals in danger.

Jesus then makes a powerful argument: "A person is worth far more than a sheep."

If rescuing an animal is acceptable, how much more appropriate is helping a suffering human being?

Jesus Greater Than the Law's Interpreters

Earlier in Matthew 12, Jesus had already made a stunning statement:

Matthew 12:8 “The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”

This means Jesus does not merely interpret the Sabbath—He defines its meaning.

The Sabbath ultimately points to Him.

The miracle therefore demonstrates two things:

- Jesus has power to heal
- Jesus has authority over the law itself

The Escalating Conflict

The miracle restores the man's hand. But instead of celebrating, the Pharisees leave and begin plotting Jesus' death.

This moment marks a turning point in Matthew's Gospel.

Jesus' authority over the law exposes the hypocrisy of religious leaders, and their opposition becomes open hostility.

■ Cross References

Exodus 20:8–11

Deuteronomy 5:12–15

Matthew 12:1–8

Mark 3:1–6

Luke 6:6–11

Hosea 6:6

Isaiah 58:13–14

Colossians 2:16–17

Main Points

1. Religious Legalism Can Miss God’s Heart

Matthew 12:10 The Pharisees are more concerned with rules than with the suffering man standing in front of them.

They ask whether healing is lawful, but they never ask whether the man should be helped.

This illustrates the danger of legalism: focusing on external rules while ignoring compassion and mercy.

Application: Faithfulness to God must include love and mercy. Obedience that lacks compassion distorts God’s character.

2. God Values People Above Ritual

Matthew 12:11–12 Jesus points to a common-sense example: rescuing a sheep.

Then He makes the point clear. “A person is worth far more than a sheep.”

God’s commands were never intended to prevent acts of kindness and mercy.

Application: Christians must remember that God’s law always aims at human flourishing, not unnecessary burden.

3. The Sabbath Was Made for Restoration

The Sabbath was designed as a day of rest and renewal.

Healing perfectly fits the purpose of the Sabbath.

Jesus demonstrates that restoring a broken life honors the Sabbath rather than violating it.

Application: God's commands are meant to bring life and restoration, not oppression.

4. Jesus Demonstrates Authority Through Healing

Matthew 12:13 Jesus commands the man: "Stretch out your hand."

Immediately the hand is restored. This miracle once again demonstrates the authority of Jesus.

Just as He commands storms, demons, and disease, His word restores what was broken.

Application: Christ has authority to restore the areas of life that seem permanently damaged.

5. Jesus' Authority Exposes Hard Hearts

Matthew 12:14 Instead of celebrating the miracle, the Pharisees begin plotting Jesus' death.

The miracle reveals something deeper than physical healing: it exposes the spiritual condition of the observers

The same act that brings joy to some can produce hostility in others.

Application: Jesus' authority always demands a response. Some respond with faith; others respond with resistance.

Reflection & Application

1. Why do you think the Pharisees focused on the rule rather than the suffering man?
2. What does Jesus' example teach us about the true purpose of God's law?
3. How does this miracle reveal Jesus' authority over the Sabbath?
4. Why do some people respond to Jesus with faith while others respond with hostility?
5. In what ways can Christians avoid falling into legalism today?
6. How can believers reflect the compassion of Jesus in everyday life?
7. What areas of your life might need the restoring touch of Christ?

Prayer Focus

Pray together for:

- hearts that value mercy over legalism
- wisdom to apply God's truth with compassion
- healing and restoration in broken areas of life
- humility to follow Christ rather than religious pride

Thank God for the freedom and restoration found in Christ.

Family Engagement

“Helping Instead of Ignoring”

Family Activity — The Helping Challenge

Create a simple challenge where family members must help one another complete tasks.

Examples:

- tying shoes
- carrying books
- cleaning up toys together

Explain that helping people is more important than simply following rules.

Family Discussion

Ask children:

- Why did the religious leaders think Jesus should not heal on the Sabbath?
- What did Jesus say about helping people?
- Why do you think God wants us to help others?

Explain that God's commands are meant to help people experience His love and goodness.

Family Prayer

Pray together: "Jesus, help us care about people the way you do. Teach us to show kindness and compassion to others."

7

The King Who Provides

Matthew 14:13–21

Lesson 7: The King Who Provides

Matthew 14:13–21

Theme: Jesus demonstrates that He is the Messiah who provides abundantly for His people, revealing that He is greater than Moses and the prophets and the true source of life.

Full Scripture (CSB)

13 When Jesus heard about it, he withdrew from there by boat to a remote place to be alone. When the crowds heard this, they followed him on foot from the towns.

14 When he went ashore, he saw a large crowd, had compassion on them, and healed their sick.

15 When evening came, the disciples approached him and said, “This place is deserted, and it is already late. Send the crowds away so that they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”

16 “They don’t need to go away,” Jesus told them. “You give them something to eat.”

17 “But we only have five loaves and two fish here,” they said to him.

18 “Bring them here to me,” he said.

19 Then he commanded the crowds to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them. He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

20 Everyone ate and was satisfied. They picked up twelve baskets full of leftover pieces.

21 Now those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Ice Breaker — “Not Enough”

Have you ever faced a situation where what you had was clearly not enough?

How do people usually respond when they feel they do not have enough?

In today’s miracle, the disciples face an impossible situation: thousands of hungry people and almost no food. This miracle shows that when human resources are insufficient, Jesus is more than enough.

Historical / Biblical Background

This miracle is unique among Jesus’ miracles because it is recorded in all four Gospels (Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6). The early church clearly viewed this event as especially significant.

Matthew places this miracle shortly after the death of John the Baptist, when Jesus withdraws to a remote place. Instead of finding solitude, Jesus is met by a large crowd seeking help.

Compassion of the Messiah

Matthew emphasizes that Jesus “had compassion on them.”

The Greek word used here refers to deep emotional concern.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus’ miracles are often motivated by compassion.

The Messiah is not distant from human need. He cares deeply for people who are suffering and searching for hope.

Echoes of the Exodus

The setting of this miracle contains striking parallels with the story of Israel in the wilderness.

In the Exodus, God provided manna from heaven to feed His people during their journey.

Exodus 16:4 “I will rain bread from heaven for you.”

Now, in a wilderness-like setting, Jesus feeds a multitude with miraculous provision.

Matthew’s Jewish audience would recognize the connection immediately: the same God who provided for Israel in the wilderness is now acting through Jesus.

This reinforces Matthew’s portrait of Jesus as the new and greater Moses.

Jesus Greater Than Elisha

The miracle also echoes a story from the ministry of the prophet Elisha.

2 Kings 4:42–44 Elisha fed one hundred men with twenty loaves of bread, and there was food left over.

The similarities are clear:

- bread multiplied
- people fed
- leftovers gathered

But the differences are even more striking.

Elisha fed one hundred men. Jesus feeds more than five thousand people. Matthew is showing that Jesus surpasses even the greatest prophets.

The Significance of the Twelve Baskets

After everyone eats, the disciples collect twelve baskets of leftovers.

The number twelve likely symbolizes the twelve tribes of Israel, suggesting that Jesus' provision is sufficient for all of God's people.

It also demonstrates the abundance of God's provision. Jesus does not merely provide enough; He provides more than enough.

A Sign of the Messianic Kingdom

Jewish tradition associated the coming Messiah with a great banquet when God's kingdom would be fully revealed.

Isaiah 25:6 "The Lord of Armies will prepare for all the peoples a feast of choice meat."

The feeding of the five thousand foreshadows this future celebration.

The miracle therefore points beyond itself to the ultimate restoration of God's people in His kingdom.

■ Cross References

Exodus 16:4–15

2 Kings 4:42–44

Psalms 78:23–25

Isaiah 25:6

Matthew 15:32–39

Mark 6:30–44

Luke 9:10–17

John 6:1–14

Main Points

1. Jesus Sees the Needs of the Crowd

Matthew 14:14 When Jesus sees the crowd, He does not turn them away. Instead, He responds with compassion and begins healing the sick.

This reminds us that Jesus is attentive to human need.

Application: Christ cares about both the physical and spiritual needs of people.

2. Human Resources Often Seem Inadequate

Matthew 14:15–17 The disciples see the situation as impossible.

Thousands of people are hungry, and they have only five loaves and two fish.

From a human perspective, the solution is obvious: send the crowd away.

But Jesus gives a surprising command: “You give them something to eat.”

Application: God often calls His people to participate in His work even when their resources seem insufficient.

3. Jesus Multiplies What Is Offered to Him

Matthew 14:18–19

The disciples bring their small amount of food to Jesus.

He blesses it, breaks it, and distributes it.

In Jesus' hands, what seemed inadequate becomes more than enough.

Application: When believers offer what they have to Christ, He can multiply it in ways they cannot imagine.

4. Jesus Provides Abundantly

Matthew 14:20 Everyone eats and is satisfied

Then the disciples collect twelve baskets of leftovers.

This miracle demonstrates the generosity of God's provision.

Application: God's provision often exceeds what we expect.

5. The Miracle Points to the Greater Bread of Life

John's Gospel records that Jesus later explains the deeper meaning of this miracle.

John 6:35 "I am the bread of life."

The feeding of the crowd points beyond physical bread to the spiritual life that Jesus provides.

Application: Jesus is the ultimate source of life and satisfaction.

Reflection & Application

1. Why do you think Jesus chose to feed the crowd instead of sending them away?
2. What does this miracle reveal about Jesus' character?
3. Why do you think Jesus involved the disciples in distributing the food?
4. What does the abundance of leftovers teach us about God's provision?
5. How does this miracle connect to the Old Testament story of manna?
6. In what ways does Jesus provide for believers today?
7. What might God be asking you to place in His hands, even if it seems small?

Prayer Focus

Pray together for:

- trust in God's provision
- compassion for people in need
- willingness to serve others
- gratitude for God's abundant blessings

Thank God for both physical and spiritual provision.

Family Engagement

“God Multiplies What We Share”

Family Activity — The Sharing Challenge

Prepare a small snack (such as crackers or bread) and place it in the center of the table.

Explain that it represents the five loaves and two fish.

Ask family members to share the food equally.

Use this moment to talk about how Jesus multiplied the food to feed thousands of people.

Family Discussion

Ask children:

- Why were the disciples worried about feeding the crowd?
- What did Jesus do with the small amount of food?
- What does this teach us about trusting God?

Explain that Jesus can take small acts of kindness and turn them into big blessings.

Family Prayer

Pray together: “Jesus, thank you for providing for us. Help us trust you when we feel like what we have is not enough.”

8

The King Revealed in Glory

Matthew 17:1–13

Lesson 8: The King Revealed in Glory

Matthew 17:1–13

Theme: The Transfiguration reveals Jesus' divine glory and confirms that He is the Son of God and the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets.

Full Scripture (CSB)

1 After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and his brother John and led them up on a high mountain by themselves.

2 He was transfigured in front of them, and his face shone like the sun; his clothes became as white as the light.

3 Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with him.

4 Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it's good for us to be here. If you want, I will set up three shelters here: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

5 While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased. Listen to him!"

6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown and were terrified.

7 Jesus came up, touched them, and said, "Get up; don't be afraid."

8 When they looked up they saw no one except Jesus alone.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Don't tell anyone about the vision until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."

10 So the disciples asked him, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

11 “Elijah is coming and will restore everything,” he replied.

12 “But I tell you: Elijah has already come, and they didn’t recognize him. On the contrary, they did whatever they pleased to him. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.”

13 Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.

Ice Breaker — “Seeing Someone Clearly”

Have you ever misunderstood someone at first, only later realizing who they really were?

Why do people sometimes fail to recognize the true identity of someone right in front of them?

Throughout Matthew’s Gospel, people have been asking the same question about Jesus:

“What kind of man is this?”

In today’s passage, three disciples receive a moment of extraordinary clarity about who Jesus truly is.

Historical / Biblical Background

The Transfiguration occurs after a crucial turning point in Jesus’ ministry.

Just before this event, Peter makes a powerful confession.

Matthew 16:16 “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Immediately afterward, Jesus begins explaining that He will suffer and die.

This shocks the disciples, who expected the Messiah to bring political victory and national restoration.

The Transfiguration occurs to strengthen the disciples' faith and reveal Jesus' true identity.

The Mountain Setting

Mountains often function as places of divine revelation in Scripture.

Examples include

- Mount Sinai — where Moses received the Law
- Mount Carmel — where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal

The Transfiguration continues this pattern. God reveals His glory on a mountain, but this time the focus is on Jesus Himself.

The Meaning of “Transfigured”

The word translated “transfigured” means to change form or appearance.

Jesus' face shines like the sun and His clothes become dazzling white. This radiant glory reflects His divine nature.

For a moment, the disciples see the glory that normally remains hidden during Jesus' earthly ministry.

Moses and Elijah

Two great figures of the Old Testament appear with Jesus:

- Moses — representing the Law
- Elijah — representing the Prophets

Together they symbolize the entire Old Testament witness.

Their presence communicates that everything the Law and the Prophets anticipated finds its fulfillment in Jesus.

This moment visually confirms what Matthew has been demonstrating throughout his Gospel: Jesus is the promised Messiah.

The Voice from Heaven

A voice from the cloud declares: “This is my beloved Son... listen to him.”

This echoes the voice heard at Jesus’ baptism in Matthew 3.

The message is clear: Jesus is uniquely the Son of God.

The command “listen to him” also echoes Deuteronomy 18:15, where Moses foretold that God would raise up a prophet like him and that the people must listen to that prophet.

Jesus is that promised prophet—and far more.

The Significance of “Jesus Alone”

After the vision ends, the disciples see “Jesus alone.”

Moses and Elijah disappear because their role was to point forward to Christ.

Now that Christ has come, He stands alone as the final and complete revelation of God.

Connection to the Resurrection

Jesus tells the disciples not to speak about the vision until after His resurrection.

The Transfiguration prepares them for what lies ahead. The suffering of the cross will not be the end of the story. Behind the suffering Messiah stands the glorious Son of God.

Cross References

Exodus 24:15–18

Exodus 34:29–35

Deuteronomy 18:15

1 Kings 19:11–13

Daniel 7:13–14

Matthew 3:16–17

2 Peter 1:16–18

Revelation 1:12–16

Main Points

1. Jesus Reveals His Divine Glory

Matthew 17:2 For a moment the veil is lifted, and the disciples see Jesus as He truly is.

The radiant glory of Christ confirms that He is not merely a teacher or prophet but the Son of God.

Application: Christians worship Jesus not simply because of His teachings but because of who He is.

2. Jesus Fulfills the Law and the Prophets

Matthew 17:3 The appearance of Moses and Elijah shows that the entire Old Testament points toward Jesus.

Everything God had been doing throughout Israel's history was preparing for the arrival of the Messiah.

Application: The Bible tells one unified story that culminates in Christ.

3. God Commands Us to Listen to Jesus

Matthew 17:5 The Father's voice emphasizes one instruction: "Listen to him."

Jesus' authority surpasses that of every prophet, teacher, or leader.

Application: Faithful discipleship means listening to Jesus and obeying His words.

4. Jesus Brings Comfort in the Presence of Glory

Matthew 17:6–7 The disciples fall down in fear. But Jesus approaches them, touches them, and says: "Don't be afraid."

The same glory that terrifies also brings comfort because it belongs to the Savior who loves His people.

Application: Christ's power does not distance Him from believers—it reassures them.

5. The Path to Glory Passes Through the Cross

As the disciples descend the mountain, Jesus again reminds them that He will suffer and die.

The Transfiguration does not replace the cross; it prepares the disciples to understand it.

Application: God's glory often becomes visible through suffering and sacrifice.

Reflection & Application

1. Why do you think Jesus allowed Peter, James, and John to witness the Transfiguration?
2. What is the significance of Moses and Elijah appearing with Jesus?
3. Why does the Father command the disciples to listen to Jesus?
4. How does this event strengthen the disciples before the coming crucifixion?
5. What does the Transfiguration reveal about the identity of Christ?
6. How can believers learn to listen more closely to the voice of Jesus today?
7. How does this passage give hope when life includes suffering or uncertainty?

Prayer Focus

Pray together for:

- deeper understanding of Christ's glory
- hearts that listen carefully to Jesus
- faith that remains strong through trials
- greater devotion and worship

Thank God for revealing Himself through His Son.

Family Engagement

“Seeing the Glory of Jesus”

Family Activity — The Bright Light Illustration

Materials

- flashlight
- dark room

Turn off the lights and shine the flashlight.

Explain that just as light shines in darkness, Jesus revealed His glory to the disciples on the mountain.

Family Discussion

Ask children:

- Who appeared with Jesus on the mountain?
- What did God say about Jesus?
- Why is it important to listen to Jesus?

Explain that Jesus is God’s Son and the one we should follow.

Family Prayer

Pray together: “Jesus, thank you for showing us who you are. Help us listen to your words and follow you every day.”

