

What Jesus Said

5. Matthew 8:1-22. *Jesus heals the leper*

This story is found in the Matthew Chapter 8, verses 1 through to 22. – We write it like this:

Matthew 8:1-22. *BibleHomework* uses this format throughout its website.

The Scripture:

8:1-3 - Large crowds followed him when he came down from the hillside. There was a leper who came and knelt in front of him. "Sir," he said, "if you want to, you can make me clean." Jesus stretched out his hand and placed it on the leper saying, **"Of course I want to. Be clean!"** And at once he was clear of the leprosy.

8:4 - **"Mind you say nothing to anybody,"** Jesus told him. **"Go straight off and show yourself to the priest and make the offering for your recovery that Moses prescribed, as evidence to the authorities."**

8:5-6 - Then as he was coming into Capernaum a centurion approached. "Sir," he implored him, "my servant is in bed at home paralysed and in dreadful pain."

8:7 - **"I will come and heal him,"** said Jesus to him.

8:8-9 - "Sir," replied the centurion, "I'm not important enough for you to come under my roof. Just give the order, please, and my servant will recover. I'm a man under authority myself, and I have soldiers under me. I can say to one man 'Go' and I know he'll go, or I can say 'Come here' to another and I know he'll come - or I can say to my slave 'Do this' and he'll always do it."

8:10-12 - When Jesus heard this, he was astonished. **"Believe me,"** he said to those who were following him, **"I have never found faith like this, even in Israel! I tell you that many people will come from east and west and sit at my table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven. But those who should have belonged to the kingdom will be banished to the darkness outside, where there will be tears and bitter regret."**

8:13 - Then he said to the centurion, **"Go home now, and everything will happen as you have believed it will."** And his servant was healed at that actual moment.

8:14-15 - Then on coming into Peter's house Jesus saw that Peter's mother-in-law had been put to bed with a high fever. He touched her hand and the fever left her. And then she got up and began to see to their needs.

8:16-17 - When evening came they brought to him many who were possessed by evil spirits, which he expelled with a word. Indeed he healed all who were ill. Thus was fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy - 'He himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses'.

8:18-19 - When Jesus had seen the great crowds around him he gave orders for departure to the other side of the lake. But before they started, one of the scribes came up to Jesus and said to him, "Master, I will follow you wherever you go."

8:20 - "**Foxes have earths, birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere that he can call his own,**" replied Jesus.

8:21 - Another of his disciples said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

8:22 - But Jesus said to him, "**Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.**"

The Explanation:

Jesus' healing ministry continues. On visiting the town where Peter's mother-in-law lives he is confronted by a leper asking Him if He would like to heal him, and a Roman Centurion saying that if he says to heal his servant, he know he will be healed just by his word! Such faith leaves Jesus astonished.

Jesus seems to give a rather negative response when a Disciple asks if he can go and bury his father – but this seems to be either to leave the *spiritually dead* burying the *physically* dead – or an indication that he's opposed to a second burial ritual of bones that did take place at the time. It could also be to test the Disciple's determination to follow Jesus.

Places and People Mentioned:

Simon (Peter): The son of John or of Jonah or Jona, he was from the village of Bethsaida in the province of Galilee.

Questions:

1. Why would the Leper ask Jesus "if he wanted to heal him"?
2. A Roman Centurion has complete faith in Jesus' ability to heal. Why?
3. Why does Jesus say **"Foxes have earths, birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere that he can call his own,"**
4. Why do you think Jesus told the Disciple to **leave the dead to bury their own dead?**