

14. Jesus Healed the Mother-in-law of Peter

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that Jesus quoted a passage about the Messiah in the synagogue in Nazareth. Then, Jesus said, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing”. We saw that the people of Nazareth realized this was a statement that He was the Messiah. The people of Nazareth were so angry that they tried to throw Him off the cliff of the hill on which Nazareth was located. However, the Father protected Jesus and He went on His way. Today, we are going to see what Jesus did when He left Nazareth.

Jesus went to Capernaum after He was forced to leave Nazareth. Luke 4:31-37 says, “Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Let *us* alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God!’ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ‘Be quiet, and come out of him!’ And when the demon had thrown him in *their* midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, ‘What a word this *is*! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.’ And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.” Here, we see that when Jesus left Nazareth that He went to the city of Capernaum.

In Capernaum, Jesus began teaching on the Sabbaths. This shows us that Jesus stayed for a period of time in Capernaum. The people of Capernaum were astonished at the teaching of Jesus. Mark 1:22 explains why the people were astonished at the teaching of Jesus. That verse says, “And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” The scribes taught what earlier rabbis said about the Old Testament. In contrast, Christ explained what the Word of God taught.

One of the men in the synagogue that day was possessed by a demon (unclean spirit). This man began crying out in a loud voice saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God!” Here, we see that demons were forced to recognize that Jesus is God. Demons also recognized that they served a different master. The demons wanted nothing to do with Jesus of Nazareth because they served Satan. This demon also recognized that Jesus has the power to destroy all of the demons. Then, the demon used the name of Jesus given in an Old Testament prophecy about Jesus. Psalm 16:10 says, “For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.” This particular prophecy was a statement made by David about a thousand years before Jesus that spoke of the fact that Jesus would rise from the dead and He would not see corruption.

Jesus immediately rebuked the demon and told him to come out of the man. The demon made one last effort to try and destroy the man by causing the man to be thrown to the floor in the middle of the synagogue. However, the demon was not able to hurt this man in his attempt to destroy him. The people in the synagogue were filled with amazement. They immediately began talking among

themselves. The people recognized that Jesus had authority and power to command the unclean spirits. They realized that the demon was forced to obey Jesus. Jesus later said in Matthew 28:18, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’” This authority was recognized by some of the people from the beginning of His ministry. Word quickly spread from Capernaum to the other towns throughout Galilee as the people of Capernaum talked with people from other towns.

When Jesus left the synagogue in Capernaum, he immediately went to the home of Simon Peter. Luke 4:38-41 says, “Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them. When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of God!’ And He, rebuking *them*, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.” Jesus went to the home of Simon Peter and was given an opportunity to minister after he entered the home of Peter.

The mother-in law of Peter was sick and had a high fever. Some of the family came to Jesus and told Him about the mother-in-law. The family members told Jesus that the mother-in-law had a high fever and asked Jesus to help her. Jesus went to the woman and rebuked the fever. Immediately, the fever was gone. In fact, the mother-in-law was both healed and filled with strength. She got up and immediately began serving Jesus and the others that were in the house.

The people of Capernaum heard what Jesus had done in the synagogue and possibly even in the home of Peter. As a result, as the sun was setting, the people began bringing people who were sick with various diseases to be healed by Jesus. Jesus laid His hands on each sick person that was brought to Him. Jesus showed that He was the Son of God by healing every person that was sick. In addition to bringing those who were sick or diseased, the people also brought many people who were possessed with demons. Jesus also cast demons out of many people. The demons cried, “‘You are the Christ, the Son of God!’” Here, we see that the demons recognized that Jesus was the Christ (Messiah) that had been promised to the Jews in the Old Testament.

We also see the response of Jesus to the demons when they recognized Him. Jesus rebuked the demons. Then, He told the demons that they were not allowed to speak and tell who He was. The time will come when the demons will be forced to speak and tell who Jesus is. Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” However, at that time they will be facing eternal judgment. It was not the desire of Jesus to have the demons tell the people that He was the Christ.

Luke 4:42-44 says, “Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; but He said to them, ‘I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have

been sent.’ And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.” Mark tells us more about that day. Mark 1:35 says, “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.” Here, we see that the reason Jesus had gone to a deserted place was to pray to the Father. We also see that Jesus had gone to pray long before it was even daylight. In this way, Jesus showed the importance of us having regular times alone with God.

Because of the miracles Jesus had performed the previous evening, many people were looking for Jesus. Many times, people are attracted by miracles but they are often attracted for the wrong purpose. John 6:26-27 says, “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.’” In this case, Jesus had fed the five thousand the previous day and Jesus said that they were attracted to Him because of the free food.

Peter and those with Peter finally found Jesus and told Him that all of the people were looking for Him. Jesus did not respond by going to talk to the crowds. Instead, Mark 1:38-39 says, “But He said to them, ‘Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.’ And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.” Here, we see that Jesus said that His primary purpose was not just to perform miracles of physical healing.

Instead, Jesus said that He was going to the next towns so He could preach there also, because that was His purpose. Jesus knew that the Father had given Him a purpose for the time of His public ministry and Jesus was focused on that purpose. In fact, as Jesus prayed to the Father the night before His crucifixion, Jesus said in John 17:4, “‘I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.’” As a result, Jesus took His disciples with Him and they traveled throughout Galilee preaching in the synagogues of the various towns and cities.

Jesus said that the Father had sent Him to preach the kingdom of God. Jesus had also told Peter and several other disciples in Mark 1:17, “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’” The purpose of Jesus was to preach the kingdom of God. The work of Jesus was to prepare a group of disciples to carry on that ministry when Jesus went back to heaven. Jesus gives us that same purpose and work. Matthew 28:19-20 says, “‘Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.” We also want to show our physical and spiritual children how to make disciples. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children develop this purpose for their lives as well.