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Matthew 9

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Matthew 9.

Topics.

- Jesus heals a paralytic man lying on a bed.
- A woman who suffered a discharge of blood for 12 years touches Jesus.
- Jesus heals a dead daughter, two blind men, a mute man and every disease.
- The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few.

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter Jesus healed a leper, a centurion servant lying paralysed and Peter's mother in law. He rebuked the wind and the sea and there was a great calm and then sailed to the country of the Gadarenes where he cast demons out of two men into pigs. After this event all the city begged him to leave their region.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

MATTHEW 9:1

Jesus Sails across the Sea of Galilee.

- **Matthew 9:1:** And getting into a boat he crossed over (the Sea of Galilee) and came to his own city.

The previous chapter ended with Jesus casting out demons into pigs on the east side of the Sea of Galilee and the people asking him to leave their region, so Jesus boards the boat with his disciples and sails to the other side of the Sea of Galilee to his own city Capernaum.

MATTHEW 9:2

Jesus Heals a Paralytic Man Lying on a Bed.

- **Matthew 9:2:** And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven."

Jesus sees the faith of the paralytic man's friends in their actions their faith was so strong it drove them to overcome any obstacle to get their friend to Jesus. If it were not for their great faith, they would not have been motivated to get their sick friend before Jesus in this sense the paralytic man's friends' faith healed the paralytic man. Jesus recognised the faith of the paralytic man's friends and tells the paralytic man his sins are forgiven. The paralytic man probably believed he was under the wrath of God because of his paralytic condition (during this era they believed sicknesses like this were a result of demon possession) (see the title, "A man called Legion," in Matthew chapter 8).

MATTHEW 9:3-7

The Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins

- **Matthew 9:3-7:** And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." ⁴But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ⁶But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." ⁷And he (paralytic) rose and went home. ⁸When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

The reason it is easier to say ones sins are forgiven is because there is no outward physical change or proof to prove it, but to say rise up and walk is scary because if the person does not rise up and walk people will consider you stupid and a false prophet.

NOTE: Jesus being able to forgive sins does not mean he is God (as many believe), the apostle John tells us "the Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand" (John 3:35) and Jesus said, "the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" (Matt 9:6). God the Father has given his Son the Lord Jesus Christ all power and authority to forgive sins even the crowds recognise that it was God who had given His power to this man named Jesus; it was the power of God working through Jesus that healed the paralytic man (v8).

Words of comfort and encouragement: since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states:

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God the Son will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim:

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said:

- This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God 'and' Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).

For further information see the title: Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

MATTHEW 9:9-13

Jesus calls Matthew and Eats with Tax Collectors.

- **Matthew 9:9-13:** As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. ¹⁰And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and

were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹²But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Matthew was an Israelite (also called Levi). Jesus had no problem mixing with those outside the church, he did not separate himself from sinners rather he saw it as an opportunity to share the Gospel.

The Pharisees:

- Saw themselves as righteous and Holy to God.
- Wore the priestly garments, looked after the temple and the holy things.
- Believed God accepted them, because they were descendants of Abraham.
- Were self-righteous and saw no need for repentance or to change their ways.

The Pharisees are the people Jesus has in focus when he said; "He did not come for the righteous," meaning those who were self-righteous like the religious leaders of his day, the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes. The tax collectors and sinners in contrast to the Pharisees knew they were sinners before God and that they needed to repent. Jesus came to call sinners means, he came to save those who know and acknowledge that they are sinners before God.

MATTHEW 9:14-15

Fasting and Mourning.

- **Matthew 9:14-15:** Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁵And Jesus said to them "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them and then they will fast.

In these verses there are two groups of disciples:

1. John the Baptists disciples.
2. Jesus disciples.

Fasting: in this context has to do with mourning. In this story Jesus is the Bridegroom and his disciples are the wedding guests and at the time of John the Baptist the Bridegroom is with them so it is a time of rejoicing not mourning thus Jesus is saying to John's disciples, "Do the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? It is when the bridegroom is taken away that they mourn and fast. Prior to Jesus death and resurrection Jesus disciples were the wedding guests in this story, but since Christ's resurrection all who confess to believe in Jesus by faith can be seen as the wedding guests since the marriage of the Lamb has not yet taken place.

MATTHEW 9:16-17

Wine Skins Old and New Wineskins.

- **Matthew 9:16-17:** No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth (new cloth) on an old garment, for the patch (new cloth) tears away from the (old) garment, and a worse tear is made (in

the old garment or cloth). ¹⁷Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the (old) skins burst and the (new) wine is spilled and the skins (old wineskins) are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."

Jesus is telling his disciples not to try and take the Old Covenant away from the Jews who have been faithful to it for over four-thousand years, because if they pull down what the older generation has grown up with, or try to force it on them, they are likely to destroy the faith of the Jews who have been faithful to it and cause all kinds of strife, contention, quarrels and arguments.

It is far better to take the New Covenant to people who want to hear it and who are without God, the sinners and tax collectors etc. Old wineskins, does not have the chief priests and Pharisees in focus (hypocrites) the focus is those who have been and still are truly faithful to God under the Old Testament Covenant.

A similar and practical application today: (there are many others) would be the younger generation trying to change a tradition (i.e., types of music, format of the service and meeting etc.,) that a church has held since its conception. Jesus is warning the danger in doing this is that it may alienate or cause a problem with those who have grown up with the tradition. Jesus advice seems to be if something can't be done without causing other faithful believers harm, do it with different people start again with those who are accepting, avoid causing bitterness, contention and strife amongst faithful believers.

MATTHEW 9:18-19

A Man Asks Jesus to Heal his Dead Daughter.

- **Matthew 9:18-19:** While he was saying these things to them (John's disciples) behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples.

NOTICE: the man's attitude, he is fully confident Jesus can heal his daughter, but he doesn't know if he will, he does not demand or claim a healing for his dead daughter, but humbly kneels before the Lord and asks him to heal her (this story is continued in v23).

MATTHEW 9:20-22

A Woman Suffering a Discharge of Blood for Twelve Years Touches Jesus.

- **Matthew 9:20-22:** And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, ²¹for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I will be made well." ²²Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well.

In this healing Jesus commends the woman for her faith and says, it made her well. The woman's faith made her well, in the sense she believed so much she was prepared to do anything to reach or get to Jesus her faith in Christ overcame any shame or rejection from the crowds and priests and was so great it motivated her to overcome the stigma of her sickness so she could touch the Lord, it is in this sense that her faith healed her, but the actual power was flowing from God through Christ.

MATTHEW 9:23-26

Jesus Resurrects the Man's Dead Daughter (continued from v19).

- **Matthew 9:23-26:** And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶And the report of this went through all that district. (Capernaum).

How fabulous would this have been for all those at the ruler's house, what a beautiful story they have to tell everyone they know? They initially stand mocking Jesus for saying the girl is only sleeping when they know she is dead, they think Jesus is stupid and laugh at him, so he puts them out and takes the girl's hand and she stands up, (whose laughing now) no-wonder news of Jesus spread around the region so quickly, what a fantastic story these people had to share with their friends.

MATTHEW 9:27-31

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men.

- **Matthew 9:27-31:** And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." ²⁸When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." ²⁹Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." ³⁰And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about it." ³¹But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

The two blind men asked Jesus to have mercy on them they did not demand or command Jesus to heal them. Jesus asked them, "Do they believe that he is able to heal them?" And they replied yes, the blind men believed Jesus could heal them, but it does not say they believed Jesus would heal them, their faith was such that they believed Jesus was able to cure their blindness not that he would heal their blindness that is why they humbly ask Jesus to heal them (they do not demand, command or claim it as some modern day teachers are teaching today).

See that no one knows about it: Jesus tells the two blind men not to tell anyone about Jesus or their healing, perhaps the reasons for this request was because Jesus fame was spreading so rapidly around the region that multitudes were coming to him so all his time was being taken up healing the sick amongst the crowds so much so that neither he nor the disciples had time to eat or sleep and Jesus primary ministry was not to heal, but to teach the twelve apostles the Good News of the Gospel.

MATTHEW 9:32-34

Jesus Heals a Mute Man.

- **Matthew 9:32-34** As they were going away, behold, a demon (daimon) oppressed man who was mute was brought to him. ³³And when the demon (daimon) had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marvelled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." ³⁴But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons" (daimon).

How amazing is this Jesus does an absolutely beautiful thing, the boy, his family and all who knew them would be off the planet with joy at the boy's healing, imagine for the first time his parents can hear their young son speak, what overwhelming joy and all the religious leaders can do is see this majestic miracle as being demonic and accuse Jesus of using the highest power of demons. The religious Jews, the chief priests, Pharisees

and scribes in Jesus era had a mistaken understanding of demons; they believed every sickness they did not understand was caused by demons possessing the person who was sick thus they reasoned only a higher power (the prince of demons) could cast out demons.

DEMONS, DEVILS AND SICKNESS

The English word demon and demons are not found in the entire King James Bible. In the New Testament of the King James Bible the translators have unfortunately translated both (diabolos) and (daimion) as devil or devils which gives a completely wrong understanding of the Greek words diabolos (devil) and daimion (demon). This has over the years led to a misunderstanding of the difference between devils and demons. Most well recognized and globally accepted modern Bibles have translated demons (daimion) and devils (diabolos) correctly. The word demons (daimion) was believed to be an inferior deity or god and primarily relates to sickness whereas devils (diabolos) means a false accuser or slander and primarily relates to people's behavior and not sickness.

THE JEWS AND DEMONS

The Jews believed demons to be an inferior evil god or deity that held possession of those with severe sickness either bodily or mentally those that were mentally sick were believed to be possessed by an evil inferior god called daimon. They believed that the demons (daimonions) so held possession of them as not only to afflict them with ills, but also to dethrone the reason and take its place themselves and that people possessed with demons were forced by the demons to express the mind and consciousness of the demons dwelling in them, and the only cure was by the expulsion of the demons. The fact that the Pharisees and scribes and certain Jews believed John the Baptist and Jesus were possessed by demons (Jn. 7:20) (Jn. 8:48-49) (Jn. 10:19-20) (Matt. 11:18) clearly shows us that just because the religious leaders of Jesus era believed mental illness, deafness, blindness and sickness they didn't understand were a result of demons does not mean it is a true fact.

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THE BIBLICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SICKNESS AND DEMONS

In most instances when people had an illness that does not control the person, it is referred to in biblical writings as a sickness, but when a sickness (mental illness) controls a person to do things they do not want to do (have fits etc.), they are referred to as having demons or an unclean spirit. Sickness commonly related to illnesses the people understood, while demons primarily relate to severe illnesses and diseases, either bodily or mentally the people did not understand. Just because people believe something does not mean it is true if the Bible were being written today it would contain words like bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia epilepsy, melancholy, loss of speech etc., which in the New Testament are referred to as unclean spirits, demons or caused by demons as are paralysis, blindness and deafness and any other sickness the people did not understand.

ONE SUPER EVIL GOD IN CONTROL OF MILLIONS OF LESSER EVIL GODS

Any force in a human that controls a person to do things they cannot control themselves, things that affects their behavior and mental well-being, voices or words in the mind and severe diseases, either bodily or mentally, (such as schizophrenia paralysis, blindness, deafness, loss of

speech, epilepsy, melancholy, insanity and seizures etc., plus speeches that entice people against the things of God and God Himself are all commonly called demons in the New Testament. But the Bible does not present a picture of one super evil god (slightly less in power than God) being in control of millions of lesser evil gods. This is a modern-day misunderstanding of the language of the Bible. Demons are not evil people as Hollywood portrays demon possessed people in their movies. People in the Bible that had demons were morally good people and, in some cases, only children who were sadly afflicted with severe diseases, either bodily or mentally such as paralysis, blindness, deafness and loss of speech, epilepsy, melancholy and insanity, etc.

In the opinion of the Jews demons had entered their bodies, and so held possession of them as not only to afflict them with ills, but also to dethrone the reason and take its place themselves. The people of Jesus age believed the possessed were driven to express the mind and consciousness of the demons dwelling in them; and their only cure was thought to require the expulsion of the demon.

THE ORIGIN OF DEMONS

A demon is believed to be a supernatural being, spirit, or force capable of influencing human lives, usually by evil means. Demons have played a role in the traditions of most religions. The practice of expelling demons (exorcism) that possess people or places has been carried out by many religions. The belief in evil spirits and their ability to influence the lives of people dates from prehistoric times. Many early people believed that spirits occupied all elements of nature. Evil spirits or demons were spirits that brought harm to living people. Societies that believed in demons sought to influence the actions of both good and bad spirits through worship and sacrifices. Some ancient societies, including those in Egypt and Babylonia (now Iraq), believed that such spirits were responsible for the functions of the body and that demons caused specific illnesses. The word demon originated from an ancient Greek term, daimon, which referred to beings whose special powers placed them between people and the gods. These beings had the ability either to improve people's lives or carry out the punishment of the gods. Basic Christian ideas about demons originated from references to evil beings or unclean spirits in the Old Testament. By the middle ages, Christian theology had developed an elaborate hierarchy of angels, who were associated with God, and fallen angels, or demons, who were led by Satan. Satan himself was considered the original fallen angel. Islam also developed a complex system of demons. Muslim writings describe a group of evil beings, called jinn, who cause destruction and preside over places where evil activities take place. The original jinn were called Iblis, who was cast out by Allah for refusing to worship Adam, the first man.

MODERN DAY MISUNDERSTANDING OF DEMONS

Demons can be seen as any controlling power or force in people that is destructive to their well-being, science says, anorexia and such like are mental problems and not physical, doctors call anorexia a destructive mental power or force whereas the Bible calls it, demons meaning, something that is destructive to a humans well-being. Today's generations primary understanding of demons comes from Hollywood and not New Testament or spiritual thinking because of this to think of someone having a demon is highly offensive as it implies, they are either extremely evil or extremely morally bankrupt which not one of the persons who are said to have demons in the Bible were. It is not the Bible that is wrong, but the modern-day misunderstanding of the terminology and language of the Bible because modern generations have been influenced by a wrong understanding of the language used during the time of Jesus and the apostles.

SOME SIMILAR BIBLICAL STORIES

A WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER

A Greek Syrophenician woman asked Jesus to cast forth the demon (daimon) (meaning an inferior deity or god) out of her daughter, Jesus said the demon is gone out of her daughter and when she went to her house, she found her daughter healed. This is a woman's young daughter, a child. The child would not be evil or morally bankrupt, this was not an inferior evil god or deity possessing the child as the Jews believed but a mental disorder or disease (Mark 7:23-30).

A MAN AND HIS CHILD

A man tells Jesus that a spirit takes his child, and the son cries out during his epileptic fits and the boy suffers bodily harm. This is a man loved his son, the child would certainly not be evil or morally bankrupt, the spirit, is not an evil god possessing the child as the Jews believed, but a mental disorder, illness or disease (Luke 9:37-41).

A LUNATIC

A man came to Jesus and asked him to have mercy on his son telling Jesus that his son is lunatic (meaning affected by the moon), and often has very bad fits that sometimes seriously harm the boy (Matt. 17:14-18). The Jews believed evil inferior gods caused mental disorders and the Greeks believed the moon could cause bodily seizures or fits. Today we know the moon does not cause illness, but understand that the child had epilepsy or a similar disease and was having a fit, the Greeks and the Jews knew nothing of epilepsy or the like so they simply referred to illnesses and sicknesses they did not understand as being the result of the moon or the sick person being possessed by inferior evil gods. The Jews mistaken understanding of demons was the same as the Greeks wrong belief about the moon.

THERE ARE MANY SO-CALLED GODS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH

The Bible teaches that there is only one real God and creator of all that exists and His name is I AM the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, yet the apostle Paul says there are many so-called gods in heaven and on earth (1 Cor. 8:5). Immediately after making this statement Paul says, nevertheless not everyone possesses this knowledge. Meaning the knowledge that there are many gods, neither do they understand how and why (1 Cor. 8:7). Pagans believed in various gods, often referred to as "the god." These false but very real illusionary gods are created by a very strong belief in "the god" in the imagination of the mind.

The New Testament calls these gods demons (daimonion), but that does not mean real inferior false gods actually exist, they are an entity created by a false belief of the mind, but to the person believing in false gods and demons they are very real entities this is most likely why Jesus did not try to explain the medical terms as we know them today. Jesus rather than go into lengthy detail to explain in detail the medical causes of sickness simply used the common language of his era and manifested God's power over all other gods people believed in by supernaturally healing people. Once a person saw and experience the healing power of God why would they continue to believe in their false inferior gods who had no power? When Jesus gave this same healing power to his apostles

to heal physical sickness and spiritual or mental disorders of the mind it was not solely so they could deliver people from their sickness, but to prove to the people that they were teaching the words of the only true God and the only way to eternal salvation. Thus the apostles and Jesus ministry was not to teach medical science, but to connect people separated from God to God.

DEMONS (ILLUSIONARY GODS AND THE MIND)

Demons as evil spiritual gods only exist in the mind of those who believe in them, they are an image of the mind created by imagination through a false belief in them. This false image in the mind will affect a person's emotions and feelings accordingly because the human nervous system cannot tell the difference between a real image of the mind and a false one. The imaginary but real images of the mind create real emotions and feelings of fear through the human nervous system and these feelings in turn reinforce and convince those that believe in demons or monsters that real evil gods do exist.

NOT EVERYTHING IS BLACK AND WHITE

Perhaps everything regarding demons is not quite as black and white as I have explained, even the best doctors and scientist in the world today still don't fully understand the cause of many of these illness, but one thing that is very clear and is black and white is that those in the Bible who were said to be possessed by demons were not evil wicked people in fact some were children and others humbly fell at the Lords feet and wanted to follow him added to this God through the Lord Jesus Christ showed them great compassion and mercy. For further information see the titles:

- Devils.
- Demons.

Both titles are in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

MATTHEW 9:35-38

The Harvest is Plentiful, but the Labourers are Few.

- **Matthew 9:35-38:** Jesus went through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; ³⁸therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest."

Jesus saw the multitudes that were coming to him as harassed, oppressed and helpless because they had no guide (shepherd). The religious leaders of Christ day were the chief priests, the Pharisees and the scribes Jesus called them blind guides and hypocrites (Matt. 23:1-13). This is why the harvest is so plentiful and the labourers are few, the religious leaders were self-absorbed and their ministry was legalistic and more about maintaining their own empire and authority over the people than it was about shepherding and caring for the flock and those that were lost.

The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few:

- Applies primarily to the time of Jesus, but by extension applies to every age.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

Bible House of Grace