INTRODUCTION

- This chapter records the 5th of 10 crowd situations in Matthew where the Lord of the Sabbath continues supernaturally healing everyone of everything (100%) to fulfill Scripture and to tick off the establishment who ask for another sign to prove His claims.

- Do we need to differentiate between Supernatural and Providential wonders? Yes we should, at least for the sake of non-believers.

DEFINITIONS

- Definition of Supernatural Healing. One or more laws of nature, including time, are broken or suspended to restore someone’s health. Examples: Every conceivable ailment from miraculously raising the dead to instantaneously restoring a missing limb, healing a broken bone, or repairing genes of Down’s Syndrome.

- Definition of Providential Healing. No laws of nature are broken as God uniquely brings events together to restore someone’s health. Examples: The timely delivery of medical intervention, medicine, surgery, positive attitude, or even rest to restore “Functional” ailments such as headaches, backaches, colds, some cancers, resuscitation of someone near death, etc.

- We have to acknowledge providential healings are very subjective. We can never say with certainty if a healing was truly from God working through a situation or coincidental to passage of time or receiving medical attention, medication, rest, etc.? 

NOTES

- Note #1. Jesus and His Disciples only performed supernatural healings – for a season. Providential healings became prominent after the Holy Spirit turned the supernatural switch off. Examples. Epaphras’ near death episode (Phil 2:25-30), Paul tells Timothy to take medicine (i.e., wine) for his many ailments (1Tim 5:23), & Paul leaves Trophimus sick in Miletum (2Tim 4:20)

- Note #2. The next occurrence of supernatural miracles will be done by the 2 witnesses identified in Revelation 11.

- Note #3. Remember, the best miracles Satan and his demons can do are called “lying wonders”................................. 2 Thes 2:9

Passage | Comments
---|---
Matthew 12:1-14 | Jesus (the Son of Man) is Lord of the Sabbath
- The Jews knew the Letter of the Law, but failed to recognize the Spirit of the Law
- The Pharisees substituted legalism for righteousness
- A man’s wellbeing (need for food) trumps legalism
- Same thing with the man with the withered hand – his wellbeing on the Sabbath trumped the no-working law

Note on Restoring Withered Hands
- B.B. Warfield presents in his book “Counterfeit Miracles” several cases of “withered hands” being healed by: 1) Faith Healers; 2) Roman Catholic Priests; 3) Mesmerism; 4) Imagination; and by 5) Deception [source: “Counterfeit Miracles”, p186]
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Blaspheme Against the Holy Spirit
- Jesus stops the train after knowing their blasphemous thoughts and cautioned His listeners to think carefully about what they were saying and thinking about Him.
- In short, blaspheme of the Holy Spirit is lifelong rejection of God’s remedy for salvation through Christ.
- v27. Note that non-believers (in this case, the sons of Pharisees) could also cast out demons. Is demonic release temporary or permanent? It depends. For believers, demonic release is permanent as the Holy Spirit takes up residence. For non-believers, it could be temporary as seen in v45 when more demons come in.
- Consider this. Would Satan have his demon(s) to temporarily vacate someone after some do-gooders tried some “magical incantations” to exorcise a demon, even in Jesus’ name? Absolutely. It’s called deception.

Good Words ➔ Good Fruit
- v33. “Make the tree produce good fruit…” – We have the choice what fruit to produce in our lives.
- Good fruit begins with our thoughts, then our words, and finally our actions.
  1. Think on good things ............................................................ Phil 4:8
  2. Say only what is uplifting/encouraging................................. Eph 4:29
  3. Do what is right ................................................................. 1Peter 3:11
- v34. “You brood of vipers…” – That doesn’t sound like a nice or loving thing to say. Did Jesus say it with love?
  - True discernment knows when it’s time to call the baby ugly to try and correct a wrong ............................... Gal 2:11
  - Yes, Jesus had love for them – He died for them.

Give us One More Sign
- This evil generation just wanted more signs, more free food, more miracles, more handouts - give me, give me.
- The Jews had a severe heart condition. They did not want to believe. Recall the Exodus when the Jews saw great and mighty miracles from the Lord, but, “in spite of all this, they kept on sinning; in spite of His wonders, they did not believe” ................................. Psalms 78:32
- Why didn’t Jesus give to him who asked of Him? We must realize this is one of those overriding principles. We are not obligated to cast pearls before swine.
- Jesus gave them a sign to consider – the sign of Jonah ➔ Repent or Perish – and they perished in 70 AD.

Unclean Spirits Unite
- Example. When a person breaks an addiction on his own and doesn’t replace a bad habit with a good habit, the bad habit can come back with a vengeance.
- We must replace bad habits with good habits: e.g., “Stop stealing, start working and giving”.............. Eph 4:28
- Also, when a demon leaves a person, and the person fails to establish a firm grounding in Christ, his latter end is worse than the beginning.................. 2 Peter 2:20

Who Is My Mother and Father
- v50. Jesus makes it plain that we are considered His closest & dearest relatives when we do the will of God.
- In John 15:14 Jesus also made it clear that “You are My friends if you do what I command you.”
- Consider This. God wants to call each of us “friends” which means we need to show ourselves friendly, loyal, available, trustworthy, and obedient.
  - Have we spent time with God this week?
  - Have we shown kindness to friends and strangers?
  - Have we sacrificed any possessions (time, money, effort) to further God’s Kingdom?
  - And, like Jesus, chose your Friends carefully. A man with too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother......Prov 18:24

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS
- God provides convincing reasons to believe in Him, but not always compelling. No one is forced to believe on Him or forced to accept Him. Though, one day, everyone will be forced to stand before Him and acknowledge Him either as Lord or as Judge.
- And there will come a day when the handicapped will be blessed beyond measure for their hardships on earth.................. Isaiah 56:3-5
- Are we more interested in seeing and receiving the miraculous, which delivers temporary relief, or should we be more interested in hearing & sharing God’s words, which delivers eternal life?

NEXT WEEK: Matthew 13. Matthew records 8 parables, and finishes with Jesus in His hometown, where He did few miracles because of unbelief. It wasn’t that He couldn’t, but they wouldn’t.

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