

Matthew 20-02-02a

Good morning. You have joined the Sunday morning services at Grace & Truth Bible Church. This is the 2nd of February, 2020.

A lot of twos in the date today. For sports fans, this is Super Bowl Sunday. And for those of you in my immediate periphery, it's my wife's birthday, so we're having a celebratory weekend, enjoying it very much.

And we're also going to enjoy our study this morning in the Gospel of Matthew, resuming in Chapter 8. Let's take a moment to focus on the importance of God's Holy Spirit and His ministry to us in helping us to understand and remember and put into practice in our thoughts and actions the truth that we find in God's Word. Shall we pray? Father, we are thankful for your many gracious blessings and provisions. We thank you for your mercies that are renewed to us every morning.

We thank you for your grace in sending the Lord Jesus Christ. And it's such a privilege to have the opportunity to look in detail at His ministry during the days that He walked this earth and presented Himself as Messiah to the nation of Israel and became their Savior and ours. We pray that as we look at this portion of your Word, that your Holy Spirit will minister to each heart, guide the presentation and the reception as we look at these events and the truths that they convey to us.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. In Matthew Chapter 8, we began with the realization that Matthew has taken his events a bit out of order to focus on a purpose.

Do you remember what that theme or that idea is? What is Matthew as the gospel that presents Jesus as the Messiah, the King to Israel, having given the policy statement in the Sermon on the Mount, the teaching on the hill, chapters 5, 6, and 7? What's going on here in chapter 8? Do you remember? If you think about the presentation, Matthew moves up the visit of the leper that Jesus cleanses. We know from other gospels that this actually took place a bit later. If you have a chronological Bible, it's quite fascinating to see the understanding we have of when things did take place.

But Matthew organizes this on a thematic basis, and the theme in chapter 8 is summed up by the centurion. What does he say? I understand authority. So as we think about what we should do with the things that we learn in this portion of God's Word, one of them is an understanding of appreciation for, respect for, authority, whether we exercise it or whether we function under it.

It is a part of God's plan and purpose, and it is no more fully reflected than in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus himself. And his expression of authority is evident and manifest. We're going to continue to see that thread, that major color theme, if you will, woven through this chapter, but it doesn't really stop there.

That's a good thing. Don't have to engage the trowel very deeply in the soil to come up with that observation. But there are some concomitant points that I want to draw our attention to before we continue.

First is that in the telling of the story we saw last time, which is the healing of the centurion's servant, when Jesus had entered Capernaum, verse 5, that is an important detail, very important detail for Bible interpretation in a way that we'll see in a moment. But the Bible doesn't always give us details, some of the details that we might really like to have. In some cases, it omits details, and we find out from other passages that certain things are true.

But when Jesus had entered Capernaum, where has he been? He's been down south. He's been in Jerusalem for the feast. He has presented himself down there, and he has returned to this area and has entered Capernaum, which is in Galilee up north.

Centurion comes to him pleading with him, saying, Lord, my servant is lying at home, paralyzed, dreadfully tormented. Jesus said to him, I will come and heal him, et cetera. So if you picture this scene in your mind, what do you see? You imagine some dusty old biblical town, Capernaum, Jesus comes in, Centurion comes up, and you have a two-shot, as they say in Hollywood.

You've got Jesus, and you've got the Centurion, right? Keep your finger here and turn over to Luke chapter 7. Luke's account, based on the testimony of eyewitnesses and very careful research, as he tells us at the beginning of both this book and Acts, when Jesus concluded all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. Same detail, he entered Capernaum. What town is he in? Say it with me.

Capernaum. It's important. And a certain Centurion's servant who was dear to him was sick and ready to die.

So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to him, pleading with him to come and heal his servant. Now, in your mind, same dusty biblical town, Capernaum, Jesus enters the city. We don't have a two-shot.

Who is talking to Jesus? This is the very same event. There aren't two Centurions with two sick servants, but the Centurion does not personally come and talk to Jesus. Who is talking to Jesus? Elders, plural, of the Jews, pleading with him to come and heal the Centurion's servant.

And when they came to Jesus, verse 4, they begged him earnestly, saying that the one for whom he should do this was deserving. He loves our nation and has built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them.

And when he was already not far from the house, the Centurion sent friends to him. These are more emissaries. We started out with at least two elders of the Jews who come

to Jesus, say he's a Roman, but he's a good guy.

He loves God. He has built a house of worship for the God of Israel evidently with his own money. He's sponsored it, made it happen.

And so Jesus is on the way. Now the Centurion, accompanied by these elders of Israel, now the Centurion has sent more friends. So there's beginning to be a crowd of emissaries from the Centurion around Jesus, right? None of this is in Matthew.

Not far from the house, the Centurion sent friends to him, verse 6, saying to him, Lord, do not trouble yourself. I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. Therefore, I did not even think myself worthy to come to you, but say the word and my servant will be healed.

And then we have the same illustration. I'm a man under authority. I say to a soldier, go.

And he goes to another company comes. I say to my servant, do this. And he does it.

When Jesus heard these things, you have the, I say to you, I've not found such great faith. No, not in Israel. And those who were sent returning to the house found the servant well, who had been sick.

That who had been sick is not in your generally more reliable manuscripts. So what do we do with this? Matthew in our passage says, a Centurion came to him, pleading with him saying, Lord, my servant is lying at home, paralyzed, dreadfully tormented. Jesus said to him, I will come and heal him.

In Luke, we have more details. So what do you think? Did the Centurion really come or did he not? I think Luke is trustworthy. The certain Centurion explicitly says, I didn't think myself worthy.

He's a Roman Centurion and he doesn't think himself worthy to come before the Lord Jesus. It gives you a measure of his faith, but Matthew does not include that detail. And Matthew tells the story as though the Centurion is present and speaking.

The reason I point this out, as some of you will remember from long ago days, this is a great revelation for us. The Bible will sometimes present someone as in the immediate prosopon, pros meaning face-to-face area, speaking in the first person to someone when they aren't actually there. The words of the servants are as good as the Centurion standing there himself and his words are presented in the first person.

Now you can tell me why this is important, right? Why is this important? How many people go to the Old Testament and see the angel of the Lord and want to say, capital A, and this is God himself speaking. This is Jesus in a pre-incarnate form. And you have a lot of people who want that to be capital A and want it to be Jesus.

Before he was born in the flesh, Jesus came as the angel of the Lord. And they justify this by looking at the words that the angel speaks and he is speaking in the first person as God. So if we had no other information, we would be tempted to agree and take it in that way.

However, God has helpfully given us Matthew and Luke and the episode of the Centurion and a few other parallels to show us that there is a point to be made. Why would Matthew omit the detail about the servants and I'm not worthy to come under your roof and so on? What is Matthew's thematic point? Authority. So the details about worthiness and the use of intermediaries are not pertinent to that thematic point.

It actually sort of distracts from it. Luke is making a different point. You remember our four cherubim faces and the four themes and the four gospels.

What is Luke's emphasis? What is his thematic choice under the influence of the Holy Spirit? Matthew, I see some of you straining to pull this up. Matthew presents Jesus as the Messiah King to Israel. This is the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Just remember those four faces. You can remember the faces. It's a picture.

It's easier to remember pictures than concepts. So you've got the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He's got the lion's face.

Mark presents him as the suffering servant. Remember the question John the Baptist asks, are you he that shall come or should we wait for another? Because in the Old Testament, some of the pictures of Messiah present him as the conquering king. Matthew, conquering king.

Other passages, you go to Isaiah 53 and so on and you have the suffering servant. Mark presents Jesus in that servant role. Conquering king, suffering servant.

Luke, son of man, his humanity. Luke is the doctor, the physician. Jesus is often referred to as the great physician and people think, oh, there's a verse for that somewhere.

There's not. Bible nowhere says Jesus is the great physician. Not one single solitary place.

Believe me, I have been asked repeatedly and I have looked and there is no such verse. Not that he isn't the great physician. Bible doesn't call him the great physician.

If anybody was going to do so, I'm having a frog in my throat this morning, it would be Luke. Luke himself is a doctor, but it's the son of man. It's that sharing in our flesh.

Now thinking about Luke and the nature of our flesh and our assignment, whether it is hereditary or environmental, the circumstances in which we are brought up, raised, this is something Luke would tend to address. And you think about these extra details about

the people who are involved and the social constraints and the sort of dance that is done here with a Gentile centurion and Jesus and these Jewish elders and Jewish friends that he sends as intermediaries. What kind of Jews must these be? They can't be the kind that are his own and his own receiving him not, right? These are good guy Jews.

These are going to respect the centurion. They are friends of the centurion. They share his views and are willing to go see Jesus.

They don't say, what are you talking about? This man has no qualifications. We don't know who he is, where he is from. He hasn't been to seminary.

He's not been vetted by the pharisaical council or the Sanhedrin. These Jews get it. But it's the human interaction.

It's the context of relationships between the centurion and the elders and the friends and Jesus that gets the emphasis in Luke's account. So looking at details as they are presented in a gospel is important. At the same time, it's also helpful to note that in comparing these two gospel accounts, we find the Bible often, this is not the only place, but it's a significant and very clear place where the Bible will occasionally present someone as speaking in the first person and being present when they actually aren't.

And I submit to you that this is the case with the angel of the Lord. Now, why would he do that? We can see that he does do it and say, okay, I have confidence that I'm pretty sure the angel of the Lord is just what the Bible says he is. He is an angel.

He's a messenger. So what? Why would the Bible send the angel of the Lord and have him talk in the first person as God, whether it's to Abraham or to Manoah or to whoever? Why would he do that? Why would the Bible not be very scientific and say, and an angel came and said, thus saith the Lord, instead of I am. Why? Well, what is the effect on someone when the angel appears? And the Old Testament is rife with examples.

Remember Hagar and Beer-lahai-roi. This is the well of the God who sees me. I have seen God and lived, Jacob wrestling with the man.

I will not let you go until you bless me. And the representative is a conduit, as I've said many times. It's like your phone.

You don't say, well, my phone was talking to me the other day and said to be sure and stop and get eggs on my way home. That's my spouse on the phone. The phone is a means of conveying the conversation at a distance.

And this is what the angel is. But why would God put these in the first person? What does it connote? This is personal engagement and nearness. An example of distance.

Remember when Daniel prays and Gabriel finally gets there and he says, it took me

three weeks to get here. From the time your prayers were heard, there was a big, long delay. That has a purpose as well.

What is the purpose of the immediacy and nearness? And it is as though God is right here. It is as though God is right here. It is the personal concern, the one-on-one engagement that speaks of relationship, covenant relationship with God.

And God in the figure, in the telling, removes all of these details to emphasize the point that he is near. He is personally engaged. You don't have Genesis where God hears about the evil on the earth and says, I will go down and see what's happening.

All of that is removed to remind us when Jesus says, the one who has my words and keeps them, he's the one that loves me. I and my father will come to him and make our home with him. The essential meaning of that is hard to grasp that the enthroned God, the father in heaven, see Satan doesn't like this point.

We're going to be talking about demons and animals here for long, but there's an important point here that I'm going to make. And that is the nearness of God to you and to me. That's the reason Jesus says, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man will open the door, I will come in and share a meal. Over and over again, Old Testament and new, God emphasizes, the Lord Jesus emphasizes that our relationship with him is personal and it is near at hand. And because God is near, his power is near.

And back to Matthew chapter eight, looking at the power and authority of the Lord Jesus being expressed. That's why the elders and the friends are not included in the centurion story because this is Jesus communicating directly through those things to the centurion, the centurion communicating directly through those intermediaries to the Lord Jesus. This is what we do.

We pray and our words are heard in the throne room of God. In other places, we find out that we do not know how to pray as we ought. You think about Hebrews chapter eight, I believe, where it says, we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Holy Spirit is the conduit, is the intermediary who conveys our thoughts and our concerns and our prayers to the father in sounds that cannot be uttered by human lips.

So there is a chain, there is an intermediary, but we are taught to think of it as the Jews say, from your lips to God's ears. And that's pretty much what it is. So there is that emphasis here.

And there is also something that I'd like to address in this regard. Many people think that there is yet another record of this encounter with the centurion. Turn with me to the gospel of John chapter four, John chapter four.

If you remember the gospel of John, what is its organizing principle? First of all, the

theme, what's the theme? This is a quick review because we just covered it. What's the theme of the gospel of John? Jesus as son of God, son of God. He is the logos.

Word was with God. The word was God. The word became flesh and dwelt among us.

We beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the father, begotten of the father. John three 16 said his only begotten son, son of God is in John, right? Now that's the theme. What's the organizing principle? How did John organize his gospel? What is its spine? What is the, well it hasn't been that long ago in the gospel of John.

Remember the seven signs, first sign, wedding feast at Cana, remember? Seven signs. You go to John chapter 20 or thereabouts and he says, you know, the number of things Jesus did, you couldn't fill the earth with enough books to hold them, but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name, son of God. Very clear in John.

And the organizing principle is seven signs. John chapter two is the wedding feast at Cana, right? So you have the introduction and declaration and the ministry of John the Baptist and the first disciples in John chapter one, you have the water turned to wine in John chapter two, you have Nicodemus in John chapter three, three 16, it's Jesus talking to Nicodemus, ruler came to Jesus by night, must be born again. Then you have that very significant section at the end of chapter three, the people come to, there's a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification.

So they come to John and they ask him questions. And he emphasizes again that there is one who comes from above in verse 31. He who comes from above is above all.

He who is of the earth is earthly and speaks from the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all Jesus, the son of God. Now we're in chapter four and you have the dialogue with the woman of Samaria, the woman at the well, that's John chapter four.

But as you come toward the end of that chapter in verse 46, actually begin in verse 43, all of the Samaritan stuff is in the first part of John chapter four. So where is he? He's at the well, Jacob's well in Samaria. In verse 42, we believe because of what you've said, we've heard, we know this is indeed the Christ, the savior of the world.

Verse 43, now after two days, he departed from there and went to Galilee. This is the same going to Galilee that is in Luke chapter seven and Matthew chapter eight. It's the same trip.

He was, he was up North. He went down to Jerusalem and he has come back up. Remember he was at the wedding feast of Cana.

He went down to Jerusalem. Nicodemus comes by night. Now he has gone back up.

The feast is over and he's returning to the North. He's coming to Galilee, same trip as Luke seven and Matthew eight. Jesus testified a prophet has no honor in his own country.

So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans received him having seen the things he did in Jerusalem at the feast for they also had gone to the feast. This was one of those assembly feasts. Now look at verse 46.

So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where he had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to him and implored him to come down and heal his son for he was at the point of death.

The word servant and son are the same in Greek. Jesus said to him, unless you see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe. The nobleman said to him, sir, come down before my son dies.

Jesus said to him, go your way. Your son lives. So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and he went his way.

And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him saying your son lives. Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him yesterday at the seventh hour, the fever left him.

So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, your son lives. And he himself believed and his whole household. This again is the second sign Jesus did when he had come out of Judea into Galilee.

There are many, going all the way back to the second century who have thought that this too is a telling of the healing of the centurion's servant, that the nobleman is the centurion, the servant is the son, the son is the servant. In any of the three accounts, it could have been a son or a servant. The same word is used to refer to both.

So is this yet another reshaping of the details in order to serve the theme and make a point? There are many similarities here. It is a healing at a distance. There is someone making requests on behalf of a servant slash son.

So, and the time is right. So there are many who will swear literally on a stack of Bibles that this is the same story told in a different way. Now we have seen looking at Matthew and Luke that details may not always match.

And we've got another famous episode of this coming up because we're about to look at the Gadarene, Gergesene, Geresene, Demontia. Is there one or are there two? One gospel says one, another gospel says two. So we know that there are details that may be included or omitted in service of the theme.

Is that the case? This is not just a pop quiz. This is more of a, this is like a midterm. This is an exam.

What do you think when you come to this end of John chapter four, healing of the nobleman's son, is this a parallel to Luke seven and Matthew eight or not? What do you think? And more importantly, why do you think it? I gave, I gave you a few clues at the, at the beginning. What did I say to pay special attention to right at the beginning of the story? What was Jesus doing at the very beginning of the story? Jesus entered Capernaum. Jesus entered Capernaum.

When a, when a detail is given, it is true. You can't swap cities and have the same story, right? Jesus entered Capernaum. Now it may leave out the fact that when he's talking to a demoniac, there's another one standing right behind him.

It may leave out the fact, you remember the leper outside the city, when Jesus is entering Jericho, son of David have mercy on me. You go to another gospel, there's another guy, but the first guy is actually there. And it really is the town.

It's the right town. And the fact that the other guy's not mentioned doesn't change the veracity of what is said. So anytime we're looking at things like this, you cannot alter a detail and say, this detail here is not true.

There may be additional eyewitness testimony. There may be other facets and other points of view, but it is not going to change any of the significant facts of the story. So looking here at John 4.46, where is Jesus? Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee, where he had made water wine.

To my knowledge, Jesus never turned any water into wine in Capernaum. No record of that ever happening. John is explicit.

He's in the town where he made the water into wine. And by the way, he is connecting the first sign and that's it to the second one. Look at the other significant details here that are unique and different from our centurion story.

There is a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. Now, interestingly, the centurion and his sick servant live in Capernaum. This man lives in Capernaum and has a sick son slash servant.

So that coincides. The sick young man is in Capernaum. The concerned father has a house in Capernaum and both men are notable.

They are high up. They're not just your run-of-the-mill merchant or farmers. They're leaders in the community of some kind.

When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to him and

implored him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. He went to him and implored him. This is a little bit more specificity because he went to him from Capernaum to Cana.

You can look on a map. You can check it on the break. There's a fair distance between Capernaum and Cana.

Cana is north and west of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum is more almost directly north. It's a fair hike.

You see that in this story a bit later. So he went to him and implored him to come down and heal his son. When I look at a map, I think north is up, but he wants him to go northeast from Cana to Capernaum and heal his son, for he's at the point of death.

Jesus said to him, unless you see signs and wonders, unless you see signs and wonders. If you look at your Greek New Testament, which I'm sure you have handy there, in John 4, 48, you'll notice that they have added a word in italics there. Unless you all see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.

He is speaking to this man, but he is speaking to him as a representative of a larger group. This is the second person plural, and they've helpfully added people here to help you understand that he's not just talking to the man in the singular. And that's a good helpful italicized word.

Unless y'all see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe. Now, is the centurion Jewish? No, he is not. There are no Jewish centurions.

They are Romans. Jesus speaks to this man and says, you are part of the group that requires signs and wonders in order to believe. Right? What is the man's response? Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.

What does he say? Sir, you've got to get there before my son dies. What does this tell you? I think these signs and wonders are great, and I want you to perpetrate one for my son. What is Jesus declaration about the centurion? This guy has so much faith.

He doesn't come himself. We see in Luke, but even in Matthew, he says, I know how authority works. I know who you are.

I know you have the authority. You speak the word and it will happen. And Jesus says, I have not seen this faith in Israel.

Who's he looking at here? On the same return trip from the same town, a Jewish man who is not invoking any kind of faith. You know, have you ever seen these teasers on the internet? You're trying to read your email or something. And some little sidebar thing comes up and it says, try this weird trick to get rid of bags under your eyes or, you know,

take the nicotine stains off your fingernails or, you know, try this weird old trick.

Well, people will click that because people say, you know, there there's, oh, if I put a cucumber on a ward, it'll go away. Or if I, you know, try this. There's some tricky thing you can do.

Some ancient wisdom that's been lost and found, right? That's the nature of this guy's appeal. I don't know how he does it. I don't care how he does it.

I've heard he can heal and I've got a need for healing. So he can be the son of Satan for all I care. I just want him to heal my son.

I want the result. I'm not interested in who he is or how he does it. And people say, well, you know, WD-40 will, oh no, hairspray.

Hairspray will take out ballpoint ink. We looked that up. Turned out to be water-based ink.

That's why the stuff didn't work. But do I know why hairspray allegedly takes out ballpoint ink? Don't know. Don't care.

Got ballpoint ink on a good shirt. Spray the hairspray on. If it comes out, that's great.

I don't care how it worked. That's the nature of this. Why is this important? Look at the contrast.

It is in the same city and it is the same situation, but look at the difference. We look at Matthew and Luke and we see the similarities and the ways that the details serve to emphasize Jesus' authority and Jesus' humanity in the two respective cases. Here we have a similar but different story.

The Jewish nobleman who ought to be the first to believe in Jesus, who ought to be the first to recognize he's been schooled in the law. He's a nobleman. He comes from a well-off family, has the best education, knows his Old Testament, has heard it in synagogue his whole life, been down to the temple on all the assembly feasts.

And what's the deal? We find out in Luke that the centurion has come to the faith of Israel from a great distance. Here's a man born to it and misses it. He says, Jesus says, signs and wonders you're not going to believe.

The guy just waves that away. You just got to come and heal my son. He doesn't even respond.

But Jesus is very much as always to the point. You don't believe until you see signs and wonders. What happens in this story as you go on down? Go your way, your son lives.

At that point, the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him. What did Jesus speak to him? I am the son of God. I am the Savior.

I am He. What is it that the man believes? He believes the word Jesus spoke. What is the word Jesus spoke? Your son lives.

The hairspray worked. I believe you. I know that that's what he believed and that that's all that he believed from what John continues to say.

As he was going down, his servants met him and said, your son lives. It's a pretty great distance to get from and evidently was toward the end of the day when Jesus met this guy in Cana. And so it's the next day that he's returning home.

And as he's returning home, the servants are running to meet him to say, hey, good news. So he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him yesterday at the seventh hour, the fever left him.

The fever left him. Who do we know in Matthew had a fever leave? Remember our set of three miracles? You have Jewish, Gentile, Peter's mother-in-law, the fever left her and she arose and served. What happens here? We find out that this sickness is a fever.

The fever left him. So the father knew it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, your son lives. Now he himself believed and his whole household believes more than your son lives.

He figures out who Jesus is because Jesus said, you're not going to believe until you see signs and wonders. He's seen the wonder. Now he believes.

It's an interesting thing to think about. Some of us learn by observation and by crediting respected sources. Others of us have to learn in the school of hard knocks or by experience.

And we don't really cement our faith. We don't really take something to the bank until we have seen it operate in our own life. Second sign Jesus did.

And John says, in case you're wondering why Jesus said, except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe this was a sign. And the man and his household believed. So looking at the details, it becomes manifestly clear that this is a healing that took place in the same town in similar circumstances, but it is here for contrast with our story.

And we gain a great deal of insight in looking at the contrast. I want to be the Gentile who will believe that God's authority is knowledgeable and operative in my life. I want the intermediary communication that God has given me through his word and through teachers and great resources, commentators and other men who have devoted their lives to the study of scripture.

I appreciate those, but I want it to be God talking to me in the first person, just like Matthew chapter eight. It's great that there were Jewish elders. It's great that there were friends and they facilitated and made possible this contact.

But ultimately it's Matthew 8 picture. Jesus talks to the centurion, the centurion talks to Jesus. That's how it should be for us in our study of the word of God.

We don't get bogged down in textual details. We don't get bogged down in personalities or intermediaries. Our relationship with God through Christ is personal.

It is first person. And it's just like the centurion that we're that Gentile between the presentation to the Jews at the first advent and the presentation to the Jews at the second advent, the fever is going to leave them. And they're going to look back at the signs and have the opportunity to believe in the Lord Jesus as the Messiah.

Isn't that interesting? In both cases, it's a fever for the Jewish third miracle. And this is the heated concern that prevents them seeing clearly and believing objectively, but that's going to be removed. The scales are going to fall from their eyes like Saul after the Damascus road encounter, encountering Jesus initially blind, but then the scales fall and he becomes the great apostle.

It's a picture of Israel. And we pray for Israel, but the Israelis of our day and the Jews of our day have the option of becoming church and entering into a new covenant founded on new and better promises. So what is the application for us as we look at these tellings? We have multiple ones.

First, we can trust the integrity of any account of scripture, even when we might realize that all of the details aren't there. We benefit from paying attention to detail and letting the context speak and bringing to bear the information we have from earlier studies and other passages. But ultimately and finally, it is the Lord Jesus standing at the door and knocking.

And if we will open that door, he will come in. He and his father will come and stay. And it is a personal, intimate, blessing relationship that God offers us through Christ.

And if we ever lose sight of that and get distracted by circumstances or by some of the things we're going to see in the second session today, we've missed that great point. And it is the great point. And yes, Jesus has authority.

Yes, he is the king for Israel. But in the final analysis, he is the personal savior of every Jew, and he is the personal savior of every Gentile that comes to him in faith. Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

That's the most important point out of this portion of Matthew chapter 8. Let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we're going to see the sea. We're going

to watch Jesus calm the storm.

And there are things there that as many times as I've looked at it, I haven't seen before.
So we'll come back, look at it and see what you think.