

MIRACLES OF JESUS

A CLUSTER OF TEN MIRACLES (MATTHEW 8-9)

As we've seen in our study thus far, Jesus used miracles to reinforce his teachings. In Matthew 8-9, we have a cluster of several miracles which are topically arranged. In other words, they are not in chronological order. We know this based on the arrangement of these same events in the Gospels of Mark and Luke (**Figure 4**). (In the table below, they're numbered based on Matthew's arrangement.) It's best to look at these miracles in three sets (Matt 8:1-17; 8:23-9:8; 9:18-34).

Miracles in Matt 8-9 in Chronological Order

Miracle	Matt	Mark	Luke
3. Healing Peter's Mother-in-Law (Fever)	8:14-17	1:30	4:38
1. Cleansing a Leper	8:2-4	1:40	5:12
6. Healing a Paralytic	9:1-8	2:3	5:18
2. Healing a Centurion's Paralyzed Servant	8:5-13		7:1
4. Stilling the Stormy Sea	8:23-27	4:35	8:22
5. Demons Entering a Herd of Swine	8:28-34	5:1	8:26
7-8. Healing two "Daughters"	9:18-26	5:22-43	8:41-56
9. Healing Two Blind Men	9:27-31		
10. Curing a Demon-Possessed, Mute Man	9:32-34		

Figure 4.

Why topically arranged in Matthew? This cluster of miracles in Matt 8-9 comes on the heels of the Sermon on the Mount in Matt 5-7. They both present Jesus' authority, in his preaching and in his miracles.

Set 1 (Matt 8:1-17)

In the first set of miracles, Jesus demonstrates his power over disease.

1. Leprosy (Matt 8:2-4)

Jesus healed a leper instantaneously. We also see his compassion on full display when he is approached by the leper, beginning for mercy.

2. Paralysis (Matt 8:5-13)

A Roman centurion appealed to Jesus on behalf of his servant who was paralyzed and "suffering terribly" (Matt 8:6). Jesus would have

"If You Are Willing"

"Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."

"I will; be clean."

—Matt 8:2-3

gone to the centurion’s home, but the soldier, feeling unworthy, asked Jesus to heal his servant from a distance (cf. John 4:46–54). Jesus marveled at this man’s amazing display of faith, praising him for his willingness to believe so strongly in Jesus’ power to heal, even from a distance.

3. Demonic sickness (Matt 8:14–17)

Jesus heals Peter’s mother-in-law of a debilitating sickness; and then later that evening, he casts out demons by rebuking them. This shows his authority over disease and demons.

Set 2 (Matt 8:23–9:8)

Jesus’ authority over disease and demonic forces intensifies.

4. Stilling the Stormy Sea (8:23–27)

This storm was anything but ordinary. It was ferocious, requiring Jesus to rebuke it. This same verb is used to describe Jesus’ rebuking of the demons in Mark 1:25. This was a demonic storm!

5. Demons Entering a Herd of Swine (8:28–34)

While in Gentile territory, Jesus confronts two demon-possessed men. The one who speaks to Jesus identifies himself as Legion. He has numerous demons inside of him. Jesus casts them out in a nearby herd of swine.

6. Healing a Paralytic (9:1–8)

In addition to healing a paralytic and restoring his ability to walk, Jesus first forgave the man of his sins. He demonstrates his authority over sin and thus declares himself to be God.

Set 3 (Matt 9:18–34)

Yet again, Jesus proves unflappable in the face of disease or demons.

7-8. Healing two “Daughters” (9:18–26)

When a woman touches Jesus, she is healed instantly. “Daughter,” he says, “your faith has made you well.” He had been on his way to heal a little girl, but before he arrived, she died. To the amazement of her parents, Jesus restored this man’s daughter to life.

9. Healing Two Blind Men (9:27–31)

Who can open the eyes of the blind but God? Jesus proves he is God by opening the eyes of two blind men.

10. Curing a Demon-Possessed, Mute Man (9:32–34)

Once again, demons and disease are no match for Jesus.

Rebuking the Storm

He rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

—Matt 8:26