

THE BENEVOLENT MINISTRY OF CHRIST

(Matt. 12:22-23)

Jesus did what no one before had ever done. He healed everyone! He healed “impossible” cases! The dilemma for the Jews was that while Jesus did so many wonderful things, yet He didn’t come as they expected the Messiah to do. They wondered about Him being the Messiah and yet had a hard time accepting the idea.

Matthew 12:22 (NKJV)

22 Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.

This man had an interrelated threefold problem that was most severe. He was demon-possessed, and the sense is that this condition caused him to be blind and mute. He couldn’t see, and he couldn’t talk, which made any and all communication very difficult.

This was an especially difficult case, but it was no problem for Jesus. The text simply says that Jesus “**healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.**” The healing was instantaneous and complete. There was no refuting it, and even Christ’s enemies did not deny it.

Matthew 12:23 (NKJV)

23 And all the multitudes were amazed and said, “Could this be the Son of David?”

And all the multitudes were amazed, saying, “Could this be the Son of David?” Son of David was a common Messianic designation going back to God’s promise to David that God would establish the throne of his kingdom forever through his son (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12-16; see Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 20:30; 21:9, 15).

But in the Greek there is a fine nuance here we don’t see in the English. And that is that the grammar here expects a negative answer.

“It expects the negative answer. They were saying, ‘This can’t be the Messiah, can it?’ Thus their inquiry, while indicating a faint possibility of belief, indicated that their amazement was primarily in unbelief.”

– **Stanley Toussaint**

They got it that the Messiah would come doing great unprecedented healing miracles. Indeed, when He comes to usher in the kingdom

prophecy shows that will be a time of great HEALING as seen for example in Isaiah 35.

But in context their problem seems to be that they thought of David as a WARRIOR-KING and believed that the Son of David would be a great liberator in that same mold.

Thus, they struggled with how to understand these unprecedented miracles such as healing a demon possessed blind and mute man. It seemed like this is kind of thing that only the Messiah would be able to do, but He didn't seem like a WARRIOR-KING like David.

Thus, He didn't fit the Messianic profile they had been taught to expect. They were amazed but skeptical. And into that context came the Pharisees with an explanation that was so blasphemous as to be unforgivable. As we will see next time, they didn't deny Christ did this, they just claimed He did it by the power of the devil.

One of the great proofs for the truth of Jesus being the prophesied Messiah was the very NATURE of His ministry. He came doing nothing but good and being very gracious and gentle in the process. This is not like the DEVIL. In the Bible we consistently see devil doing nothing but that which is deceptive and harmful. He never does anyone good!

What a contrast! The demon or demons (Satan's angels) were responsible for this man in Matthew 12:22 being blind and mute. That is the devil's work. In contrast Jesus HEALED Him. That is God's work. As the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1 indicates Jesus came to set the captives free – and indeed He did.

Acts 10:36–38 (NKJV)

36 The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is **Lord of all**—

37 that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who **went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil,** for God was with Him.

Acts 10:43 (NKJV)

43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, **whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.**"

The ultimate question is this: Have you believed in Him?

Isaiah 55:8-9 is very clear that God's ways are NOT our ways. They are infinitely ABOVE our ways. God's ways can only be known by God's revelation. We never figure out God on our own. He doesn't do it the way we think He would.

No one would expect the infinite eternal Creator to become a man – but He did. The Jews did not expect the Messiah to come in gentleness but rather as an overwhelming conqueror. They did not expect the Son of David to come as humbly as a lamb – the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world; rather they expected Him to come as a LION!

We sing at Christmas time...

How should a King come?
 Even a child knows the answer of course,
 In a coach of gold with a pure white horse.
 In the beautiful city in the prime of the day,
 And the trumpets should cry
 and the crowds make way.

But that's not how Jesus came at His first coming. He came in a spirit of great humility, with amazing grace, in meekness and lowliness of heart. He came with a ministry of APPEAL – not on a take over mission! He appealed to the HEART, He worked through conviction, and called for repentance. The whole focus is an “internal focus” – changing people from the inside out.

But I would remind us that the FIRST COMING is only part of the story. There is a sequel. There is a SECOND COMING in which He will come with power and great glory!

And just as sure as the humble/gentle part of the prophetic story was fulfilled to the letter, just as sure will yet be the glory and power part of the story. There are TWO parts to the story – there are TWO comings. There is ONE Messiah – but TWO comings! First Jesus came as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, but He is going to return a second time, but this time He is coming as KING of kings and LORD of lords.

In His NAME Gentiles will trust! Are you among them?

Do you know Him? Be ready! Live ready!

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!