

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev Chris Trinham Dr. Luke and the Healing Miracles of Jesus 14th October 2003

A Man of Authority

Scripture Reading: Luke 4

As always, our understanding of a passage is greatly enhanced by understanding the setting in which it is found. This setting for the medical miracles of Jesus is the life and work of the Lord amid Roman occupied ancient Palestine with its rigid religious social system. It is with this in mind that we first review Luke chapters one to four.

The Setting of the Medical Ministry of Jesus.

First, there is the annunciation and birth of Jesus, and the events that attended it in Luke 1&2.

Second, the anointing of Jesus by the Holy spirit, His identification with sinful mankind by John the Baptist, and His human genealogy from Joseph the man not from Mary back to Adam in Luke 3.

Third His testing and approval by temptation. In Luke 4.1-13.

Fourth, His announcement to His home community of God's appointment to His redemptive work in Luke 4.14-30. This event should be seen as a prophetic microcosm of His coming ministry in that 'He came to His own but His own received him not' (John 1.11). It is notable that there is no recorded major miracle performed in Nazareth. Mark 6.5&6 tells us why! Having been rejected He left the region for Capernaum in Galilee, about 25 miles north east of Nazareth. These towns were then connected by a road and but took a week to traverse (from Sabbath to Sabbath vs16&31). Other events undoubtedly happened in that time which the other Gospels probably record. The key words in sequence are: annunciation, anointing,

approval and announcement.

The Early Medical Miracles in Galilee.

Luke from verse 31 in chapter four commenced recording Jesus' teaching and medical ministry. A significant statement is that he taught them as 'one having authority' Matthew adds, 'and not as the scribes'. (7.29) who saw themselves as the keepers and expounders of tradition, which authority Jesus recognised. See Matthew 23.2&3. But He warned against adopting their overbearing attitude of pride, arrogance, ignorance and unbelief. The authority of Jesus rested upon Him as God's anointed. His was a confidence borne out of His relationship with His Father See v42 & Mark 1.35. These miracles then may be seen as a demonstration of God's power upon Him.

Power Over Evil Spirits. The healing of the man with an unclean spirit Luke 4.31-37. The demons recognised His identity and authority. Mark says that the man was in 'their' synagogue, suggesting that he was not normally one of them. Luke's language is emphatic in diagnosing the man's condition to be possession by an unclean demon. It was not his

own nature that was unclean. His body was the habitation of a demon from the pit. The demon had taken control of his mind and thereby his actions. Luke records these symptoms:

It was noisy v33

It gave the man an awareness that was abnormal v34

It was subservient to true authority v35

It was disruptive v35

It was violent v35 Mark indicates that the man had some form of fit, selecting a term meaning to convulse or tear, as a spasm (1.26), but Luke softens this saying that he was thrown down into the group adding that the man was not thereby injured.

It was as if it were a noisy show, an act, like a child putting on a tantrum before its mother and testing her authority, then submitting.

Jesus' method was to rebuke the demon and the demon submitted to His authority. The word used for rebuke means to 'correct, chide, reprove, censure or admonish'.

The assessment of the people too was that they recognised Jesus' "power of authority" v27 Both Luke and Mark use the same word here. What amazed them was that the demon obeyed the word of Jesus. It was the control that Jesus exercised over the situation, so different to the scribes who were always quoting the words of earlier men.

Power over disease. The healing of Peter's mother in law who was ill with a fever Luke 4.38&39. The forces of nature recognise His authority.

Leaving the synagogue Jesus entered Peter's home, presumably for refreshment and hospitality with his friends. It was only when he was asked that he intervened in the illness of a family member.

Luke uses two phrases reminiscent of a doctor's manner. He alone tells us that she was 'suffering from a high fever.' The word used means 'lying sick' and Luke uses it again in Acts 28.8 in this way. It was a great or high fever *megas* is the word he used, from which we derive our prefix word 'mega'. Luke also tells us that the Jesus stood over her as any physician would do (Wuest).

His method was to rebuke the fever.

The word rebuke v39 Luke used is the same as in the instance of the demon v35. The healing was instantaneous and complete.

A healing of the multitudes

In Tiberias, a city ten miles away were some hot mineral spas with healing properties. Mark tells us that the sick and demented folk were 'brought' meaning 'carried as a burden'. So far and fast had the word travelled v31. He healed all who came, a recognition of His authority. He did this by laying His hands on them. This time there was no rebuke.

Welcome Glen Park Gospel Church
Lower Road, Eltham North
Sundays 10.30 am

These notes may be reproduced in part or in full when distributed without cost, with the words 'Used by Permission, Glen Park Gospel Church.' included.
Visit us at glenparkgospel.org.au