

# WHY FOUR GOSPELS? THE FOUR-FOLD PORTRAIT OF CHRIST

in  
Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

by

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CREDENTIALS OF THE KING

Matthew 8:1-9:38

In the eighth and ninth chapters of Matthew the Holy Spirit has grouped the stories of many miracles of Israel's Messiah, supernatural signs which prove that He had the power to be the King of the Jews because He ever was and ever shall be the almighty God.

In other words, these and many other miracles of the Lord Jesus have been called the credentials of the King. They prove that He was not only the Son of David and the Son of Abraham, but that He was always "**The mighty God**," "**The everlasting Father**," "**Immanuel**," "**God with us**."

These many miracles of the Lord establish the fact that He was always the One, of whom the Prophet Micah wrote, saying that His "**goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting**" (Micah 5:2).

These credentials of the King prove His power over the heavens, over the earth, over the sea, and over Satan's emissaries, the demons. They show His power over nature, sickness, death, sin, and the hosts of evil.

- Who but God can still the tempest?
- Who but the Great Physician can heal the palsied and the blind and the fever-racked body?
- Who but "**The mighty God**" can raise the dead?
- Who but the God of forgiving love can pardon sin?
- Who but the omnipotent Lord God can cast out demons and rob Satan of his power?

And these two chapters of Matthew tell of Christ's power over all of these! If we had no other miracles recorded — and we do have very many more — these alone would be conclusive proof of the right of Jesus of Nazareth to sit upon David's throne and to be the Saviour of the world.

**They establish, beyond all controversy, that the Lord of the Old Testament was the Jesus of the New.**

Besides the “**many**,” out of whom He cast demons; and besides “**all that were sick**,” who were brought to Jesus, and were healed; these chapters tell of a group of remarkable miracles, any one of which should have convinced Israel of Jesus’ deity and authority and power.

God forbid that we, today, should become casual or indifferent about these startling deeds of our eternal God!

They include:

- The healing of the leper,
- The centurion’s servant,
- Peter’s wife’s mother,
- The woman who had suffered for twelve years,
- The two blind men.

They include also:

- The stilling of the tempest,
- The casting out of demons,
- The raising of the daughter of Jairus from the dead.

No wonder Matthew, writing to Jews who knew the message of the prophets, said concerning Christ that these things were done,

**“ . . . that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses”** (Matthew 8:17; cf. Isaiah 53:4).

But there are also other tokens of Christ’s Messiahship in these two chapters.

- With the voice of authority He called “**a certain scribe**” and Matthew, the publican, to follow Him.
- With the voice of authority He answered the murmuring Pharisees, and taught of the futility of self-reformation (9:10-17).
- Affirming His right to call sinners to repentance, He rebuked the hypocritical rulers in Israel
  - With a heart of compassion for the multitudes, He bade His disciples to pray for “**labourers**” for His harvest.
- With the foreknowledge that belongs to God alone, He looked forward to the day when “**the children of the bridegroom**” should mourn because “**the bridegroom**” should be “**taken from them.**”

He foresaw His rejection by the nation of Israel and the calling out of His blood-bought church, which is His bride.

In these two chapters He is pictured as having received worship; and worship is rightly attributed only to God. He is called **“Lord,” “Son of Man,” “Son of God,” “Son of David.”** Thus the Holy Spirit was proving to Israel that the eternal God had become Man, in order to manifest Himself as Israel’s King and the world’s Saviour. Both the humanity and the deity of Christ are set forth in the stilling of the tempest. As a Man, He was asleep, doubtless weary; but as the omnipotent Lord, He arose, **“rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.”**

Matthew, writing particularly to Jews, did not need to explain to the leper who had been cleansed about **“the gift that Moses commanded”** to be presented to the priest. That leper, like others in Israel, knew what the fourteenth chapter of Leviticus taught.

Matthew did not need to explain who Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were (8:11); they were the patriarchs of the Hebrews, and every Jewish boy knew their stories. Matthew, ever bearing in mind Christ’s mission to His own nation, the Jews, recorded the Lord’s statement to the Roman centurion, whose servant was healed by the spoken word of Christ,

**“Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel”** (8:10).

And Matthew, true to the purpose of the Holy Spirit in writing this Gospel, spoke of the Lord’s **“preaching the gospel of the kingdom”** as He went about **“all the cities and villages . . . teaching . . . preaching . . . and healing.”**

Matthew, writing to Israelites, quoted again from their Old Testament, with which they were familiar, saying in 9:13,

**“I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”**

The Pharisees offered the sacrifices in the temple, according to the Mosaic Law; they were very strict in their formalism and ritualism; but their hearts were far from God.

When they found fault with the Lord Jesus for eating with publicans and sinners, boasting in their own self-righteousness, the Lord told them plainly that He would have **“mercy,”** love and compassion for men’s souls, not sacrifices on the altar when their hearts were not right with God.

In this, as in all His teachings, Christ spoke with authority, probing into the secret thoughts of men, showing them their need of the salvation He came to offer to repentant hearts. None but God could speak as He spoke! Thus His words, as well as His deeds, proved His right to the throne of Israel. What more authentic credentials could be asked?

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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