

## 4 The king's authority (Matthew 7–8)

Are you being inspired by The King's Address (a.k.a The Sermon on the Mount)?  
Do you have questions we need to discuss before we approach the final chapter?

To hear the familiar text in a fresh way, I'm mostly using my own translation tonight.  
Compare with the version you normally use, and ask if anything isn't clear.

We conclude The King's Address (Matthew 7), and see our king delivering care and protection for his kingdom (Matthew 8). It's all about his **authority**.

So, the main point of these chapters is something we deemphasize! We find it easier to ask people to treat Jesus as a friend. But our culture is quick to defriend too. The gospel calls us to allegiance to God's anointed king and life together as his kingdom.

Watch for all the ways our Lord uses his authority to establish how we relate to each other as a kingdom under heaven's governance, in his care and protection. It's all about how to love God and love people.

### 4.1 Our relationships under his authority (Matthew 7)

#### ***Authority to sort out what's wrong (7:1-12)***

He has the authority to define how our communal life will function (Matthew 5–6).  
He has not given us authority to judge each other:

##### **Matthew 7:1-2**

<sup>1</sup> “Stop **judging**, so that you won't be judged. <sup>2</sup> The judgement you use will be used to judge you. What you measure out will be measured out to you (collectively).”

This isn't about how you personally will fare in the next life. The Pharisees were judging the community as unfit to be restored to God's reign. Jesus held up the mirror: “By the way you judge, you probably aren't ready for God's reign. If you would just step aside, you might see that God sees things differently.”

But how can Jesus free the crowd from these self-appointed judges without sounding judgemental himself? He uses humour. It's a matter of perspective. A fault up close (in me) should loom larger than the same issue in others:

##### **Matthew 7:3-6**

<sup>3</sup> “Why do you see the sawdust in your brother's eye, and pay no attention to the timber in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> How can you say to your brother, “Let me get the sawdust out of your eye,” ... and look: the timber in your own eye! <sup>5</sup> You actor! First get the timber out of your own eye. Then you will see clearly to get the sawdust out of your brother's eye.

<sup>6</sup> “Don't give holy things to dogs; don't lay out your pearls for pigs. You (plural) don't want them walking all over those things and then turning to tear you (collectively) apart.”

At verse 6, Jesus turned back to the crowd (the switch back to plural). He warned them not to trust these “actors” with matters that are precious to us and belong to God. Their judgements don't reconcile people; they tear the community apart.

So how do we get justice matters sorted if we don't trust these self-appointed judges? Jesus doesn't say, "Put me in power instead!" We hear that so often from our politicians (compare 2 Samuel 15:1-10)

There have always been two "cities" on earth: one relying on human power to get justice, and the other *calling on the name of the LORD* (Genesis 4:23, 26). Our heaven-anointed king turns us to God: to **ask** him for justice, to **seek** the reconciliation he wants in his community, to **knock** on heaven's door calling for God to reign over us:

#### **Matthew 7:7-8**

<sup>7</sup> "Ask; it will be given to you.

**Seek**; you will find.

**Knock**; it will be opened to you.

<sup>8</sup> Each asking person receives.

The seeking person finds.

To the knocking person it's opened."

The heart of the matter is trust, whether we take matters into our own hands or rely on what God has decreed for us:

#### **Matthew 7:9-12**

<sup>9</sup> "Which person in this crowd, if your child asked for some bread, would give them a stone? <sup>10</sup> Or if they asked for a fish, would give them a snake? <sup>11</sup> Although you're twisted, you know to give good gifts to your children. Much more, your heavenly Father will give what's good to those who ask him."

Jesus was not saying I can get whatever I want out of God. What he said was that the Father of the human family is more than willing to give us the communal life he always intended for us. Even selfish people should understand that, and parenting is one of the experiences that teaches us to live for more than self.

Everything God decreed in the beginning becomes our reality as we treat each other as children of his family, instead of playing judge against each other:

#### **Matthew 7:12**

<sup>12</sup> "Everything, therefore, you might want people to do for you, do the same for them; for this is the Bible."

**GOLDEN RULE**

### ***The king's relationship with his people (7:13-23)***

King Jesus calls us to live as the kingdom of heaven (the community governed by our Father in heaven), and instructs us how to do so (compare Deuteronomy 17:18). It's like Proverbs: the king (son of David) teaching God's wisdom to his people (Proverbs 1:1-7).

Seeking justice for the self is the road more travelled. There's another way:

#### **Matthew 7:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> "Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction; many go that way. <sup>14</sup> How narrow is the constricted gate, the way leading into life; few are those who find it."

He's right: the obvious path leads to people destroying each other (Genesis 4:8, 22). When everyone goes that way, violence corrupts God's world. There is an alternative

way to life, as Noah found (Genesis 6:5-11). Among the violent nations of the earth, Israel struggled to find the less obvious way—from the Red Sea to their exile to Babylon. God still had a way to restore justice to his world in his Messiah, but that path wasn't obvious to the rulers of this world (1 Corinthians 2:8).

So how are we supposed to know which leaders to follow? There are Pentecostals who promise me the world, a health-and-wealth gospel. There are current-day Pharisees who trade on my sinfulness so I'll cave in to their wrath. Entrepreneurs use us to grow their own kingdoms, claiming to speak for God but operating out of self-interest.

God's people have always been vulnerable to wolves (Ezekiel 34), so how do we recognize the true shepherd leading us in God's way (34:23-24)?

### **Matthew 7:15-20**

<sup>15</sup> “Watch out for those who claim to speak for God but don't. They present as sheep following God, but they're viscous wolves inside.

<sup>16</sup> You'll recognize them by what they produce. People can't get grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles. <sup>17</sup> Every good tree makes good fruit; but a worthless tree makes degenerate fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot make degenerate fruit, and a worthless tree cannot make good fruit.

<sup>19</sup> Every tree that doesn't make good fruit is cut down for firewood.

<sup>20</sup> You can certainly recognize them by their fruit.”

To find a real gardener, look at what's growing in their care. Good community cannot grow from selfishness. God placed us in his garden, but the attempt to be God yielded thorns and thistles (Genesis 3:5, 18). Good relationships can't be faked. Unselfish love is the authentic fruit of God-community (John 13:35). Nothing else endures.

False shepherds aren't our only problem. Not following the true shepherd is just as harmful. That's the other side of the relationship between king and kingdom:

### **Matthew 7:21-23**

<sup>21</sup> “Not all who call me ‘Lord! Lord!’ will be part of heaven's kingdom—only those who do what my Father wants.

<sup>22</sup> There'll be many who say to me at that time, ‘Lord! Lord! Didn't we use your authority to speak for God? Didn't we use your authority to cast out demons? Didn't we use your authority to do many powerful things?’

<sup>23</sup> Then I will confess to them, ‘But I never recognized you. Take your leave from me, you agents of lawlessness.’”

That's shocking! Recognizing the heaven-sent king is the requirement for citizenship in the kingdom of heaven (compare Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9). Faith in Christ is allegiance to his leadership. But loyalty to Jesus is a life spent in loving our Lord and his people, not merely a statement of servitude.

Like he said about the vicious wolves, we can misuse his authority to benefit the self, to seem to speak for God, to appear to have power in the spiritual realm, to look spectacular with a global television ministry that never actually builds a local community under the Christ but contributes to the inequality by collecting wealth.

You can hang a gift on any kind of tree, but only a good tree can bear good fruit.

***It all stands or falls on the kingdom's response to the king (7:24-29)***

The king wraps up his address by focusing on how we his people respond to him:

**Matthew 7:24-27**

<sup>24</sup> “Everyone, then, who hears these words of mine and does them will be compared to a wise man who built his house on the bedrock.

<sup>25</sup> The rain came down and the rivers came up and the winds blew and struck that house. It did not fall, for it had been founded on the bedrock.

<sup>26</sup> And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be compared to a foolish man who build his house on the shifting sand.

<sup>27</sup> The rain came down and the rivers came up and the winds blew and struck that house. It fell, and what an enormous fall it was.”

A *wadi* is a streambed that runs only when it rains. It's easier to build on the sandy floor of the wadi than on the rockface around it. But a wise person notices the erosion: the streambed is not a good place to build!

Throughout history, kingdoms have been built on conquest, war, overthrowing other powers to assert one's own. That's how Pompey's army captured Galilee for Caesar in 63 BC.

But Jesus knew: kingdoms like that don't last. He wasn't relying on the shifting sands of public opinion or political might. Jesus was building his kingdom on the bedrock, what the Ancient of Days had decreed in the beginning.

God created humans in his image, reflectors of our heavenly sovereign to all creation. The God-appointed human rebuilds society on that bedrock.

What if we don't partner with him? What if we don't respond to God's Messiah rebuilding God's kingdom? The horrific conclusion is that it wouldn't last! It would fall. Since it's not built by force (conquest) but by self-giving love (the cross), the whole thing falls like a pack of cards if we don't respond to his leadership.

Isn't this what happened in Old Testament times? God established Israel as his kingdom at Sinai. But God's people didn't follow their heavenly sovereign. The kingdom fell. And what a tragic fall it was!

Some theologians are horrified by this. How can God's programme be contingent on how humans respond to him? Truth is, the kingdom of God has always been like that because God doesn't force his reign on the earth; he calls us to follow.

It doesn't mean that God's project fails if we don't follow. It just takes longer. Like the generation that died in the wilderness. This is why it's taken more than 2000 years so far, 4000 since God called Abraham. Obedience to the king matters.



Monastery of St. George of Choziba, in Wadi Qelt near Jericho, AD 420. Photo: Allen Browne, 2014.

## ***Response to the good news***

At the end of the king's address, one thing stood out to those who listened:

### **Matthew 7:28-29**

<sup>28</sup> When Jesus finished his message, the crowds were astounded at how he taught. <sup>29</sup> He was instructing them authoritatively, not as their scribes.

No Bible teacher has the authority to say, "You heard that it was said ... but I tell you ..." That's the authority of the king who is replanting God's reign, establishing a new covenant between God and his people in the very place where the old one had fallen.

This is the gospel—the good news of God's reign, arriving in his Anointed.

We respond to the gospel by recognizing his authority, genuine obedience that comes from allegiance to him (faith), following the one who gave his life (cross) rather than taking the lives of his enemies (conquest).

We join in the proclamation of his kingship, "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:12)

## **4.2 How the king implements his authority (Matthew 8)**

The king has now completed his address. People were remarking on his authority. But how does the king use his authority?

### ***Bringing in the outcast (8:1-4)***

God's people were expected to be a holy community, staying away from everything that defiled them because they lived in God's presence (Leviticus 11:44-45). "Touch no unclean thing," God said (Isaiah 52:11). Things that defiled included menstruation and other fluids, anything dead, and non-kosher foods.

But the worst defilers were those that could not be washed away with ceremonial cleansing: persistent moulds and skin diseases. Lepers were excluded from any communal gatherings, for anything they touched made people unclean (Leviticus 14).

It was unthinkable that the king would allow a **leper** to approach him. Everyone he touched in the crowd would be unclean, passing on the defilement on to the rest.

### **Matthew 8:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> As he descended from the mountain, large crowds followed him. <sup>2</sup> And look! A leper approached and was bowing to him, saying, "Master, if you want it, you're able to cleanse me."

<sup>3</sup> Extending his hand, he touched him, saying, "I want to. Be cleansed!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. <sup>4</sup> Jesus says to him, "See you tell no one, but head off to show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

While the Pharisees and Torah teachers treated the leper as a human defilement, the outcast saw Jesus as the leader of God's community, with the authority to restore him. "Lord, if you want me in your community, you have the power to bring me in."

Jesus touched the defiled man. The leper's defilement did not defile Jesus. Jesus' authority removed his defiling disease. This man has a place in the kingdom.

This is how King Jesus is transforming God's world. While the Sinai covenant excluded all that was defiled in God's world—the unclean nations and the unclean among God's people—the Son from heaven is cleansing God's world, bringing the outcasts back under God's authority.

What began with one leper becomes a cleansing that the Christ extends to the whole world. In the end, the unclean power of the nations has fallen (Revelation 18:2), so the Holy City from God comes to fill the earth (Revelation 21:2). In the old covenant, the temple was the holy space quarantined from the defiled world, but there's no temple in the new covenant: the whole world becomes God's holy space with the nations purified to live in his light (Revelation 21:22-27).

"I do want to include you," Jesus said. "Be cleansed!" That's the powerful word of the king of all the earth. And he wants the temple authorities to know (verse 4).

### ***A military man who trusts authority (8:5-13)***

The next to approach the king is someone regarded as an enemy: an officer in the army enforcing the occupation of God's people. You can almost feel the zealots reaching for their swords.

His request is for Jesus to heal his houseboy who's in such pain they can't move him. But going inside a gentile's house was a big deal: the kitchen benches and utensils are unclean, the clothes and bedding, pretty much everything. This was a significant cultural obstacle (compare Acts 10:1-25).

The officer is fully aware that he can't expect Jesus to treat him like one of his people:

#### **Matthew 8:5-12**

<sup>5</sup> He went to Capernaum where an army officer approached him with a request: <sup>6</sup> "Master, my servant is bedridden, unable to move, in terrible pain."

<sup>7</sup> He says to him, "I'll come and heal him."

<sup>8</sup> The officer replied, "Master I am not a suitable person to have you come under my roof. Just say the word, and my servant will be well."

<sup>9</sup> For I also am a person under authority, having soldiers under me. I tell this one, "Go!" and he goes. I tell another, "Come!" and he comes. To my slave, I say, "Do this!" and he does it."

<sup>10</sup> On hearing this, Jesus was amazed and said to his followers, "I tell you the truth: I have not found this degree of trust in Israel. <sup>11</sup> I tell you that many will come from east and west to be seated with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in heaven's kingdom. <sup>12</sup> But the kingdom descendants will be deported to the deepest dark, lamenting and grinding their teeth."

<sup>13</sup> And Jesus said to the officer, "Go! Just as you trusted, let it be for you." And his servant was made well at that hour.

Jesus holds this man up as a model of *great faith* (verse 10). But *great faith* does not mean the ability to get more stuff out of God. Great faith is great loyalty—recognition of Jesus' *authority* in a way few of his own people have done.

As an agent of the Rome, the officer knew his decrees would be carried out: "Go!" "Come!" "Do This!" If Jesus is an agent of heaven's authority, his command is all it takes to set right what was wrong on earth.

What is **faith**? Faith is recognition of Jesus' leadership, loyalty to his authority, trust in his capacity to set things right, allegiance to our God-appointed Master.

This foreign officer was the most unlikely example of faith in Israel. Would people like him he really give allegiance to the God-appointed Master rather than the Senate-appointed Caesar?

"Yes!" Jesus says. Foreigners who were not part of the Sinai covenant were intended to receive the promises God gave Abraham, the blessing of God's reign for all the peoples of the earth (Genesis 12:3). The new covenant will bring people of all nations into God's kingdom. With his allegiance, the "unsuitable person" is brought into God's house.

Tragically, the descendants of Jacob were much more reticent to recognize their king. If they don't trust the heaven-sent Messiah, they won't have a place under his reign. They'll still be in exile, suffering oppression, while their oppressors are finding a place at God's table.

It's the great reversal. The poor, grieving, and powerless receive the kingdom, while the children of the kingdom are still outside, in the dark, grinding their teeth, suffering as terribly as the centurion's servant had.

### ***How the king uses his authority for his people (8:14-17)***

Jesus is not giving up on his own people. As their king, he shoulders their sufferings:

#### **Matthew 8:14-17**

<sup>14</sup> Arriving at Peter's house, Jesus saw Peter's mother-in-law bed-ridden and burning up. <sup>15</sup> He touched her hand, and the fever left her. She got up and served him.

<sup>16</sup> When evening arrived they brought him many who were demonized. He cast out the spirits with a word, and all those who were doing badly he cured. <sup>17</sup> In this way, the message of the prophet Isaiah was fulfilled, "He shouldered our illnesses; he carried off our diseases." [Isaiah 53:4]

The quotation is from Isaiah's oracles on the suffering servant (Isaiah 41–56). The servant was Israel (41:8-9), but they'd struggled to represent the heavenly sovereign's justice to the nations (42:19). They'd fallen to the nations, but in their exile God has not forgotten them (44:21). He called a Persian king to send his servant back to their land (44:1-4), redeeming his people from Babylon (48:20) to be the agent of God's majesty (49:3) instead of serving other rulers (49:7; 50:10).

God's suffering servant was unable to deliver themselves, God promised he would stretch out his own arm to save them from their oppressors (48:14; 50:2; 52:10; 53:1).

He would rescue his servant who had borne so much suffering for the sake of the world: their anguish, their failures, their oppression, their demise as the people of God (53:3-9). God would raise them out of death, as the servant who restores divine justice to the world (50:10-12).

They'd never seen these wonderful promises fulfilled. Until now! Now they saw the anointed leader shouldering the pain and affliction of his people, overturning the powers of evil that caused their sufferings.

Isaiah 53 was not a prediction about Jesus. Only after the cross and resurrection of the Messiah could the community look back and say, "That's how God bared his holy arm and rescued the people who could not rescue themselves."

### ***Prioritizing his authority (8:18-22)***

Notice what the king was doing. He took on himself the sufferings of his people, but he did not protect himself from suffering. The king did not promise comfort and safety for his servants either:

#### **Matthew 8:19-20**

<sup>18</sup> Seeing a crowd around him, Jesus issued the instruction to head off across the lake. <sup>19</sup> One of the scribes approached and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever go."

<sup>20</sup> Jesus says to him, "The foxes have dens, and the birds of the heavens have roosts, but **the son of man** has nowhere he could rest his head."

*Son of man* is Jesus' favourite way to describe himself: 80+ times in the Gospels! It's a poetic expression, meaning nothing more than *descendant of humanity*.

Okay, "nothing more" is an understatement. God created humans with dominion over his creation, to reflect our Majesty in the heavens (Genesis 1:27-28).

Yet, people have grasped power over each other, behaving like beasts as Cain did to Abel (Genesis 4:8). The violence corrupted God's world (6:11). We're now ruled by warriors who kill for power (10:10). That has been the story of God's nation (his suffering servant).

Yet God never gave up on the descendants of humanity.

This Psalm celebrates the creational order, and our place in it:

#### **Psalm 8:4–6 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> What is man that you are mindful of him,  
and the **son of man** that you care for him?

<sup>5</sup> Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
and crowned him with glory and honour.

<sup>6</sup> You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under his feet.

That's what humanity had fallen from: reflecting the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

We barely know what it means to be human anymore. We need to see a *son of man*.



God had promised to take the kingdom away from the beasts who kill each other for power, and give it to someone *like a son of man* (Daniel 7:13-14). That's who Jesus understands himself to be.

But *the human* is in danger from *the beasts*. "That fox" as Jesus called Herod (Luke 13:32) knew how to play the political game. Herod had multiple palaces to lay his head in luxury. He had fortifications all over the country where he could rest his head in safety. Israel today is still dotted with the fortresses Herod built for his own protection, places like Masada near the Dead Sea.

So, when a Jewish scholar (scribe) wanted to join his mission, but Jesus tried to dissuade him. It would mean giving up privilege, becoming a suffering servant of the servant king. Creation is not as it should be. Animals and birds have places to rest in safety, while *the human descendant* does not.

*The human descendant* is the suffering servant called to restore creational order.

There can be no other priority than the kingdom of God, regardless of how pressing:



Northern tip of Masada near the Dead Sea. Photo: Allen Browne, 2017.

### Matthew 8:21-22

<sup>21</sup> Another of his followers said to him, "Master, permit me first to go and bury my father." <sup>22</sup> Jesus says to him, "Follow me. Release the dead to bury their own dead."

Now we know what he meant by, "Seek first the kingdom" (6:33).

### ***His authority in the earthly realm: the uncontrollable sea (8:23-27)***

Rulers fight for territory to control, but no one controls the sea.

### Matthew 8:23-27

<sup>23</sup> As he boarded the boat, his followers followed him. <sup>24</sup> And look! The sea became severely agitated so the boat dipped into the waves, but he was sleeping. <sup>25</sup> They came and roused him saying, "Lord, save us! We're perishing."

<sup>26</sup> He says to them, "Why are you fearful, trusting so little?" Then, rising up, he told off the winds and the sea. It settled to a great calm.

<sup>27</sup> The people were astonished saying, "What kind of person is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

Who controls the sea? In the founding of their nation, Israel had learned who controls the sea: *They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. ... And all that night the LORD drove back the sea with a strong east wind* (Exodus 14:10, 21).

What God did at the Red Sea became a symbol of God's authority over all creation:

- *God our Saviour ... stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations* (Psalm 65:7).

- *You rule over the surging sea; when its waves mount up, you still them* (89:9)
- *He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed* (107:29)
- Psalms 65:7; 74:8; 77:19; 78:13, 53; 106:9; 135:6; 136:13-15; etc.

God alone has the authority to still the sea, so the person who can command the sea to be still must be speaking with divine authority.

So long, God's little nation had lived in fear of being overwhelmed. "Why are you so fearful?" God was calling them to trust the Messiah he has appointed. God does know how to restore peace to an out-of-control creation, calming even the warring nations so they become the kingdom of God, restoring heaven's governance to all creation.

### ***His authority in the spiritual realm (8:28-34)***

The final episode in Matthew 8 reveals the extent of Jesus' authority.

#### **Matthew 8:28 – 9:1**

<sup>28</sup> Having gone across to the Gadarene area, Jesus encountered two demonized people coming out of the cemetery. They were extremely dangerous, so no one could travel that way. <sup>29</sup> Look, they shouted saying, "What business do you have with us, son of God? Have you come here before your time to torture us?"

<sup>30</sup> In the distance, a large herd of pigs was feeding. <sup>31</sup> The demons urged him saying, "If you expel us, send us into the herd of pigs."

<sup>32</sup> He said to them, "Go!" The expelled ones went into the pigs. Look: the whole herd rushed down the bank into the sea and died in the waters.

<sup>33</sup> Their herders took off into town, telling everyone what had happened to the demonized ones. <sup>34</sup> Look, the whole town went out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him they urged him to get out of their boundaries.

9 <sup>1</sup> Climbing into a boat, he crossed over, arriving at his own city.

This was gentile territory, east of Galilee. Capernaum had no pig farms.

Jewish people regarded these gentiles as constantly unclean. With their pigs and non-Torah lifestyle, they attracted unclean spirits. These two men, terrorized by unclean spirits, terrorized the people of the region. Living among the unclean tombs, they were so violent that no one wanted to go near them.

Why was Jesus here? His authority was to gather *the lost sheep of Israel* (Matthew 10:6; 15:24). What authority did he have in this place?

That's the question the demons ask. Their defence is that Jesus has no legal right to deal with them at this point in time. Jesus doesn't answer their complaint. There's no point arguing legal technicalities with liars!

Realizing they're about to be expelled, the demons suggest a compromise. If they can't have these men, they'll have the pigs.

Jesus agrees. The pigs go mad and drown in the depths of the Sea. The demons have no more place to live here. Jesus does have authority in this place.

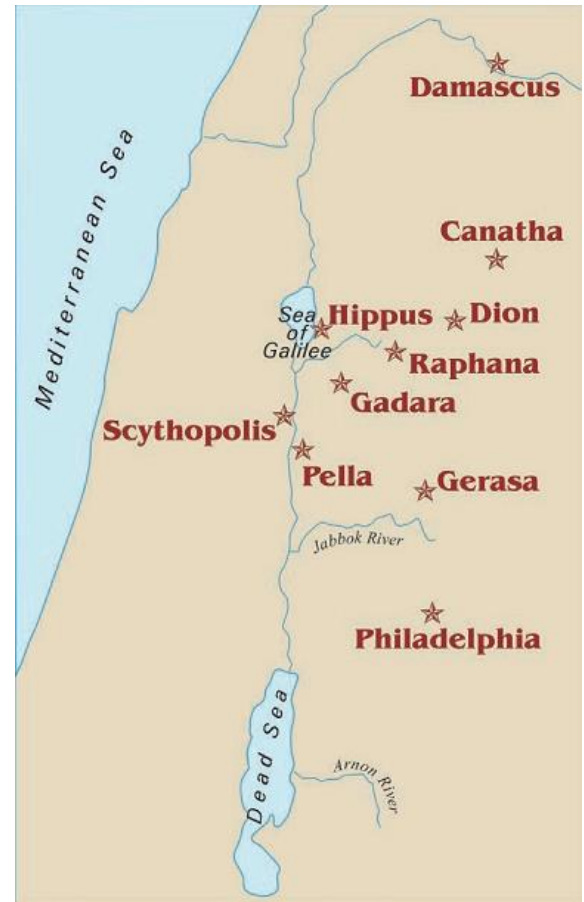
But his authority is too threatening for the locals. They could cope with demonized individuals who made *it extremely dangerous, so no one could travel that way*. But a Jewish exorcist with authority to expel unclean spirits and destroy thousands of dollars' worth of unclean pigs? That's too frightening.

They plead with him to leave their territories, to go back where he came from (8:34). Jesus complies: he steps back into the boat, and retreats to his own town (9:1).

Imagine a delegation telling Caesar they didn't want him over their area! They'd be hanged for treason. That's not how Jesus operates his authority. Jesus has authority alright, but they weren't ready for him yet. And Jesus doesn't take authority where he's not welcome.

That's the problem with the kingdom of God: God has all power, but he won't force his reign on people who don't want him. Can the Jewish Messiah restore the world as the kingdom of God? Will the world submit to him? He's ready to help, to cleanse from uncleanness and to free from oppression. But do we want him?

Do you think this will work? Can this gentle king's approach save the world from abusive control and restore the earth to its true sovereign?



"The Ten Cities of the Decapolis," *Understanding the Life of Jesus: An Introductory Atlas*, (Carta, 2019), 23.

## 4.3 Conclusion

As you meditate on the extent of Jesus' authority, what doesn't it cover? Does his authority extend to places where there is uncleanness? People we treat as outcasts? Military officers who cause suffering? Suffering and affliction of all forms? The earth? The sea? The heavenly powers? The people of the nations?

How does the Christ use his authority? How do we represent his authority in the world today? How do we explain the good news of the Christ to people in our culture?

What is the gospel? How important is it to call people to recognize his authority?

Which of the stories we've just read help you to describe the hope of a world reconciled to heaven and at peace under heaven's reign?

For further detail on particular verses in these chapters, see:

- Mat 7:1-6 [Careful how you judge](#)
- Mat 7:7-11 [Knocking on heaven's door](#)
- Mat 7:12 [The Golden rule](#)
- Mat 7:13-14 [The less obvious way](#)

Mat 7:15-20	<a href="#">The produce defines the tree</a>
Mat 7:21-23	<a href="#">Acknowledging Jesus as Lord</a>
Mat 7:21-29	<a href="#">Jesus' authority as King (podcast) (Matthew 7:21-29)</a>
Mat 7:24-27	<a href="#">So what do we do if we don't preach guilt?</a>
Mat 7:24-27	<a href="#">A rock worth building on</a>
Mat 7:28-29	<a href="#">Hearing the king</a>
Mat 8:1-4	<a href="#">Asking good questions</a>
Mat 8:2	<a href="#">Why kneel?</a>
Mat 8:2-4	<a href="#">The leper and the king</a>
Mat 8:4	<a href="#">A secret Messiah?</a>
Mat 8:5-10	<a href="#">Faith that amazed Jesus</a>
Mat 8:5-13	<a href="#">What is faith? (podcast) (Matthew 8:5-13)</a>
Mat 8:10-13	<a href="#">Jesus' kingdom hope</a>
Mat 8:14-17	<a href="#">What does the way you read reveal about you?</a>
Mat 8:14-17	<a href="#">Can the kingdom gospel bring us together?</a>
Mat 8:14-17	<a href="#">Jesus the healer</a>
Mat 8:18-22	<a href="#">The decision moment with Jesus</a>
Mat 8:20	<a href="#">The homeless king</a>
Mat 8:20	<a href="#">Jesus, the son of man</a>
Mat 8:20	<a href="#">Introducing the Son of Man</a>
Mat 8:23-27	<a href="#">When your life is threatened</a>
Mat 8:28-34	<a href="#">What if people don't want Jesus as king?</a>

The links are from <https://allenbrowne.blog/scriptureindex/>

In preparation for next week, read Matthew 9–10.