

Yeshua Heals Kefa's Mother-in-Law To Be Like Yeshua Means to Serve Others

We've been learning what it means to be like Yeshua in serving others. In this post, we look at Yeshua's healing of Kefa's mother-in-law who would have been considered a "second-class citizen" in the first century.

"Yeshua went to Kefa's home and there saw Kefa's mother-in-law sick in bed with a fever. He touched her hand, the fever left her, and she got up and began helping Him. When evening came, many people held in the power of demons were brought to Him. He expelled the spirits with a word and healed ALL who were ill. This was done to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Yesha'yahu, 'He Himself took our weaknesses and bore our diseases.'" ~ Matthew 8:14-17:

Yeshua's compassion reached out to a third category of people viewed as "second-class citizens" - women. Previously, Yeshua had healed a m'tsora and a gentile. Now he heals a woman. Women did not hold a high position in Israel, and it is doubtful that a Pharisee would have paid much attention to the need in Kefa's home.

Kefa's mother-in-law was ***sick in bed with a fever***. A malaria-type fever was common to this region because of marshes near the mouth of the Jordan River. We don't know for sure what this fever signified, but the Greek word for **"fever"** in the noun form is also the word for "fire"; thus, she was burning with a severe fever. [Luke (the doctor) wrote in his Gospel that she "was suffering from a high fever" (Luke 4:38)]. Yeshua went to the mother-in-law's bedside and ***touched her hand***. For a rabbi to touch a woman who was not his spouse was against rabbinic regulations; for Yeshua to touch a person with a fever was prohibited by Jewish law. Yeshua did both in order to heal a sick person, as well as to show His authority. Yeshua's touch on the woman's hand brought complete healing. In fact, she ***got up and began helping Him***.

Matthew recorded this detail to show that her healing was instant and complete. She didn't need time to recuperate from her illness; she was immediately well enough to serve her guests. She arose at once; she ministered to Yeshua and His apostles; she attended to their needs. Every blessing received, every prayer answered, should lead us to give ourselves more entirely to His **service**, to minister to Him by ministering to His poor, to give freely and generously for the work of His mission.

This seems like a "minor miracle," but the results were major; for after sundown (when the Shabbat ended), ***many people*** gathered at the door that the Lord might meet their needs. Blessing in the home ought to lead to blessing in the community. The change in one woman's life led to miracles in the lives of many people. Matthew saw this as a fulfillment of Yesha'yahu 53:4. This is the first citation in the B'rit Hadashah that most clearly portrays the Messiah as a servant of Adonai who suffers for the sins of the people. Note that Yeshua fulfilled this prophecy ***in His life*** and not on the cross. He bore man's sicknesses and infirmities ***during His ministry on earth***.

There are four lessons to be learned from the passages we have been exploring in Matthew 8:1-17:

1. Be humble: ***"God gives grace to the humble."*** (see James 4:6 and 1 Kefa 5:5)

Are you developing a servant's heart?

2. Have faith in God: ***"Let it be for you as you have trusted."*** (Matthew 8:13)

Do you really believe God will do what He says He will do?

3. Follow after charity: ***"Blessed are those who show mercy."*** (Matthew 5:7)

Does your faith cause you to respond to the needs of others like Yeshua did?

4. The Believer's household should be hallowed by the presence of **THE** Savior: He brings peace; He comforts in sickness and sorrow; He blesses those whom he sanctifies.

Have you invited Him to take control of your life and your household?

We are called to serve others. It's time that we begin to put our faith on the line and into action. As we continue in our exploration of the Christian Torah, each of us should think about what we can do to serve our community, both internally and externally. It's not enough to hear the WORD of God; we have to put it into action by serving others to be like Yeshua.

In my next post, we will continue to un-pack Matthew 8 as we explore the cost of following Yeshua as He concentrates His teaching on discipleship training.