

## “Rise, pick up your matt, and walk”

### *Mother of God Prayer Meeting*

Sunday, Sep 13, 2009

Given by Marty Wild

While I was praying about the Word Power conference and some of the things that I took away from it, I noted the importance that Damian placed on claiming healings as they occurred. I was also impressed by his mention of this new phenomina called the Joshua Generation, the term being applied to what seems to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of the renewal. And so while these two ideas may seem distinct, I want to shed some light on them both and show that they are related. One being the logical development of the first. So while I was praying and pondering the idea of claiming healing, the scripture “rise, pick up your matt and walk” kept coming to mind. What I noticed about this scripture is the call to action, the response, that Jesus calls for.

**Matthew 9:2-7** And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." <sup>3</sup> And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." <sup>4</sup> But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? <sup>5</sup> For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? <sup>6</sup> But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" -- he then said to the paralytic -- "Rise, take up your bed and go home." <sup>7</sup> And he rose and went home.

Jesus doesn't tell the paralytic “you're healed, go home”, he just says “rise, pick up your matt, and go home.” Do something. Respond to me. Take action. So as I thought about this verse I thought to myself, “how many other cases of healing are there in the Gospel when Jesus gave the person a command to take action, to respond to the healing just received? So I started looking them up. Here's a few:

Matthew 9:6 (just cited) "*Rise, take up your bed and go home.*"

Matthew 8:13 And Jesus said to the centurion, "You may go; as you have believed, let it be done for you." And at that very hour (his) servant was healed.

Matthew 8:4 [When Jesus heals the leper] he says him, "See that you tell no one, but go *show* yourself to the priest, and *offer* the gift that Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them."

Matthew 8:14-15 Jesus entered the house of Peter, and saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. <sup>15</sup> He touched her hand, the fever left her, and she *rose* and waited on him.

Matthew 9:23-25 When Jesus arrived at the official's house and saw the flute players and the crowd who were making a commotion, <sup>24</sup> he said, "Go away! The girl is not dead but sleeping." And they ridiculed him. <sup>25</sup> When the crowd was put out, he came and took her by the hand, and the little girl *arose*.

Matthew 9:29-31 [Jesus heals two blind men] Then he touched their eyes and said, "Let it be done for you according to your faith." <sup>30</sup> And their eyes were opened. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this." <sup>31</sup> But they went out and *spread* word of him through all that land.

Matthew 9:32-33 As they were going out, a demoniac who could not speak was brought to him, <sup>33</sup> and when the demon was driven out the mute person *spoke*.

Matthew 12:13 [Man with withered hand] Then he said to the man, "*Stretch* out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored as sound as the other.

Matthew 12:22 Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute. He cured the mute person so that he could *speak* and *see*.

Mark 7:32-35 And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup> He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; <sup>34</sup> then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!") <sup>35</sup> And (immediately) the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he *spoke* plainly.

Luke 7:14 [Jesus raises the dead man in the city of Nain] He stepped forward and touched the coffin; at this the bearers halted, and he said, "Young man, I tell you, *arise!*"

John 9:6-7 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, <sup>7</sup> and said to him, "Go *wash* in the Pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

John 11:38-44 So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." <sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" <sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me. <sup>42</sup> I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me." <sup>43</sup> And when he had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" <sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

What if the story happened this way?

John 11:38-44 [sortof] Jesus then went into the tomb and there was heard some voices and rustling about. Jesus came out of the tomb and spoke to Martha, "Lazarus is fine. He'll have a heck-of-a-heache, but he'll be fine. Make sure he gets plenty of rest and fluids. Don't move him from the tomb for 24 hours, (laughing) he kinda likes it in there. You know, he said, it was the first time he's had peace and quiet since... well, I digress. Have some friends carry him to his house and keep him there for a couple weeks till he gets his strength back."

Or what if the story of the paralytic happened like this?

Mark 2:10-12 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth"--  
<sup>11</sup> he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." <sup>12</sup> The paralytic motioned to Jesus to bend down his ear and said, "Thanks just the same Jesus, but since I've been on this matt, I don't have to work anymore. My brothers take care of me. I get to sleep in late. They take me to the market everyday and I sit and watch the pretty girls go by. I don't have to go to Synogue every Sabbath because somedays I'm just too tired to be carried there. Look, I'll tell everybody here that I feel great and fine now, but I haven't walked in so long I'm just not ready to do it right now. Just let my friends carry me out on my matt."

Many times in the gospels when Jesus heals someone, a response is required – its commanded! A physical action is taken, to confirm, to *claim* - the healing. Damian made it very clear that we have to claim the healing that the Lord gives us or we may lose it! He encouraged those who had received healings to tell others about it.

Satan wants me paralyzed. Spiritually, emotionally, mentally, physically. I can be very self-absorbed; I call it naval-gazing. I'm not much - but I'm all I think about. As the Lord heals me there is always the faint call to rise, pick up my matt, and walk. And for a long time I couldn't walk. My spiritual 'legs' weren't strong enough yet. Or I didn't *believe* they were strong enough. But recently the Lord has been making it very clear to me that I need to start to take action. I need to *stand* on the truth of his healing work in my life. I need to *step* out in faith. I need to *stretch out* my hand in service to others and give them the encouragement I have received. I need to *wash* the mud out of my eyes and see what God is doing in the world and go and meet him there.

You may think I'm preaching to you. I'm not up here for you. I'm up here for me. I need to speak the truth to claim it. I'm praying that by my speaking the truth as revealed to us in the Word that I can claim it for myself.

God does for me what I cannot do for myself - but he will not do for me what I can do for myself. He may heal my paralysis, but he won't walk for me. He may heal my blindness, but he won't see for me. He may bring me back to life, but I'm the one who has to live my life. God's action requires a response from me. When I believe that he's healed me I must take action to confirm it and in that action claim it.

### The Joshua Generation

I hope that you are all familiar with the story of Israel's exodus from Egypt and their flight into the desert for 40 years: They're in slavery in Egypt for 400 years and they cry out to God for deliverance. God sends them Mose to lead them out of Egypt and to the Promised Land. They leave Egypt and go to Sinai where God shows his glory and gives them the law. Next they come to the Promised Land, but they claim that it is inhabited by giants and they want to go back to Egypt. God says nope, you'll go into the desert for 40 years until all of the ones who didn't trust that I could deliver you into the land have died.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Numbers 14:29-33** Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness; and of all your number, numbered from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against me, <sup>30</sup> not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. <sup>31</sup> But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. <sup>32</sup> But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. <sup>33</sup> And your children shall be shepherds in the

“Leave us to our fleshpots” they said. Talk about complacency. They’d rather have their “comfortable” lives of slavery than live in freedom. You know why? Because freedom means responsibility. Responsible means to be answerable, to be liable to be called on to answer, to give an account. When you’re in slavery you get used to not having to give an account of yourself or your actions.

Healing is the same way. If I get healed I just might have to give an account of my healing. I might have to be answerable now! I might have to do something! But after 40 years in the desert the Israelites were ready to do anything to enter the Promised Land! 40 years of manna and quail! Ugh. A land flowing with milk and honey was worth any sacrifice or hardship even if it was inhabited by giants.

Do you know that Joshua never denied that there were giants.<sup>2</sup> And do you notice how fears tend to get bigger and bigger the longer you have them? Those giants of 40 years ago – I wonder how massive they had become in their minds by the time the Israelites were ready to cross the Jordan. Yet the Israelites were ready to cross, they were hungry for more (literally)!

They knew the old ways were ending, a new era was beginning. Their provision was no longer in the desert where they received all that they had needed directly from God. Their provision was now in the land they were about to enter and conquer.<sup>3</sup> Why does God make it so hard for us? Why can’t he just bottle-feed us our whole lives? Why does he insist on us taking an active role in our salvation? He created us without our permission but he will not save us without our cooperation. When you’re in slavery why do you even cry out for freedom? How do you know you’re in slavery? If you were born into slavery and it’s all that you know? If you’re born blind how do you know you’re blind? Isn’t everybody this way? Isn’t this normal? Inside each of us is the desire to be free. Freedom is the ability to respond to God, to choose God. The Israelites weren’t free to choose and respond to God in Egypt.

**Exodus 3:18** Permit us, then, to go a three days’ journey in the desert, that we may offer sacrifice to the LORD, our God.

“Free to worship Him without fear” (Canticle of Zechariah, Lk 1:74).

So they knew something was missing from their lives. Their desire to be free cried out to God. So they’re standing at the Jordan river, 40 years later. And they’re scared stiff. Their spirits are yearning for true freedom. They can taste it. “Finally, we will be free, really free!” Free to worship God, to offer sacrifice from the land and from our labors. That’s what *my* heart yearns for: to enter into full worship of God with all my spirit, my body, and my labor, my sweat and my tears. But still, there must have been hesitation:

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wilderness forty years, and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness.

<sup>2</sup> **Numbers 13:32-33** "The land that we explored is a country that consumes its inhabitants. And all the people we saw there are huge men, <sup>33</sup> veritable giants (the Anakim were a race of giants); we felt like mere grasshoppers, and so we must have seemed to them."

<sup>3</sup> **Joshua 5:12** And the manna ceased on the morrow, when they ate of the produce of the land; and the people of Israel had manna no more, but ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

### **Joshua 3:14** The people struck their tents to cross the Jordan

They “broke camp,” “stuck their tents,” “were removed from their tents.” Why this mention of tents? It doesn’t say anything about their animals or other possessions, or gathering their families together. Maybe the tents represent that *one thing* that was literally holding them down, holding them back from crossing into the new land.

Damian said that the renewal, as a movement, is at the Jordan river. We’re ready to cross over. But are some of us still comfortable with being bottle-fed? Manna for breakfast and quail for dinner. Last January we were given a vivid prophecy about our swords being on the mantle. Why is the sword such a powerful image? (It’s not just a masculine image) Because it represents our dignity. We have the God-given ability to participate in our own destiny. We have been given the weapons and the authority to use them and conquer the land across the Jordan.

God has given us swords. Each unique to each of us. *He doesn’t give you a sword which you cannot wield!* What are the swords given us by God? Of course the Word of God is a sword each of us has. But what are our individual swords? For some it’s the Rosary, for some the mass, for some its service, or family and children, Eucharistic Adoration. And then there are the charismatic gifts: prophecy, healing, teaching, exhortation, intercessory prayer, mercy, administration, just to name a few.

When I was first inspired to give this talk I notified the prayer meeting leadership that I thought I was given inspiration by the Lord on this topic. Once I had committed to give the talk my faith immediately waned, and I thought to myself, “This topic is silly. It was already covered sufficiently at the Word Power conference. I have nothing new to say. I’ll be embarrassed.” But did the Lord give me a gift of teaching? You all have told me so. Will he let me be put to shame if I use the gift for His Glory and the good of the body? No.

As Damian said, we must cross the Jordan together – en masse – each and every one of us.

**Joshua 3:1-4** Joshua moved with all the Israelites from Shittim to the Jordan, where they lodged before crossing over. <sup>2</sup> Three days later the officers went through the camp <sup>3</sup> and issued these instructions to the people: "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD, your God, which the levitical priests will carry, you must also break camp and follow it, <sup>4</sup> that you may know the way to take, for you have not gone over this road before.

Let the Levitical priests lead the way. How will we know that the Lord is with us?

**Joshua 3:13** When the soles of the feet of the [Levitical] priests carrying the ark of the LORD, the Lord of the whole earth, touch the water of the Jordan, it will cease to flow; for the water flowing down from upstream will halt in a solid bank.

Who were the Levitical priests? Those who fervently defended the Lord God at Sinai when the whole people of Israel apostazied and worshiped the Golden Calf. Today, we are living in a post-Christian world. Europe is no longer Christian, America isn’t far behind. The entire Western World has turned from God. One night at The Fresh Anointing, I had the image of Sinai in my mind and I had a strong sense that the people worshipping were a Levitical priesthood. Anyone who is fervent for the Lord and willing to do *whatever it takes* to bring about His

Kingdom is living out a Levitical priesthood. The Lord is forming a community of Levitical priests in Washington, D.C., at The Fresh Anointing young adult outreach. This particular group of priests will help lead the way across the Jordan for many, many people.

And the promised Land, the "Land of Milk and Honey," is the harvest of souls<sup>4</sup> to be given the good news – deliverance and healing, and year of favor.<sup>5</sup> We only have to be willing to break camp (i.e. pick up our spiritual gifts and weapons)<sup>6</sup> and follow the ark and do whatever we see the Lord doing. He will lead us and direct us.

I've shared this before here at prayer meeting. Who is the Ark of the Covenant that we are to follow? Our Lady. We bear her name. Co-incidence? Is there such a thing in God's providence? We hardly ever talk about her at prayer meeting? I think she's suffocating in the closet. We need to let her out.

This community is a Levitical priesthood. If you are covenanted to this community you are called to a radical way of life for God. Not all of us are called to preach, or organize events, or cook for 120 people (like at our Sedar dinners), but each of us has a gift, a sword, with which to enter the promised land. If you're covenanted you know what that sword is (you'd better!) – because it's time to wield it.

Each one of us has received healing. Now is the time to claim that healing. To answer to God, to be *responsible* for that healing. You were given that healing for a *purpose*. "Rise, pick up your matt, and walk!"

Each one of us has been saved from slavery. Each one of us has been in the desert where the Lord has feed us from his own hand! But now is the time to cross the Jordan, as a community, as a church. Break camp. Pull up your tent pegs. Fasten your sword. Follow the Levitical Priests, those who are leading, and follow the Ark of the New Covenant, for we have not gone this way before.

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<sup>4</sup> **John 4:35-37** I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. <sup>36</sup> The reaper is already receiving his payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. <sup>37</sup> For here the saying is verified that 'One sows and another reaps.'

<sup>5</sup> **Luke 4:18-21** "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, <sup>19</sup> and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." <sup>20</sup> Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. <sup>21</sup> He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

<sup>6</sup> **Joshua 3:14** The people struck their tents to cross the Jordan, with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant ahead of them.