

### Episode 3: Matthew 4:24

This episode revolves around the verse in Matthew 4:24 where people from all over came to see Jesus so they could be healed. Jesus was busy healing people all day and night while the disciples helped with the crowds and had discussions amongst themselves. Read the verse that inspired this episode below:

- **Matthew 4:24 (ESV)** – *So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.*

Matthew enters the scene right where he left off at the end of episode 2, asking Philip what he should study in the bible. Philip gives him a verse out of Psalms written by King David. Philip explains that there is no where that you can go that God cannot reach you. He is always with you. He tells Matthew to meditate on the verse and write it down several times. Let's do that today.

- **Psalms 139:8 (ESV)** – *If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!*
  - Note: Sheol is the Hebrew term for the realm of the dead, the underworld where all departed souls go. If you would rather say “the grave” instead of Sheol, feel free.

Write the verse below:

Now, let's take Philip's advice and meditate on the verse. Read the verse and pray through the passage word for word, talking to God as you pause. Be sure to also listen if you feel he is responding to you. Reflect on this meditation below capturing how this verse speaks to you.

## Bible Reference

It is mentioned in this episode and is a common misconception that the Messiah will be a fierce warrior who would save the Jews in battle. The disciples quote Zechariah below:

**Zechariah 14:2-4 (ESV)** <sup>2</sup> *For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to **battle**, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city.* <sup>3</sup> *Then the Lord will go out and **fight** against those nations as when he **fights on a day of battle**.* <sup>4</sup> *On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.*

### DID YOU KNOW??

Many people did not believe Jesus was the Messiah because he wasn't a warrior. The Jews took the fact that the Messiah would save them to mean he would physically, through battles, defeat the Romans and free them. Jesus did so much more than that! He saved everyone from generation to generation from sin. We are no longer slaves to sin, but free through the blood of Jesus. It's such a good thing that God has a bigger plan that we can imagine ourselves.

Little James (James the lessor) talks to Thomas about his frustrations with the people that have come to see Jesus. He feels like the people are only believing because Jesus is healing them. He questions if the people would believe if they were not healed. Even though we do not have Jesus in human form this day and age, he still heals people miraculously. Some people believe because of this healing, but others are not healed and believe just the same. It is through the miracles that Jesus reaches some people, but how strong of a faith of those people who believe and do not need to see a miracle. Have you witnessed or been a part of a miracle? Has this strengthened your faith?

The disciples open up to each other around the fire as Jesus is healing. They talk about their insecurities of not pursuing Torah studies after school. They even have a little confession circle where they confess how they broke the Lord's commands around food. Thomas shares how he ate meat with cheese and then was very sick afterwards. Another disciple shares how he ate pork and loved it! I love how these disciples are being vulnerable with each other and sharing their confessions. God tells us to confess our sins. Is there anything that you would like to confess to God? Confessing sin takes the weight off of your shoulders. Use the space below to reflect on any confession you want to have with God.

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*James the son of Alphaeus is mentioned in the bible in Matthew 10:3, Mark 3:18, Luke 6:15, Acts 1:13. His name is simply listed along with the other disciples. We do not know if he had a disability like The Chosen has portrayed as this is not stated in scripture.*

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At the end of the episode the conversations that the disciples are having stray away from Jesus and his healing and the Torah and start to get heated. They are all fighting and arguing with each other until Jesus comes back to the camp. He is so tired he can hardly walk. They all stop, revert their eyes back to Jesus, focus on him and stop quarreling. They are quiet and feel guilty that they were fighting once their focus returns to Jesus. This is something that happens all the time. We leave church on Sunday all revived, focused on Jesus, ready to tackle the week. Then slowly as the week progresses our focus strays from Jesus onto ourselves, our disappointments and our anger. Exactly like it happened with Simon and Matthew. Simon and Andrew focused on the hurt that they felt from Matthew and started to pick a fight with him. But Jesus enters the scene and they refocus on Christ. What are some things you can do to refocus your attention to Jesus when you stray or start to focus only on yourself?

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*Did you catch that Thomas said he didn't know Jesus lost his father? Biblical scholars believe that Jesus' father, Joseph, passed away as he was not present at the crucifixion with Mary and Jesus tells his disciple, John, to care for her (John 19:25-27).*

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