A HARMONY OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS — CHAPTER NINE

Matthew 9–10, Mark 5–6, and Luke 8–9 Woven Into One Continuous Narrative

Based on the American Standard Version (ASV, 1901) — Public Domain

2026

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Preface: Continuation of the Harmony

This volume continues the harmony of Matthew, Mark, and Luke through their ninth chapters. Chapter nine is the most concentrated sequence of miracles in the entire Synoptic tradition, presenting in rapid succession the healing of the Gerasene demoniac, the raising of Jairus's daughter, the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, the healing of two blind men, the healing of a mute demoniac, the second rejection at Nazareth, the sending out of the Twelve, the death of John the Baptist, the feeding of the five thousand, and Jesus walking on water. No chapter in this harmony has contained more miracles across a shorter span of narrative.

The chapter follows the chronological sequence of Mark 5–6, which provides the narrative spine, with Matthew 9–10 and Luke 8–9 filling in parallel and supplementary material throughout. For the first time in the harmony, a major block of Matthew's unique material — the Mission Discourse of Matthew 10 — is integrated into the narrative sequence alongside Mark and Luke.

Each section is identified by its source Gospel in brackets:

[Matt] = Matthew

[Mark] = Mark

[Luke] = Luke

[Matt / Mark], **[Matt / Luke]**, **[Mark / Luke]**, or **[Matt / Mark / Luke]** = parallel passages

The translation throughout is the **American Standard Version (ASV, 1901)**, a public domain text of high scholarly accuracy. No words are invented or paraphrased; all text is drawn directly from the ASV.

Chronological ordering follows the scholarly consensus of A.T. Robertson's *A Harmony of the Gospels* (1922), Kurt Aland's *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*, and Orville Daniel's *A Harmony of the Four Gospels* (2nd ed., 1996).

Part Eight: Miracles, Mission, and the Feeding of the Multitude

Section 89 — The Gerasene Demoniac [Matt 8:28–34 / Mark 5:1–20 / Luke 8:26–39]

And they came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes.

And when he was come out of the boat, straightway there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling in the tombs: and no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain; because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been rent asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: and no man had strength to tame him. And always, night and day, in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones.

And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped him; and crying out with a loud voice, he saith, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, torment me not.

For he said unto him, Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man.

And he asked him, What is thy name? And he saith unto him, My name is Legion; for we are many.

And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there on the mountain side a great herd of swine feeding. And they besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And he gave them leave.

And the unclean spirits came out, and entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the sea, in number about two thousand; and they were drowned in the sea.

And they that fed them fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they came to see what it was that had come to pass. And they come to Jesus, and behold him that was possessed with demons sitting, clothed and in his right mind, even him that had the legion: and they were afraid.

And they that saw it declared unto them how it befell him that was possessed with demons, and concerning the swine. And they began to beseech him to depart from their borders.

And as he was entering into the boat, he that had been possessed with demons besought him that he might be with him. And he suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee. And he went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men marvelled.

Section 90 — Jairus's Daughter and the Woman with the Issue of Blood [Matt 9:18–26 / Mark 5:21–43 / Luke 8:40–56]

And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude was gathered unto him; and he was by the sea.

And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and seeing him, he falleth at his feet, and beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death: I pray thee, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live.

And he went with him; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.

And a woman, who had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, having heard the things concerning Jesus, came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole.

And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague.

And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, turned him about in the crowd, and said, Who touched my garments?

And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

While he yet spake, they come from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Teacher any further?

But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe.

And he suffered no man to follow with him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

And they come to the house of the ruler of the synagogue; and he beholdeth a tumult, and many weeping and wailing greatly. And when he was entered in, he saith unto them, Why make ye a tumult, and weep? the child is not dead, but sleepeth.

And they laughed him to scorn.

But he, having put them all forth, taketh the father of the child and her mother and them that were with him, and goeth in where the child was. And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise.

And straightway the damsel rose up, and walked; for she was twelve years old. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement.

And he charged them much that no man should know this: and he commanded that something should be given her to eat.

Section 91 — The Healing of Two Blind Men [Matt 9:27–31]

And as Jesus passed by from thence, two blind men followed him, crying out, and saying, Have mercy on us, thou son of David.

And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it done unto you. And their eyes were opened.

And Jesus strictly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they went forth, and spread abroad his fame in all that land.

Section 92 — The Healing of a Mute Demoniac [Matt 9:32–34]

And as they went forth, behold, there was brought to him a dumb man possessed with a demon. And when the demon was cast out, the dumb man spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

But the Pharisees said, By the prince of the demons casteth he out demons.

Section 93 — Jesus's Compassion for the Harassed Multitudes [Matt 9:35–38]

And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.

Section 94 — The Second Rejection at Nazareth [Mark 6:1–6]

And he went out from thence; and he cometh into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, Whence hath this man these things? and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and what mean such mighty works wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?

And they were offended in him.

And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

Section 95 — The Sending Out of the Twelve [Matt 10:1–42 / Mark 6:7–13 / Luke 9:1–6]

And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

And he charged them, saying unto them, Take nothing for the journey, save a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse; but go shod with sandals: and put not on two coats. And he said unto them, Wheresoever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence. And whatsoever place shall not receive you, and they hear you not, as ye go forth thence, shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony unto them.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and charged them, saying,

Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: freely ye received, freely give.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to councils, and in their synagogues they will scourge you; yea and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.

And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child: and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

Section 96 — The Death of John the Baptist [Matt 14:1–12 / Mark 6:14–29 / Luke 9:7–9]

At that season Herod the tetrarch heard the report concerning Jesus: and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore do these powers work in him.

For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced in the midst, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she should ask. And she, being put forward by her mother, saith, Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.

And the king was grieved; but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that sat at meat with him, he commanded it to be given; and he sent and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought on a platter, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came, and took up the corpse, and buried him; and they went and told Jesus.

Section 97 — The Return of the Twelve; Withdrawal [Mark 6:30–32 / Luke 9:10]

And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught. And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart.

Section 98 — The Feeding of the Five Thousand [Matt 14:13–21 / Mark 6:33–44 / Luke 9:11–17]

And the multitudes saw them going, and many knew them, and they ran together there on foot from all the cities, and outwent them. And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had

compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent; send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat.

But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred shillings worth of bread, and give them to eat?

And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

And he commanded them that all should sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

And they all ate, and were filled. And they took up broken pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes. And they that ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Section 99 — Jesus Walks on the Water [Matt 14:22–33 / Mark 6:45–52]

And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sendeth the multitude away.

And after he had taken leave of them, he departed into the mountain to pray.

And when even was come, the boat was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. And seeing them distressed in rowing, for the wind was contrary unto them, about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking on the sea; and he would have passed by them: but they, when they saw him walking on the sea, supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out: for they all saw him, and were troubled.

But he straightway spake with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee upon the waters. And he said, Come. And Peter went down from the boat, and walked upon the waters to come to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me.

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and took hold of him, and saith unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

And when they were gone up into the boat, the wind ceased. And they that were in the boat worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

Appendix: Notes on Chapter Nine

On the Gerasene Demoniac

The healing of the Gerasene demoniac (Section 89) is the most dramatic exorcism in the Synoptic Gospels. Several details deserve attention. The man's self-description — "My name is Legion; for we are many" — borrows the Roman military term for a unit of approximately six thousand soldiers. The irony is stark: Judea groaned under Roman military occupation, and the most concentrated symbol of Roman power has entered the language of demonic self-identification. The detail that the herd of swine numbered "about two thousand" is characteristic of Mark's eyewitness precision.

The man's response to his healing — sitting clothed and in his right mind — contrasts in every particular with his condition before: naked, among the tombs, uncontrollable, crying out, cutting himself with stones. The townspeople, rather than rejoicing, beg Jesus to leave their borders. The healed man begs to go with Jesus and is refused: instead Jesus gives him the first formal missionary commission in the Gospel narrative — *"Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."* He becomes the first evangelist to the Gentile Decapolis region.

On Jairus's Daughter and the Interrupted Healing

The story of Jairus's daughter (Section 90) is unique in the Synoptic tradition as an interrupted miracle — a healing narrative that pauses for another healing narrative before reaching its conclusion. The intercalation (the "Markan sandwich" technique) is deliberate and theologically meaningful: both healings involve women; both involve the number twelve (the woman bled for twelve years; the girl was twelve years old); both are healed by faith; and the delay caused by the woman's healing is precisely what allows the girl to die before Jesus arrives — setting up the escalation from healing to resurrection.

The woman's cure is the most detailed healing account in the harmony so far. Mark's version gives her medical history — twelve years of suffering, many physicians, all her money spent, growing worse rather than better — before describing her act of faith. She touches the hem of Jesus's garment from behind, believing herself unseen. His immediate awareness that power had gone out of him, his turning in the crowd, his question — these details all suggest a genuine event recalled by an eyewitness with a specific perspective.

The Aramaic words preserved at the moment of the girl's raising — *Talitha cumi* — are among the handful of Aramaic phrases that Mark retains untranslated before giving the Greek equivalent. Their preservation suggests they were remembered as the actual words spoken, carrying an authority that Greek translation could convey but not fully replace.

On the Mission Discourse

The Mission Discourse of Matthew 10 (Section 95) is the second of Matthew's five great discourses and is addressed specifically to the Twelve as they are sent out on their first independent mission. Its scope, however, extends well beyond the immediate Galilean mission: the warnings about being brought before governors and kings, the sayings about family

division, and the promise that he who endures to the end shall be saved all anticipate a much longer and more dangerous mission than a brief preaching tour of Israelite villages. Matthew has gathered here both immediate instructions and longer-range prophetic warnings about the church's future mission in a single discourse.

The saying about the sword — "I came not to send peace, but a sword" — is among the most deliberately startling sayings in Matthew's Gospel, coming from the teacher who has just completed the Sermon on the Mount's teaching on peacemaking and love of enemies. The sword here is not the sword of warfare but the sword of division: Jesus's presence and teaching cuts through the most intimate human loyalties, setting family members against one another along the line of allegiance to him. The parallel in Luke 12:51 uses the word "division" rather than "sword," suggesting that the two are equivalent in meaning.

On the Death of John the Baptist

The death of John (Section 96) is the darkest episode in the narrative sequence of chapter nine. The story is told by all three Synoptists but with the fullest detail in Mark. Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, had imprisoned John for publicly denouncing his marriage to Herodias, his brother Philip's wife — a marriage forbidden by Levitical law (Leviticus 18:16; 20:21). Herod is presented in Mark as simultaneously fearing John, protecting him, enjoying listening to him, yet baffled by him — a portrait of a man in moral suspension who lacks the resolution to do either the right thing or the consistent wrong thing, and is therefore manipulated by Herodias into the worst act of all.

The birthday dance, the oath, the mother's instruction, the girl's request, and Herod's inability to refuse in the presence of his guests — the sequence has the quality of a moral tragedy in miniature. The greatest prophet born of woman (as Jesus has called him) dies by the political vanity of a small man on a birthday. John's disciples come, take the body, bury it, and go to tell Jesus.

On the Feeding of the Five Thousand

The feeding of the five thousand (Section 98) is the only miracle, apart from the resurrection, recorded in all four Gospels. It occurs on the heels of the news of John's death, when Jesus withdraws — and is followed by the crowds across the water. The sequence of actions over the five loaves and two fish — taking, blessing, breaking, giving — is exactly the sequence used at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19), and the early church read the feeding miracle through a eucharistic lens. The twelve basketfuls of fragments collected after five thousand are fed carries its own implicit commentary: the abundance generated by the miracle exceeds the abundance that existed before it began.

On Walking on the Water

The account of Jesus walking on the water (Section 99) appears in Matthew and Mark but not in Luke. Matthew's version is the only one that includes Peter's walking — and sinking. The fourth watch of the night (3–6 a.m.) places the event in the darkest hours before dawn. The phrase "he would have passed by them" in Mark is puzzling and has generated much discussion; it may echo the language of divine theophany in the Old Testament, where God "passes by" before the

face of Moses and Elijah (Exodus 33:22; 1 Kings 19:11). The disciples' response to his entry into the boat — "Of a truth thou art the Son of God" — is the first full confession of Jesus's divine identity by the disciples in Matthew's narrative, anticipating Peter's fuller confession at Caesarea Philippi.

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