

If Jesus was illegitimate as some scholars think (e.g. Andries van Aarde *Fatherless in Galilee: Jesus as Child of God*, (2001) he would have been shunned by his society – an outsider. **Are there any clues in the stories written about him that might suggest he had a 'soft spot' for other people considered by society to be 'outsiders'?**

In pairs, read one of the stories below and then outline the story to another pair. Use both stories to answer the question above. Do these texts provide strong evidence that Jesus was illegitimate? Explain your answer; why else might they have been included?

The Cleansing of a Leper

⁸ When He came down from the mountains, large crowds followed Him. ² And then a leper came and worshipped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

³ Jesus reached out His hand and touched him, saying, "I will. Be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ Then Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one. But go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded as a testimony to them."

The Healing of a Centurion's Servant

⁵ And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion^[a] came to Him, entreating Him, ⁶ and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home, sick with paralysis, terribly tormented."

⁷ Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

⁸ The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But speak the word only, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this man, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

¹⁰ When Jesus heard it, He was amazed and said to those who followed, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith, no, not in Israel.¹¹ And I say to you that many will come from the east and west and will dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the sons of the kingdom will be thrown out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

¹³ Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way. And as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that very moment.

The Healing of Many People

¹⁴ When Jesus entered Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother, lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she rose and served them.



¹⁶ When the evening came, they brought to Him many who were possessed with demons. And He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all who were sick, ¹⁷ to fulfil what was spoken by Isaiah the prophet,

“He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.”

The Healing of the Gergesene Demoniacs

²⁸ When He came to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two men possessed with demons, coming out of the tombs, extremely fierce, so that no one might pass by that way. ²⁹ Suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

³⁰ Now a good way off from them was a herd of many swine feeding. ³¹ So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.”

³² He said to them, “Go!” And when they came out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. ³³ Those who kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told everything, including what had happened to those possessed by the demons. ³⁴ The whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart out of their region.

The Haemorrhaging woman

²⁵ And a certain woman had a haemorrhage for twelve years, ²⁶ and had suffered much under many physicians. She had spent all that she had, and was not better but rather grew worse. ²⁷ When she had heard of Jesus, she came in the crowd behind Him and touched His garment. ²⁸ For she said, “If I may touch His garments, I shall be healed.” ²⁹ And immediately her haemorrhage dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction.

³⁰ At once, Jesus knew within Himself that power had gone out of Him. He turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My garments?”

³¹ His disciples said to Him, “You see the crowd pressing against You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’ ”

³² And He looked around to see her who had done it. ³³ But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the entire truth. ³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

