

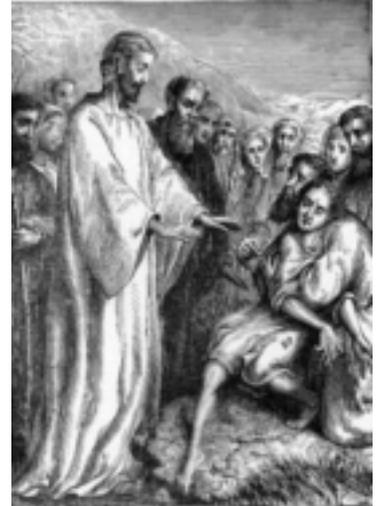
LESSON 10

SOME OF CHRIST'S EARLY MIRACLES

Scripture Text: Matthew 8:1-4, 14-17, 23-27

Do not confuse a miracle with magic. Miracles require a special manifestation of God's power. Magic either is imaginary or done by the use of natural laws available to all to produce mystifying results that anyone could do by the same methods. In many instances magic is the supernatural works of the devil; there are Bible examples.

This lesson reveals something of the life that is in Jesus and His power over physical disease and death. His life has as great power over spiritual death. We can have this life.



MEMORY VERSE: *Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.* *John 10:25*

Life Conquers Death

Matthew 8:1-4 **When he was come down from the mountain**—from preaching the Sermon on the Mount. **There came a leper and worshipped him**—He believed Jesus was God and worthy of worship. He opened his heart to Jesus. **If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean**—no question about Jesus' power to heal, but not sure it was His will. **Jesus . . . touched him . . . I will; be thou clean**—Jesus does just that. He stretched out His hand to this diseased one whom all others avoided. The condition of a man's body makes no difference; what matters is the condition of his heart. God loves the whole world, but salvation is a process of singling out the individual who feels his need and cries out to God. Look at this wretched man—a fearful sight! Leprosy acts as a type of sin unto death, a slow decay to which man can give no cure. The touching of the leper by Jesus has double significance: the leper comes in faith expecting Jesus to touch him, while the ever-present critics watch, believing that He will not dare. Jesus defies the onlookers, breaks through the Levitical law, heals the leper, and, in so doing, establishes the higher law of love.

Leprosy works as cruelly upon a man's spirit as upon his body. In answer to faith, the touch of Christ both restores the spirit and heals the body's decay. This miracle proves to us that God cares for both the spiritual and physical well-being of the individual. The story of the leper teaches us that no man is so diseased, so filthy, so forsaken, or so beaten down by society, but that Christ's touch can heal him and make him clean. Christ's atonement provided for both the soul and body of mankind, showing that Jesus is much concerned for both.

Miracles, Not Magic

Matthew 8:14-15 **Peter's . . . wife's mother . . . sick of a fever**—Peter's mother-in-law had a physical need. **He touched her hand**—JUST A TOUCH—**fever left her . . . she arose . . . ministered**—another miracle. This was not magic, but the divine power of God. The Bible is so full of miracles that to discard miracles is to discard the Bible.

Matthew 8:16-17 **Brought unto him many . . . possessed with devils**—spirits of demons dwelt in the bodies of these people, controlling them. There are also devil-possessed people today. Here we witness a spiritual sickness. **He cast out the spirits with his word.** God at Creation spoke and things came into existence by the power of His Word. By that same Word Christ spoke and demons departed. There are basically three causes of sickness. Nature

causes sickness; Satan causes sickness; and God causes sickness. The sickness that nature causes can be healed by nature, by Satan, or by God. The sickness that Satan causes can be healed only by Satan or God. The sickness that God brings about can be healed only by God. Satan performs magic, but the power of God easily overcomes magic (Exodus 7:10-12). There is but one power over Satan—the power of God's Word (Hebrews 4:12). These were **done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias**. (Compare Isaiah 53:4-5). It is clear that destroying the power of Satan and healing the body was part of Christ's work of which Isaiah wrote some 700 years before. He came to heal bodies as well as take away sins.

The Storm Stilled

Matthew 8:23-24 Entered into a ship . . . great tempest . . . ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. Picture the scene—the ship crossing Galilee in a great storm, terrified disciples, the tired, sleeping Jesus.

Matthew 8:25-26 Disciples . . . awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. They had witnessed things over and over again that made them know He had power over every situation. **Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?** Sufficient faith would have driven out the fear. Here was Jesus with them; they were all in the same boat; nothing would happen to them that would not happen to Jesus. Proper faith in Christ brings a deep-settled peace through the storms we face in this sea of life. **He . . . rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.** We were all tossed about on the sea of life by the mighty waves of sin, and we called on Jesus, and He spoke the Word and calmed the troubled waters of our souls. Although we desire smooth water to sail across, most of our ships will sail through rough water. But if Christ is on board, He will take us safely through by His Word.

Be Thankful

Matthew 8:27 But the men marvelled—Oh, that men would marvel more and thank God for His faithfulness! For stilling life's storms for us! We take too much for granted. **What manner of man . . . even the winds and the sea obey him!** Only One is Master of the winds and seas, the One Who made them. One more miracle to confirm in the minds of men in all generations the truth that this Jesus was the Son of God. Words are effective to a degree, but works are more convincing. People hear about the power of God, but what they really want and need is to see a manifestation of the power of Christ. God's miracle power has never been withdrawn or limited. Many can testify to present-day miracles. **All things are possible to him that believeth** (Mark 9:23).

JUST A THOUGHT

Modernists and other disbelievers deny the miracles or try to explain them as natural happenings.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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