

DAY BY DAY

Bible Texts and Topics, With Comments,
For Personal Study and Use at Family Worship.

2.3: MIRACLES

1. APART FROM THE WORLD

“From the top of the rocks I see Him, and from the hills I behold Him: lo, the People shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.” Numbers 23:9.

“Wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goes with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.” Exodus 33:16.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24.

“God will test the fidelity of His people. Many of the mistakes that are made by the professed servants of God are in consequence of their self-love, their desire for approval, their thirst for popularity. Blinded in this manner, they do not realize that they are elements of darkness, rather than of light. “Come out from among them, and be you separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” These are the conditions upon which we may be acknowledged as the sons of God, separation from the world, and renunciation of those things which delude, and fascinate, and ensnare.

“The apostle Paul declares that it is impossible for the children of God to unite with worldlings: “Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” This does not refer to marriage alone; any intimate relation of confidence and co-partnership with those who have no love for God or the truth, is a snare.

“The apostle continues: “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believes with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for you are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” In consideration of these facts, He exclaims, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate.” “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Testimonies, Volume 5, pages 12, 13.

2. THE SYROPHENICIAN DAUGHTER

“Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son

of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Matthew 15:21-28.

"Jesus had just departed from His field of labor because the scribes and Pharisees were seeking to take His life. They murmured and complained. They manifested unbelief and bitterness, and refused the salvation so freely offered them. Here Christ meets one of an unfortunate and despised race, that has not been favored with the light of God's word; yet she yields at once to the divine influence of Christ, and has implicit faith in His ability to grant the favor she asks. She begs for the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. If she may have the privilege of a dog, she is willing to be regarded as a dog. She has no national or religious prejudice or pride to influence her course, and she immediately acknowledges Jesus as the Redeemer, and as being able to do all that she asks of Him.

"The Savior is satisfied. He has tested her faith in Him. By His dealings with her, He has shown that she who has been regarded as an outcast from Israel, is no longer an alien, but a child in God's household. As a child it is her privilege to share in the Father's gifts. Christ now grants her request, and finishes the lesson to the disciples. Turning to her with a look of pity and love, He says, "O woman, great is thy faith. Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." From that hour her daughter became whole. The demon troubled her no more. The woman departed, acknowledging her Savior, and happy in the granting of her prayer." The Desire of Ages, 401, 402.

"He's a seer for God, with his vision afar;
His faith binds the earth to the farthest star.
He is ears to the deaf and sight to the blind,
To the stranger a guide, to the humblest, kind.
For his touch is as gentle as fresh morning dew,
And his heart, like the polestar, is faithful and true.

"He has love for the wayward and aid where there's need,
And he speaks for his Master in pulpit and deed.
He has balm for the wounded and smiles for the glad,
He has prayers for the dying and tears for the sad.
On his heart lies the world as it lay on his Lord,
And he willingly offers himself with the Word.

In Christ's service he lives, in Christ's service he dies,
And naught that is given he counts sacrifice.
He's a seer for God, with his vision afar,
And for him heaven's portals are standing ajar." J. H. Evans

3. FEEDING FIVE THOUSAND

"When the day was now far spent, His disciples came unto Him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed. Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto Him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give

them to eat? He says unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided He among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men." Mark 6:35-44.

"He who taught the people the way to secure peace and happiness was just as thoughtful of their temporal necessities as of their spiritual need. The people were weary and faint. There were mothers with babes in their arms, and little children clinging to their skirts. Many had been standing for hours. They had been so intensely interested in Christ's words, that they had not once thought of sitting down, and the crowd was so great that there was danger of their trampling on one another. Jesus would give them a chance to rest, and He bade them sit down. There was much grass in the place, and all could rest in comfort.

"Christ never worked a miracle except to supply a genuine necessity, and every miracle was of a character to lead the people to the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. The simple food passed around by the hands of the disciples contained a whole treasure of lessons. It was humble fare that had been provided; the fishes and barley loaves were the daily food of the fisher folk about the Sea of Galilee. Christ could have spread before the people a rich repast, but food prepared merely for the gratification of appetite would have conveyed no lesson for their good. Christ taught them in this lesson that the natural provisions of God for man had been perverted. And never did people enjoy the luxurious feasts prepared for the gratification of perverted taste as this people enjoyed the rest and the simple food which Christ provided so far from human habitations.

"If men today were simple in their habits, living in harmony with nature's laws, as did Adam and Eve in the beginning, there would be an abundant supply for the needs of the human family. There would be fewer imaginary wants, and more opportunities to work in God's ways. But selfishness and the indulgence of unnatural taste, have brought sin and misery into the world, from excess on the one hand, and from want on the other.

"Jesus did not seek to attract the people to Him by gratifying the desire for luxury. To that great throng, weary and hungry after the long, exciting day, the simple fare was an assurance not only of His power, but of His tender care for them in the common needs of life." The Desire of Ages, 365-367.

4. GREAT CATCH OF FISH

"Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken." John 21:5-11.

"After the work was done and the preparation made, Jesus bade the disciples come and dine. He broke the food, and divided it among them, and was known and acknowledged by all the seven. The miracle of

feeding the five thousand on the mountainside was now brought to their minds; but a mysterious awe was upon them, and in silence they gazed upon the risen Savior.

“Vividly they recalled the scene beside the sea when Jesus had bidden them follow Him. They remembered how, at His command, they had launched out into the deep, and had let down their net, and the catch had been so abundant as to fill the net, even to breaking. Then Jesus had called them to leave their fishing boats, and had promised to make them fishers of men. It was to bring this scene to their minds, and to deepen its impression, that He had again performed the miracle. His act was a renewal of the commission to the disciples. It showed them that the death of their Master had not lessened their obligation to do the work He had assigned them. Though they were to be deprived of His personal companionship, and of the means of support by their former employment, the risen Savior would still have a care for them.

“While they were doing His work, He would provide for their needs. And Jesus had a purpose in bidding them cast their net on the right side of the ship. On that side He stood upon the shore. That was the side of faith. If they labored in connection with Him. His divine power combining with their human effort, they could not fail of success.

“Another lesson Christ had to give, relating especially to Peter. Peter's denial of His Lord had been in shameful contrast to his former professions of loyalty. He had dishonored Christ, and had incurred the distrust of his brethren. They thought he would not be allowed to take his former position among them, and he himself felt that he had forfeited his trust. Before being called to take up again his apostolic work, he must before them all give evidence of His repentance. Without this, his sin, though repented of, might have destroyed his influence as a minister of Christ. The Savior gave him opportunity to regain the confidence of his brethren, and, so far as possible, to remove the reproach he had brought upon the gospel.” *The Desire of Ages*, 810, 811.

5. RAISING LAZARUS

“Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.” *John 11:38-44*.

“Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself comes to the grave.” Lazarus had been laid in a cave in the rock, and a massive stone had been placed before the entrance. “Take you away the stone,” Christ said.... The command is obeyed. The stone is rolled away. Everything is done openly and deliberately. All are given a chance to see that no deception is practiced. There lies the body of Lazarus in its rocky grave, cold and silent in death. The cries of the mourners are hushed. Surprised and expectant, the company stand around the sepulcher, waiting to see what is to follow....

“In all that He did, Christ was cooperating with His Father. Ever He had been careful to make it evident that He did not work independently; it was by faith and prayer that He wrought His miracles. Christ desired all to know His relationship with His Father. “Father,” He said, “I thank Thee that Thou has heard Me. . . .”

“And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.” . . . There is a stir in the silent tomb, and he who was dead stands at the door of the sepulcher. His movements are impeded by the grave clothes in which he was laid away, and Christ says to the astonished spectators, “Loose him, and let him go.” Again they are shown that the human worker is to cooperate with God. Humanity is to work for humanity. Lazarus is set free, and stands before the company, not as one emaciated from disease, and with feeble, tottering limbs, but as a man in the prime of life, and in the vigor of a noble manhood. His eyes beam with intelligence and with love for His Savior. He casts himself in adoration at the feet of Jesus.

“The beholders are at first speechless with amazement. Then there follows an inexpressible scene of rejoicing and thanksgiving. The sisters receive their brother back to life as the gift of God, and with joyful tears they brokenly express their thanks to the Savior.” *The Desire of Ages*, 534-536.

6. THE MAN BORN BLIND

“As Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. 'When he had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.” John 9:1-7.

“Christ feels the woes of every sufferer. When evil spirits rend a human frame, Christ feels the curse. When fever is burning up the life current, He feels the agony. And He is just as willing to heal the sick now, as when He was personally on earth. Christ's servants are His representatives, the channels for His working. He desires through them to exercise His healing power.

“In the Savior's manner of healing, there were lessons for His disciples. On one occasion He anointed the eyes of a blind man with clay, and bade him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.... He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.” John 9:7. The cure could be wrought only by the power of the great Healer, yet Christ made use of the simple agencies of nature. While He did not give countenance to drug medication, He sanctioned the use of simple and natural remedies.

“To many of the afflicted ones who received healing, Christ said, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” John 5:14. Thus He taught that disease is the result of violating God's laws, both natural and spiritual. The great misery in the world would not exist, did men but live in harmony with the Creator's plan.

“Christ had been the guide and teacher of ancient Israel, and He taught them that health is the reward of obedience to the laws of God. The great Physician who healed the sick in Palestine had spoken to His people from the pillar of cloud, telling them what they must do, and what God would do for them. “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God,” He said, “and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians. For I am the Lord that heals thee.” Christ gave to Israel definite instruction in regard to their habits of life, and He assured them, “The Lord will take away from thee all sickness.” When they fulfilled the conditions, the promise was verified to them. “There was not one feeble person among their tribes.” *The Desire of Ages*, 823, 824.

7. THE NOBLEMAN'S SON

“So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.” John 4:46-53.

“He who blessed the nobleman at Capernaum is just as desirous of blessing us. But like the afflicted father, we are often led to seek Jesus by the desire for some earthly good; and upon the granting of our request we rest our confidence in His love. The Savior longs to give us a greater blessing than we ask; and He delays the answer to our request that He may show us the evil of our own hearts, and our deep need of His grace. He desires us to renounce the selfishness that leads us to seek Him. Confessing our helplessness and bitter need, we are to trust ourselves wholly to His love.

“The nobleman wanted to see the fulfillment of his prayer before he should believe; but he had to accept the word of Jesus, that his request was heard and the blessing granted.” *The Desire of Ages*, 200.

“Yet the nobleman had a degree of faith; for he had come to ask what seemed to him the most precious of all blessings. Jesus had a greater gift to bestow. He desired, not only to heal the child, but to make the officer and his household sharers in the blessings of salvation' and to kindle a light in Capernaum, which was so soon to be the field of His own labors. But the nobleman must realize his need before he would desire the grace of Christ....

“Like a flash of light, the Savior's words to the nobleman laid bare his heart. He saw that his motives in seeking Jesus were selfish. His vacillating faith appeared to him in its true character. In deep distress he realized that his doubt might cost the life of his son. He knew that he was in the presence of One who could read the thoughts, and to whom all things were possible. In an agony of supplication he cried, “Sir, come down ere my child die!” His faith took hold upon Christ as did Jacob, when, wrestling with the angel, he cried, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.”

“Like Jacob he prevailed. The Savior cannot withdraw from the soul that clings to Him, pleading its great need. “Go thy way,” He said; “thy son lives.” The nobleman left the Savior's presence with a peace and joy he had never known before. Not only did he believe that his son would be restored, but with strong confidence he trusted in Christ as the Redeemer.” *The Desire of Ages*, page 198.