

DAY BY DAY

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

3.12: HEALING MIRACLES 2

1. "ARISE AND WALK"

"Behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy: Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think you evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then says He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto your house. And he arose, and departed to his house." Matthew 9:2-7.

"Again and again the bearers of the paralytic tried to push their way through the crowd, but in vain. The sick man looked about him in unutterable anguish. When the longed-for help was so near, how could he relinquish hope? At his suggestion his friends bore him to the top of the house, and, breaking up the roof, let him down at the feet of Jesus. The discourse was interrupted. The Savior looked upon the mournful countenance, and saw the pleading eyes fixed upon Him. He understood the case; He had drawn to Himself that perplexed and doubting spirit.

"While the paralytic was yet at home, the Savior had brought conviction to his conscience. When he repented of his sins, and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the life-giving mercies of the Savior had first blessed his longing heart. Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a belief that He was the sinners' only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence. Now, in words that fell like music on the sufferer's ear, the Savior said, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."

"The burden of despair rolls from the sick man's soul; the peace of forgiveness rests upon his spirit, and shines out upon his countenance. His physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed. The helpless paralytic is healed! The guilty sinner is pardoned!

"In simple faith he accepted the words of Jesus as the boon of new life. He urged no further request, but lay in blissful silence, too happy for words. The light of heaven irradiated his countenance, and the people looked with awe upon the scene." The Desire of Ages, 268.

"In the home of the paralytic there was great rejoicing when he returned to his family, carrying with ease the couch upon which he had been slowly borne from their presence but a short time before. They gathered round with tears of joy, hardly daring to believe their eyes. He stood before them in the full vigor of manhood. . . . Glad thanksgiving went up from that home, and God was glorified through His Son, who had restored hope to the hopeless, and strength to the stricken one. This man and his family were ready to lay down their lives for Jesus. No doubt dimmed their faith, no unbelief marred their fealty to Him who had brought light into their darkened home." Ministry of Healing, 79.

2. STILLING THE STORM

"And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake Him, and say unto Him, Master,

carest Thou not that we perish? And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Mark 4:37-39.

"How often the disciples' experience is ours! When the tempests of temptation gather, and the fierce lightning flash, and the waves sweep over us, we battle with the storm alone, forgetting that there is One who can help us. We trust to our own strength till our hope is lost, and we are ready to perish. Then we remember Jesus, and if we call upon Him to save us, we shall not cry in vain. Though He sorrowfully reproves our unbelief and self-confidence, He never fails to give us the help we need. Whether on the land or on the sea, if we have the Savior in our hearts, there is no need of fear. Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life, and will deliver us from danger in the way that He knows to be best.

"There is another spiritual lesson in this miracle of the stilling of the tempest. Every man's experience testifies to the truth of the words of Scripture, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest. ... There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked." Isaiah 57:20, 21. Sin has destroyed our peace. While self is unsubdued we can find no rest. The masterful passions of the heart no human power can control. We are as helpless here as were the disciples to quiet the raging storm. But He who spoke peace to the billows of Galilee, has spoken the word of peace for every soul. However fierce the tempest, those who turn to Jesus with the cry, "Lord, save us," will find deliverance. His grace, that reconciles the soul to God, quiets the strife of human passion, and in His love the heart is at rest." Desire of Ages, 336, 337.

"When God's calling us to stillness, To the quietness of rest, Waiting to pour out His blessings In the way that He sees best,
What a joy there is in trusting, Lying passive on His arm, Knowing He who formed and made us Has all power to keep from harm.

"Sometimes He would draw us closer, Sometimes take our work away,
Giving time for meditation, Giving us more time to pray.
For He knows 'tis in the stillness That the heart's poured out to God,
And He knows how rich the blessings He bestows with chastening rod.

"So whatever He sends of resting, Whether days or months to be,
May we know His hand is leading, And accept it gratefully.
He who watches o'er the sparrow, Watches o'er His children too.
And with care and loving-kindness He is watching over you." Mina E. Carpenter.

3. "BE THOU CLEAN"

"There came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying unto Him, If Thou wilt, Thou can make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed." Mark 1:40-42.

"The leper is guided to the Savior. Jesus is teaching beside the lake, and the people are gathered about Him. Standing afar off, the leper catches a few words from the Savior's lips. He sees Him laying His hands upon the sick. He sees the lame, the blind, the paralytic, and those dying of various maladies, rise up in health, praising God for their deliverance. Faith strengthens in his heart. He draws nearer and yet nearer to the gathered throng. The restrictions laid upon him, the safety of the people, and the fear with which all men regard him, are forgotten. He thinks only of the blessed hope of healing.

“He is a loathsome spectacle. The disease has made frightful inroads, and his decaying body is horrible to look upon. At sight of him the people fall back in terror. They crowd upon one another in their eagerness to escape from contact with him. Some try to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but in vain. He neither sees nor hears them. Their expressions of loathing are lost upon him. He sees only the Son of God. He hears only the voice that speaks life to the dying. Pressing to Jesus, he casts himself at His feet with the cry, “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou can make me clean.”

“Jesus replied, “I will; be thou made clean,” and laid His hands upon him.

“Immediately a change passed over the leper. His flesh became healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappeared, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, took its place....

“The work of Christ in cleansing the leper from his terrible disease is an illustration of His work in cleansing the soul from sin. The man who came to Jesus was “full of leprosy.” Its deadly poison permeated his whole body. The disciples sought to prevent their Master from touching him; for he who touched a leper became himself unclean. But in laying His hand upon the leper, Jesus received no defilement. His touch imparted life-giving power. The leprosy was cleansed.

“Thus it is with the leprosy of sin,--deep-rooted, deadly, and impossible to be cleansed by human power. “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” Isaiah 1:5, 6. But Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution. His presence has healing virtue for the sinner. Whoever will fall at His feet, saying in faith, “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou can make me clean,” shall hear the answer, “I will; be thou made clean.” Desire of Ages, 262-266.

4. FEEDING FOUR THOUSAND

“Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.” Matthew 15:32-38.

“Jesus went up into a mountain, and there the multitude flocked to Him, bringing their sick and lame, and laying them at His feet. He healed them all; and the people, heathen as they were, glorified the God of Israel. For three days they continued to throng about the Savior, sleeping at night in the open air, and through the day pressing eagerly to hear the words of Christ, and to see His works. At the end of three days their food was spent. Jesus would not send them away hungry, and He called upon His disciples to give them food.

“Again the disciples revealed their unbelief. At Bethsaida they had seen how, with Christ's blessing, their little store availed for the feeding of the multitude; yet they did not now bring forward their all, trusting His power to multiply it for the hungry crowds. Moreover, those whom He fed at Bethsaida were Jews; these were Gentiles and heathen. Jewish prejudice was still strong in the hearts of the disciples, and they answered Jesus, Whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?” But obedient to His word, they brought Him what they had, seven loaves and two fishes. The multitude were fed, seven large baskets of fragments remaining. Four thousand men, besides women and

children, were thus refreshed, and Jesus sent them away with glad and grateful hearts." Desire of Ages, 404,405.

"Jesus, the divine Master, ever exalted the name of His heavenly Father. He taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name." Matthew 6:9, AR.V. And they were not to forget to acknowledge, "Thine is ... the glory." Matthew 6:13. So careful was the great Healer to direct attention from Himself to the Source of His power, that the wondering multitude, "when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see," did not glorify Him, but "glorified the God of Israel." Matthew 15:31. In the wonderful prayer that Christ offered just before His crucifixion, He declared, "I have glorified Thee on the earth." "Glorify Thy Son," He pleaded, "that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou has sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou has loved Me may be in them, and I in them." John 17:1, 4, 25, 26." Prophets and Kings, 69.

5. HEALING THE DEMONIAK

"There was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him." Mark 1:23-26.

"In the synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus was speaking of His mission to set free the slaves of sin. He was interrupted by a shriek of terror. A madman rushed forward from among the people, crying out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God."

"Jesus rebuked the demon, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not."

"The cause of this man's affliction also was in his own life. He had been fascinated with the pleasures of sin, and had thought to make life a grand carnival. Intemperance and frivolity perverted the noble attributes of his nature, and Satan took entire control of him. Remorse came too late. When he would have sacrificed wealth and pleasure to regain his lost manhood, he had become helpless in the grasp of the evil one.

"In the Savior's presence he was roused to long for freedom; but the demon resisted the power of Christ. When the man tried to appeal to Jesus for help, the evil spirit put word, into his mouth, and he cried out in an agony of fear. The demoniak partially comprehended that he was in the presence of One who could set him free; but when he tried to come within reach of that mighty hand, another's will held him; another's words found utterance through him.

"The conflict between the power of Satan and his own desire for freedom was terrible. It seemed that the tortured man must lose his life in the struggle with the foe that had been the ruin of his manhood. But the Savior spoke with authority and set the captive free....

"There are multitudes today as truly under the power of evil spirits as was the demoniak of Capernaum. All who willfully depart from God's commandments are placing themselves under the control of Satan. Many a man tampers with evil, thinking that he can break away at pleasure; but he is lured on and on, until he finds himself controlled by a will stronger than his own. He cannot escape its mysterious power. Secret sin or master passion may hold him a captive as helpless as was the demoniak of Capernaum.

“Yet his condition is not hopeless. God does not control our minds without our consent; but every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart's unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who consent to enter into covenant with God are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature.” Ministry of Healing, 91-93.

6. THE CENTURION'S SERVANT

“And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

“When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.” Matthew 8:5-13.

“The centurion who desired Christ to come and heal his servant felt unworthy to have Jesus come under his roof; his faith was so strong in the power of Christ that he entreated Him just to say the word, and the work would be done. . . .

“Here Jesus exalted faith in contrast with doubt. He showed that the children of Israel would stumble because of their unbelief, which would lead to the rejection of great light, and would result in their condemnation and overthrow. Thomas declared that he would not believe unless he put his finger into the prints of the nails, and thrust his hand into the side of his Lord. Christ gave him the evidence he desired, and then reproved his unbelief: Because thou has seen Me, thou has believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

“In this age of darkness and error, men who profess to be followers of Christ seem to think that they are at liberty to receive or reject the servants of the Lord at pleasure, and that they will not be called to an account for so doing. Unbelief and darkness lead them to this. Their sensibilities are blunted by their unbelief. They violate their consciences and become untrue to their own convictions, and weaken themselves in moral power. They view others in the same light with themselves.” Testimonies 4, 233, 234.

7. THE MAN WITH DROPSY

“It came to pass, as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, that they watched Him. And, behold, there was a certain man before Him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spoke unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? And they held their peace. And He took him, and healed him, and let him go; and answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day? And they could not answer Him again to these things.” Luke 14:1-6.

“When Jesus turned upon the Pharisees with the question whether it was lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill, He confronted them with their own wicked purposes. They

were hunting His life with bitter hatred, while He was saving life, and bringing happiness to multitudes. Was it better to slay upon the Sabbath, as they were planning to do, than to heal the afflicted, as He had done? Was it more righteous to have murder in the heart upon God's holy day, than love to all men, which finds expression in deeds of mercy?

"In the healing of the withered hand (Matthew 12:13), Jesus condemned the custom of the Jews, and left the fourth commandment standing as God had given it. "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days," He declared. By sweeping away the senseless restrictions of the Jews, Christ honored the Sabbath, while those who complained of Him were dishonoring God's holy day.

"Those who hold that Christ abolished the law, teach that He broke the Sabbath, and justified His disciples in doing the same. Thus they are really taking the same ground as did the caviling Jews. In this they contradict the testimony of Christ Himself, who declared, "I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." Neither the Savior nor His followers broke the law of the Sabbath. Christ was a living representative of the law. No violation of its holy precepts was found in His life. Looking upon a nation of witnesses who were seeking occasion to condemn Him, He could say unchallenged, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?"

"The Savior had not come to set aside what patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for He Himself had spoken through these representative men. All the truths of God's word came from Him. But these priceless gems had been placed in false settings. Their precious light had been made to minister to error. God desired them to be removed from their settings of error and replaced in the framework of truth. This work only a divine hand could accomplish. By its connection with error, the truth had been serving the cause of the enemy of God and man. Christ had come to place it where it would glorify God, and work the salvation of humanity." *Desire of Ages*, 287, 288.

"Christians may safely accept invitations to dinners where a promiscuous company shall gather, if they will but follow the example of Christ, and act from the same motives as did our Saviour. Their influence will be on the right side if they speak words that will impress with divine truth those who are assembled, and thus sow seed unto eternal life.

"But the Pharisees had not invited Christ for the sake of hearing of eternal things. Filled with jealousy and envy, he and his guests had laid plans by which they hoped to bring Christ into disfavor. The man with the dropsy who sat before Christ had been purposely chosen as a means by which to bring Christ under condemnation. The suffering man was placed directly before Christ, "and they watched him" to see whether he would violate their traditions and heal the man on the Sabbath day, in order that they might find occasion to condemn him to death. They knew that Christ always expressed sympathy for human woe, and that he ever exercised his power to relieve suffering humanity. Jesus read their hearts as an open book. They had no need to tell him what were their thoughts. He forestalled all their arguments, and revealed the fact that he read their questionings and purposes. "And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, and saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" If he had healed the man without closing the mouths of his accusers, they would at once have charged him with Sabbath breaking. He asked this question before the guests in order that these men might not venture to take the position that it was not lawful. They would have been obliged to answer, if they answered honestly, "The law does not forbid the work that relieves the suffering of man or beast on the Sabbath day." Jesus gave them an opportunity to disclose their sentiments, and to point out the ground of their objection to his works of mercy. But "they held their peace." They were wise enough to see that this was the best policy. They knew that their Guest understood the law perfectly, and that he was able to make plain their misrepresentations and to unveil their subterfuges before those who were present. And he took the man with the dropsy, "and healed him, and let him go." *Signs of the Times*, February 6, 1896.

