

Magic, Miracles And You: 2

Loving Truth or Loving a Lie

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

Notice the phrase 'they received not the love of the truth'. It is vital that we understand this. God seeks to lead us to 'love the truth', in fact the ability to love the truth is given to us by Him, it is not something that we have to do on our own, in fact we couldn't do it on our own, because since man fell it is natural for him to hate the truth. This ability is essential so that we can be saved, if we don't love and accept the truth we can't be saved.

The reason why they don't accept this ability from God is an interesting one; 'but had *Pleasure* in unrighteousness'. I'll put it in simpler terms; they refuse to believe the truth because it's more fun to believe the lies. Watching, hearing or reading untrue things gives them pleasure; they enjoy it. Now the scriptures don't say this is only referring to doctrines, it refers to all truth. It refers to accepting the truth about the sin in our life and what we need to confess and repent of; it refers to facing the truth that the world with its fascinations is wicked and is rapidly heading for destruction; it refers also to fiction and fantasy in entertainment; it also refers to all those little 'lies of convenience' that we indulge in.

If we are going to be saved we have to work in cooperation with the Holy Spirit all the way and He deals in 100% truth. He will teach us only 100% truth. If we don't want to hear the truth, He finally has to leave us to our own unhappy destinies. That is what it means when it says 'God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie'. God doesn't deceive them, No, of course not; they insist on being deceived, so God has to withdraw His protection and the liar, Satan sweeps in and they are carried away by the muddy torrent of delusions. Even though a person is warned by the Holy Spirit that what he is wanting to hang on to is a lie, if he insists, he finally will really believe his chosen set of lies. At that point he has rejected the Holy Spirit and is lost.

Notice this sad verse: "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Revelation 22:15. This tells us the fate of those who received not the love of the truth; instead they love and make lies and end up outside the city to be destroyed with the wicked.

Exposing the Lies

I want to make this point crystal clear, anything out of harmony with the scriptures is not truth. Satan is putting forth the concept that man is immortal in himself. And of course he tells his followers that he is able to give life and do anything for them that they want. Why does he try so hard to make us believe we are all powerful and immortal?

The *Truth* is that only God, that is God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, have underived life. All other lives in the universe are dependent upon the life of God. If we think that we have life in ourselves, then we are not so worried about God's authority. "He's just bluffing when He warns us, "The wages of sin is death!" After all, we can't really die." God only deals in truth, He never bluffs.

Satan is a powerful angel, he has great power to influence our minds and bodies, great hypnotic ability, and can do things that to us seem impossible; but he has no life in himself. This is a truth he knows but refuses to accept. He cannot give life to his followers. He cannot even heal when it is a case where real life-giving power is required. There are many people who go to occult healers, the ones that get 'healed' are usually the illnesses with strong emotional or psycho-somatic aspects. Those with problems that would require real creative power, often seem to get well for a while, only to have the problem reoccur later. That is because he can hype them up with hypnotism and feelings for a while, but he has no power to give life or to re-create; only the Life-giver has this power.

Satan can destroy and kill, and he does when God finally is forced by our stubborn refusal to allow Him to save us, to withdraw His protection; but he can't give life. He can't even keep his human servants alive when it is so valuable to him to do so. If they get sick and die, he can do nothing about it. His only recourse is to impersonate some of them like he has in spiritualism and make us think they are still alive or they are contacting us from 'beyond'.

This brings us to a great understanding of the 1,000-year period when Satan and his angels are going to be left here on this desolate earth, while all the saints are in heaven. Satan has boasted to his followers that he will resurrect them and they shall live forever in his kingdom. Well, God is going to give him his chance. He is going to have 1,000 years to resurrect the wicked dead whose bodies will litter the earth. He won't be able to do it; he will finally realize that only God is the source of life, his life included.

But do you know what he does when God finally returns for the judgment of the wicked and He resurrects them to meet their sentence of death? Why he goes right back into lying as soon as he has someone to lie to! He runs out into the crowds of the wicked and tells them that he resurrected them and now they can take the city from the saints and live forever on earth with him as king. He is indeed a liar and the father of it. Remember that when you find your heart reaching out to believe in 'magic'.

Are Miracles the same as Magic?

Often when people come up against something that they can't explain away, where it surely appears that supernatural agencies are at work, they are then sure that it must be from God, or they will think it proves the dead are interacting with them. But they don't take into consideration the myriads of fallen angels in this world that are totally dedicated to deceiving you and tricking you into believing their lies instead of the Word of God.

"For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Revelation 16:14.

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 2 Corinthians 11:14.

But what about when God really performs a miracle, is it the same as magic? No, there is a big difference. Take for example when Jesus fed the 5,000 + people from a small lunch. It wasn't some kind of magic; He is the Creator and has the power to create. He used the same power to feed the people that he uses in nature every day to feed the multitudes of earth, He just accelerated it, that's all.

He can recreate; He can raise the dead, heal and restore by using the same power He used to create everything in the first place. The power is in God, He is the only Being who has life in Himself. Satan has no such power in himself and neither do we. Satan can impersonate the dead, and really fool us, but not truly raise them. He can oppress people and make them sick and then by removing his oppressive

power make it appear they are healed, but to actually heal people like the man blind from birth that Jesus healed, he can't, because that took real creative power.

Signs and Wonders

What about the things people are calling miracles these days? Statues of Mary that weep tears or blood? It is very easy for Satan to cause a few drops of blood or tears to appear on a dumb idol. That is easy for him, and there go thousands of people all amazed and because they do not choose to believe the Word of the Living God, they are fooled by a devil's trick with a dumb idol. What is even more sad is the things that people think are 'proved' by these happenings.

So I have a plaster saint and all of a sudden I find blood or tears on it. What does that mean? Well, really all it means is that a fallen angel, (or a dishonest person) put tears or blood on my plaster saint. It doesn't mean my plaster saint is really alive, it isn't a sign from God to tell me to worship the idols as the Bible tells me not to do that. It isn't even the collective minds of all the people worshiping the idol that cause it to happen, no it is merely 'devils working miracles' seeking to deceive the very elect.

What about when a heathen idol really 'drinks' milk? It is easy for the devil and his angels to slurp up milk or in some way get it to disappear when it is offered to the idol. Does it mean the idol has power? No, the bible says idols have no power, only the demons that are involved in them. Does it mean that the idol is going to do something wonderful for you? No, it can't do anything for you, and the only thing the devils want to do for you is to trick and destroy you.

See what I mean about anything that is not in harmony with the scriptures being untrue? When we study and learn what the Bible says, then if we see an idol drink milk or bleed or cry, we simply say, "yes, there is old Satan trying to trick people into disobeying God" and we walk away and seek to warn others not to believe his lies.

There is another terrible trick Satan is using a lot today, he gets people together then hypnotizes them and makes them act in strange ways, he takes them captive and gives them all sorts of 'wonderful feelings', and thousands think it is the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit never makes people do weird things, God never plays games with people; that is Satan's field, he invented games and he loves to play games with the tender hearts of people and fool them and destroy them.

Friends, if you read about the Holy Spirit in the Bible, you will learn that He does a lot for us and in us, but He never makes us speak gibberish or bark or roar, or run around out of control. This is a deception and people say, "see, God is with us! So we are right in breaking His laws or He wouldn't be blessing us". Get hold of the Bible folks, and if it is not in agreement with the Bible, it is a lie, it's the bait on the mousetrap and you are the mouse.

God Working Within His Laws

God's power is working marvellously every day, feeding us, protecting us, healing us, but it is seldom thought of as a miracle as He is so dependable we take it for granted and He usually works through His own laws of nature. Nevertheless, there is real creative power at work in us and around us every day. Even when it seems a 'miracle' has happened, it doesn't mean that God is not working through His own natural laws. For example, when an airplane flies, is that because the natural law of gravity is magically turned off? No, it is because there are other laws that counteract the law of gravity and allow the plane to fly.

You know, science can tell you how gravity works and they can measure it and calculate it; but no one really knows what it is. The Bible tells us it is the power of God holding the universe together. What makes a seed grow? Man can't make a seed that will grow; no, it is the power of God; the Life-giver that makes a seed grow.

God can work through natural laws we know nothing about, and yet, God is not limited by His own laws, He works with them and through them but can work outside of them also if He sees fit.

How did God Create?

The 1st chapter of Genesis tells about God creating the earth. It says that He merely spoke and things were created. God has that kind of power. If I say I will make a painting, for example, then I have to work and do that, but when God says for something to exist, it is there. The power is in God to do this.

Only God can create life, if Satan is trying to trick us into thinking something is coming to life, he has to either impersonate it, he or his angels, or he has to hypnotize you and make you think you are seeing something when you are really not.

Laws of the Universe

God has set up His universe with laws to govern and control how things work. We call them natural laws and they are very dependable. If Magic were a true concept, nothing would be dependable. Just imagine dropping something and one day it will fall to the floor and the next go smashing up through the ceiling? Think about the properties of water, they act in certain ways, dependably so. But what if one day you drink water and are refreshed but another day everything changes somehow and you are poisoned; Or if one day water decided to act like gasoline and burst into flames. Astronauts can tell you just how exact and dependable God's natural laws are, if it were not so, they never could have gone to the moon and back.

And think of the number of mischievous and mean people there are, who if they could manipulate these laws at will, we would never have a moment's peace. Actually, if you get deeply enough involved with the demon spirits that are the real power behind 'magic'; that is just what happens, you will be tormented and never have a moments peace!

God doesn't run that kind of universe, His laws are good, beneficial and consistent so we can have security in our lives to the degree we learn to live in harmony with those laws.

Does God prefer Miracles?

There are basically two kinds of miracles, one where God uses His creative, life-giving power to heal or restore and the other where He uses His agents, such as our guardian angels to protect us by stopping harm from reaching us or by snatching us from harm's way.

Both of these He is doing constantly, we will never know how much we are dependant on the direct power and intervention of God in our lives, until the veil is removed and we see the unseen and are shown all His providences.

It is only when these interventions come in an accelerated or dramatic way that we tend to see them and call it a miracle. But really, every day we live and every loaf of bread we eat is a miracle of God's love and sustaining power.

We often want to see His power in this accelerated form and we pray for 'miracles'. We are impatient and want to see the dramatic instantaneous healings and so on. But God's desire is that we learn to understand the laws He has put in place to govern Nature and our health and to live in harmony with them. He cannot work for us with 'miraculous' power when we cast aside His laws of health and then ask Him to heal us anyway. It is no less the power of God that heals us when we take hold of the health message and bring our habits in line with His laws; then when he heals suddenly in response to the prayer of faith. Also the person healed 'instantly' is expected then to obey the Laws of health, which are no less God's laws then are the Ten Commandments, 'lest a worse thing come upon him.'

The Dependable Laws of a Dependable God

God's promises are sure and available to all who will fulfill the conditions contained in them. Just as the laws of nature are dependable, consistent and measurable, so are the promises and sustaining power of our loving heavenly Father. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that there is a science in the things of God. It is a science that God wants us to study, it is much greater than magic, as it always works and there is real power from the Life-giver to back it up. Where do we go to study that science? We are to go to our knees, ask God, in the name of Jesus, for the Great Heavenly Teacher, the Holy Spirit and then we are to get into the Bible and study and learn. Everything that we find there we are to put to practice. When we are shown changes we must make and things to repent of, we are to do it. Remember as long as you continue to learn the lessons of this science and practice them, the Holy Spirit will keep teaching you more. There is no limit to the knowledge and power of the science of the Bible!

Real Power in a Book? By the Word of the Lord...

We have heard about magic books, we seem fascinated by the idea of some musty old tome found in some attic in an ancient trunk being full of secret spells that when studied and practiced cause all sorts of wonderful and powerful events. Well I want to tell you this day that there is such an ancient book and you probably have that book in your home. It is the only book that actually has real power in it. It is the Bible.

Remember what we found out was the way God created everything? It was by His Word. Where do we find His Word today? In the Bible! It is the most wonderful mystery, greater than any of those lies old Satan tells us, that God put His power in that Word He gave to us. Jesus Himself, who is actually the Creator, calls Himself the Word of God and so He identifies Himself with the Bible. The Holy Spirit who is the actual author of the Bible, is made available to teach it to us personally if we will have Him.

Why friends, this is greater than any magic and fantasy Satan could dream up! The power of the Life-giver is actually to be found in His Word! Even a wizard if he found a magic spell in an old book would have to go and do something to try it out. We don't have to do anything just accept it and believe it and it is ours. Once you really grasp the concept that God never lies, He means exactly what He says; and that the reality of whatever He has promised is found in the Word itself, then the whole Universe opens up before you! Even the Commandments, when it says, Thou shalt, or Thou shalt not, are promises! If we just say, yes, Lord, I will, or I won't, then the power to obey is there as soon as we accept it and make it ours! If we just say, yes, Lord, I will, or I won't, then the power to obey is instantly provided to us. God doesn't have to 'do anything' to give it to us, it is already there.

We are told that Faith is what is important, where do we get faith? Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the WORD of GOD! We get faith by hearing and reading the Bible. I challenge you, start re-reading some of those old promises you have heard since childhood and just rattle off without thought, read them slowly saying to yourself, "God means this. He means it for me. The very power to bring this about is right here in these words because these are the Words of the Living God! This is His gift to me personally!" That's the 'faith of a little child'! If a parent tells a little child, "Come here and I'll give you a toy", he will toddle on over with a big smile and the hand out to receive. Oh, dear readers try coming to God with a big smile and the hand out to receive; it will change your life!

Breaking Free from the Magic Trap

So why, Oh why, doesn't everybody grab onto the real power of the Life-Giver and start living according to the laws of the universe and enjoying the radiant victorious life? Well, I am sad to say it, but all too many of us want things that the Great Creator God will not give us. Why, because He is mean and selfish? NO, no, no! Rather, because they are sinful and wrong, and sin, if unchecked will destroy the universe as well as every one who hangs on to it.

I want to take a walk on the dark side with you for a moment. What kind of things do we want when we seek Satan's lies? Well we want to be rich, (money is power), we want to get our own wishes, we want to control others, we want to be able to 'help' others (on our own terms of course), we want to be able to make others admire us, we want to be able to get things done and acquire things with no effort and without waiting for the natural time it takes (we are lazy and impatient).

Alright, but do we want to have rich people control everything in our lives? Do we want people to enslave, manipulate and control us? Do we want people to be able to force us to obey them or they will harm us? You begin to see, if you think about it for a while, that all these concepts don't stand up under the light of the 'Golden Rule'.

Always remember, if somebody does something to somebody, it isn't much fun for the little guy, and in Satan's power struggle, there are lots of little guys. In fact, because he is the most powerful, all people are 'little guys'. Want a life where you are always bossed around and tortured by Satan? Well, just follow his lies and you'll be there!

God doesn't want that for any of His creatures, His laws are set up so all can be free and happy and get along together joyfully forever. Now that's worth having!

Let's look at Pokemon, now wouldn't we just love to have a pocket full of little monsters who will obey us and attack others on command? (That's a bit like a guard dog, we think he'll only bite our enemies, but often he bites us too.) But do you want someone who doesn't like you to have a pocket full of monsters and command them to hurt you? That's a bit different isn't it?

What about Harry Potter, a great wizard or sorcerer, you'd love to have him for a friend and he'd work magic and help you. But what if he didn't like you any more? Then you're in trouble aren't you? And think how scared you'd be of offending him! That's the way the poor native peoples of the world are when they have to obey the witch-men, they live in terror of offending them. They are oh, so happy when missionaries come and tell them about Jesus who is stronger than the witch-men.

Remember the story of the sorcerer's apprentice? Well this foolish young fellow was lazy and wanted to use magic to do the job he was supposed to do himself. He got some magic going, but he couldn't

get it turned back off and got into terrible trouble. You know, this is what will happen to everyone who decides to follow Satan's lies and try and work magic of any kind; they will end up trapped and not be able to break free from the snare. Then Satan will laugh as he destroys them.

But I'll let you in on the most wonderful mystery of the universe. It's called the 'mystery of Godliness'. God saw that when Mother Eve obeyed Satan to try to get some magic power, that she and all mankind would be ensnared and destroyed by Satan. So He stepped in and provided a way of escape for all who will agree to take it. The Creator Himself, Jesus, the Son of God, paid the death penalty and God said, "There, the door is open again, you can come home to Me now, I've bought back for you the right to choose. If you choose to come to Me, Satan can't get you any more. Oh, he'll try, he'll put bait out, he'll tell you lies, but if you keep coming to Me and choosing My ways, he can't ever take you back! And I'll send all the power in the universe to keep you safe if need be."

You know, the Bible says, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28:18. Now when I went to school 'all' meant everything, there's nothing left. So if Jesus has 'ALL POWER' how much real power does Satan have? NONE! And how much real power do witches and wizards and Harry Potter and Pokemon and New Age have, and well I could go on all day couldn't I? And the answer is they have *None*; no power at all. And finally, how much power do you have if you follow Satan, who has no power? You have less than none.

Now, what if you have already been hooked, perhaps on Harry Potter, Dungeons and Dragons, New Age, Wicca or something? Well there is still one gift that God gave you; the power to choose to break free. Behind you, if you choose to leave Satan and follow Jesus. Satan will rage and bellow, but he can't take you away from God if you don't agree to let him do it.

"In no case can Satan obtain dominion over the thoughts, words, and actions, unless we voluntarily open the door and invite him to enter." AH 402

"In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ." Christ's Object Lessons, 157.

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve;... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15.