

A Journey with Christ the Messiah The Purpose of the Miracles of Jesus

Matthew 4:23-25

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are continuing a series that I have entitled *A Journey with Christ the Messiah*. In the last several weeks we have embarked on a journey through both the Old and the New Testaments with the purpose of discovering **Christ the Messiah** that is written there. We have looked at Old Testament prophecies concerning Him. We have seen that Jesus fulfilled all of the Messianic prophecies concerning Him. A feat that would be an impossibility by human probability to be accomplished by just one man. It required divine intervention of God to accomplish all of them. These prophecies were written so we would be able to recognize the Messiah when He came. We have looked at His birth, His teachings, and His seven "I AM" proclamations. Today we are going to examine His miracles and the purpose for them. In the next few weeks, Lord willing, we will be examining His death, burial, and resurrection from the dead and the significance of those events.

This morning we will take a journey through the miracles recorded in the New Testament. These miracles include the miracles of Christ, the miracles performed by the apostles, and the miracle of salvation that God has offered to us through His Son.

It is my prayer, that the miracles will help strengthen your resolve that Jesus is the Christ. Or if you do not know Christ, that they might point you to the One who came so that we might have Eternal life with God in Heaven.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Matthew 4:23-25 (NASB)

²³ Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

²⁴ The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and *the Decapolis* and Jerusalem and Judea and *from beyond the Jordan*.

As we prepare to continue this journey, let's bow in a word of prayer.

Prayer

Do you believe in Miracles?

Miracles do exist. We would not want nor could we prevent God from doing His will. However, we must be careful that the miracles we experience are of God.

There are miracles done by the “dark side” of the spirit world? We have been warned that just before Christ's second coming there will be false Messiahs and false prophets who will perform miracles.

Mark 13:21-23 (NASB)

21 And then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ’; or, ‘Behold, He is there’; do not believe him; 22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. 23 But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.

But there are miracles that should convince us of the existence of God and His goodness toward us? YES!

John 20:30-31 (NASB)

30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

So there are miracles that should lead us to belief in God. John calls them signs and they should point the way to TRUTH.

The pages of our Bible are inspired by God and when you read its pages they can convict your heart. By reading and following its message we can experience the miracle of salvation in our lives.

Let's continue the journey!

BODY:

I. THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST CONFIRMED THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH.

Ever since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, the coming Messiah has been proclaimed. In Genesis 3 Adam and Eve were deceived by Satan, who was in the form of a serpent, and they ate of the tree of good and evil which caused mankind to die spiritually and be separated from God. God told Satan:

Genesis 3:15 (NASB)

15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

Here in Genesis 3 we have the promise of the coming one. And for centuries the Jews knew of this prophecy and the other prophecies in the Old Testament scriptures and knew that the Messiah was the Son of God. They just did not believe or understand that it would be in this man Jesus. That was the problem.

John the Baptist was the forerunner to Christ. Christ had begun His ministry. Now John the Baptist finds himself in prison and hears of the miracles of Christ.

Matthew 11:2-6 (NASB)

² Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent *word* by his disciples ³ and said to Him, “Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?” ⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ *the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.* ⁶ And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.”

This passage comes immediately following the miraculous feeding of the 5000. They had seen Jesus take five barley loaves and two fish, bless the food, and feed 5000 people with as much as they wanted and ended up with twelve baskets of fragments.

John 6:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

The miracle physically fed 5000 people. But the result of the miracle was to make the point that He was the prophesied Messiah.

So when Jesus responded to the disciples of John the Baptist who had been arrested and now was in prison. Jesus quotes the scripture for John the Baptist's benefit.

Matthew 11:2 (NASB)

² Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent *word* by his disciples ³ and said to Him, “Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?”

Jesus says, John, here is your answer. I will quote prophecies from Isaiah that describes the Messiah Who is to come.

Matthew 11:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ *the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.*

Just as in the seven "I AM" statements that we just went over in previous weeks, Jesus is proclaiming yet another "I AM" statement. Jesus said, "Yes, John. **I AM the Messiah** that was prophesied in the Old Testament. I am fulfilling those prophecies even as I speak.

Jesus is doing a very literal physical healing, but also notice all of imagery here. The spiritually blind will be made to see. He is the light of world to those who are sitting in darkness spiritually. The spiritually lame will walk again. Sinners will be cleansed. The spiritually deaf will hear. The poor in spirit will hear the good news of the Gospel.

So you see when Jesus healed the people around Him it had a profound impact upon them. It was more than just a physical healing. They were understanding that He **was** the promised Messiah, the Son of God!

II. THE MIRACLES CONFIRMED THIER MESSAGE.

Remember the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Jesus had told his disciples to stay in Jerusalem and He would send them a helper, the Holy Spirit. When that day came, the scriptures tell us...

Acts 2:1-6, 36-41 (NASB)

2 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

⁵ Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.

⁶ And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.

...

³⁶ Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” ³⁸ Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.” ⁴⁰ And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!” ⁴¹ So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

God used a miracle of flaming tongues on the heads of the disciples and the miracle of having everyone hear the message in their own language so they would know that they were experiencing and what was being taught them was from God.

Acts 14:1-3 (NASB)

14 In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks. ² But the Jews who disbelieved stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and embittered them against the brethren. ³ Therefore they spent a long time *there* speaking boldly *with reliance* upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.

The purpose of miracles is stated here as clearly as anywhere in the scriptures. The purpose of miracles was to authenticate the message about Jesus.. They provided evidence that the inspired men through whom the miracles were performed were really speaking truth from God. Because there are false teachers and those who falsely claim the power of God, people need some way to distinguish true teachers from false. Miracles were one such proof.

III. THE MIRACLE OF NEW LIFE THROUGH JESUS.

The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave is the most important event that has ever occurred during the history of mankind on earth. The resurrection of

Jesus Christ was the greatest miracle of all time for mankind because it proved to us that the claim of Jesus that He died to offer us the ability to have our spiritual being restored back to righteousness was of God.

Do you understand the significance of that miracle? When we become old enough to realize that we are sinners, the scriptures tell us that we become spiritually dead. There is nothing that **WE** can do on our own that can reverse the sins that we have committed before God.

Too many people believe and are being taught to believe that all you have to do is live a good life here on earth and you will go to Heaven.

- Be a good husband and provide for your family.
- Be a good wife and take care of your family.
- Work hard and earn a honest living.
- Give to the poor and help the needy.
- Live a moral life.
- They may even believe in God.
- They may even attend church every Easter Sunday just to remind God that they are still doing good.

They will say "If I **do** all these **good** things in my life then God surely will see all of my goodness and will allow me into Heaven"! These are all good qualities that we should have in our life and if you are trying to live by those standards, I commend you for it.

But let me share a couple of scriptures with you that Paul wrote to the churches in Colossae and Ephesus concerning how we are made spiritually alive and good works.

Colossians 2:8-14 (NASB)

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Paul says "Do not listen to the ideas of men in this world when it comes to salvation". It is only by hearing and obeying Christ that we can truly receive the miracle of being made spiritually alive".

⁹ For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, ¹⁰ and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; ¹¹ and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

Paul proclaims that it is because of Christ that our sins were forgiven. As he put it, we were "circumcised" by Christ and had our "body of flesh" (our sins) removed from us.

Then he tells us that baptism and **faith** work hand in hand for salvation.

¹² having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Paul says we are buried in baptism and raised with Him **through faith**. This shows that going through the motions of baptism is not a true baptism unless the one being baptized has faith in his heart. There is no magical power in the water or in the act itself. Baptism

without faith is a futile dipping in water. Without faith the person's spiritual state after baptism is no different from what it was before.

¹³ When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He made you alive together with Him**, having forgiven us all our transgressions, ¹⁴ having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

This is the miracle of baptism! We were all spiritually dead. But Jesus died on the cross as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. When we are buried with Him in baptism and are raised up with Him through faith Christ removes our sins from us and replaces our sin with His righteousness. Plus we are promised that the Holy Spirit will come and dwell within us. When we are saved we become an adopted child of God. We become one of His sheep!

Now, I would like for you to hear what Paul wrote to the Ephesians concerning salvation **and good works!**

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NASB)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God*; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

The Bible repeatedly instructs us that faith without works is dead. But it is NOT the works that save us! We are saved through our faith in Christ. Our salvation is a free gift from God. We are immersed into baptism because Christ told us to and through faith we believe that we are made spiritually alive when we do. **Our good works are a RESULT of our love for God and our thankfulness for what He has done for us through His Son!**

CONCLUSION:

Is it too much for Christ to ask us to have faith in Him and obey His commands?

Do you realize what is at stake here? Our existence does not end when we physically die. You think that life on earth is long? Have you ever considered how short that is in comparison to eternal life? Christ died on the cross for your sins. He **miraculously** arose on the third day from the grave to prove that He was who He claimed to be, the prophesied Messiah, our Lord and Savior. But He can only be your Savior if you allow Him to make you spiritually alive.

This is your window of opportunity to let Him work a miracle in your life. The miracle of having your spiritual being brought back to life so you **can** spend eternity in Heaven in the presence of God and His righteousness free from the bondage of sin.

If you do not know Christ as your Lord and Savior, I invite you to come forward this morning and place your faith in Christ and be immersed in the waters of baptism for the forgiveness of your sins and become a Child of God.

He is Lord!