

MIRACLES OF JESUS

THE HEALING OF PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW, LUKE 4:38-39

- A. Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law (38-39)
1. He left the synagogue and went to Peter's house (38a), *And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever,*
 - a. Jesus left the synagogue in Capernaum after healing a demon-possessed man.
 - b. He went to Simon Peter's house in Capernaum where He probably was staying.
 - c. It was the Sabbath and a festive meal should have been prepared, awaiting the arrival of Jesus.
 - d. Instead, Peter's mother was seriously ill with a chronic fever.
 - 1) Luke put the verb in the imperfect tense which means the action was continuing for some time.
 - 2) Also, he diagnosed it as a severe fever. He called it *great*. Ancient Greek physicians divided fevers into great and small.
 2. A request was made that Jesus heal her (38b), *and they appealed to him on her behalf.*
 - a. People in the household *urgently asked* Jesus to do something.
 - b. It seems she was too sick to ask for help.
 - c. We don't know who was there or what they expected Jesus could do.
 - d. How did Jesus respond to the request?
 - 1) He had taught in the synagogue.
 - 2) He exorcized a demon.
 - 3) He was expecting a good meal and some well-deserved rest.
 - 4) He selflessly responded to the need of which many more would come.
 - a) That evening, Luke 4:40, *Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them.*
 - b) The next morning, Luke 4:42, *And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them,*
 - c) There will always be needy people who want help.
 - d) Matthew saw that Sabbath day as a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.
 - 1] Matthew 8:17, *This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."*
 - 2] Isaiah 53:4, *Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*
 - e. How do we respond to requests?
 - 1) I am not Jesus but I am indwelt by His Spirit and good works have been prepared for me by our Heavenly Father, Ephesians 2:8-10, *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*
 - 2) Charles Ryrie, *The world says "get"; Christianity says "give." Give constantly; give eagerly; give selflessly...All service for the master should be like his own service for others, unceasing and eager even at the end of a long day that had already been filled with good deeds.*
 3. Jesus completely healed her (39), *And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.*
 - a. Jesus went to her side and rebuked the fever.
 - 1) *Rebuke* is the same word Jesus used when He cast out the demon in the synagogue.
 - 2) Jesus used the word against, demons, sickness, wind and wind, Matthew 8:26, *And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.*
 - 3) In Luke's Gospel, healing is cast in terms of release from the oppression of the devil, also note Acts 10:38, *how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.*
 - 4) Is sickness evil? We will examine that in just a moment.

- b. At the word of Jesus, the fever left Peter's mother-in-law.
 - 1) Her healing was complete with no need for recuperation.
 - 2) She began serving her house guests. Dinner was on.
- c. Sabbath continued as if nothing had happened.
 - 1) Peter's mother-in-law was able to host her guests as if she had never been ill.
 - 2) Health is a gift from God intended for service.
 - 3) There was confusion in the synagogue when Jesus healed the demon-possessed man but there was calm in Peter's house.
 - 4) Larry Richards, *Perhaps the little miracles of Jesus, performed behind closed doors so that ordinary people can continue on in their ordinary ways, are the most significant miracles of all.*

B. Why do Christians get physically ill?

- 1. Biblical reasons for sickness.
 - a. It is part of living in a fallen world where sin abounds, Luke 13:11-12, *And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability."*
 - b. It is a tool of God for discipline, 1 Corinthians 11:27-30, *Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.*
 - c. It is a means of glorifying God, John 11:2-4, *It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."*
 - d. It is a reminder to depend upon God, 2 Corinthians 12:7-9, *So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*
 - e. It can be a result of overwork, even the Lord's work, Philippians 2:29-30, *So receive him (Epaphroditus) in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.*
 - f. It can be a means by which others are brought to faith, John 4:53, *The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he himself believed, and all his household.*
- 2. Charles Ryrie, *Being a follower of Christ does not exempt one from illness in this life. And until we get to heaven that shall be the case.*

CONCLUSION

- A. Jesus cares about our physical needs which are real but temporary.
- B. Jesus came to serve not to be served; so should we.
- C. Some miracles may seem so ordinary that we miss the blessing of seeing God's work in our lives.