

1048 Power of Jesus and things beyond all that we ask or think - The image of Jesus (3)

(Verses refer to those in NASB unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)

First let us take a look at the fact that Jesus is powerful in the spiritual world. He rebuked the unclean spirit who then obeyed Him. We can also see the unclean spirit knows more than us. And we take a look at the interpretation of scriptures in terms of scriptures. Secondly, let us see how He healed a high fever of Simon's mother-in-law and some about what He did. On the top of that, we also see some other healings in Capernaum, and take a look at why He could heal as described in Bible verses. Thirdly, we can see that Jesus came mainly for preaching the gospel. Miracles and wonders are needed for preaching the gospel to make sure that people know it for real. Fourthly, about things beyond all that we ask or think, we give three examples in the past, which includes the eyes of servant of Elisha being opened, Jesus saying clearly about His death and resurrection, and Copernicus talking about the earth moving around the sun. We'll talk about the last example which is related with the present which is the fact that Paul was raised up to the third heaven, and why we know that he didn't want to speak in detail about that experience, which is not because God didn't want him to say.

1. The power of Jesus in the spiritual world

Jesus is powerful in the spiritual world. He rebuked the spirit of an unclean demon, and the spirit obeyed Him. This is clearly said in Luke 4:31-37, "And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath; and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority. In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, "Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are-the Holy One of God!" But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people, he came out of him without doing him any harm. And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, "What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out." And the report about Him was spreading into every locality in the surrounding district."(Luke 4:31-37) In fact, not only what Jesus says has power, but also the disciples too. For example, Paul clearly said in 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 "and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."

The same event is also mentioned in Mark 1:21-28, "They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach. They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are-the Holy One of God!" And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit

cried out with a loud voice and came out of him. They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." Immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee."

You can see that they are basically the same, and can be used to check each other. So, you can see why they belong to the Synoptic Gospels. Because they are based on the same fact, we have to choose their union. That means that we have to consider all different parts. This is part of what is called interpreting scriptures based upon scriptures. Actually, this is the only correct way. Here, we also see that the spiritual world knows more than we do. The unclean spirit already knew that Jesus is the Holy One of God, and at that time the fact was not known by people yet. Of course, He had power towards unclean spirits are mentioned in other places as well. There are indeed many examples.

2. Healing of a high fever of Simon's mother-in-law and some in Capernaum

What Jesus did in the world is described in Matthew 4:23-25, "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. 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. Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan." We can see that He is also powerful in this world. Then, maybe someone will ask, if He is so powerful in the world, how come He was nailed to the cross? Like what we discussed last time, when His time comes up, He will give up His own life in the cross. Before that, no one could harm Him at all.

Let us now take a look at the healing of some cases in Capernaum. First, the healing of a high fever of Simon's mother-in-law is described in Luke 4:38-39, "Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her. And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and waited on them." The same event is described in two other Gospels as below, and can be compared with each other. Below are the passages. "And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them."(Mark 1:29-31) "When Jesus came into Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him."(Matthew 8:14-15)

We can see that the home of Simon is in Capernaum. And we see that she immediately got up and waited on them. So, the immediacy is very important; otherwise, one may miss the right time. We also see that He can heal only by His words. This reminds us in the chapter one of Genesis where "God said." So, His words are very different from ours, they are powerful. As a result, some people think that proclamation by mouth is powerful. Is that

so? No, absolutely not. Sometimes, God backups the proclaimers and makes the proclamation accomplished. We need to see that God has absolute authority, not us. When you make a proclamation, you really want to make sure that it is moved by the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, it only makes people laugh if not accomplished!

Let us now take a look at the other healing instances in Capernaum. In Luke 4:40-41, it says, "While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them. Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ." This is also recorded in Mark 1:32-34, "When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city had gathered at the door. And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was."

We also see that Jesus used various methods to heal different people. And again, the unclean spirit knows something before people know. Someone may say that all diseases are due to the unclean spirit. The Bible doesn't say so. Instead, the following verses say very clearly, "When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases."(Matthew 8:16-17)

3. The mission of Word coming to flesh, and miracles and wonders

In Luke 4:42-44, it says, "When day came, Jesus left and went to a secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and came to Him and tried to keep Him from going away from them. But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose." So He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea." Clearly, His main mission is to preach the Gospel. The miracles, wonders, and casting out the unclean spirits are not the main mission, but are needed to support His activities of preaching Gospel and shows what he preaches is real and not just only saying so. The latter can also be seen in the Book of Acts.

For example, in Acts 2:22, it says, "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know." In Acts 4:29-30, it says, "And now, Lord, ...grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus." Peter knew this point very well, so "...he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? ...And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.""(Acts 3:12-16) In the first journey of Paul with Barnabas, "...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."(Acts 14:3) Christians are supposed to make the name of Jesus Christ known, not themselves, not being proud just because of the ability performing miracles and wonders.

4. What are things beyond all that we ask or think?

Let us in the last section take a look at this verse since it is related to miracles and wonders. In Ephesians 3:20, it says, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us." What are things beyond all that we ask or think? Absolutely not healing or casting out unclean spirits. This may be beyond we ask, but not beyond what we think. They are clearly spelled out in the Bible.

Now let us take a look at some examples in the past and at the present. Let us first see three examples in the past. The first one is in 2 Kings 6:15-17, "Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." At that time, the eyes of the servant of Elisha were opened, and he saw the reality that Elisha saw. We also know that under some circumstances, unless God opens eyes for someone, he cannot see anything even in front of him. At that time, it was definitely beyond what the servant could see or think. As a matter of fact, even if he told others, they most likely wouldn't believe him. Today, we believe that this happened since we believe that the Bible is inspired by God, which is absolutely correct. The Bible says clearly that eyes could be opened. We should ask so, but we should be aware of the existence of those things which are still beyond what we can think. How can we ask if we cannot think? In this case, God must initiate.

The second one is in the New Testament. In Matthew 16:21 it says, "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day." Jesus said clearly that He would die and resurrect. But apostles didn't understand that until they saw by their eyes as stated in Acts 2:32, "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses." Apparently, it was beyond what they could ask or think at that time. Nowadays, it isn't for us anymore since it happened and the Bible has its record.

The third one is related to history. Nicolaus Copernicus proposed that earth moves around the sun. At that time, most people thought that the earth didn't move, and all other planets moves around it. Therefore, this fact was beyond what they could think for those people at that time. Nowadays, the scientific technology can actually see this fact. Therefore, we do know. But there are certain things which might never been seen by technology. Such things are absolutely beyond what we can think!

The last thing we'll examine is related to the present. That is in 2 Corinthians 12:2-6, where Paul was raised up to the third heaven. "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago-whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows-such a man was caught up to the third heaven. And I know how such a man-whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows -was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to my weaknesses. For if I do wish to boast I will not be foolish, for I will be speaking the truth; but I refrain from this, so that no one will credit me with more than he sees in me or hears from me." At that time, what Paul saw in the third heaven was definitely beyond what he could think. We can also see that God is active and He initiates. Nowadays, we have to be in faith to see the existence of the third heaven.

Someone said that because Paul was humble since he said "whether in the body or apart from the body he didn't know." But as the verse says, "I will be speaking the truth." How can someone be humble by lying? I am not saying that Paul was dreaming about raising up to the third heaven. But we can imagine this indeed happened by using a dream in a dream to explain such phenomena. A dream in a dream is as follows. When a person sleeps, assume that he was dreaming in a dream. In his first dream, he dreams again that he sleeps and has the second dream. Then, he wakes up in the second dream. When he wakes up in the second dream, he is still in the first dream. At that time, does he really know where he is? So, this situation is absolutely possible. The Bible is telling the truth, and we shouldn't think that it is wrong because of our own mistakes.

We can also see that something that you shouldn't tell even encountered. So, Paul didn't tell that experience because he refrained himself not because God requires him not to say. Otherwise, from the consistency of the Bible, it should have recorded like what happened to the words seven thunder said that God would tell John not to say directly, as stated in Revelation 10:4, "When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."" In fact, even if Paul described, we cannot understand what he said since we didn't have the same experience. He clearly knows that words not edifying people are not worthy to say, as said in 2 Corinthians 12:19, KJV, "...but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying." Actually, there are many places saying so. I only know one sort of exception. In this case, we may think that God permits us to say something from all the facts we know. Unless a thing happens, we don't know in advance if it can edify people or not. It could happen that such an event didn't edify another people at that time. The sharing might be just for our sake instead.