

MASS HEALING

Date: March 13, 2020

Scripture: Luke 4:40-41

Hey, name is Jessie Stalnaker. This Lent season we're working through some of the miracles of Jesus shared with us across the gospel accounts. We're looking at how each of these miracles points us to the greatest of all miracles, which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The miracle of Jesus we are focused on today is found in Luke 4:40-41.

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. ⁴¹ And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

Luke 4:40-41

Jesus's authority is much greater than Satan's and where Jesus is present, we know demons cannot stay for long. As we reflect on this miracle, I'm drawn to the nature of the author, Luke. Luke was a wise man, a gentle Christian, a doctor, a companion of Paul, a man of science and a man of detail. Luke is careful here to give us clear, concise detail of what happened that day and nothing more. While this story is hard to wrap our minds around, I trust that someone as factual as Luke would give it to us straight. And I trust that the Lord was intentional to share this encounter with us through His perspective. If we flip back to verses 31 through 37 where Jesus first enters Capernaum, we are fortunate enough to witness Jesus's healing power over evil in more detail.

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³¹ And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, ³² and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. ³³ And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴ "Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." ³⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. ³⁶ And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!" ³⁷ And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Luke 4:31-37

The people were amazed by Jesus's authority. Who was this man that had the power to overcome evil? Who was this man who was able to rebuke the evil spirits ruled by Satan and sent to harass? Who was this man who with words was able to heal and overpower spirits that were in rebellion against God? Who was this man? He was Jesus. He is the great I Am. He is Yahweh. He is the name above all names. He is healer. He is comforter. He is strength restored. He is promises fulfilled. And He is King.

So why did Jesus rebuke the demons? Why not let them speak? Why was He so afraid for them to reveal who He was? As we know, Jesus works in His perfect timing. No one has authority to do anything outside of what Jesus has commanded, especially not those in rebellion against the Father. Jesus wanted them to stay silent, to show His authority over them. Jesus wanted His listeners to believe He was the Messiah because of His words, not the demons'. Jesus had plans in His perfect timing

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to reveal His identity according to God's timetable and He was not going to be pushed by Satan's evil plan. The demons called Jesus, the Son of God, because they knew He was the Christ. But Jesus wasn't going to show Himself to be the suffering servant before He became the great King, to reveal His identity as King too soon would stir the crowd with false expectations.

In Matthew 8:16 and 17 we get another glimpse of this miracle.

¹⁶ That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

Matthew 8:16-17

Jesus is King. He rules over all evil powers and earthly diseases. In the book of Matthew, we get to witness a different take on the same encounter. The book of Matthew reminds us that not only did Jesus perform this miracle in His perfect timing, but He did so in order to emphasize the fulfillment of Scripture. We recall this prophecy in Isaiah 53:4.

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:4

Since the beginning of time, many were anticipating the coming of the Anointed One. Witnesses that day would have been familiar with the story of the Son of God and

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how He would have the influence to take on the sickness of the broken world. Jesus knew that this miracle would begin to reveal His identity in His perfect timing. Who besides the true Lamb of God can command evil spirits to flee with words alone? He has the power and the authority to conquer sickness and evil. Only King Jesus can conquer death, the grave and the sin of mankind. He is both fully man and fully God. He's the Messiah. He's the chosen one. And He's the power that can raise death to life.

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

1 Peter 2:24

²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Romans 4:25

Both of those are great examples of how Jesus delivers us from the schemes of the evil one. What Satan intended for evil, God meant for good.

While we don't see too many cases of demon possession today, it does still exist. Due to the nature of living in the fallen world, we would say, undoubtedly, that evil still permeates. Do not be afraid. Jesus's power is greater. Jesus was sent to overcome all evil. So how do we rebuke that today? The God-breathed Holy Spirit inspired map that Jesus left for us to navigate: the Bible.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of

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faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, Ephesians 6:14-18

The more we know God, trust Him, live in obedience, the more dangerous we become to the enemy. It is often hard to look around at the world and wonder why evil still exists, why bad things still happen. We do not need to know more about evil things, but seek to know God more. Jesus at the center of our lives has that same authority. That power has been given to us through the gift of the Holy Spirit. When you come face to face with evil things of the world, do not be afraid. He is sovereign, He is in control and He has given you permission to stand firm trusting that He has it all worked out for your good and His glory.

Let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, you are so, so good. We don't deserve Your grace or even Your protection, yet You continue to lavish it upon us. Thank You for Your Son. Thank You for sending Him as the payment for our sins. Thank You that You created Him with authority and power as the everlasting King and that nothing is able to dethrone Him. God, I pray against all schemes of the enemy. We know that everything is by Your design. We trust that You have a plan that is much bigger than anything we can see or feel, so help us to seek You when we don't understand Your plan. God, we thank You for this Scripture. We thank You that we have been given authority to go to war with the enemy as sons and daughters in the most High King. Thank You for inviting us into Your Kingdom. Help us to seek You and not rely on our own power or strengths. It's in Your Son's name I pray. Amen.