

NO MIRACLES

"He could not do any miracles there" (Mark 6:5)

Jesus could not do any miracles in Nazareth! That's remarkable! In once sense, they knew more about Jesus than any people on earth. He had lived in their midst for almost thirty years. They knew He was the Carpenter, the son of Mary. They knew his four brothers: James, Joses, Judas, and Simon. They also knew his sisters. They knew what He looked like, where He lived, and where He worked. Yet, the Scriptures teach that Jesus was amazed at their lack of faith. In fact, the Bible states categorically that He could not do any miracles there. Oh, He did lay hands on a few sick folk and heal them, but the mighty works He had done elsewhere were impossible at Nazareth. The people of Nazareth did not deny His existence, but something far more insidious. They denied His ability to do the supernatural at that time, and in their midst. They were so cocksure and confident that they knew all there was to know about Jesus that their pride smothered the flames of His miracle working power. In reality, they knew almost nothing about Jesus.

The thirty years that Jesus spent in Nazareth pale into utter insignificance by comparison with His eternal identity and mission. Jesus was there in the beginning with God. He was God! All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made (John 1:1-3). He created every angel in the heavens, and every star in the universe. He also created the earth and everyone and everything within it. If we could write down all the things that Jesus has done, even the whole world would not have room for all the books that would be written (John 21:25).

There were also other places like Nazareth where Jesus had difficulty doing the miraculous. Bethsaida, for example, was also a citadel of unbelief (See Matt. 11:21). Therefore, when Jesus wanted to heal a blind man he took him by the hand and led him outside of Bethsaida (Mark 8:23). He was apparently escaping from the oppressive atmosphere of their unbelief. Once outside of town He spat on the man's eyes and put His hands on him. "Do you see anything?" Jesus asked. The man's vision, as you recall, was only partially restored. He saw people, but they looked like trees walking. When Jesus touched him a second time he saw clearly. This is the only time recorded in Scripture when Jesus had to touch someone twice in order to heal them. Note that Jesus sent this man to his home saying: "Don't go into the village" (Mark 8:26). Though we are not informed why Jesus made this prohibition, it is easy to surmise. If the faith of Jesus Christ could not function at full capacity in Bethsaida , what chance would this man have?

The people of Nazareth claimed to be in contact with "reality". They had known Jesus for almost thirty years and never seem him walk on water or raise the dead. Consequently they assumed that because they had never seen such things, such things did not exist. They were wrong! Their experience was not a rational criteria to define and explain the power of Jesus. Neither is ours. The power to do miracles does not come from earth and consequently cannot be seen with human eyes. You and I cannot determine what Jesus can or cannot do!

To test the reality of your faith, let us propose an imaginary assignment. Let us suppose that you are in Philippi and the time Paul and Silas were unjustly beaten and put in prison. (See Acts 16:18-40) How would you approach their plight? Would you suggest that they face "reality"? Would you remind them that they had been stripped and severely beaten in public, that their backs were bleeding, and they were in the "inner prison" where escape was "impossible"? Would you point out the cold filthy floor, the noxious odour and that their feet were in stocks? Would you believe there was no way to get food or drink, and no chance of deliverance until morning? Such "reality" was not really true. The human point of view is a distortion of reality. God does not slumber or sleep and He is a very present help in time of trouble. That's reality. God can deliver any time He chooses. That very night Paul and Silas were delivered from prison, their stripes were washed, and a sumptuous meal was set before them. In the darkness of the midnight hour they sang praises that summoned help from heaven. Their hymns of praise sprang from hearts that were filled with faith. When we see what they saw, we'll be singing praises too!