

The Miracles Of Jesus Christ: Healing Malchus' Ear (Part Two)

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Forerunner, "Bible Study," September-October 2016

Jesus Christ exhibited great power (John 18:6) and mercy (Luke 22:51) when He restored the ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest who had come to arrest Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Despite this miraculous demonstration, the band of men who came with Malchus proceeded to apprehend Jesus, while the disciples fled in fear, refusing to stand with Him (Matthew 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-50; Luke 22:49-51; John 18:1-11). Thus, through no fault of Christ, the miracle had no immediate effect on the observers.

Instead, it exposed their ungodly attitudes and emotions. Resistance to God moved the multitude to detain Jesus (Romans 8:7), while a lack of faith, with the accompanying fear of pain and persecution, motivated the disciples to desert Him (Mark 4:40). Only Jesus remained with His integrity intact.

1. How did Malchus react to the miracle?

C o m m e n t: Jesus' actions in healing Malchus reflect the grace of God in contrast to the madness of His captors for continuing His arrest. But how did Malchus himself react to having his ear restored? What went through his mind? Did he question his antagonism toward Jesus? Or did he coldly resist his Healer? Scripture provides no answers, making it likely that he continued in his foolish apprehension of the Messiah.

Sadly, this is a typical reaction of unbelievers. There is little difference between Malchus' actions in the face of Christ's healing and those today who oppose God while enjoying His many blessings. One who does not give thanks to God for His blessings is selfish, thoughtless, and ungrateful.

In contrast, Jesus Christ always possessed the power to prevent any harm to Himself, but having been born to die as an atoning sacrifice, He meekly submitted to His adversaries. In His suffering and restraint, He glorified God, neither accepting nor providing Himself any defense. Had He desired, He could have called upon twelve legions of angels to protect Him (Matthew 26:53). We can be thankful that He was more interested in fulfilling God's plan than receiving angelic assistance (Matthew 26:54).

2. To what does Jesus refer when He asks for "this cup" to be taken away? (Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42).

C o m m e n t: Matthew, Mark, and Luke each record Christ praying to the Father on this fateful night, asking if He might "let this cup pass from Me." He mentions the same "cup" in rebuking Peter's assault on Malchus: "So Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?'" (John 18:11).

The image of drinking from a cup is a metaphor for His submission to the Father's will, while the cup itself stands for the enormous burden His submission would require (Luke

22:42-44). Despite desiring that some other way could be found to accomplish the payment for mankind's sins, Jesus bowed to His Father's will in the matter and gave Himself up to the arresting troops.

3. Why did the Father give this cup to Christ? John 1:14-18, 29.

Comment: Jesus Christ was sent as the Forerunner (Hebrews 2:10, *archegos*, “one who goes before”) to live among men in order to reveal His Father, the Living God (Matthew 11:27; John 14:7-11; 17:6-7). This prodigious work necessitated that Christ be willing to “drink the cup” and suffer many burdens, the greatest being His arrest, persecution, crucifixion, and death at the hands of His own creation. As our Forerunner and an example to all men, it was incumbent on Christ to submit to the will of the Father and to do so with a perfect attitude of faithful humility. His incomparable level of submission allowed Him to become our Savior, a type of which is ultimately required of everyone to enter the Kingdom of God (Hebrews 11:6; James 4:6).

4. Why should we submit to drinking from this cup? Matthew 20:23; I John 2:6.

Comment: If we, as the elect of God, believe in “Christ crucified” and all that it entails (I Corinthians 1:23), then we must recognize the need for suffering and trial—to drink of the cup that God has prepared for each of us just as He did for our Savior. The apostle Peter encourages us that, if we partake in Christ's sufferings, it will be well worth the effort at His return (I Peter 4:12-13).

We should also realize that in comparison to what was required of Christ, our cup of burden will pale in magnitude; we will only be drinking *from* the cup He had to empty (Matthew 11:30; Romans 12:1). While these two verses should not be taken to mean that our burdens will be undemanding, we should always keep our personal sufferings in perspective by remaining aware and appreciative of the staggering effort required for our Creator and Savior to make the sacrifices he made.