

THE DIVINE POWER OF JESUS

Matthew 8-9

By Raymond White

Jesus did miracles. There's no doubt about that. But so did the prophets, a few of them anyway. Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Elisha and others demonstrated God's power on earth.

But what impresses us about Jesus' miracles, far beyond the miracles of the prophets, is the scope of his power. The prophets, with God's intervention, controlled some things. Jesus, on the other hand, controlled everything.

Here then is the short list of the universal power that Jesus had and used.

[1] JESUS HAS POWER OVER DISEASE

Matthew 8:2 And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. :3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

The Jews were forbidden to touch any unclean person (*Leviticus 5:3*). That was wise counsel from God. The idea of quarantine protected the people from the spread of contagion. If you touch uncleanness you become unclean.

But Jesus touched these lepers without fear of contamination. Why? Because when he touched uncleanness, the uncleanness went away. Disease didn't affect him, he affected disease. He cured disease with a touch. Jesus had power over illness and the human body.

[2] JESUS HAS POWER OVER NATURE

Matthew 8:24 And, behold there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the wave: but he was asleep. :25 And his disciples came to him and awoke him saying, Lord, save us: we perish. :26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea and there was a great calm. :27 But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

That's a fair question. Indeed, what manner of man is this who tells the winds and the sea what to do and they obey him. Jesus has power over the natural world.

[3] JESUS HAS POWER OVER THE SUPERNATURAL ("SUPER"-NATURE)

Matthew 8:28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. :29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? :30 And there was a good way off from them an heard of many swine feeding. :31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away

into the herd of swine. :32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

An interesting note here is that devils know what most people don't know: that Jesus is the Son of God: **James 2:19** *...the devils also believe and tremble.* They also know that their time isn't up yet and negotiate that fact with Jesus.

Now, what about the pigs? Why pigs? Well, without the pigs, we might wrongly conclude that what Jesus is dealing with here is simply mental disorder, insanity, crazy lunatics. But that cannot be, because the devils moved from humans to animals who then drowned. So, what Jesus faced here is, quite literally, devils; sentient, malicious beings from an unseen world whom we are helpless against. And Jesus has power over them, over the supernatural world.

[4] JESUS HAS POWER OVER SIN

Matthew 9:2 *And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee :3 And behold certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. :4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? :5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? :6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thin house. :7 And he arose, and departed to his house.*

Here's the bad news: we sin. It's bad enough that we get sick and die, but that we are at odds with God's will is even worse. Here's the good news: Jesus has power to forgive sin. Isn't it interesting that they resented it! You can make some people made simply by forgiving them.

Also interesting is that the healing was secondary to the forgiving. Why did Jesus heal? Because he loved people, certainly. But his love moved him to do something far greater for us than heal our fail and dying bodies, his love moved him to forgive us. He loved enough to heal, but more than that, he loved enough to forgive. The healing was simply the evidence that he could forgive, and would.

His ability to forgive is one thing, his willingness to forgive is another. To forgive, he had to pay a horrendous price. When he forgave this palsied man, he knew he took on an outstanding debt that he was going to have to pay for. And that is exactly what he did. Jesus had power over sin.

[5] JESUS HAS POWER OVER DEATH

Matthew 9:18 *When he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. :19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples. :23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house... :25 ...he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.*

At the moments of our greatest desperation, we give up caring about trivial things like social status. This man was a ruler. He might not have spent a lot of time mixing with the common people, but when his daughter died, he wanted only one thing: to get to Jesus. He pushed to the front of the crowd, and in full view of everyone, he worshipped and pled for his daughter. Rules don't do that; this one did.

And what was Jesus' response? "Let's go." Whatever he was doing at that moment, he was willing to drop to go with this man to rescue his daughter.

This story reveals two things about Jesus: (1) He is willing to help and wants to right now. And (2) He can help, to the point of bringing the dead back to life. Think about that. Divine, life restoring power can be turned to benefit you. Why would anyone not go to him, and worship, and pled for what he so willingly wants us to have and gives so freely? Jesus has power over death.

[6] SUMMARY

Jesus demonstrated that he had divine power. But much more than that, he demonstrated that he had *all* power. **Matthew 28:18** ...*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* He controls everything: your health, the earth, demons and angels, even sin, and finally your life, death, and new life again. As he said, **John 16:15** *All things that the Father hath are mine...* And he proved it.