

## The Children's Bread Pt.2

*29Departing from there, Jesus went along by the Sea of Galilee, and having gone up on the mountain, He was sitting there. 30And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them. 31So the crowd marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.*

*32And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said, "I feel compassion for the people, because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way." 33The disciples said to Him, "Where would we get so many loaves in this desolate place to satisfy such a large crowd?" 34And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish." 35And He directed the people to sit down on the ground; 36and He took the seven loaves and the fish; and giving thanks, He broke them and started giving them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. 37And they all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, seven large baskets full. 38And those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.*

*39And sending away the crowds, Jesus got into the boat and came to the region of Magadan.*

In the candidate debates, Jeb Bush, talking about the terrorist threat of ISIS said; "This is an organized attempt to destroy Western civilization."

Western Civilization is indeed under attack. But Western Civilization is in the final throes of cancer. It's too weak to get out of bed any more. Too sick to fight.

You're probably thinking, my isn't Jim cheery this morning. I just want you to think with me for a minute. I'm going somewhere with this.

Western civilization was based in a work and moral ethic, based in an

ancient book, based in one person. Jesus Christ. The Jewish messiah. So we call it the Judeo - Christian ethic.

Europe was formed around rules of conduct based in the Christian religion. As it formed in the bones, Puritans fled to America and this nation was formed around Protestant Christian ideals. The 10 commandments. Charity. Faith. Worship. Families. Work. A robustly civilized society.

Europe jettisoned all of that and chose secularism with the old ideals somewhere on a shelf in the background. America always seems to be just a few years behind Europe.

My point is that anyone who thinks Western Civilization has the fortitude to fight a religious war, and ISIS is a religious war, is deluded. Western civilization is old and sick.

Look around you. Where is the millennial generation? Well, the fact is, studying an old book has become irrelevant to the millennial generation. They think we've driven off the tracks and gotten stuck in the mud.

They don't believe this book is relevant. It doesn't mean anything to them. Why would it? Why should they believe anything it seems to say? Why would they subject themselves to any authority this book claims to have over people?

I think our study this morning answers that question. The book boils down to one person. *In the roll of the book it is written of Me.* Heb. 10:4 It's ultimately all about one person. Jesus, messiah.

OK, fair enough. Why should we believe anything it asserts about Him? Answer: Because of what He did. If He's real, it's all real. All of it.

This story this morning is either a fairy tale, or it isn't. Those are our two options. Men who wanted to propagate a religion, made this stuff up. Jesus wasn't real. He's a mythological character devised by men for their own purposes. A fairy story.

Or, He lived, and He did these things.

The fairy tale thing is impossible for reasonable minds. There's too much viable evidence for thinkers to go there. So evil tries to find some middle ground. He was a great teacher. The greatest man that ever lived, blah blah blah. Anything short of the truth is better than capitulating to the obvious. Jesus is God. Only God can do these things.

These miracles didn't happen in a closet, as one of the apostles said. Paul argues with Agrippa; *"For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.*

Only a fool argues that this is fairy tale stuff. It's like Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad denying the holocaust happened. Unfortunately, willful ignorance and dis-belief is not uncommon.

So, with that as our introduction let's look at these things Jesus did. And He did them effortlessly, I might add. Miracles. Acts that defy any rational explanation. Thousands of witnesses. That's the evidence before us folks. The world has to accept it or reject it. Mostly the world ignores it.

Miracles you say? Ohh. Wait a minute I just got a tweet. Conversation over.

I was considering an obscure passage in Deuteronomy this week.

Deut. 25:17 - 19 *"Remember what Amalek did to you along the way when you came out from Egypt, 18 how he met you along the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; **and he did not fear God.** 19 "Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.*

Amalek was a descendant of Esau. Fierce, violent, degenerate peoples who viciously attacked Israel as they were about to enter the land God had given them.

And in true cowardly fashion like we're seeing today, they didn't go after the forward group, they hid and attacked the stragglers. The old, the sick, the women and children. Pregnant women. Infirm folks who were at the tail end. The kind of folks who would hide in the basement of a hospital.

That's bad enough, but what really stands out in that paragraph and hits home today are those 6 words that make my skin crawl; *and he did not fear God.*

We have a generation, a huge population of younger people in this country, and indeed the world, who don't fear God because they live in a world devoid of God. They have no concept of God. They're more interested in counting how many "likes" they get to the last thing they shared. No time for God.

Bring Him up and they'll get belligerent. "Oh, you mean the God who drives pigs over cliffs? That god? The one who deprived those pig owners of their rightful property and slaughtered all those pigs for no good reason. That god?"

Yeah. That God. The one who blotted the Amalekites from off the face of the earth because they had no fear of Him. The one who owns the cattle on a thousand hills. The One who judged the world with a flood and promises to judge it again. With fire.

The one who extends mercy to thousands.

If there is such a God, why should we believe in Him. All kinds of evidence, beginning with creation which these same blasphemers have put out of their minds. But perhaps the greatest of all evidences besides the resurrection from the dead of Jesus, is these miracles.

Thousands of witnesses saw and benefited from these miracles. They

really happened. Honest thinking people need to stop and consider what this man did on a hillside in the region of Decapolis on this day.

Mark tells us we're in Decapolis. Named for 10 cities that were east of the Sea of Galilee. In the region we would call the Golan Heights today. A real place, a real day, a real Man, the Son of God.

*29Departing from there, Jesus went along by the Sea of Galilee, and having gone up on the mountain, He was sitting there.*

You can go on Google Earth and fly over this area. Somehow it makes it more real. At least to me. And at the southern end of the Sea of Galilee you go up an area that is like cliffs. And you climb from well below sea level to upwards of 1300 feet in elevation, and then it flattens out like a table into farm land.

I picture a place like this. Near the edge with a view of the of the Sea down down down below. Maybe not too far from where those pigs took the long swim. That was real too. He owns the pigs. He owns the demons. He owns the large crowd. Ultimately.

*30And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet;*

I want to take just a moment to dissect words a little bit here. We've become numb to these words. The original language had some distinctions that are lost to us.

Lame and crippled, sound like the same thing, but they are not. Mark 9:43 states; *43"If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire,*

*45"If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than, having your two feet, to be cast into hell,*

The word crippled is used of a person missing the use of a hand, or both

hands. In that culture, that would move you from being able to be self supporting and able to supply the needs of your family, to someone who begs at the gates. The word lame is used for a person missing the use of a foot, or perhaps both feet. Same situation.

We're talking about people either missing limbs, or perhaps the limbs were broken and not set and the use is compromised, or maybe there are folks with birth defects. Maybe a hand or foot got cut off. Any of these things is possible, but I want you to get the idea, this is talking about folks with visible maladies that are significant.

People missing hands. People missing feet. And the gamut in between. Then there are blind folks. Not much needs to be said. Either born blind, or some disease or condition has shut that function down. Blind beggars.

Mute. Tongue tied. Probably also deaf. They can't speak usually because they never heard speech. Deaf and dumb. Except we don't say dumb any more.

All of these conditions are serious physiological conditions. Most of them, we can't fix to this day. Conditions modern medicine can't bring a recovery from.

Those are the ones described. Then it says, *and many more*. That could be all kinds of things. Leprosy. Tuberculosis. Cancer. etc.

*and He healed them.*

That's it?? Four words!

Jesus created billions of microscopic cells, with the matching DNA for the person, and put them in the peoples bodies where they needed to be. Instantly. From nothing.

People with missing limbs got perfect matching limbs. People with missing legs and feet got perfect matching legs and feet. People who had never experienced anything but darkness, suddenly could see.

People who had never heard a word uttered before, suddenly could not only hear, they could speak. The vocabulary came with the ears.

Now, I want to talk about our modern faith healers. Let me read you a section from a talk by a Zimbabwe pastor named Conrad Mbewe. And I'll set the stage. He's talking about going on a call in radio program that was discussing the issue of faith healing in Zimbabwe. It's become a huge distraction there. And the panel was supposed to be a Catholic Priest, as sort of middle ground, and 2 pastors who claimed to be faith healers, and Conrad, who you'll see, thinks modern faith healing is bunk. One of the faith healers didn't show up. The title of his message was;

TM13-13 Are We Preachers or Witch Doctors? (Conrad Mbewe)

*these are his words*

As the interview went on, the Roman Catholic priest was always trying to be on the two sides of the argument, every so often trying to show that yeah, there's something you said here that makes sense, and something you said that made sense.

It was the Charismatic person and myself that basically locked horns. Since it was a live broadcast and people could call in, I made the challenge. I read the passage of Scripture where John the Baptist disciples had inquired of Him whether He was the one and Jesus said, “Go and tell John what you have seen. The dumb talking, the deaf hearing, the lame walking, the blind seeing.”

And I said on that broadcast, “If there's anyone of you who fits this description and you have been healed like any of these, please call. That went on for well over an hour. I became a New Testament Elijah because I kept taunting.

Now remember that this is in a country where literally every weekend churches are having these healings, every weekend. Literally every month you've got pastors all over your city from one prophet, another Apostle, this bishop and everything else conducting these healing crusades, to the point where you...you just want to tear them off the

walls or trees because it's overwhelming. And all of them claiming these things are happening.

Over one solid hour of waiting and discussing, and with me repeating that invitation, two phone calls came through. One was a gentleman who said that eight years ago he took a neighbor's daughter whose legs were not quite equal to this faith healer and the legs became equal after praying for her.

And I remember saying, "Eight years ago?" And he would say yes. I said, "Eight years ago," he's not appreciating my point. I mean, first of all, I questioned the issue of short and long legs, but that's not the point. But if it's happening every weekend, that testimony must be stale. Eight years ago?

The second caller was a lady, clearly agitated, encouraging the man of God not to listen to me because I am a dead theologian. But what does it got to do with me? I'm asking for testimonies. Those were the only two calls that pretended to have anything in support of this in a whole nation of over ten million people...with healing crusades every weekend.

Well the gentlemen who was doing the interview finally turned to the pastor on the other side and said, "Well, you know, we sort of waited for a while, nobody is calling in." This was his answer. "I think they are shy."

The poor soul, he had a stroke not too long after that, he was in a coma for a while, at least for about a week until he finally died. Why didn't his fellow faith-healers rush in there and raise him from that bed? It's because they knew it was fraud, it was a lie. :End quote:

I agree with Conrad. Not only is what's going on a lie, and a travesty, it also cheapens the real miracle. Jesus is creating billions of cells with DNA that matches the person who's getting healed. Out of nothing. Something only God can do!

And people sit in church and yawn and think, maybe I'll flick on Creflo



Dollar this afternoon and watch a few healings.

And meanwhile Creflo Dollar has 27 million of his last name in the bank and he's whining because the jet he wants is 60 million.

In my mind, that just makes the whole miracle that Jesus just did, tawdry. Cheap. How'd you like to be the guy who just turned something only God can do into something cheap. I wouldn't want to be that guy.

The miracles aren't cheap. What Jesus does on this mountain side is something only God can do. Create something out of nothing. Create body parts with DNA that matches the person who got them. Out of nothing. Arms and legs the same age as the ones the folks already had.

Hands with freckles and wrinkles that match the other hand that was already there. Brain memory cells with words and vocabulary in them that can make a deaf person open his mouth and some of the first decibels he'll ever hear are words from his own mouth that were never in his mind until that moment.

A foot with warts on it from walking 8 miles to see Jesus, that wasn't there before, but now there's 2 and they match. Both size 11. Both 42 years old. Both sore from the long walk. One of them not there an hour ago.

Over and over and over Jesus says; You don't believe in me. I get that. I don't look like the messiah you were waiting for. I'm not what you expected. Believe for the very works sake. Believe because only God can create something, perfectly, matching what was already there in age and size and color, out of nothing. Only God knows your DNA code.

In modern medicine, we can harvest body parts from the immediate dead from time to time and do transplants. But our bodies have natural rejection mechanisms. The body says, that's not my DNA. Out it goes, and it is rejected unless we have a medicine to fool that body function.

The body parts Jesus created were perfectly imperfect. The freckles and

the wrinkles and the age matched the other parts of the persons body as if it had been there from day one. And the DNA was a match. No rejection. How did Jesus know everybody's DNA code? Modern science only makes this more glorious, not less.

You can read every book of history from beginning until end and no one else has ever done this. No one! The miracles are signs. Big gawdy blinking bright colored neon arrows flashing; God. God. God.

And thousands of people saw them. It only takes 2 respectable witnesses to document something as true. Thousands saw these miracles of creation. And thousands are going to eat the next miracle. As MacArthur says, "fish that never swam. Bread that never grew in a field and was never baked."

How much evidence does someone need?

*31 So the crowd marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.*

Thousands, literally, of witnesses to the works that Jesus did. They marveled.

Millions of millenials who haven't given Jesus a second thought. Some religious guy who seems to be causing a lot of trouble. And the folks who do believe in Him are horrible. Haters. He's got all these rules about sex. I think I'll choose ignorance. That's all I need to know about Him. And they walk away.

Some day they will answer to these witnesses. Why should we have believed? Because 20,000 people witnessed miracles on a hillside in Israel that only God could do, and people who were there, wrote it in a book. Court is in session. This is the evidence. It IS enough. Period

Well, Jesus is going to give away the store this day. Magnanimous evidence. If the miracles weren't enough, how about lunch. Created out of nothing. Mostly. 7 loaves and some fish. To feed 15,000 or more.

*32 And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said, "I feel compassion for the people, because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way."*

Last week we considered the gravity of what Jesus said to his home town folk in Luke 4. How he reminded them that God took the childrens bread and gave it to people outside the covenant. And it made them so furious they tried to murder Him, on the spot!

*Lk.4:23 And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! **Whatever we heard** was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'"*

The unbelievers in Nazareth heard about Capernaum. Now they're going to hear about a bunch of gentiles in Decapolis. Hundreds of healings. Thousands fed. Outside the promised people. God is giving the childrens bread to folks on the outside. Nazareth and Capernaum will hear all about it.

*"I feel compassion for the people,*

The compassion of God for lost sheep, battered sheep, in a fallen world, confused, battered by Satan who rules, hungry, physically and spiritually, knows no boundaries.

God chose a people, a nation, as a repository for His revelation, and to be the first fruits of His blessing that would overflow to all the nations. That people has patently rejected Him. That fact didn't stop the compassion of God. That fact is not a road block for compassion.

God's compassion spills out all over the place. Gentiles on a hillside, healed. Fed. Pinch yourself. Here we are. An unbroken line of God's compassion reaching out to hopelessly lost and broken sheep. Rescued from the evil shepherd. Clothed and fed and cared for by the Good shepherd.

*33The disciples said to Him, “Where would we get so many loaves in this desolate place to satisfy such a large crowd?”*

This sounds like an instant replay of the previous feeding miracle. I think it's a loaded question. I don't think they're as thick as the commentators make them out to be.

Pam's puppies have all kinds of triggers. You tell them to go inside their little lock up area and they'll run for the door and go right in and then they'll look at you, like, we were good, do we get a treat?

I think the disciples are asking this, sort of as a necessary lead in to what's next. Yeah, feeding them is a great idea. Where's the food going to come from. hint hint

*34And Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?” And they said, “Seven, and a few small fish.”*

You know, Jesus had options, right. He could have created the food, already in their stomachs. Hungry? Full. Just like that. Proper proportions. People like me would get less.

Or He could transport all 15,000 of them back to where they started from, like He did Philip and the eunuch.

*35And He directed the people to sit down on the ground; 36and He took the seven loaves and the fish; and giving thanks,*

I think He did it this way because of the beauty of corporate worship. 15,000 people silenced and in their hearts, corporately, joining Him, in giving thanks for a meal. A picnic.

One little difference between this feeding and the one a couple of chapters ago. There He told them to sit down on the grass. Here He told them to sit down on the ground.

The region is like southern california, if you've ever been there, and even like here. The country turns green for a few weeks. Then the grass

withers and is gone. That likely indicates that several months have passed during this period outside of Israel. Tyre, Sidon, and the region east of Galilee.

*He broke them and started giving them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. 37And they all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, seven large baskets full. 38And those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.*

Alfred Edersheim, the famous Jewish Christian commentator noted, Jesus ends significant eras or periods of ministry, with a meal.

He finished with His outreach to Israel, after their rejection, with a feast. He fed everyone. Then He moved out to Tyre and Sidon.

He finishes this time with the gentiles, with a meal, and notably, they glorified God. Mark, in his account, at this moment in time in 7:37 says of the multitude; *And (they) were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.*

And Edersheim says there is a 3rd meal. When He has finished the process with the disciples, there is the last supper in the upper room.

And we have kept that supper, that memory alive, to this day. When we corporately partake of the elements. 2,000 years later we uphold the tradition of a meal, with our saviour, and OF our saviour. His body. His blood. Shed for us.

There's a fourth meal coming. Right. A banquet in heaven. A wedding supper that we're invited to. A feast. A celebration like nothing we've ever imagined. We'll get all dressed up in new white garments. Spotless. Soon!

Well, this is a good stopping place. Think about the feasting, with Jesus, this week as you assemble with family and friends and enjoy a thanksgiving meal. The bread and the wine, the body and the blood of

Jesus, that purchased for us, a place at the banquet that waits for us in  
Glory, when we see Him.

The miracles are enough. We believe in ALL of this, because of the  
miracles He did, written down by reliable witnesses, intact, in a book.  
Find a millenial and tell them.