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A STUDY OF THE MARGAN MIRACLES

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The indefinite title of this study indicates its breadth and general character. This is not an investigation into the specific problems of various miracles, nor is it an exegetical presentation of all the miracle stories of St. Mark's Gospel. The present writer has simply let himself be confronted by the Marcan miracles. From such a confrontation two basic questions arose: What does St. Mark tell us about the miracles? and, What do the miracles tell us about Jesus Christ? This study is an attempt to answer these two questions.

The present writer has experienced some difficulty in trying to give the miracle of Jesus a proper homiletical treatment. He has usually avoided them, especially when somewhat similar miracle stories presented themselves in close sequence as Gospel lections of the Church Year. This difficulty has kept him on a constant search for fresh and inspiring material on the miracle stories. His search was recently rewarded. It is proper to let credit fall where it belongs, and credit for "opening up" the miracle stories to the present writer and inducing him to do further similar study of his own, belongs to Dr. Alan Richardson, whose rather recent (1941) book, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, is a definite asset to the field of Biblical theology and an outstanding contribution to the understanding of the Gospels.

No matter how many limitations one imposes on himself, it seems

as though the limited bonds are always somewhat exceeded. Such has been the case in this study; it has exceeded its intended limits of length, and yet how hastily some sections have had to be treated and how much ought to be added! This study has been limited to St. Mark's Gospel and to the actual eighteen miracle stories of this Gospel. The great miracles of the Incarnation, Transfiguration, Resurrection, and Ascension are not treated. Space did not permit a totally adequate consideration of the Matthean and Lucan parallels of those sixteen miracle stories of Mark which they also relate. The concentration is thus almost exclusively on St. Mark's Gospel. The Synoptic problem is not a problem in this study; the writer contends neither for Marcan nor for Matthean priority. And lastly, this study does not indulge in apologetics to any great extent. Deeming Samuel Cartledge's statement: "It is no longer necessary to parade one's rejection of the miracles in intellectually respectable circles,"¹ to be correct, the writer delves into apologetics only when such an approach is still quite necessary.

Two details of the mechanics of this study deserve mention for the reader's benefit. The English Bible version quoted throughout (except in quotations from other authors) is the Revised Standard Version. Unless otherwise indicated, the chapter and verse references are from St. Mark's Gospel. For purposes of clarification in some instances his Gospel is specifically designated (Mk.).

¹Samuel A. Cartledge, "Studia Biblica, XXIX. The Gospel of Mark," Interpretation, IX (April, 1955), 192.

This study is divided into two complementary chapters. Chapter II considers what St. Mark tells us about the miracles. The first section presents the miracle stories as an integral part of the Gospels. The miraculous element in St. Mark is then compared with the other Gospels. The third section discusses the Greek words employed to express the concept of miracle. The miracle stories are then classified into four categories: healings, expulsions of demons, nature miracles and resuscitations. Each of these categories is treated, and the entire section is concluded by a consideration of the common cause of human calamity, which made miracles (not to say a Savior) necessary in the first place. The final section of Chapter II handles the Marcan miracle stories contextually. The four Appendixes pertain to Chapter II, and the writer suggests that the reader turn to each when he is so requested in the text. These Appendixes were added for the reader's benefit, both for clarification of the present study and for future reference use.

Chapter III treats what the miracles tell us of Jesus Christ. After two initial sections in which the miracle ministry is compared to the preaching ministry and some limitations of the miracles are pointed up, the heart of the study is reached in the third section: "The Primary Proclamation of the Miracles." This proclamation is fivefold: Scripture fulfilled, God's power at work, God's kingdom present, the enemy worsted, and the eschatological outlook of the entire proclamation—all in Jesus Christ. The two concluding sections of Chapter III take up the method which Jesus employed in the performance of His miracles and the response which the miracles evoked.

There is an abundance of homiletical material on the miracles;

but, as far as the writer's researches carried him, he found a dearth of exegetical material. Many of the commentaries accord the miracles an adequate treatment, but much of the "real" material is tucked away in sections or chapters of books in the field of Biblical theology. It is from this latter source that a goodly portion of the material for this study was taken.

With so much by way of introduction, we turn now to more interesting and profitable material—"A Study of the Marcan Miracles."

statement and is on his way to a proper understanding of the miracle stories of Jesus. It is not enough merely to note that "the New Testament does not dwell in the description of the miracles," and most men can be satisfied how this statement is related to the life and miracles which it envelopes. One must come to the realization that "the gospel without miracles," as Blake has put it, "would be like air without oxygen." Surely the miracles have the record (and there would be much sweeping involved in such a project) and there remains "no responsible plan of work and an intelligent portrait of the worker." Jesus Christ and

¹ Also Richardson, *The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1924), p. 1.

² A. H. J. Swellengrebe, "The Miracle Story," *Christ in the Gospels* (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 13.

³ J. Henry Blake, "The Place of a Miracle," *Philosophical Review*, 1911 (1912), 25.

⁴ John E. Powell, "Miracles," in *The Gospels: An Introduction* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), p. 10. Powell, "Miracles," in *A Study of Christ in the Gospels*, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 107, has criticized every trace of the miracle story. But in an effort to show that a true doctrine is left, as long as a story as told would have to be viewed in an illumination of the miracle story from that

CHAPTER II

ST. MARK'S RECORD OF THE MIRACLES

The Miracles an Integral Part of the Gospels

When Alan Richardson begins his book The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels with the words, "The miracle-stories form an essential and inseparable part of the Gospel tradition," he has made an irrefutable statement and is on his way to a proper understanding of the mighty works of Jesus.¹ It is not enough merely to note that "the New Testament moves in the atmosphere of the miraculous,"² one must move on to determine how this atmosphere is related to the life and mission which it envelopes. One must come to the realization that "the gospel without miracles," as Blake has put it, "would be like air without oxygen."³ Scrape the miracles from the record (and there would be much scraping involved in such a project) and there remains "no recognizable plan of work and no intelligent portrait of the worker."⁴ Jesus Christ not

¹Alan Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1941), p. 1.

²A. E. J. Rawlinson, "The Messianic Signs," Christ in the Gospels (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 33

³S. Leroy Blake, "The Place of a Miracle," Bibliotheca Sacra, LVI (1899), 25.

⁴John T. Driscoll, "Miracle," in The Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: Robert Appleton Company, c.1911), X, 345. T. H. Wright, "Miracles," in A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1908), II, 189f. has eliminated every trace of the miraculous from Mk. 1-3 in an effort to show what a bare skeleton is left. As large a block as 4:35-5:43 would have to be excised in an elimination of the miraculous from Mk.!

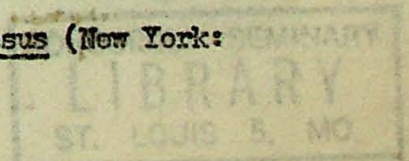
only entered and left the world of space and time in a miraculous manner (not to mention the miracle of miracles on Easter), but He performed a ministry marked with mighty works. Any Jesus "discovered" apart from the miracle stories of the Gospels will not be the Jesus of the New Testament faith.

The actual count of the miracle stories of the Gospels depends to some extent on who is doing the counting. Thus Hunter counts twenty-six,⁵ Robertson and Bruce thirty-five,⁶ Beck "about thirty-five,"⁷ and others from thirty to forty, or even above forty. These discrepancies in the count of the miracles do not indicate that as one advances in proficiency in the field of Biblical theology he decreases in mathematical skill, but rather that there are slight difficulties involved in the counting. Some of these factors which influence the counting ought to be mentioned. For example, some scholars consider the Cleansing of the Temple (Mt. 21:12,13; Mk. 11:15-17; Lk. 19:45,46; Jn. 2:13-17) and the Escape from the Hostile Crowd (Lk. 4:28-30) as miracles. If the supposed cases of miraculous foreknowledge (cf. Mk. 11:2; 14:12-16), the general references to healings and expulsions, and the miracles which attended Jesus' death and resurrection are added, the count increases by leaps and bounds. Some scholars consider the Cure of the Nobleman's

⁵ Archibald M. Hunter, "The Mighty Works," The Work and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), p. 54, footnote 2.

⁶ A. T. Robertson, A Harmony of the Gospels (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, c.1922), p. 294; A. B. Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, c.1886), pp. 128-29.

⁷ Dwight Marion Beck, Through the Gospels to Jesus (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, c.1954), p. 144.



Son (Jn. 4:46-53) a variant of the Cure of the Centurion's Servant (Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10),⁸ and the Stater Story (Mt. 17:24-27) as non-miraculous.⁹ These and other minor considerations influence the count, and, having been alluded to briefly, need not detain us here. The reader is referred to Appendix A, where the "Chronological List of Miracles of Jesus" by T. H. Wright is presented, with some necessary corrections and additions by the writer, in the hope that it will serve as a general survey of the mighty works of Jesus' ministry.

But even such a comprehensive list of the miracles in the Gospels does not tell the whole story. There are many general references to healings and expulsions which force us to recognize that the miracles which have been more fully narrated by the evangelists are but a sampling of many more mighty works. "Just as we have nothing like a complete record of our Lord's words, so we have nothing like a complete record of His deeds" (cf. Jn. 20:30).¹⁰ A typical general reference is recorded in 6:54-56:

And when they got out of the boat, immediately the people recognized him, and ran about the whole neighborhood and began to bring sick people on their pallets at any place where they heard he was. And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or country, they laid the sick in the market places, and besought him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment; and as many as touched it were made well.

⁸ So Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 78.

⁹ Ibid., p. 107, "though a miracle is doubtless implied, none is explicitly affirmed."

¹⁰ Samuel G. Craig, "Jesus and Miracles," Jesus of Yesterday and Today (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, c.1956), p. 135.



Other general references to miracles performed by Jesus are recorded in 1:32-34; 3:10,22; 6:5,14. Shafto counts forty-two such general and indirect references to miraculous action on the part of Jesus in the four Gospels.¹¹ There is thus no possibility of counting all the miracles performed by Jesus; they might run into the thousands! The fact that many of the general references in the four Gospels are parallel paragraphs does not appreciably diminish the comprehensive miraculous picture.

The Miraculous in Mark Compared with the Other Gospels

The Gospel according to St. Mark is the Gospel of Jesus in action. "Here is a life story which is theology in deeds and doctrine in drama."¹² The evangelist does not reflect upon the career or the character of Jesus; he slights the teaching ministry; he is interested in happenings and events, but he does not pause to muse over them. He is writing the life of mighty works, he is offering a series of action-packed sketches—"The Cartoons of Mark."¹³ He does not talk about or attempt to explain Jesus' authority, but he exhibits the exercise of that authority. He does not reason out an elaborate Christology, but he presents a man among men acting as the Mighty God alone can. He does not tell us who Jesus was, but what Jesus did; and yet in so doing

¹¹G. R. H. Shafto, The Wonders of the Kingdom (New York: George H. Doran Company, [1924]), pp. 8-9.

¹²Gerald Kennedy, "Good News of Action," God's Good News (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, c.1955), p. 38.

¹³Shafto, op. cit., p. 12.

he picturesquely portrays to us Who it was that alone could do these mighty works.

Richardson has worked out the following statistics on the miraculous in Mark:

In St. Mark's Gospel some 209 verses out of a total of 666 (to 16:8) deal directly or indirectly with miracle (i.e. over 31 per cent). If we omit the Marcan Apocalypse (ch. 13) from our calculation, about one-third of the Gospel is concerned with miracle. In the first ten chapters of the Gospel (i.e. omitting the whole Passion narrative), 200 out of 425 verses deal directly or indirectly with miracle (i.e. about 47 per cent).¹⁴

The above considerations are not intended to say that the other Gospels are unconcerned with the miraculous. The seven miracles of St. John's Gospel play a very significant role in his book. And both Matthew and Luke reproduce most of the Marcan miracles (only the Deaf and "Dumb" Man and the Blind Man at Bethsaida are peculiar to Mark).¹⁵ But it is in Mark's Gospel that the concentration of the miraculous is the heaviest, and where a distinct emphasis lies on the miracles recorded.

For a helpful survey of the miracles in the triple and double traditions and those recorded in a single Gospel only the reader is referred to Appendix B.

¹⁴Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 36.

¹⁵For a detailed study of the manner in which the individual evangelists handle the miracle stories the reader is referred to ibid., pp. 100-22.

The Words Employed to Express the Concept of Miracle

The New Testament employs three words to express what we are accustomed to call "miracle." These words are *δύναμις* ("mighty work"), *σημεῖον* ("sign"), and *τέρας* ("wonder"). *Δύναμις* is by far the preferred word, being used, according to May, one hundred twenty times in the New Testament.¹⁶ Its basic meaning of "power" is, of course, in mind more often than its "miracle meaning" of "mighty work." As Richardson points out, *δύναμις* "emphasizes the essential biblical notion of miracles as the result of the operation of the *δύναμις* (power) of God, who is the source of all power and with whom all things are possible (Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:17; Mk. 10:27)."¹⁷

Δύναμις is employed in St. Mark in direct connection with a mighty work in 5:30, where in the Healing of the Woman with the Issue of Blood it is said of Jesus: "perceiving in himself that power (*δύναμιν*) had gone forth from him, . . ." Its precise meaning of "mighty work" occurs in 6:2 ("What mighty works—*αἱ δυνάμεις τοιαύται*—are wrought by his hands!"), 6:5 ("And he could do no mighty work—*δύναμιν*—there, . . ."), 6:14 ("Some said, John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers—*αἱ δυνάμεις*—are at work in him."), and 9:39 ("for no one who does a mighty work—*δύναμιν*—in my name will be able soon after to speak evil of me."). Its native

¹⁶Eric May, "For Power Went Forth From Him," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIV (April, 1952), 100.

¹⁷Alan Richardson, "Miracle," in A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1950), p. 152.

meaning of "power" or "powers" occurs in 9:1 ("Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power— *δυναμει*"), 12:24 ("Is not this why you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power— *δυναμειν* —of God?"), 13:25,26 ("and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers— *αι δυναμεις*—in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power— *δυναμεις*—and glory."), and 14:62, where it is used as a periphrasis for God Himself ("and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power— *δυναμεις*—, and coming with the clouds of heaven.").

The second word for miracle is *σημειον* ("sign"). A sign is not always a miracle (cf. the "sign" to the shepherds in Lk. 2:12); in its basic and broad meaning it is merely "Merkmal fuer etwas."¹⁸ But when it is employed in the sense of miracle, it has great significance, as Trench points out:

Among all the names which miracles bear, their ethical end and purpose comes out in *σημειον* with the most distinctness, . . . It is involved and declared that the prime object and end of the miracle is to lead us to something out of and beyond itself; that, so to speak, it is a kind of finger-post of God; . . . valuable, not so much for what it is, as for what it indicates of the grace and power of the doer, or of his immediate connexion with a higher spiritual world. . . .¹⁹

Thimme also observes that Zeichen "weisen ueber sich selbst hinaus und erwarten, dass man nicht bei ihnen stehen bleibt, sondern sich durch

¹⁸ Helmut Thielicke, "Das Wunder," Theologie der Anfechtung (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1949), p. 103.

¹⁹ Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament (9th edition; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1880), pp. 342-43.

sie auf das Eigentliche das hinter ihnen steht und durch sie angekündigt wird, verweisen lasse."²⁰ How precisely this designation of miracle as sign suits St. John's Gospel, where the seven miracles recorded lend order to the whole, and where each record of a miracle is followed by exposition and explanation, is attested by the fact that *σημείον* is St. John's favorite word for miracle (*σημείον* occurs some seventeen times in St. John's Gospel, *τέρας* but once in 4:48, and *δύναμις* never).

The word *σημείον* is used with reference to miracle in St. Mark in 8:11,12:

The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign (*σημείον*) from heaven, to test him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and said, Why does this generation seek for a sign (*σημείον*)? Truly, I say to you, no sign (*σημείον*) shall be given to this generation.

It is employed in connection with the Last Things in 13:4 ("Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign—*σημείον*—when these things are all to be accomplished?"), as part of the deception of the false Christs and false prophets in 13:22, and in connection with the work of Jesus' disciples in 16:16 ("And these signs—*σημεία*—will accompany those who believe: . . ."), and 16:20 ("And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs—*σημείων*—that attended it.").

The third word for miracle is *τέρας*, "wonder," the action which

²⁰ Ephorus Thimme, "Zeichen," in Biblich-Theologisches Handwörterbuch, herausgegeben von Edo Osterloh und Hans Engelland (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, c.1954), p. 703.

the miracle produces being transferred to the designation of the miracle itself.²¹ "It is the miracle," Trench explains, "regarded as a startling, imposing, amazement-wakening portent or prodigy;"²² Since such an impression was the very last thing Jesus intended His miracles to create, the New Testament (with the exception of Acts 2:19, which is an Old Testament quotation) never uses the word *τέρας* alone. It speaks of signs and wonders, of signs alone and of mighty works alone, but not of wonders alone. Trench makes a noteworthy observation on this New Testament usage:

the fact which we are thus bidden to note is indeed eminently characteristic of the miracles of the N. T.; namely, that a title, by which more than any other these might seem to hold on to the prodigies and portents of the heathen world, and to have something akin to them, should thus never be permitted to appear, except in the company of some other necessarily suggesting higher thoughts about them.²³

The Marcan apocalypse contains the only use of the word *τέρας* in St. Mark; it is there used in 13:22 with reference to the wonders of the false Christs and false prophets who "will arise and show signs and wonders (*τέρατα*), to lead astray, if possible, the elect."

A fourth word employed to denominate miracle is the simple *ἔργον*, "work." Although the almost exclusively favorite word of St. John, it is used in Mt. 11:2 and Lk. 24:19 to include the miracles of Jesus. And "to include" is its limited function when used in connection with

²¹Richard C. Trench, Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord (Popular edition; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, c.1949), p. 3.

²²Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament, pp. 341-42.

²³Ibid., p. 342.

the miracles, for it is basically the word which covers all the "works" and deeds of Jesus. The word does not occur in St. Mark, nor do the following infrequently employed words: *ἐνδοξα* ("glorious things," Lk. 13:17), *παράδοξα* ("strange things," Lk. 5:26), *θαυμάσια* ("wonderful things," Mt. 21:15), and *ἄπερας* ("wonderful deeds," 1 Pet. 2:9).

There are five New Testament passages in which *δύναμις*, *σημεῖον* and *τέρας* are employed together. Two of these passages refer directly to the miracles of Jesus. Peter preaches to the Pentecost crowds:

Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works (*δυνάμεις*) and wonders (*τέρατα*) and signs (*σημεῖα*) which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— . . . (Acts 2:22).

And the author to the Hebrews, writing about "such a great salvation," says:

It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, while God also bore witness by signs (*σημεῖα*) and wonders (*τέρατα*) and various miracles (*δυνάμεις*) and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his own will (Heb. 2:3,4).

The other three passages are Rom. 15:19; 2 Cor. 12:12; 2 Thess. 2:9, the first two referring to the works of the Apostle, the last to the activity of Satan.

Although the three principal New Testament words for miracle are not always, not even frequently, used to describe the individual miracle stories of the Gospels, and although not a single miracle story is explicitly described by all three words, the fact remains that these words are descriptive of each and every miracle of Jesus. They do not designate three different types of miracles; they designate any miracle viewed from three aspects. Trench illustrates this point, using the Healing of the Paralytic as an example:

The healing of the paralytic (Mk. 2:1-12) was a wonder, for they who beheld it "were all amazed"; it was a power, for the man at Christ's word "arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all"; it was a sign, for it gave token that One greater than men deemed was among them;²⁴

Classification of the Miracle Stories

There are probably as many ways to classify the mighty works of Jesus as there are those who attempt a classification. And, no doubt, a multitude of classifications is legitimate and serves many useful purposes. We shall briefly consider several attempts at classification.

C. S. Lewis offers the following classification: "(1) Miracles of Fertility (2) Miracles of Healing (3) Miracles of Destruction (4) Miracles of Dominion over the Inorganic (5) Miracles of Reversal (6) Miracles of Perfecting or Glorification."²⁵ His second system, although appearing to be quite simple, is theologically profound:

"(1) Miracles of the Old Creation, and (2) Miracles of the New Creation."²⁶ T. H. Wright offers an eightfold classification:

- I Healings of bodily ailments
- II Healings of nervous disease
- III Healings of nervous and psychical disorders
- IV Revelations of power in the nature of Jesus
- V Revelation of Jesus in nature and upon the inorganic world
- VI Power upon the organic world
- VII Power upon the inorganic world
- VIII Raising of the dead²⁷

²⁴Trench, Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord, p. 6.

²⁵C. S. Lewis, Miracles (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1947), p. 161.

²⁶Ibid., p. 162.

²⁷Wright, op. cit., p. 190.

Robertson alludes to the "common division of Christ's miracles . . . into miracles of nature, miracles on man, and miracles on the spirit world." He goes on correctly to point out that there is no "sharp line of cleavage" between the different classes of miracles and that "we get a very little way in understanding Christ's power by any analysis of the kind of miracles wrought."²⁸ Our purposes will best be served by a simple classification of Christ's miracles into four categories: healings, expulsions of demons, nature miracles, and resuscitations.²⁹ The Marcan representatives of each of these categories are listed in Appendix C. It is now our endeavor to take up in order each of these miracle categories pointing up necessary considerations and making observations pertinent to our study.

Healings

An effort to classify the various diseases represented in the healings is about as difficult as it is futile. For one thing, as is the case often today, diseases and defects did not always come singly upon the Gospel "patients." The cure in 7: 31-37 is of both deafness and a speech impediment; and the boy at the hill of Transfiguration (9:14-29) suffered from epilepsy, dumbness, deafness, in addition to and probably as a result of his possession by a demon. His case raises another consideration: Shall expulsions be classified

²⁸A. T. Robertson, "The Miraculous Element in Mark's Gospel," Studies in Mark's Gospel (New York: George H. Doran Company, c.1919), pp. 52-53.

²⁹This is the classification of Beck, op. cit., p. 139.

with the other healings? Although Beck and others believe that healings and expulsions cannot always be sharply separated,³⁰ we have chosen to make such a separation in our study. The reasons for this will become clear as we come to consider the category of expulsions. It will suffice here to say, with Wendland, that demonic influence is not the cause and explanation of all (or even many of) the sicknesses reported in the Gospels.³¹

Of all the miracles of Christ the healing miracles are the "closest" to us, for we are able, partially at least, to understand the process involved when a human body recovers from a disease, or when a wound mends itself. We are able to picture Jesus doing "small and close"³² what God does gradually in the case of every recovery and cure. But the inadequacy of even this rationalization, and of every rationalization with reference to the miracles of Christ, is apparent. You simply cannot explain a miracle without to a certain extent explaining it away. That the "closeness" of the healing miracles should lead those of a heavily naturalistic outlook to accept many of the healings of Jesus and then to explain them as cures by "suggestion," thus denying their miraculous character, is an unfortunate product of our "scientific" age. It will be interesting to see if such naturalistic

³⁰Ibid., p. 142.

³¹Heinz-Dietrich Wendland, "Messianität und Wunder," Die Eschatologie des Reiches Gottes bei Jesus (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1931), p. 230.

³²This is C. S. Lewis' idea of what happened in our Lord's miracles; op. cit., pp. 159-70.

considerations will some day be able to explain and "de-miraculize" the cures at a distance³³ which Jesus accomplished. The present explanation of "coincidence" deserves no serious consideration.

Although the healing stories vary in some details, a somewhat similar pattern is observable in all of them. The sufferer is introduced with some named ailment; the healing is performed by Jesus' word and/or action; the success of the cure is demonstrated by an act or word; and there is some reaction on the part of observers.³⁴ Formgeschichte has, of course, capitalized on this healing pattern, and, having ransacked contemporary literature, has found a similar pattern in the Hellenistic and Rabbinic cures, from which sources, it is affirmed, the evangelists borrowed their forms. But the Formgeschichtlers appear to have overlooked a very simple point: there is no other way in which to relate the story of a healing! All one would need to do would be to insert the "human element" into modern medical case histories to observe a very similar pattern.

Our discussion of the category of healings concludes with a consideration of St. Mark's description of those suffering from specific illnesses, his general description of the sick, and the words which describe the cure.

³³There are two cures at a distance in the Gospels: The Centurion's Servant (Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10), and The Nobleman's Son (Jn. 4:46-53), which we do not consider a variant of the Centurion's Servant, as does Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 78. Matthew and Mark contain an expulsion at a distance: The Daughter of the Syrophenician Woman (Mt. 15:21-28; Mk. 7:24-30).

³⁴Beck, op. cit., pp. 114-15.

In Mark's Gospel there is one case of fever (πυρέβουσα and ὁ πυρετός , 1:30,31), one leper (λεπρός and ἡ λέπρα , 1:40,42), one paralytic (παραλυτικόν , 2:3,4,5,9), a man with a "withered hand" (ἔξηραμμένην ἔχων τὴν χεῖρα , 3:1,3), a woman "with a flow of blood" (οὖσα ἐν ῥύθει αἵματος , 5:25; ἡ πηγὴ τοῦ αἵματος , 5:29), a deaf and "dumb" (κωφὸν καὶ μογιλάλον , 7:32) man, and two blind men (τυφλοί), one of Bethsaida (8:22) and Bartimæus the Beggar (10:46).

In the general statements of cures the sick are designated as κακῶς ἔχοντας (1:32,34; 2:17; 6:55), as having μάστιγας (from μάστιξ , "scourge," or "plague," 3:10; 5:29,34, in the latter two citations describing the sickness of the flow of blood as an especially distressing disease), and as ἄρρωστοί ("weak," 6:5,13; 16:18).

The cure is described by various words. The most common is θεραπεύειν ("to heal," 1:34; 3:2,10; 6:5,13). The verb of "restoration" (ἀποκαθιστάνειν) is employed at 3:5 and 8:25. Another verb of healing (ἰάσθαι) occurs once (5:29), as does the periphrastic ἴαθε ὕγιής ("be whole," 5:34), and καλῶς ἔψαιεν ("they will recover," 16:18). The leper is characteristically "cleansed" (καθαρίσειν , 1:40,41,42, cf. 44) from his unclean disease of leprosy. And lastly, and quite significantly, the verb σώζειν ("to save"), frequently employed of eternal spiritual rescue, occurs five times in connection with sickness (5:23,28,34; 6:56; 10:52).

Expulsions of demons

If physical sickness is quite close to us, demon possession is quite foreign. It is about as far removed from our daily experience

as any phenomenon could be. Rawlinson's quotation of Canon J. O.

Hannay states the situation well:

"For the modern man the whole apparatus of demons and their works has passed into the region of myth. Even to those who hold fast the ancient Christian faith, the existence of demons is an obscure dogma rarely present to the consciousness. To the primitive Christian demons were intensely real beings, and belief in them was the most pressing and insistent of all beliefs, excepting only the conviction that Christ could conquer them."³⁵

To present the Marcan material on demon possession and to attempt to remove this phenomenon from the "region of myth" will be our dual purpose in this section.

There are seven distinct cases of demon possession in the Synoptics:³⁶

1. The Capernaum Demoniac, Mk. 1:23-26; Lk. 4:33-36.
2. The Dumb Demoniac, Mt. 9:32,33; Lk. 11:14.
3. The Gadarene Demoniac, Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-39.
4. The Blind and Dumb Demoniac, Mt. 12:22.
5. The Daughter of the Syrophenician Woman, Mt. 15:21-28; Mk. 7:24-30.
6. The Epileptic Boy, Mt. 17:14-21; Mk. 9:14-29; Lk. 9:37-43.
7. The Woman with a Spirit of Infirmary, Lk. 13:10-17.

Of these St. Mark records the four (relatively more important) cases underlined in the above listing. The summary accounts which mention expulsions (cf. 1:34; 3:11,12; 6:13) indicate that the fully narrated

³⁵J. O. Hannay, The Spirit and Origin of Christian Monasticism, p. 33, quoted in A. E. J. Rawlinson, "The Supernatural Element in the Gospel," St. Mark (6th edition; London: Methuen & Company Ltd., 1947), xvii-xviii.

³⁶St. John records no cases of demon possession.

cases are only examples of many cases of demon possession and that "the Saviour's [sic] power over the demons is a leading motif in the Gospels, especially in St. Mark."³⁷ But Headlam is incorrect when he goes so far as to say: "To cast out devils, to cure those possessed of evil spirits, is represented as the work of our Lord more constantly than any other miraculous activity."³⁸

The record leads us to believe that demon possession was common and frequent at the time of our Lord. Fenner thinks that we are confronted by an epidemic of possessions in the early Christian times.³⁹ And Geldenhuis speaks of the "amazing scale" on which demon possession occurred during Jesus' appearance on earth.⁴⁰ Alexander offers a most probable explanation of this fact:

The incarnation initiated the establishment of the kingdom of heaven upon earth. That determined a counter movement among the powers of darkness. Genuine demonic possession was one of its manifestations.⁴¹

We turn now to a consideration of the manner in which St. Mark describes the possessing demon, those possessed, and the expulsion. In every case where πνεῦμα ("spirit") is employed to describe a demon the qualifying adjective ἀκάθαρτος ("unclean") is added (1:23, 26, 27;

³⁷Rawlinson, Christ in the Gospels, p. 35.

³⁸Arthur C. Headlam, The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ (London: John Murray, 1923), p. 185.

³⁹Friedrich Fenner, Die Krankheit im Neuen Testament (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1930), p. 76.

⁴⁰Norval Geldenhuis, Commentary on the Gospel of Luke (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 174.

⁴¹William Menzies Alexander, Demonic Possession in the New Testament (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 249.

3:11,30; 5:2,8,13; 6:7; 7:25; 9:25), except in 9:17, where the reference is to a πνεῦμα ἄλαλον ("dumb spirit," the τὸ πνεῦμα of 9:20 referring back to this), more fully described by our Lord as τὸ ἄλαλον καὶ κωφὸν ("deaf") πνεῦμα (9:25). It is instructive to note that ἀκάθαρτος is not employed in the Gospels except as a description of spirits (demons). It is not an easy matter to determine why "unclean" should be employed to describe the spirits, and not many scholars have attempted the task. Perhaps Du Brau is on the right track when he writes:

This nomenclature ["unclean spirit"] no doubt harks back to the impure and unclean spirit of idolatry. To the ennobled and regenerated Christian soul, uncleanness was inseparable from the pagans' worship of their lesser divinities, or demons, both from a physical and psychical point of view.⁴²

The actual word δαιμόνιον ("demon") occurs at 1:34 bis, 39; 3:15,22 bis; 6:13; 7:26,29,30; 9:38; 16:9,17; and the verb δαιμονίζεσθαι at 1:32; 5:15,16,18, used substantively to describe the one possessed.

With regard to the persons possessed, the Capernaum demoniac is said to be ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ (1:23), as is also the Gadarene demoniac (5:1-20). The Syrophenician daughter is said to "have" (ἔχεν) an "unclean spirit" (7:25), as the epileptic boy "has" (ἔχοντα) a "dumb spirit" (9:17).

The verb describing the expulsion is either ἐξέρχεσθαι ("come out," 1:25,26; 5:8,13; 6:13; 7:29,31; 9:25,29), or ἐκβάλλειν ("cast out," 1:34,39; 3:15; 7:26; 9:18,28,38; 16:9,17); curiously each verb is employed nine times in connection with demons in Mark's Gospel.

⁴²R. T. DuBrau, "Evil Spirits," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (April, 1939), 277.

There appear to be no attendant maladies in the cases of the Capernaum, Gadarene and Syrophenician demoniacs, but the boy at the hill of Transfiguration suffered from epilepsy, deafness and dumbness in addition to (or in conjunction with and as a result of) his possession. But this case of the epileptic boy does not indicate that all cases of ordinary sickness are attributed to a demonic cause in the Gospels. Such a position is so frequently taken by modern scholarship⁴³ that it is necessary for us to emphasize that demon possession "is distinguished . . . from cases of ordinary sickness, insanity ('lunacy'), leprosy, blindness, lameness, deafness, and other natural defects and diseases."⁴⁴ Notice how carefully Matthew delineates diseases and possession:

So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick (πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας), those afflicted with various diseases (ποικίλαις νόσοις) and pains (βάσανοις), demoniacs (δαίμονιζομένους), epileptics (ἐπιληπτικῶν), and paralytics (παρλυτικῶν), and he healed them (Mt. 4:24; cf. Mt. 8:16; 10:8; Mk. 6:13; Lk. 4:40; 7:21,22).

Foerster points up three considerations which distinguish demon possession from any other phenomenon:

Es ist nicht so, dass im NT alle Krankheiten auf Dämonen zurückgeführt werden. . . . Zwar nicht alle Krankheiten sind Dämonenwerk, aber alle Krankheiten können als des Teufels Werk angesehen werden. Bei den meisten Besessenheitsgeschichten aber —und das ist das Zweite— handelt es sich um etwas anderes, um eine Zerstörung und Verkälterung der schöpfungsgemässen Gottesebenbildlichkeit des Menschen, indem das Zentrum der Persönlichkeit, das Ich als bewusst vollendes und handelndes, von fremden Mächten lahmgelegt ist, die den Menschen verderben wollen und ihm gelegentlich bis zu Selbstzerstörung treiben (Mk. 5:5).

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⁴³See, for example, S. Vernon McCasland, By the Finger of God (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1951), p. 17.

⁴⁴Geldenhays, op. cit., p. 174.

Den Dämonen wohnt zum dritten als πνευματικά ein besonderes Wissen inne. Sie müssen dieses Wissen aussprechen,⁴⁵

Several other facts about demons and demon possession deserve notice. More than one demon may take up residence in a person. "My name is Legion; for we are many" (5:9; cf. Mt. 12:43-45; Mk. 16:9). The demons recognize Jesus and express their recognition. The Capernaum demon says: "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" (1:24). The Gadarene legion cries: "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" (5:7). How applicable Jas. 2:19: "Even the demons believe—and shudder"! The case of the Syrophenician daughter is an expulsion at a distance and we have no record of the demon's reaction when the mother confronted Jesus with her request. The epileptic boy suffered from dumbness; the demon was thus deprived of the vehicle of confession. But that each and every demon knew Jesus is stated in 1:34: "and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him." So characteristic of demons is this recognition of Jesus for what He is that Alexander considers this confession "the classical criterion of genuine demonic possession."⁴⁶

Another fact that needs to be noted is that demon possession is to be differentiated from possession by Satan. It is one thing to be possessed by the leader of the demons himself, and quite another to be

⁴⁵ Werner Foerster, "Δαίμων," in Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 19.

⁴⁶ Alexander, op. cit., p. 150.

possessed by one or more of his horde. Goldenblyys rightly explains regarding the demon possessed:

Those possessed are depicted throughout as unfortunate sufferers who by no fault of their own are dominated by evil spirits and who, when the spirits are cast out by Jesus, accept their deliverance with joy and gratitude (Mk. 5:18-20; Lk. 8:2).⁴⁷

In their case no forgiveness of sins is hinted at, no prior faith in Jesus is expected, and no moral consequences attend their actions while possessed. How different the case of Judas, whom "Satan entered" (Jn. 13:27).

Before we venture to say that we have removed the phenomenon of demon possession from the "region of myth" we need to note and refute some objections to its actuality and to make some positive attempts to defend its actuality. One objection to demon possession as a separate and distinct phenomenon is presented by Battenhouse, who writes:

Knowing that be the word "demons" they [the ancients] were but giving a name to the fact of sin and evil in the world, can we say, today, that they were wrong?⁴⁸

We believe that this statement, in addition to glossing over the difficulties involved, fails to note that the New Testament can name "sin and evil" without any reference to demon possession. The word "demons" does indeed designate sin and evil, but it does so as a distinct phenomenon especially prevalent during Jesus' ministry.

A second objection is raised by McCasland, whose book By the Finger of God was written to uphold the accuracy and credibility of the

⁴⁷Goldenblyys, op. cit., p. 174.

⁴⁸Henry M. Battenhouse, Christ in the Gospels (New York: The Ronald Press Company, c.1952), p. 183.

Gospel expulsion narratives at the expense of holding that demon possession equals insanity. The following is a typical quotation from McCasland: "Physicians in our time call disorganizations of the mind neuroses or psychoses; the ancients called the same phenomena demon possession."⁴⁹ In answer we refer again to Mt. 4:24, where the demoniacs and epileptics (the closest probable description of insanity in the Gospels) are differentiated, and to the quotation of Foerster cited above.⁵⁰ We maintain that the demon had an effect on the mind of the one possessed, a profound and extensive effect, but we are unwilling to see the existence of demons and the reality of demon possession "written off the record" by any explanation which holds that the ancients ignorantly accepted and employed demon possession as their explanation for what we know as insanity. We take our stand with Zahn, who wrote:

Those who are possessed are mentally diseased and, according to Mark, are cases of extreme insanity. But the true meaning of the account is not that those who are afflicted have in their delusion identified themselves with the demons by whom they believe themselves to be controlled, but, on the contrary, that actually existing demons have taken possession of the whole psychophysical organism so completely that the ego of the patient can no longer utter even a cry for freedom.⁵¹

But there is another facet to this second objection: namely, that if the demon possessed of the Gospels are not to be simply considered as insane, then we have no accounts of cures of the insane in the

⁴⁹ McCasland, op. cit., p. 26.

⁵⁰ Supra, p. 23f.

⁵¹ Theodor Zahn, Evangelium der Matthaeus, quoted by Theodore Graebner, "Demoniacal Possession," Concordia Theological Monthly, IV (August, 1933), 592.

Gospels, whereas we have such accounts in ancient secular literature; and, if the demon possessed are just what these two words mean, then we have no cases of possession in the ancient world outside of the Gospels. The case is succinctly stated by Gould:

The dilemma is very curious. Outside the N. T., no demoniacal possession, but only lunacy and epilepsy; in the N. T., no cases of lunacy and epilepsy proper, but only demoniacal possession.⁵²

This objection overlooks the *βελγηνιαζομένους* of Mt. 4:24,⁵³ and incorrectly confines demon possession to the New Testament. McGinley's study reveals the practice of exorcism in Hellenic miracle stories, although there is a distinct scarcity of such practice in the Hellenic world when compared to the exorcisms in Rabbinic circles.⁵⁴ It thus appears impossible categorically to deny cases of possession in the Hellenic tradition and cases of insanity in the Gospels. But let us frankly admit that it is difficult to find a clear reference to insanity in the Gospels. Let us also admit that the dividing line between

⁵² Ezra P. Gould, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1896), p. 23. See McCasland, op. cit., p. 66.

⁵³ This reference is admittedly quite indecisive, for the relation between insanity, epilepsy and "lunacy" in the Gospels is far from being clearly understood. It is, perhaps, as good a guess as any to say that *βελγηνιαζομένους* covers epilepsy, lunacy and insanity, and thus Mt. 4:24 gives us one notice of insanity in the Gospels. The situation is complicated by the fact that Matthew employs the same verb in 17:15 (the only other usage in the New Testament) as the father's description of the epileptic boy. If our above guess is true, Matthew's version of this incident makes the boy both insane and possessed. One fact remains certain: the boy had a demon (Mt. 17:18).

⁵⁴ Laurence J. McGinley, Form-Criticism of the Synoptic Healing Narratives (Woodstock, Md.: Woodstock College Press, c.1944), p. 151.

insanity and demon possession may not always have been carefully observed by the ancients. The subject is here beset with difficulties and remains shrouded in silence. But such silence dare not be allowed to deny the existence of demons or the reality of demon possession. In each of Mark's four expulsions we are dealing with a "spirit."

We have already alluded to the fact that demon possession is concentrated in the period of our Lord's ministry. Something similar to it is recorded in 1 Sam. 16:14ff. and 1 Kgs. 22:22ff.; and the Acts recorded several cases (16:16-18; 19:11-16).⁵⁵ But it would seem that the story does not end here, for, whether or not demon possession has continued throughout the Christian centuries, there appears to be excellent evidence that it has been in existence in recent times. A. M. Hunter, a careful and cautious Scottish scholar, writes in his recent little commentary on St. Mark:

No one acquainted with the facts will deny that the phenomena ascribed in the Gospels to evil spirits are well attested in both ancient and modern times (though nowadays such phenomena are mostly seen in the mission field among primitive peoples). . . . Competent observers have declared that these phenomena are only intelligible on the hypothesis of demon-possession.⁵⁶

Unger records the following about the work of the famed Dr. John C. Nevius:

Dr. John C. Nevius, a missionary to China from 1854 to 1892, in the prosecution of his Christian work there was faced with the question, which was constantly forced upon his attention: "Is there such a thing as demon possession in the latter part of

⁵⁵Geldenhays, op. cit., p. 174.

⁵⁶Archibald M. Hunter, The Gospel According to Saint Mark (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1948), p. 33. See also Archibald M. Hunter, Interpreting Paul's Gospel (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), pp. 74-76.

the Nineteenth Century?" Dr. Nevius' experiences and careful, unbiased study of strange psychical phenomena in Shantung Province present unequivocal evidence of the widespread existence of demon possession in modern pagan China, the author recording numerous cases, thoroughly authenticated.⁵⁷

And even Cadoux admits that "there are certain phenomena in mental disease for which the hypothesis of spirit-possession provides an easier explanation than any other."⁵⁸

One more positive consideration deserves attention. It is simply this, that our Lord Himself believed in the existence of demons and diagnosed the four Marcan cases under our study as cases of genuine demon possession. The only way in which to get around this fact is to posit an accommodation theory by which Jesus operated. We shall have more to say on this subject later.

We bring our extended discussion of the category of expulsions to a close, conscious that we have been dealing with a largely unknown supernatural world and with a subject "on which it is excusable to be in suspense,"⁵⁹ yet hopeful that in some small way we have removed demon possession from the "region of myth."

⁵⁷Merrill F. Unger, "Biblical Demonology and Demon Possession," Biblical Demonology (Wheaton, Ill.: Van Kampen Press, Inc., c.1952), p. 87. See John C. Nevius, Demon Possession and Allied Themes (5th edition; New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), pp. 9-94.

⁵⁸Cecil John Cadoux, "The Conqueror of Satan," The Historic Mission of Jesus (New York: Harper & Brothers, n.d.), p. 65.

⁵⁹Bruce, op. cit., p. 181.

Nature miracles

The nature miracles, like the expulsions of demons, are quite beyond our ken. Some have tried to explain (away) the Stilling of the Storm and the Withering of the Fig Tree by positing a coincidental explanation—a very unsatisfying procedure to serious scholarship. The futile attempts to rationalize the feedings have met with little success. The conjecture that the four thousand in Matthew and Mark is a doublet of the five thousand in all four Gospels (the only miracle thus attested) does not remove the miracle; and the conjecture about "sharing hitherto hoarded provisions" deserves the "brush off" accorded it by serious Biblical scholarship. The "shore theory" with reference to Jesus' Walking on the Water has met a similar merited fate. It is heartening to hear F. C. Grant, a scholar who is neither conservative in his theology nor reticent in his criticism, say with regard to the nature miracles:

Whether we can "explain" them or not—and I doubt if we can "explain" them to the satisfaction of the mind of our generation—they had better be left as they stand, as an indispensable element in the gospel story and as the evidence (for the first century) of the stupendous power and true value of the oncoming kingdom of God, the proof of "the powers of the age to come" (Heb. 6:5) and the assurance that the ministry of Jesus, and continuous with it, the spread of the church was not human in origin or devising, but was the mighty act of God for the salvation of men.⁶⁰

The evangelists certainly had no difficulties with the nature miracles and felt little difference between them and the acts of Jesus upon man.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Frederick C. Grant, "Miracles," An Introduction to New Testament Thought (New York: Abingdon Press, c.1950), p. 158.

⁶¹ Beck, op. cit., p. 209.

The nature miracles are quite severely restricted. We have listed the five of Mark's Gospel; the only one to be added from the other Gospels is John's account of Changing Water to Wine at Cana (Jn. 2:1-11). The general references to mass miracles contain no hint of nature miracles, and, although the power to heal, expel demons and raise the dead was communicated to the disciples, they are nowhere informed and authorized to perform nature miracles. And yet with all these restrictions the six nature miracles of the Gospels are well attested. They are found in each period of Jesus' ministry, in the Fourth Gospel, and in both the double and triple synopsis. The Walking on the Water is recorded by Matthew, Mark and John; the Stilling of the Storm and the Withering of the Fig Tree by Matthew, Mark and Luke; the Feeding of the Four Thousand by Matthew and Mark; and the Feeding of the Five Thousand by all four evangelists. "They are therefore as well attested as the works of healing."⁶²

But what purpose did they serve? That Jesus' healings, expulsions and resuscitations benefited the recipients goes without saying, but how about the nature miracles? Cartledge sets us off to a proper answer of this question when he notes "that these miracles were worked for the benefit of human beings just as were the other miracles; it makes no important difference that men were helped indirectly rather than directly."⁶³

⁶²Wright, op. cit., p. 189.

⁶³Samuel A. Cartledge, "Studia Biblica, XXIX. The Gospel of Mark," Interpretation, IX (April, 1955), 192.

Bruce points out the surface purpose served by the storm incidents:

In the storm incidents we encounter miracles which, whether providential or not in nature, were certainly such in aim. The object Jesus had in view in both cases was to guard against danger threatening the men with whom the fortunes of the kingdom were identified. Danger is expressly pointed at in the story of the stilling of the storm, and it is pretty plainly implied in the other narrative concerning the walking on the sea.⁶⁴

The feedings served the surface purpose of feeding hungry people, very hungry people in the case of the four thousand (8:2,3). Very likely the five thousand were Jews, the four thousand Gentiles. There is very much to commend two separate feedings.⁶⁵

The Withering of the Fig Tree is for some the most perplexing story in the Gospels. It is not the nature miracle itself, but the supposed unworthy light which it casts on the character of Jesus which finds objection. It is held to be frankly incredible that He should have used His power to wither a fig tree because it did not yield figs two or three months before its natural time (this was the time of the Passover and figs do not ripen until June). Thus Hunter, for one, beset by this perplexity, holds that the source and kernel of Mark's story was Luke's parable of the fig tree (Lk. 13:6-9).⁶⁶ This would, of course, mean that Mark invented the miracle story. It does not seem necessary, however, to go to such lengths to explain this story. It is an "enacted

⁶⁴ Bruce, op. cit., p. 271.

⁶⁵ Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, pp. 97-98. A further purpose of the feeding miracles is seen by some scholars in their possible Eucharistic significance; cf. ibid., pp. 96-97.

⁶⁶ Hunter, The Gospel According to Saint Mark, p. 110.

parable,"⁶⁷ but let us not drop the "enacted" unless compelled to do so. Let us frankly admit that this is the only example of a "cursing miracle" on the part of Jesus, and that every other miracle was of some help and service to people. We believe that there is, nonetheless, ample justification for this miracle.

For one thing, such enacted parables "were not without precedent among the Jews (see Hos. 1:1-3; Jn. 4:6-11; Mt. 13:10-15). And in Jesus' own teaching, the recourse to enigmatical methods that should force men to think, was not uncommon."⁶⁸ Furthermore, as Lohse correctly observes:

Judgment is coming upon Israel, because it bears no fruit, because it has failed to recognize and to accept the Christ of God, because it has rejected Him and condemned Him to the cross. Judgment has already been passed upon the unbelieving people of God.⁶⁹

When note is taken of the fact that the Cleansing of the Temple immediately follows the Withering of the Fig Tree the picture becomes even clearer. Jesus "on the eve of spiritual conflict with a nation whose prime and patent fault was hypocrisy or false pretense, . . . here finds a tree guilty of the same thing. It gives him his opportunity, without hurting anybody, to sit in judgment on the fault."⁷⁰ In addition, there was deep meaning in this miracle for the disciples, whether they grasped it at that time or not; and Jesus put the whole incident to didactic use in the context of Peter's observation that the tree had "withered

⁶⁷Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 57.

⁶⁸Gould, op. cit., p. 212.

⁶⁹Edward Lohse, Mark's Witness to Jesus Christ (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), p. 61.

⁷⁰Gould, op. cit., pp. 211-12.

away to its roots" (11:21-25). And lastly, C. S. Lewis, tying the fig tree incident in with God's constant action in nature and applying his principle of "small and close" for a partial explanation of the miracles of Christ, pointedly calls our attention to the fact that "no tree died that year in Palestine, or any year anywhere, except because God did—or rather ceased to do—something to it."⁷¹ There is little justification for any questioning of the Cursing of the Fig Tree.

Resuscitations

The one Marcan resuscitation need not detain us long here in this preliminary consideration of the miracles by categories. That the young daughter of Jairus was definitely dead is expressly stated by St. Luke (εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπέθανεν, 8:53), and an honest study of the Matthaean and Marcan narratives yields the same conclusion. Let it be admitted that we cannot definitely pin-point the instant of death, in fact we cannot even precisely define what death actually is. And our knowledge of the state of being beyond physical death is still less. All such considerations admitted, the young daughter of Jairus was "dead." And Jesus brought her back to life.

Mark's marching scenes lead toward one climax. The response that Jesus made to the father's first pitiful plea, his fear-banishing words as he overruled the death message of the messengers, his strong questions to the mourners and his climactic life-giving words to the girl all point in fourfold fashion to One mighty in word and in power to overcome death and to restore life.⁷²

⁷¹Lewis, op. cit., p. 169.

⁷²Beck, op. cit., p. 212.

Here is the resuscitation of a young girl who had just died; the young man at Nain (Lk. 7:11-16) had been dead one day and was on his way to burial, and Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-54) had been dead four days before the almighty and irresistible call to life began with his name. These are the three resuscitations of the four gospels.

The categories crossed by a common cause of calamity

Were we to say that sickness and death, demon possession and calamities in nature occurred at our Lord's time and occur today because the world has gone awry; and were we further to say that it was Jesus' mission to set the world aright, we should be making two vague statements which would enjoy general acceptance. Our purpose in the following paragraphs is to show in small compass that the awryness is due to sin and Satan and that the miracles picture Jesus setting matters aright. We shall here be dealing with a common cause of all human calamity, a double cause, and yet hardly double. It may be somewhat helpful for us to think of sin with a capital "S" (Sin) and to see Satan behind this "Sin-force"; and/or to see Sin when we say Satan, the father of it. Although this is conceptually difficult, for practical purposes Sin equals Satan, or vice versa.

Job had rejected the idea that specific sicknesses are to be attributed to specific sins. Jesus also rejected this widespread belief (cf. Lk. 13:1-5; Jn. 9:1-3); "but this must not be taken as a denial of any relationship between sickness and sin."⁷³ To realize this we need

⁷³Alan Richardson, "Heal," in A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, C.1950), p. 103.

but consider the Healing of the Paralytic (2:1-12). "It is the only miracle where a physical healing is brought into direct connexion with the proclamation of forgiveness of sins."⁷⁴ The One before whom the paralytic is lowered is none other than He of Whom the Psalmist had said that He forgives all iniquities, and heals all diseases (Ps. 103:3). Harnack's well-known statement, which climaxes in a reference to this story, deserves our attention:

Jesus says very little about sickness; he cures it. He does not explain that sickness is health; he calls it by its proper name, and is sorry for the sick person. There is nothing sentimental or subtle about Jesus; he draws no fine distinctions, he utters no sophistries about healthy people being really sick and sick people really healthy. He sees himself surrounded by crowds of sick folk; he attracts them, and his one impulse is to help them. Jesus does not distinguish rigidly between sicknesses of the body and of the soul; he takes them both as different expressions of the one supreme ailment in humanity. But he knows their sources. He knows it is easier to say, "Rise up and walk," than to say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee" (Mc. 2:9).⁷⁵

The relation between suffering and sin is further indicated by one of the very words used to describe suffering: "affliction," "blow," "plague," the *μάστιξ* of 3:10; 5:29,34. The word of rescue, *σωσειν* (5:23,28,34; 6:56; 10:52), is of even greater significance, being used of both physical and spiritual rescue (cf. Lk. 7:48,50). "The Christian picture of Jesus as the Good Physician, the Saviour [sic] of both the body and the soul, is well-grounded upon the stories of the Gospels."⁷⁶

⁷⁴Reginald H. Fuller, "The Signs of the Coming Kingdom," The Mission and Achievement of Jesus (Chicago: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1954), p. 41.

⁷⁵Adolph Harnack, The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries, translated from the German and edited by James Moffatt (2nd edition; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), I, 101.

⁷⁶Richardson, "Heal," p. 103.

The relation between death and sin needs little elaboration. Death is the natural end of disease uncured, and the end of the "healthy" man too—all because of sin (cf. Rom. 5:12 et al.).

Satan "is not only the father of those who sin," says Bruce, "but he is the tyrant of those who suffer."⁷⁷ What we have said about sin and sickness and death goes for Satan and sickness and death also. The one is a person, the other is a power. But the satanic attack upon man reaches its worst peak as his minions take possession of man. That the cases of possession in the Gospels are the work of Satan's "under-spirits" is the manifest testimony of the Beelzebub Controversy (3:22-27) and of the story of the Infirm Woman (Lk. 13:10-17), "who had a spirit of infirmity," and "whom Satan bound."

Zahn nicely pulls together the thoughts of this section of our study when he writes:

Jener grundlegende Sieg Jesu ueber Satan ist zunaechst eine Ueberwindung der versucherischen Macht Satans und damit der Suende; aber auf der Macht, welche Satan auf dem sittlichen Gebiete ueber die Menschen ausuebt, beruht auch seine Macht auf dem Gebiete des physischen Lebens, welche er nicht nur an den Besessenen, sondern in allen Krankheitsformen (Lk. 13:11-16; Acts 10:38) und im Sterben der Menschen (Jn. 8:44) beweist.⁷⁸

There is a curious incident which some believe ties in one of the nature miracles with the satanic. The address of Jesus to the wind and sea (4:35-41) is said to indicate that He is addressing the demon of the storm. Let us note right now that this applies to only one of the

⁷⁷ Bruce, op. cit., p. 176.

⁷⁸ Theodor Zahn, "Das Zeugnis der Wunder," Grundriss der Neutestamentlichen Theologie (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung D. Werner Scholl, 1928), p. 17.

nature miracles, and is a rather nebulous interpretation, as we hope to show. This is not to deny that calamities in nature are due to satanic force, nor to imply that calamities in nature are part of God's intended order for His creatures.

The contention that Jesus is addressing the demon of the storm is well presented by Engelland:

Jesus kaempft aber nicht nur in den Heilwundern und den Totenerweckungen mit daemonischen Gewalten, sondern auch anorganische Maechte koennen daemonische Hintergruende haben. In der Stillung des Sturmes begegnet er den Wellen nicht wie einer Zusammenballung toter Materie, sondern in einer Weise, in der man nur einer feindlichen Macht begegnen kann: er bedroht den Wind und ruft dem Meer die Befehlsworte zu: "Schweig und verstumme!" [σιώπα, πεφίμωβο] (Mk. 4:39), also in der gleichen Weise, in der er den Daemonen gegenebertritt: "und Jesus bedrohte ihn und sprach: Verstumme und fahre aus von ihm!" [φιμώθητε καὶ ἔφελεθε ἔξ αὐτοῦ] (Mk. 1:25; cf. Lk. 4:41).⁷⁹

This explanation of Jesus' address to the wind and sea is quite prevalent. Bruce offers another explanation.

The true view to take of the apostrophe to the storm is to conceive of it, not as spoken, with express intent to influence either the winds or the disciples, still less as addressed to Satan, the prince of the power of the air, but as the spontaneous expression of victorious faith and heroic self-possession.⁸⁰

It is a wholesome exercise to try to imagine what other words Jesus might have employed in the situation. Should He have said, addressing the disciples: "Don't worry; calm is at hand"? Or should He have

⁷⁹Hans Engelland, "Wunder," in Biblich-Theologisches Handwoerterbuch, herausgegeben von Edo Osterloh und Hans Engelland (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, c.1954), p. 697. E. Basil Redlich, St. Mark's Gospel (London: Duckworth & Company Ltd., 1948), p. 55, and Karl Helm, "The Problem of Miracles in the Light of Modern Natural Science," The Transformation of the Scientific World View, translated from the 1st German edition by W. A. Whitehouse (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1953), p. 191 are in agreement.

⁸⁰Bruce, op. cit., p. 211.

performed the miracle in silence? The fact that He addresses the storm is tremendously impressive, to say the least. Need this direct address imply anything more? On the strength of this one incident (notice also the weak verbal resemblance in the two passages involved) it would appear not. Or, are we to find a demon in the fig tree, also personally spoken to by Jesus (11:14)? The purpose of this miracle, aside from preserving the disciples and the Lord from danger, was to induce them to ask the question: "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?" (4:41). The direct address of the Lord of Nature to the storm is the most effective manner in which such an enlightening question could be evoked.

The Marcan Miracles in Context

At this point in our study we wish to "locate" the Marcan miracles. By location we imply a bit more than a listing of chapter and verse references. We want to get a picture of the miracles as they occur in their inseparable settings. To this end a rather lengthy outline of the first eleven chapters of St. Mark is submitted to the reader's cautious scrutiny in Appendix D. The outline is limited to chapters one to eleven because these are the "miracle chapters" which are our concern in this study. An effort has been made in this outline to trace the footsteps of Jesus in so far as this is possible. Thus the capital letter subdivisions usually contain a place reference. Special notice has been taken of the mounting popularity of Jesus, as well as of the mounting opposition to Him. And, of course, all references to the miraculous have been noted, especially the eighteen actual miracle stories (which are underlined in the outline). The writer suggests

that before reading further the reader carefully read the outline in Appendix D.

As seen from the outline, Mark's Gospel concentrates on the Galilean ministry of our Lord. Even in the wandering and withdrawal section (6:6b-10:52) the Sea of Galilee is the center of operations. Incidentally, our Lord spent a good many hours on this Lake, crossing and recrossing; a fact suggesting that to the well-known expression about the "footsteps" of Jesus we add "the wake of His ship."

The mounting popularity of Jesus is too obvious to be overlooked. The astonishment over His teaching in the Capernaum synagogue (1:21,22) and the amazement over the expulsion of an unclean spirit (1:23-26) spread His fame "everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee" (1:28), so that the same day at sundown "the whole city was gathered together about the door" (1:33). The publication of the Cleansing of the Leper (1:40-42) produces the result that "people came to him from every quarter" (1:45). Upon His return to Capernaum (2:1) "many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door" (2:2). At the seaside "all the crowd was gathered about him" (2:13). After the Healing of the Man with the Withered Hand (3:1-5) "a great multitude from Galilee followed; also from Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from about Tyre and Sidon a great multitude" (3:7,8). And so the story continues (cf. 3:20; 4:1; 5:21,24; 6:33ff., 53ff.; 8:1ff.; 10:1; 11:8-10).

This mounting popularity is paralleled by mounting opposition. Already in chapter two (vv. 1-12) the scribes dispute with Jesus regarding the authority to forgive sins. "Straightway" follow the disputes

about eating with tax collectors and sinners (2:15-17), about fasting (2:18-22), and about the Sabbath (2:23-28). They are already watching Jesus in the synagogue on the Sabbath (3:2), and He does heal the man with the withered hand (3:1-6) with the result that "the Pharisees went out, and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him" (3:6). He is accused of madness by His friends (3:21) and of possession by the scribes (3:22). His home town folk take offense at Him (6:3,4). His humble forerunner is decapitated (6:21-29). And so the story continues, culminating in the events of Holy Week.

Closely related to the mounting popularity and opposition are the withdrawals of Jesus, withdrawals of His person, His word and deeds. The arrest of John induces Jesus to leave the Dead Sea area and to enter Galilee (1:14). After His initial Sabbath in Capernaum (1:21-34), He goes to a lonely place to pray (1:35,36) and, being sought by the people (1:37), goes through Galilee (1:38ff.). Whether He returns to Capernaum (2:1ff.) or departs to the seaside (2:13), a crowd is always at hand or never far away. In such circumstances the "smaller circle" is appointed (3:13-19a). And to crowds who have ears only for a kingdom of this world and eyes only for the marvelous His teaching assumes the parabolic structure (4:1-34) which only "open" ears and eyes can receive. The Stilling of the Storm (4:35-41), the expulsion of the Legion of demons from the Gadarene (5:2-19), the cure of the Woman with the Flow of Blood (5:24b-34), and the Raising of Jairus' Daughter (5:35-43) lead only to rejection and unbelief, epitomized at Nazareth (6:3-6a). And so this story also continues. A picture of the "fleeing Christ," if you will, fleeing from improper popularity and premature oppositions;

withdrawing His plain word where it went unheeded, and His merciful deeds where they produced mere wonder and amazement (there are no references to "mass miracles" after chapter six).

We come now to the actual miracle stories. A cursory glance at the outline in Appendix D shows that they are quite evenly scattered throughout the first eleven chapters of St. Mark, although a concentration is observable in chapters one to six. The section 4:35-4:43 is solid miracle material. As noted above, there are no references to "mass miracles" after chapter six. Eleven of the eighteen miracle stories of Mark are contained in the first six chapters. This would appear to agree quite well with what we have noted regarding the mounting popularity and opposition, and regarding the withdrawals of Jesus' person, word and works. The works are distinctly withdrawn from Jewish Galilee after chapter six. The demon is expelled from a Syrophoenician girl (7:24-30); the deaf and "dumb" man is in the Decapolis area (7:32-35); the four thousand were most likely Gentiles (8:1-9); the Bethsaida, where the blind man is healed (8:22-26), is on the east side of the Jordan; and the epileptic boy (9:14-29) is in the region of Caesarea Philippi. The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52) is the crowning "eye-opener" after the disciples' eyes have been opened near Caesarea Philippi. It is an "open secret" that the climax of St. Mark's Gospel is the crucial question of Jesus and the critical confession of Peter (8:27-30): "You are the Christ." Heretofore only the demons had recognized this tremendous truth, and they were commanded to keep silence. Even at the occasion of Peter's confession the disciples were charged "to tell no one about him" (8:30).

But matters had progressed since then; Jesus is on the road to Jerusalem (10:32); the three passion predictions had been uttered (8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34); He is about to permit the crowds to shout their "Hosannas" and "Blesseds" (11:9,10); the great secret is out, and Bartimaeus may cry out with open spiritual eyes "Son of David" (10:47,48), to receive his physical sight and to follow Him on the way (10:52). The cursing and withering of the Fig Tree (11:13,14,20,21) was a necessary enacted parable of judgment, significantly set in its broad context of Holy Week, and its cursing and withering interspersed by the cleansing of the Temple of a religion gone to seed (11:15-18). The concentration of miracle in Mark lies in chapters one to six. From chapter seven on the miracles are in Gentile territory, with the fitting exception of the two highly symbolic miracles which conclude Mark's record of the mighty works of Jesus. To say that the footsteps of Jesus, the popularity and opposition, and the withdrawals form a harmonious and purpose-filled pattern is close to being the understatement of Marcan studies.

Is there a pattern within this pattern? Do the eighteen miracle stories themselves fall naturally into any semblance of a pattern? Or would we here be indulging in speculation and a mechanical handling of the text? The following chronological listing of the types of the eighteen miracles does not appear to yield any significant pattern.⁸¹

⁸¹ Although Austin Farrer, A Study in St. Mark (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1951), pp. 34ff. has found patterns and cycles in the miracle stories never before dreamed of. The present writer hesitates, and yet feels constrained to say that, however interesting Farrer's work may be, most of it is quite fantastic.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Expulsion | 10. Nature |
| 2. Healing | 11. Nature |
| 3. Healing | 12. Expulsion |
| 4. Healing | 13. Healing |
| 5. Healing | 14. Nature |
| 6. Nature | 15. Healing |
| 7. Expulsion | 16. Expulsion |
| 8. Healing | 17. Healing |
| 9. Resuscitation | 18. Nature |

A closer examination of the tenth to fifteenth miracles does, however, yield something of a pattern. These six miracle stories are the warp of which the spiritual condition of the Twelve is the woof.⁸² There are two parallel sections in the Marcan narrative, the first of which begins with the Feeding of the Five Thousand (6:30-44) and the Walking on the Water (6:45-52), miracles which ought to have opened the disciples' eyes to the person of Christ, but "they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened" (6:51,52). The intensive healing ministry (6:53-56), the extension of mercy to the faith-filled Gentile woman (7:24-30) and the symbol-filled cure of the deaf and "dumb" man—"a Messianic miracle of the utmost significance"⁸³—fail to open the disciples' eyes. Thus, in the second of the two parallel sections of St. Mark's Gospel Jesus goes back, as it were, and starts over again. This section likewise opens with a feeding miracle (8:1-10), followed again by a crossing of the Sea of Galilee. The failure of the disciples to understand the feeding miracles is strongly chided by the Master (8:11-21): "Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts

⁸² For this insight the writer is indebted to Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, pp. 84-87.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 85.

hardened? Do you not yet understand?" Now we move on right to the climax: the opening of the eyes of the blind man of Bethsaida (8:22-26). "The story represents an enacted parable: the opening of the eyes of St. Peter himself and his companions. The blind man of Bethsaida is none other than St. Peter, whose eyes were opened near Caesarea Philippi" (8:27-30).⁸⁴ The parallelism of the Bethsaida and Caesarea Philippi events is quite striking:

	<u>Bethsaida</u>	<u>Caesarea Philippi</u>
1. Setting	v. 23a	v. 27a
2. First question	v. 23b	v. 27b
3. Imperfect reply	v. 24	v. 28
4. Second question	v. 25a	v. 29a
5. Perfect vision	v. 25b	v. 29b
6. Secrecy ordered	v. 26	v. 30

There thus does appear to be a pattern to the miracle stories of 6:30-8:30. Admittedly, there are weaknesses in the pattern, a perfect pattern would have called for a feeding, walking on water, and healing of a blind man in that order in both parallel sections, which is, of course not the case. And yet it does appear that Jesus performed just these six major miracles during this time, or that Mark has singled these six out and set them as he has to show how while helping people, while fulfilling the Scriptures, while establishing the kingdom, while defeating its foes Jesus is beneath it all, opening the eyes of the Twelve.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 86.

CHAPTER III

THE MIRACLES' RECORD OF JESUS CHRIST

The Miracle and Preaching Ministry Compared

One need not ponder the sacred record deeply nor search it at length to realize that teaching or preaching and performing mighty works are the two features of Jesus' ministry that loom large in all four Gospels.¹ God both preached "good news of peace by Jesus Christ," and "anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power" with the result that "he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:36,38). The expression "words and works of Jesus" is a fitting alliterative description of His mission and ministry.

But not only are word and work two aspects of Jesus' ministry, they are two closely connected aspects. Eloquent testimony to this fact is given by Jesus Himself in His answer to the Baptist, where word and work are combined "as two parts or aspects of one selfsame whole."²

Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them (Mt. 11:4,5).

¹Henry J. Cadbury, Jesus What Manner of Man (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1947), p. 110.

²J. R. Illingworth, "The Signs and Wonders," The Gospel Miracles (London: Macmillan & Company Ltd., c.1915), p. 44.

The Healing of the Paralytic (2:1-12) connects Jesus' miracle and His word as closely as can be. He not only has the authority to say: "My son, your sins are forgiven" (v. 5), He has the power to work a complete and immediate physical cure. Shafto nicely points up how closely word and work are combined in Jesus' ministry and how easily He moves from one facet of the ministry to another:

More than once we have found that His activities were aptly summed up in the phrase "He went about doing good"; we must add that His conception of doing good simply does not recognize the compartments in which we are prone to classify and arrange beneficences. He passes directly and simply from one department to another and with no apparent consciousness of transition. Is the paralytic burdened with a sense of sin? Jesus forgives it. Is he inert and helpless? Jesus speaks power to the atrophied nerves and muscles with a word. Is the multitude distraught and lacking a consciousness of right direction? He teaches it. Is it hungry? He satisfies its body-need. Is a friend's heart bereaved and desolate? He comforts it, even though to do this involves calling back the beloved one who has passed on. Are people ignorant and hopeless? He spends Himself in a divine ingenuity of teaching methods. And it is all one to Him.³

A further connection of word and work is seen in the commissions to the Twelve (7:7-13; Mt. 9:35-10:23; Lk. 9:1-6) and to the Seventy (Lk. 10:1-20); their mission is also one of both word and work.

In addition to being closely connected in many contexts, word and work are intimately related to each other. To strip away the miracles and retain the teaching is idle folly. "The two are so interwoven in Mark's Gospel that nothing of real value would remain."⁴ As Manley has

³G. R. H. Shafto, The Wonders of the Kingdom (New York: George H. Doran Company, [192?]), pp. 180-81.

⁴A. T. Robertson, "The Miraculous Element in Mark's Gospel," Studies in Mark's Gospel (New York: George H. Doran Company, c.1919), p. 49.

put it: "The miracles of Christ were the deed of which the gospel was the word."⁵ And Bruce correctly points out: "Words and works are so united that the one divorced from the other would in many instances become unintelligible."⁶

So intimately related, in fact, are word and work that one is correct in saying that the miracles are a form of the teaching and preaching of Jesus. Needless to say, a powerful and pictorial form. Thieliicke remarks: "Genau so naemlich wie das Wort sich zu den Ohren verhaelt, verhaelt sich das Wunder zu den Augen. . . ." ⁷ Further, the miracles of Jesus are very similar to His parables. Not only do both parable and miracle, in most instances, present a picture of the realities of the kingdom which Jesus is establishing, but both demand the same condition in order to be rightly received: the parables "open" ears, the miracles "open" eyes—both, of course, "open" hearts.

Thieliicke, in three profound yet simple sentences, aptly states the intimate relation between word and work:

Das Wunder ist der Leib (der Wirklichkeits-Leib) des Wortes, und das Wort ist die Seele des Wunders. Wunder ist Wort von aussen gesehen; Wort ist Wunder von innen gesehen. Wort und Wunder sind zwei Seiten desselben Vorgangs: naemlich der in Gericht und Gnade hereinbrechenden neuen Welt.⁸

⁵G. T. Manley, "Miracles," The New Bible Handbook (London: The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, 1947), p. 67.

⁶A. B. Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, c.1886), p. 115.

⁷Helmut Thieliicke, "Das Wunder," Theologie der Anfechtung (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1949), p. 115.

⁸Ibid., p. 113.

Yet, despite all the parallels and affinities between the words and works of Jesus, it ought to be noted that His words, His preaching and teaching, maintain a position of dominant precedence. This holds true from the programmatic proclamation of 1:14,15 on. Thus Jesus taught in the Capernaum synagogue (1:21,22) before He expelled the demon. "He was preaching with word" (2:2) to the crowd in His house, and then the paralytic was forgiven and healed. "He began to teach them [the five thousand] many things" (6:34) and then fed them. The four thousand had been with Him three days (8:2) before they were fed; obviously He had taught them during this time. Such implications may also be safely read into many of the notices of a crowd about Jesus where no express mention of the fact that He taught them is made. True, there are passages which refer to general healings and expulsions without mentioning teaching or preaching; but to match these there are passages which refer to teaching or preaching without mentioning miracles (1:38; 2:13; 4:1ff.; 6:2,6b.; 7:11ff.; 10:1). There are two passages where both words and works are referred to in which words are placed first (1:39; 6:12,13, this latter in reference to the disciples' tour of Galilee). A review of the outline of Mark 1-11⁹ will show how closely the preaching-teaching is related to the withdrawals of Jesus. When an undesirable popularity threatened to interfere with "His essential work of preaching"¹⁰ Jesus withdrew to the next towns in order to preach there also (1:38; cf. 1:45 et al.). As unwanted popularity and inevitable

⁹See Appendix D.

¹⁰E. Basil Redlich, St. Mark's Gospel (London: Duckworth & Company Ltd., 1948), p. 53.

opposition increase, the teaching of the Twelve becomes ever more intense. And even though the number and frequency of the mighty works had greatly decreased by chapter ten, we read in 10:1: "and crowds gathered to him again; and again, as his custom was, he taught them." His "working words" and His "speaking acts" are two prominent features of Jesus' ministry, but the "working word" remains in a precedent position.

Some Limitations of the Miracles

There were many respects in which the miracles of Jesus were subject to limitations. This is a fact which must be pointed up, for, in view of the heavy miraculous element in Mark's Gospel, it is an easy thing to overlook the definite limitations of the mighty works. Thus, in a general way, the Marcan miracles are quite limited to the Jews, more particularly to the Galilean Jews. As we have already noted, the miraculous activity of Jesus is concentrated in His earlier ministry. By and large the ministrations of mercy are extended only to faith-filled recipients. Nor does Jesus seek for sufferers in order to heal them; when they come to Him He heals them—a point often overlooked.¹¹ And to those who, out of a tempting and unbelieving heart, seek a sign, nothing but a stern and blunt refusal is given (8:11,12). In these ways the ministry of miracles was subject to limitations.

With regard to the character of the miracles themselves we notice

¹¹The only apparent exception to this rule is the man at the Pool of Bethesda whom Jesus approached with the words: "Do you want to be healed?" (Jn. 5:6).

limitations also. Jesus walked in a world of wonder-workers and miracle-mongers, but His mighty works, although possibly of the same general type as the products of the thaumaturges, are totally different in character. Meaningless marvels and needless wonders have no place in His ministry. Even Renan admitted that "the marvellous in the Gospels is but sober good sense compared with that which we meet in the Jewish apocryphal writings or in the Hindu or European mythologies."¹² The role of wonder-worker was precisely the one which Satan held out before Jesus (Mt. 4:3-7; cf. Mk. 1:12,13) and which He rejected then and again (8:11,12; Mt. 26:53,54). Further, as McGinley points out: "Unlike non-Christian wonder-workers of His time, Jesus is never presented in the synoptic tradition as the healer-avenger, who sometimes cures and sometimes maims" (Lk. 9:52-56 is explicit testimony to the contrary).¹³ The wonder-worker draws about himself those on whom he has worked his wonders, but Jesus so often commands His "patients" to be silent; He sends the leper to the priest (1:44), the Gadarene demoniac back home (5:19); He withdraws ever and again when wonder-seeking crowds threaten to defeat His purposes. Further, while the miraculous element forms an essential part of the Gospel history, it is not unduly prominent. The evangelists are neither extravagant in their description of the mighty

¹²Quoted in John T. Driscoll, "Miracle," in The Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: Robert Appleton Company, c.1911), X, 347.

¹³Laurence J. McGinley, Form-Criticism of the Synoptic Healing Narratives (Woodstock, Md.: Woodstock College Press, c.1924), p. 146, Footnote 5. This book is an excellent analysis of the Formgeschichte method applied to the healing narratives. See especially pp. 150-52, where the Synoptic traits are shown to differ from the Rabbinic and Hellenic.

works, nor do they record the half of all the miracles which Jesus performed (cf. Jn. 20:30). "The style of the miracle-histories, like that of the Gospels throughout, is calm, condensed, sober."¹⁴

A further limitation of the mighty works is observable in the fact that Jesus never employed them for personal advantage. He remained the Helper and Servant, gaining nothing for Himself, neither honor, nor gifts, nor protection. Never is His power employed for personal ease, gratification, or convenience. "Nothing was done by extraordinary which could be done by ordinary means."¹⁵ Gould nicely summarizes the above paragraphs when he writes:

A scheme of miracles which rigorously excludes everything but works of beneficence—all miracles of personal preservation, of punishment, or mere thaumaturgy, never occurred to any one but Jesus. The moment we go forward or back from him in Jewish history we find all three.¹⁶

As a final observation on the limitations of the miracles of Jesus we note that they were not "evidential" in character, they were not designed to prove the heavenly origin, the divine authority, or the divine sonship of Jesus. In the days in which Jesus performed His mighty works a miracle might be encountered by any one any day of the week at any turn, and the ability to work miracles was far from being

¹⁴Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels, p. 121. The reader is referred to a fine refutation of attempts to make Jesus out as a wonder-worker in Alan Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1941), pp. 22ff.

¹⁵T. H. Wright, "Miracles," in A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1908), II, 188.

¹⁶Ezra P. Gould, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1896), p. 34.

considered a proof of divinity. As Richardson rightly remarks: "At most the miraculous element in the Gospel story could prove only that Jesus was a good man."¹⁷ Neither Jesus nor the apostles attached an evidential significance to the mighty works. Although a time came when, in a last futile effort to win over the unbelieving, Jesus did point to His works as proof that He came from God (Jn. 10:38), "he did not parade them in this light, as being, so to say, ocular demonstrations of divinity."¹⁸ Jesus was not a "heavenly bellman" who called attention to His divinity by His works.¹⁹ "The Divinity of Jesus," says Fisher, "is a truth which rests upon His testimony and that of the apostles, and not upon the fact that He performed works exceeding human power."²⁰ The mighty works are indeed signs, testimonies and proofs to those who have received Jesus in faith, but they signify, testify and prove nothing to those whose hearts are hardened to the Incarnate God. A man must first take his stand with reference to Christ, then the miracles fall into place; if he confronts the miracles first, he will understand neither them nor the One who performed them. The miracles are not seals

¹⁷Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 21, footnote 1.

¹⁸A. Graham, "The Person and Teaching of Our Lord Jesus Christ," in A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture, edited by Bernard Orchard et al. (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1953), p. 779.

¹⁹Archibald M. Hunter, "The Mighty Works," The Work and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), p. 55.

²⁰George P. Fisher, "The Nature and Function of the Christian Miracles," Essays on the Supernatural Origin of Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), p. 497.

attached to a document, to be examined in an effort to determine the character and authority of its contents, they are part of the document itself.²¹

The Primary Proclamation of the Miracles

The fulfillment of Scripture

The writer of Deuteronomy closes his book with the significant statement:

And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, none like him for all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in all the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, and for all the mighty power and all the great and terrible deeds which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel (Deut. 34:10-12).

In the Jesus of the Gospel history the prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18:18; cf. Acts 3:22-23; 7:37) has appeared, in fulfillment of this as well as of the hundreds of other prophetic predictions of the Old Testament Scriptures. Judaism awaited such a Messiah, One endowed with divine power to restore, remake and renew the fallen world order. A Messiah without miracles, even a prophet without miracles, would have been somewhat unlikely to Jesus' contemporaries, although John the Baptist, even though he performed no miracles, was considered a prophet. But to the same John, who came to have his doubts in prison, Jesus pointed to His miracles as indications of the fact that He was "he who is to come":

²¹ Hunter, The Work and Words of Jesus, p. 55.

Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them (Mt. 11:4-6; cf. Is. 35:5,6; 61:1).

St. Mark, unlike St. Matthew and the other evangelists, omits formal Old Testament quotations. He quotes the Old Testament but once (1:2,3), although he represents Jesus as quoting it, and has nineteen formal Old Testament quotations. Westcott suggests the following implication of these facts:

The living portraiture of Christ is offered in the clearness of His present energy, not as the Fulfilment [*sic*] of the Past, nor even as the foundation of the Future. His acts prove that He is both; but this is a deduction from the narrative, and not the subject of it.²²

But such a "deduction" is certainly legitimate and necessary to a proper understanding of the Marcan miracle stories. Indeed Hoskyns and Davey go so far as to say that "neither Matthew nor Luke is able fully to detect the whole wealth of Old Testament allusion contained in the Marcan miraculous narratives."²³

The Old Testament roots of the healing narratives of Mark's Gospel are amply indicated in Is. 35:5,6 (cf. 29:18; 32:3f.; 42:7; 61:1; Ezek. 24:27):

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then shall the lame man leap like a hart,
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.

²²B. F. Westcott, An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels (6th edition; Cambridge: Macmillan & Company, 1881), pp. 365-66.

²³Edwyn Hoskyns and Noel Davey, "Miracles, Parables, and Aphorisms," The Riddle of the New Testament (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1931), p. 126. See pp. 117ff. for a fine discussion of miracles, emphasizing their fulfillment aspect.

The word here translated as "dumb" (μοιλάλων in the Septuagint) is the same word used to describe the deaf and "dumb" man of 7:31-37 (v. 32, μοιλάλον). This word, descriptive of one who stammers or speaks with difficulty, is found in only these two places in the entire Greek Bible. Thus, this healing incident especially is closely tied to its Old Testament prophecy and suggests that the Marcan healing narratives depend for their understanding upon the detection of the Old Testament allusions which they embody.²⁴ The remark of the people which follows the healing of the deaf and "dumb" man is very instructive: "He has done all things well; he even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak" (7:37). They might just as well have said: "How exactly He fulfils [sic] the prophecies!"²⁵

The expulsions of demons rest, among other prophecies, on the first promise (Gen. 3:15) and need no special elucidation here. But what about the nature miracles? Here again the Old Testament background reveals itself to the diligent searcher. The two feeding miracles recall the manna which Moses dispensed in the wilderness (both feedings took place in the desert) and the one hundred men whom Elisha fed with twenty loaves of barley (2 Kgs. 4:42-44; cf. Jn. 6:9, where, in connection with the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the loaves are said to be of barley). Richardson aptly comments:

²⁴Ibid., pp. 119-20.

²⁵A. E. J. Rawlinson, "The Messianic Signs," Christ in the Gospels (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), p. 36.

It was appropriate that Jesus, Who stood between Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, and Who had come to fulfil [sic] the Law and the Prophets, should authenticate His mission by means of the signs which they had given.²⁶

The Stilling of the Storm prompts the question: "Who then is this, that even the wind and sea obey him?" The answer is supplied in Ps. 65:7: "who dost still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves." The Walking on the Water finds its background in Job 9:8 (cf. 38:16): "who alone stretched out the heavens, and trampled [walked, $\overline{\text{I}} \overline{\text{I}} \overline{\text{I}}$] the waves of the sea." The Old Testament sea metaphors are fraught with danger and fear, and portray the confused and troubled world of sinners (cf. Is. 57:20). The sea incidents of the Gospels picture Jesus' authority and power over the violent sea and His ability to produce a peaceful calm—all in fulfillment of the Scriptures. Recalling the symbolic character of the Cursing of the Fig Tree, we see that this mighty work too falls into place as fulfillment (cf. Jer. 8:13; Joel 1:7; Ezek. 17:24; Hos. 9:10, 16f.). The fig tree represents Judaism. "The leaves of the tree are the empty ceremonies, professions and traditions by which the Jews attempted to cover up the nakedness of their spiritual life. . . ." ²⁷ Here is another in a series of judgments on the apostate race.

So full is the aspect of the fulfillment of Scripture in the miracles of Jesus, that Alan Richardson, who has come into print on

²⁶ Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 95. Regarding the transfer from Elisha to Elijah Richardson says in a footnote: "Elisha, upon whom Elijah's mantle had fallen, must be regarded as the shadow of which Elijah is the substance."

²⁷ Ibid., p. 56.

the subject of the miracle stories in more than one publication, is so bold as to say: "Every [italics mine] miracle in the Gospels may be regarded as the fulfillment of some OT conception of God and his Messiah."²⁸

God's power is at work in Jesus through the Holy Spirit

"The Hebrew mind," says Richardson, "dwells not so much upon the being of God as upon his activity; God cannot be known to us in his inner being, but only in so far as he reveals himself to us through his acts."²⁹ The God of the Bible is the God who acts, and His actions are always powerful. "As in the Old Testament, so in the New, what we call miracles were looked upon as manifestations of divine power."³⁰ A proper reading of Mark's Gospel forces on us the impression that a power is entering this world, a "power nothing less than the ultimate divine power redeeming men from all evil."³¹ That power operates in and through Jesus. "Christ is to the New Testament writers the manifestation of the power of God in the world, and His mighty deeds are the signs of the effectual working of that power."³² He is the "Mighty God" of Is. 9:6.

²⁸ Alan Richardson, "Miracle," in A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1950), p. 154.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 153.

³⁰ Frederick C. Grant, "Miracles," An Introduction to New Testament Thought (New York: Abingdon Press, c.1950), p. 114.

³¹ John A. Allan, "The Gospel of the Son of God Crucified," Interpretation, IX (April, 1955), 135.

³² Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 126.

The fact that God was at work in the life of Jesus is the explicit testimony of Nicodemus ("no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him," Jn. 3:2) and of the apostolic preaching:

Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst, . . . (Acts 2:22).

how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him (Acts 10:38).

This last passage, closely linking power with the Holy Spirit, reveals the divine source of Jesus' *δυναμεις* --it is in the power of the Spirit that He carries out His mighty mission. It is in Luke's Gospel, "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit," that this truth is especially emphasized. But Mark is not entirely devoid of it (cf. the descent of the Spirit at Jesus' Baptism in 1:10, and the Spirit's role in the Temptation, 1:12), and it is more than a pious wish to state that the Marcan narrative presupposes the ministry in the power of the Spirit throughout. But to Luke we must turn for two important references. The first is the lection of our Lord in the Nazareth synagogue:

He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of the sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk. 4:17-19; cf. Mk. 6:2; Is. 61:1-2).

Here is a clear statement that Jesus regards not only His preaching but also His mighty works as created and sustained by the Spirit.³³ The other Lucan passage of note here is in the context of the Beelzebub Controversy, where Jesus says: "But if it is by the finger of God that

³³D. S. Cairns, The Faith That Rebels (6th edition; London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), p. 89.

I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Lk. 11:20). Matthew renders this saying "by the Spirit of God" (Mt. 12:28), perhaps betraying "a deep theological motive at work in the choice of the alternate phrase, 'the Spirit of God.'"³⁴ It is significant also that immediately following the Beelzebub Controversy the sin against the Holy Ghost is spoken of (cf. Mt. 12:31,32; Mk. 3:28-30). The secret of Jesus' power to expel demons lies in His possession of the Holy Spirit, "and there is no better explanation of his works of healing,"³⁵ or of any of His mighty works.

Our brief section on the divine power at work in Jesus through the Holy Spirit is fittingly summed up by Grundmann:

Seine Kraft hat er im heiligen Geist. . . . Der Geist, der seine Existenz aus Gott sichtbar macht und seine Existenz mit Gott verbindet, schliesst in eben diesem Ursprung seiner Existenz und in dieser Verbindung seiner Existenz die Kraftbegabung ein. So gewiss Gottes Wesen Kraft ist, so gewiss ist mit der Gabe seines Geistes die Kraftbegabung verbunden. Die Geistbegabung gibt ihm ἐξουσία, eine ganz bestimmte persönliche Vollmacht, zu deren Verwirklichung er die—substantiell gedachte—δύναμις hat.³⁶

God's kingdom is here in the person of Jesus

The programmatic proclamation of our Lord, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand [is here]; repent, and believe in the

³⁴Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 39, footnote 1.

³⁵Vincent Taylor, "The Life and Ministry of Jesus," The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c.1951), VII, 120.

³⁶Walter Grundmann, "Δύναμις," in Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 300-01.

gospels" (1:15), sets the tone and tenor for His entire ministry. The advent of Jesus is the advent of God's redemptive rule in action, the breaking in upon the stage of history of the divine visitation and redemption. It is a rule in the hearts of individual men as well as in the realm of the community of such hearts--the Church. It is both contemporaneous and eschatological, "already" and "not yet," present and to fully come. Jesus Himself is all that this *Basileia* implies and involves; He is the *Autobasileia* (Lk. 17:21).

The phrase "kingdom of God" occurs fourteen times in Mark's Gospel (1:15; 4:11,26,30; 9:1,47; 10:14,15,23-25; 12:34; 14:25; 15:43) and always on the lips of Jesus. Although it never occurs in explicit connection with the miracle stories, this by no means indicates that the mighty works are somehow excluded from the kingdom, but only that Mark is presupposing the reader's recognition that the miracles are part and parcel of the in-breaking kingdom.

It is especially the German scholars who have caught the significance of this "kingdom aspect" of the mighty works of Jesus. Thielicke, for example, says:

Denn Krankenheilungen, Dämonenaustreibungen und Totenerweckungen sind eben in spezifischer Weise indirekte Kennzeichen und indirekte Nachwirkungen--wieder in eins!--der hereinbrechenden Gottesherrschaft. Denn das eben ist doch das Zeichen dieser basileia, nein, das ist sie selber: dass die Lahmen gehen und die Blinde sehen und den Armen die frohe Nachricht verkündet wird (Mt. 11:5).³⁷

³⁷ Thielicke, op. cit., p. 104. Cf. Theodor Zahn, "Das Zeugnis der Wunder," Grundriss der Neutestamentlichen Theologie (Leipzig: A Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung D. Werner Scholl, 1928), p. 17; Grundmann, op. cit., p. 302; Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of The Gospels, pp. 36-58.

That Jesus Himself regarded His miracles as evidences of the presence of the kingdom is the import of the Beelzebub Controversy (Mt. 12:25-37; Mk. 3:22-30; Lk. 11:17-23). The strong man's house has been entered; his kingdom is being supplanted by the kingdom. We shall have more to say on this aspect of the proclamation of the mighty works in the following section.

The Healing of the Paralytic (2:1-12) is especially replete with latent kingdom implications. We refer to the use of Jesus' favorite title "the Son of Man" and to the forgiveness of sins explicitly pronounced in connection with this cure. "But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins—he said to the paralytic—I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home" (2:10,11). Denny's remark on the use of the Son of Man is most applicable to this miracle:

It is the name which describes Jesus in His vocation as the Person through whom the Kingdom of God is established, It is relative to the Kingdom of God, just as the Son, simpliciter, is relative to the Father; but the Kingdom of God to which it is relative is a kingdom of grace in which men are forgiven all their iniquities and healed of all their diseases.³⁸

This story with its significant title (Son of Man) and with its healing combined with forgiveness is a picture of the present kingdom, in which there is life in place of death, joy in place of suffering, a closeness to God in place of divine judgment, forgiveness in place of condemnation.³⁹

³⁸James Denny, Jesus and the Gospel (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, c.1908), pp. 276-77.

³⁹Thielicke, op. cit., p. 107.

The fact that Jesus claimed freedom from the Sabbath restrictions is also an indication that in and with Him the Messianic Age, the kingdom, had dawned.⁴⁰ In claiming to be Lord of the Sabbath (2:28), He is indicating that this "ritual anticipation of the Messianic Age"⁴¹ has now served its purpose, because God's Rest is here, on its way to perfect fulfillment in the eternal Sabbath. To emphasize this truth, despite the fact, or rather because of the fact that it so infuriated His enemies (cf. 3:6), Jesus went out of His way, it seems, to heal on the Sabbath. There are seven Sabbath healings in the Gospels, including one expulsions:

1. The Unclean Spirit in the Synagogue at Capernaum, 1:21-28.
2. Simon's Wife's Mother, 1:29-31 (although this seems to be an "unintentional" case).
3. The Healing of the Withered Hand, 3:1-6.
4. The Bent Woman, Lk. 13:10-17.
5. The Dropsical Man, Lk. 14:1-6.
6. The Impotent Man at Bethesda, Jn. 5:1-18.
7. The Man Born Blind, Jn. 9.⁴²

When Thielicke says that miracle "ist das Stueck einer Geschichte Gottes mit seinen verlorenen und gesuchten und gefundenen Kindern,"⁴³

⁴⁰See Mk. 1:21, 29; 2:23-3:6; Mt. 12:11; Lk. 6:6-11; 13:10-16; 14:5; Jn. 5:16-18; 7:23 for Jesus' attitude toward the Sabbath.

⁴¹Archibald M. Hunter, The Gospel According to Saint Mark (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1948), p. 43.

⁴²Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 77.

⁴³Thielicke, op. cit., p. 134.

he reminds us to note that the kingdom of God with its obvious manifestation of power in the mighty works is also the kingdom in which there is both forgiveness (as we have noted) and grace, as well as a divine sympathetic compassion and pity for suffering and sinful humanity. "Healings were the marks of grace;"⁴⁴ "Their motive was mercy. . . . The Redemption is a work of mercy, and the miracles reveal the mercy of God in the works of His Incarnate Son. . . ."⁴⁵ In addition to the symbolic and didactic purposes which the mighty works served, they were performed for the immediate remedying of suffering people and for the revelation thereby of God's love and pity.⁴⁶ The significant verb $\epsilon\pi\lambda\alpha\chi\upsilon\iota\zeta\epsilon\theta\alpha\iota$ ("move with compassion") occurs in 1:41⁴⁷ in the Cure of the Leper, in 6:34 in direct connection with the Feeding of the Five Thousand, and in 8:2 in direct connection with the Feeding of the Four Thousand. Also of note here is that Jesus "had mercy on" the Gadarene demoniac (5:19). Even Richardson, who strongly disparages the compassion motive for the Gospel miracles, admits:

We cannot, we dare not, deny that a motive behind the mighty works of Jesus was compassion, or that they are to be understood as parables of the gracious mercy of God towards those who are in affliction;⁴⁸

⁴⁴Henry M. Battenhouse, Christ in the Gospels (New York: The Ronald Press Company, c.1952), p. 186.

⁴⁵Driscoll, op. cit., p. 346.

⁴⁶Wright, op. cit., p. 188.

⁴⁷Although the D reading $\sigma\upsilon\lambda\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ is felt by some to have good warrant; e.g. Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 33.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 32. See pp. 29-34 for a full discussion of this question by Richardson.

And this is all that the present paragraph intends to point up, lest we become so involved in the tremendous theological aspects of the kingdom as presented in the miracles that we fail to see the trees for the forest, fail to appreciate that the simple Christian, especially the suffering Christian, has always seen in these works of mercy a compassionate Savior, "the friend of men, bearing by sympathy their sicknesses as well as their sorrows and sins as a burden on his heart."⁴⁹

The enemy is being worsted

In the New Testament there are two great kingdoms, the kingdom of the prince of this world and the kingdom of God.⁵⁰ The one is being established, the other must be demolished. "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn. 3:8). And what an array of "works" Satan places before Him!

He sets every body and every thing in motion against God. The ruler persecutes the children of his territory, . . . the pious, the theologians, the priests all accuse him, one of his own disciples betrays him, the populace throw stones at him, . . . the Roman judge condemns him. . . . The reasons for this hostility are different in every case, but the relentlessness of it is universal. People who are at enmity among themselves find themselves allied in the fight against Christ. . . . A "United Front" is formed, held together by nothing else than a defense against Christ. . . . But where does the unanimity of this mortal enmity come from? It is the spirit of the adversary, answers the NF,

⁴⁹A. B. Bruce, "Jesus," in Encyclopaedia Biblica, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1901), II, col. 2446.

⁵⁰Werner Foerster, "Δαίμων," in Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 18.

which is active in them all. . . . Jesus tells his persecutors the same thing to their face in Luke 22:53: "This is . . . the power of darkness."⁵¹

Especially the will of Christ bore the brunt of a threefold demonic attack: the triple temptation in the wilderness (Mt. 4:1-11; Lk. 4:1-13); the satanic rebuke of Peter (Mt. 16:22,23); and the fight between self-will and God's will in the garden. To each assault the triumphant words: "Thy will be done" proclaim Jesus the Victor, for here at long last has appeared "the first and only one who has never fallen to the seductions of the old serpent."⁵² He came off as Conqueror in the wilderness (1:12,13); He boldly proclaimed the arrival of the kingdom (1:14,15); and He went straight to the battle when all hell then broke loose in the second half of St. Mark's first chapter, which has been fittingly subtitled "the conflict of the kingdoms" (note the concentration of miraculous activity on the part of Jesus in 1:21-45, initiated by the expulsion of a demon).

The expulsion of the demons is the most obvious counterattack against the enemy. As Zahn comments:

Besonders die massenhaften Heilungen Daemonischer durch sein blosses Wort, also durch Geist und ohne materielles Mittel, wollte Jesus als einen Beweis dafuer angesehen haben, dass die Macht der boesen Geisterwelt durch ihn gebrochen und somit die Alleinherrschaft Gottes in der Schoepfung durch ihn begruendet sei (Mt. 8:16f.; 12:28; Lk. 11:20).⁵³

⁵¹Ethelbert Stauffer, "The Kingdom of God and the Demonic Powers," New Testament Theology, translated from the 5th German edition by John Marsh (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1955), p. 123.

⁵²Ibid., p. 124.

⁵³Zahn, op. cit., p. 16.

The demons know who is confronting them;⁵⁴ they know what lies before them. They protest that their time has not yet run out (5:7,10). "Jesus does not torment them (Mk. 5:12f.), neither does he carry out final sentence upon them yet. But wherever he meets them he drives them before him;"⁵⁵ The implication of the Beelzebub Controversy (3:22-27) in this connection is too obvious to need comment. The strong man has been bound, his house entered, and his goods are being spoiled.

The healings present an attack on Satan also. "The Satanic will to destruction lies also behind the whole range of sicknesses which distort the human body and slowly destroy it."⁵⁶ Again Acts 10:38 is instructive: "He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil," The Raising of Jarius' Daughter (as well as the other resuscitations of the Gospels) spells victory over him who has the power of death, and unmistakably points forward to the destruction of this "last enemy" (1 Cor. 15:26).

Thus he who would dethrone God and destroy His creation is being worsted, together with his minions, in the mighty ministry of Jesus. Here is the bruised Seed crushing the serpent's head. "The irresistible

⁵⁴The demons always make a confession of Jesus in Mark's account of the expulsions. The only exceptions are the Gentile daughter (7:24-30), which was an expulsion at a distance; and the epileptic boy (9:14-29) whom the demon had rendered dumb and thus his medium could not make confession for him.

⁵⁵Stauffer, op. cit., p. 124.

⁵⁶Karl Heim, "The Problem of Miracles in the Light of Modern Natural Science," The Transformation of the Scientific World View, translated from the 1st German edition by W. A. Whitehouse (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1953), p. 190.

power of the civitas diaboli is broken; the civitas dei must be at its dawn!"⁵⁷

The eschatological outlook

The Scriptures found fulfillment in Jesus, but there is much in them which is still prophecy. The power of God was active in Jesus, but it still has much work to do. The kingdom has come, and yet we pray: "Thy kingdom come." The enemy has been stricken, but not yet destroyed. The outlook of the New Testament is eschatological. The mighty works of Jesus, too, point to the perfection at the consummation. "Die Wunder Jesu," says Grundmann, "sind wie seine ganze Geschichte eschatologisches Geschehen."⁵⁸

The battle of Jesus against the devil and his demons is a foreshadowing of the last battle with its final defeat of the forces of evil (Rev. 20:10). The eschatological significance of the resurrections of Jesus, especially of His own resurrection, is impossible to overestimate. With deep insight into this truth, Engelland writes:

Entscheidend sind unter den Wundern Jesu die Totenerweckungen, . . . weil sich in ihnen das kommende Endschicksal des Todes ankuendigt, als dessen Herr er sich in ihnen erweist. Darum ist das Wunder der Auferweckung Jesu, durch die Gott ihm nicht wie etwa Lazarus nur in dieses Leben zurueckruft, das eines Tages doch haette wieder enden muessen, sondern ihm zu seinem eigenen Leben erweckt und dadurch seine Uebermacht ueber den Tod bezeugt, . . . Die Auferweckung Jesu ist die Entscheidungsschlacht

⁵⁷Stauffer, op. cit., p. 125.

⁵⁸Grundmann, op. cit., p. 302.

Gottes, und alles Kommende—die Wiederkunft Christi, die Auferstehung der Toten, die neue Welt Gottes—ist nur ihre Folge.⁵⁹

The picture which the mighty works of Jesus present is the picture of the Revelation of St. John, a picture of the destruction of all evil and the perfection of the original mighty works of the Creator. They foreshadow the restoration of nature to her paradisiacal position (cf. Rom. 8:19-23), when hunger and thirst will be unknown (cf. the feedings and the Wedding at Cana; Rev. 7:16), and natural disorders unheard of (cf. the sea incidents; the Walking on the Water even hints at new "laws" for nature), and where fig trees will never wither (by indirect inference from the fig tree incident). The miracles are harbingers of the New Age, "when sin, suffering and death will be no more."⁶⁰ They are "fragments of heaven in the life of time,"⁶¹ "moments when the sunless light of the new Jerusalem suffuses earth."⁶² In the words of Battenhouse:

They represent moments in history when, by the uplifted "finger of God," the common order of things was interrupted: the blind saw; the lame walked; the demon of evil was cast out; and, for a time, life on earth was as it should be, altogether natural, as at the first creation—a little space of Eden restored in a world of sin.⁶³

⁵⁹Hans Engelland, "Wunder," in Biblich-Theologisches Handwörterbuch, herausgegeben von Edo Osterloh und Hans Engelland (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, c.1954), p. 697.

⁶⁰Grant, op. cit., p. 151. Cf. C. S. Lewis, Miracles (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1947), pp. 169-95.

⁶¹Cairns, op. cit., p. 67.

⁶²Illingworth, op. cit., p. 48.

⁶³Battenhouse, op. cit., pp. 185-86.

Many scholars have expressed themselves on this bright subject, for it lends itself admirably to flowery phrases and moving sentences inspired by the glorious hope under description, but no one has excelled

Thielicke's words:

Diese beiden Pole "Zeit" und "Ewigkeit," aion houtos und aion mellon kommen sich so in der Heilsgeschichte Gottes hier und jetzt in blitzenden Entladungen nahe. Das Wunder ist ein Funken dieses Blitzes. Und nur der versteht das Wunder richtig, der es zusammen mit dem Wort des Lebendigen Gottes versteht als diesen Blitz, der die Finsternis ueber den Voelkern und das Dunkal ueber dem Erdreich erhellt, und der so--in Lichte seines Strahles-- durch die Nacht dieses aeons hindurchgeht und jener wetterleuchtenden Verheissung am ihrem Horizont entgegenkuehlt.⁶⁴

The Method of Jesus

Did Jesus practice "accommodation" in the performance of His mighty works? Did He accommodate Himself to the techniques and approaches of the healers of His time? Was His thought world limited to the medical and scientific knowledge of the day? Did He use the "power of suggestion" in His cures? And was it in virtue of His perfect manhood or of His almighty deity that these miracles were done? These are the questions which shall concern us in this section of our study. They are questions which are much easier to ask than to answer. We shall find ourselves at a loss to answer "Yes" or "No" in some cases. In fact, one almost wishes he could pass over this section of a study of the Marcan miracles. It is less edifying than the sections we have just completed. And yet a sense of honesty and a striving for a semblance of completeness induces the present writer to grapple with these questions.

⁶⁴Thielicke, op. cit., p. 134.

Grundmann, after having called attention to the fact that the world in which Jesus lived was full of miracles and miracle-mongers, states the threefold way in which he believes the miracles of Jesus are different from the other miracles of His day:

(a) Die nat.lichen Wunder Jesu haben nichts zu tun mit Zauberei und magischen Mitteln und Vorgaengen. . . . (b) Die Wunder werden hervorgerufen durch das krafterfuellte Wort Jesu, das mit Zauberformeln nichts zu tun hat. . . . (c) Die Wunder haben zur Voraussetzung den Glauben des Tasters und dessen, der das Wunder empfaengt. Sie werden also in einer durchaus personalen Beziehung vollzogen.⁶⁵

Grundmann's three points will probably find few objectors. And yet there are those who see an accommodation technique in the laying on of hands and especially in the use of spittle (7:31-37; 8:22-26; cf. Jn. 9:6). Mark mentions that Jesus used His hands on Peter's mother-in-law (1:31), the leper (1:41), the daughter of Jairus (5:41), the general reference in 6:5, the blind man at Bethsaida (8:23), and the demoniac boy (9:27).⁶⁶ That a healer was expected to touch a sick person is the testimony of 5:23; 7:32; 8:22, where Jesus was requested to touch Jairus' daughter, the deaf and "dumb" man, and the blind man at Bethsaida. Boggs explains this use of hands by Jesus as "reinforcing the power of suggestion."

He writes:

This type of technique was used by many healers in ancient times, and while it may not have been essential to the actual process of healing, it unquestionably had some value in reinforcing the power of suggestion, since the people of that day were accustomed to such a technique.⁶⁷

⁶⁵Grundmann, op. cit., pp. 301-02.

⁶⁶There are also several references to the fact that Jesus was touched by others, cf. 3:10; 5:27-31; 6:56.

⁶⁷Wade H. Boggs, Jr., Faith Healing and the Christian Faith (Richmond: John Knox Press, c.1956), p. 67.

This is as reverent a comment as one will find among those scholars who bother to discuss the question. But what more affectionate and symbolic method could Jesus have used to indicate to a sufferer that He was about to cure him, than by laying His hands upon him or taking him by the hand? Need we read anything more than such affection and symbolism into the case in question? Richardson is certainly correct when he reminds us that:

In the world of the Bible, signs and gestures count for a great deal; men fall down on their faces, they kneel in humility or respect, they beat their breasts, rend their garments, kiss one another, laugh and weep, feast and fast, gird themselves, shake the dust off their feet, lift up their heads and cast down their eyes, shave their heads or wear fringes on their clothes—everything is done with a wealth of symbolic action which is quite foreign to the mind of the sophisticated European or American of the twentieth century. It would have been strange indeed if the Evangelists had recorded the wonderful works of Jesus without remarking upon His characteristic gestures, so full of meaning to those who have eyes to see.⁶⁸

The use of spittle is a bit more difficult. In the case of the deaf and "dumb" man (7:31-37), Jesus put His fingers into his ears, touched his tongue with saliva, looked up to heaven, sighed, and then spoke the one word "Ephphatha." In the case of the blind man at Bethsaida (8:22-26), Jesus spit on his eyes, put His hands upon him, and asked him if he saw anything. Upon learning that his vision was as yet imperfect, Jesus put His hands upon his eyes and the cure was complete. Both "patients" were taken aside from the crowd. Hoskyns and Davey hold that Matthew and Luke omitted these stories because they present Jesus as a "superstitious wonder-worker," and "the procedure of

⁶⁸ Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, pp. 52-53.

the editors [Matthew and Luke] shows their anxiety to be rid of this impression."⁶⁹ That the use of spittle in the cure of blindness was the accepted practice of Jesus' day cannot be denied. McGinley, who has done a thorough comparison of the Rabbinic, Hellenic and Synoptic healing narratives, lists the use of spittle as the only detail common to all three traditions. He offers as the main difference between Jesus' cures involving saliva and those of the Rabbinic and Hellenic traditions the fact that Jesus healed because He willed the cure. "The Jewish usage is partly medical, partly imprecatory. In the Hellenic examples we have either a preternatural remedy or a magic charm."⁷⁰ Boggs again introduces the power of suggestion as the answer to the use of spittle.⁷¹ That both cures are highly symbolic, intending to lead the "patients" to an attitude of trustful expectancy, cannot be denied. The gradualness of the cure of the blind man of Bethsaida is probably to be explained, as Gould does so, by the fact that "Jesus is contending here against a dull, slow-moving faith, which hinders the ordinary immediateness of the cure."⁷² What must be emphatically stated is that neither Jesus nor St. Mark imagined that there was any healing virtue in the spittle or in the touch. Had this been the case, Jesus would have employed and Mark would have recorded at least the laying on of hands in each and every cure. But the paralytic (2:1-12), the man with

⁶⁹ Hoakyns and Davey, op. cit., pp. 117-18.

⁷⁰ McGinley, op. cit., p. 150.

⁷¹ Boggs, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

⁷² Gould, op. cit., pp. 149-50; a very reverent and highly satisfactory explanation of the two "saliva cures" is here presented.

the withered hand (3:1-6), and blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52) were cured by Jesus' word alone!⁷³ "The practice of Jesus seems to have varied, and His action to have been adapted in each case to the mental state of the person healed. One He healed by a word, another by word and deed combined."⁷⁴

Did Jesus practice accommodation in the cases of demon possession? One thing is obvious: Jesus had nothing whatever to do with the techniques of contemporary exorcists. He nowhere employed "incantations based on sacred names, and knowledge of the demon's name; jealously guarded secret knowledge of efficacious herbs; noises and music; ritualistic precautions, etc."⁷⁵ He expelled demons with a word, without the aid of "spells or charms." And this holds true in every case of expulsion narrated in the Gospels. One expulsion was accomplished at a distance (The Gentile daughter, 7:24-30), an accomplishment unheard of in contemporary exorcist practice. That the people immediately recognized the difference between the expulsions of Jesus and the others they had witnessed is expressly stated in the words following the expulsion of the demon in the Capernaum synagogue: "What is this? A new teaching! With authority he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him" (1:27). But Hoskyns and Davey have an objection:

⁷³ The nature miracles also involve nothing more than Jesus' word, unless one wants to quibble about the fact that Jesus had a few loaves and fish to start with in the feedings.

⁷⁴ Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels, pp. 203-04.

⁷⁵ S. Vernon McGasland, By the Finger of God (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1951), p. 102.

in the exorcism of the demoniac of the tombs, Jesus cannot cast the devil out until he has learned his name. Knowledge of a name was commonly considered by the ancients to give power over its owner, and a formula for exorcism in the great Magical Papyrus of Paris leaves a space for the name of the devil who is to be cast out.⁷⁶

How very strange that Jesus did not say: "Legion, I adjure thee by God to come out of him!" Although Jesus asks the name, He drives the demon out by His personal command.⁷⁷

But what of the fact that Jesus accepted the existence of demons? And that He did so needs no lengthy demonstration here. First of all, we must recall that Jesus had to speak and act in a way that was understandable to His contemporaries—although even this fact must be qualified in that many of Jesus' words were not understood, and His greatest act, the sacrifice on the cross, was unthinkable to the men of His age. And yet in the common, ordinary dealings with men He spoke their language and conducted Himself as a first century Palestinian Jew. To be Man in a real sense His Incarnation thus qualified Him. He "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:52); "he learned obedience through what he suffered" (Heb. 5:8); the Son does not know "that day or that hour" (13:32). There was a certain circle of ideas which Jesus accepted in becoming Man in the same way in which He accepted a particular language with its grammar and vocabulary.⁷⁸ Jesus thus accepted the existence of demons, in "accommo-

⁷⁶Hoskyns and Davey, op. cit., pp. 118-19.

⁷⁷McCauley, op. cit., p. 114.

⁷⁸William Sanday, "The Miracles of Jesus," Outlines of the Life of Christ (2nd edition; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 103.

dition," if you will, to the current belief on the subject. But this does not mean that the existence of demons was solely a current opinion, not to say erroneous opinion. And here Langton's quotation of Prof. Schmid of Tuebingen deserves serious consideration:

any accommodation [sic] to erroneous opinions, or positive yielding to them, which would amount to an approval or confirmation of them is . . . a tendency far removed from the character of our Lord, In every case when truth and falsehood were in question, He was wont to express Himself frankly, even when most in opposition to the mightiest among the people. Not only did Jesus say nothing against the prevailing ideas of Satan and his kingdom; but He so spoke and taught that we must admit them among the body of His teaching. . . .⁷⁹

In an effort to bring help to the sufferers of His day "Jesus spoke and worked in a way that harmonized with men's thoughts. That does not mean that their thoughts were true thoughts, or that His thoughts were not true."⁸⁰ In fact, Jesus transformed to a certain extent the current ideas of possession, as He transformed the current ideas of the Messiah and the kingdom of God. He purified the current conception of possession in His "apologetic discourse" (3:22-27) on the expulsion of demons, "by placing possession under a universal and ethical point of view, representing it as a manifestation of the power of Satan, the great antagonist of the kingdom of God."⁸¹

Thus Jesus did accommodate Himself, but in a way wholly in keeping with His character and wholly divorced from the slightest mistaken notion of His day. He was a man among men, but without sin, also without the

⁷⁹Edward Langton, Satan, A Portrait (London: Sheffington & Son Ltd., 1945), p. 108, quoted in Boggs, op. cit., p. 110.

⁸⁰Arthur C. Headlam, The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ (London: John Murray, 1923), p. 188.

⁸¹Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels, pp. 183-84.

sin of being duped into delusions. To hold that He considered the employment of His hands, or even the use of His spittle, in any way efficacious to the cure of disease, and to hold that He entertained current mistaken notions that what we call insanity was possession by demons, is inconsistent with the record, injurious to the Christian's faith in his Lord, and often based on hypothetical assumptions too readily taken to be truths discovered by the modern scientific age. Than to impugn the perfect character of our Lord by foisting on Him an erroneous accommodation theory, "it would be more candid and more reasonable to say at once that Jesus was mistaken."⁸²

A final question, which may well be considered in this section of our study, is whether Jesus performed these mighty works in virtue of His perfect manhood or of His almighty deity. Let us frankly acknowledge that we are here walking in "where angels fear to tread." Bernard, speaking with "great caution," says:

To assert that the miracles of the Lord were wrought without effort, as it were, and that they are to be ascribed to the exercise of His Divine nature rather than to the operation of His human nature enriched and glorified by His indissoluble union with the Father, is perhaps to go beyond the evidence.⁸³

And Bruce believes that perhaps "it is best not to commit ourselves too decidedly to any theory as to the connection between the power exhibited in the healing ministry and the person of the Agent."⁸⁴ To consider

⁸²Theodore Graebner, "Demoniacal Possession," Concordia Theological Monthly, IV (August, 1933), 590.

⁸³J. H. Bernard, "Miracle," in A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), III, 389.

⁸⁴Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels, p. 282.

prayer the secret of Christ's miracle-working powers, as Cairns has done,⁸⁵ is building on a rather shaky foundation of three passages (9:29; Mt. 26:53; Jn. 11:41,42). To say that Jesus worked His miracles as man because He delegated the same ability to the Twelve fails to recognize the definite difference between His person and their persons. To hold that Jesus was enervated by His mighty works rests on the one notice in 5:30: "perceiving in himself that power had gone forth from him," which probably is no more than another way of saying: "He worked a miracle; He exercised His miraculous powers."⁸⁶

Unger is fully confident that, since it was by "the Spirit of God" (Mt. 12:28) that Jesus cast out demons, "it was, accordingly, by the power of the Holy Spirit, operating in untrammelled fullness in His sinless humanity, that Jesus effectuated His cures,"⁸⁷ This explanation, combined with the cautious remark of Bernard, appears to do justice to the question.

The Response to the Miracles

The response of the crowds, the disciples and the Jewish leaders to the mighty works of Jesus varied. By and large, the response of the people was one of amazement, marvel and fear. After the first Marcan miracle "they were all amazed" (1:27, ἐθαμβήθησαν). At the Healing

⁸⁵ Cairns, op. cit., pp. 80ff.

⁸⁶ Eric May, "For Power Went Forth From Him," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIV (April, 1952), 100.

⁸⁷ Merrill F. Unger, "Biblical Demonology and Demon Possession," Biblical Demonology (Wheaton, Ill.; Van Kampen Press, Inc., c.1952), p. 103.

of the Paralytic the amazement was supplemented by glorification of God: "they were all amazed (ἐξίβηθαυ) and glorified God, saying, We never saw anything like this!" (2:12). The townspeople at Gadara "were afraid" (5:15, ἐφοβήθησαν), "And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their neighborhood" (5:17). The result of the entire Gadarene affair was that "all men marveled" (5:20, ἐθαύμαζον).

At the resuscitation of Jairus' daughter "they were overcome with amazement" (5:42, ἐξέστησαν εὐθὺς ἐκτάθει μεγάλη). And the Healing of the Deaf and "Dumb" Man evoked one of the more laudable responses, containing an Old Testament allusion (cf. Is. 35:5,6): "And they were astonished beyond measure (ὑπερπεριβῶς ἐξεπλήθουτο), saying, He has done all things well; he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak" (7:37). In general, these responses leave something to be desired. The amazement, marvel and fear lead to little more than a thronging of Jesus for personal and earthly advantages. Unfortunately, the stern dictum of Jesus applies to many of the crowds which allowed Him little rest: "you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves" (Jn. 6:26).

The response of the disciples was not much better, although their eyes were finally opened near Caesarea Philippi, only to be partially closed again by the events of Holy Week. St. Mark gives notice of their response after both of the sea incidents. After the Stilling of the Storm "they were filled with awe (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν), and said to one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and sea obey him?" (4:41). And at the Walking on the Water "they were utterly astounded" (6:51, λίαν ἐκ περιβῶν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἐξίβησαντο).

But there is another set of responses, tragic to tell, which culminates in the cross. Jesus' own townspeople were not alone in a hostile reaction to His words and works (cf. 6:3). The active opposition came from the Jewish leaders. They accused Him of blasphemy at the Healing of the Paralytic (2:7); with hearts hardened they were watching for an opportunity to accuse Him at the Healing of the Withered Hand (3:2,5), and, when Jesus had satisfied their devilish desire, we read in 3:6: "The Pharisees went out, and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him." The manner in which Jesus performed His mighty works aroused hatred but did not crush it. The power with which His works spoke for Him compelled people and leaders to decide for or against Him. The call to faith inherent in the miracle was matched by its incentive to unbelief. Those in whom the mighty works did not establish faith were confirmed in their unbelief. Because of His expulsions Jesus was accused of being in the service of the devil (3:22-27), and because of the raising of Lazarus the Sanhedrin resolved upon His execution (Jn. 11:46-53).⁸⁸ The mighty works of Jesus can thus be rightly called a cause of the cross. As Richardson remarks:

The realistic rulers of the Sanhedrin knew well enough the impotence of sermons and ethical ideals; they would not have crucified an ethical teacher: their action bears the clearest historical testimony to the truth of the miracle stories of the Gospels.⁸⁹

The negative response of the Jewish leaders to the miracles of Jesus thus

⁸⁸ A. Schlatter, "Der Helfer in Gottes Macht," Die Geschichte des Christus (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), p. 246.

⁸⁹ Richardson, "Miracle," p. 154.

proclaims "the hard facts which underline man's rejection of God's salvation and which bring history to a climax and the purpose of God to its fulfilment [sic]." ⁹⁰

This negative response of the Jewish leaders is explained by the necessary precondition and result of Jesus mighty works: namely, repentance and faith. They lacked both. The mighty works which they had witnessed had been seen through "closed" eyes and with faithless hearts. For the mighty works no less than the *righty* words called out: "Repent and believe the good news." They both heard and "saw" that call, but, as Wendland correctly says: "Man kann nicht sehen ohne zu glauben; allein der Glaubende wird sehen." ⁹¹ Thus their request for "a sign from heaven" (8:11,12) had to be refused by Jesus, who dare not give a sign that would satisfy curiosity or convince even enemies and thus make repentance and faith superfluous by overcoming unbelief with violence. "Es kann nicht zugeben," Schlatter says, "dass es statt der Busse einen andern Weg zu Gott gebe, naemlich einen fuer den Unglauben ueberwaeltigenden Machterweis." ⁹² St. Matthew mentions the sign which Jesus did give on this occasion (Mt. 12:38-42), a sign quite different from what the Pharisees had desired, the sign of Jonah, a sign which demanded faith. For as Jonah was restored to life from a "living death," so shall Jesus be raised from the dead. This was the

⁹⁰ Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 135.

⁹¹ Heins-Dietrich Wendland, "Messianitaet und Wunder," Die Eschatologiè des Reiches Gottes bei Jesus (Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1931), p. 229.

⁹² A. Schlatter, "Die Wunder Jesu," Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments (Stuttgart: Verlag der Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1909), I, 270.

only sign given to this "evil and adulterous generation" at its request, and even this sign did not produce a result of faith (cf. Mt. 28:11-15).

We meet the same stubborn unbelief at Nazareth. "And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief" (6:5,6; cf. Mk. 10:13; Mt. 11:20,21). St. Mark does not mean to say that the lack of faith on the part of the people of Nazareth made the performing of a mighty work "physically" impossible, but rather that "their obstinacy rendered the miracle useless in advance, for it would have failed in its primary purpose."⁹³ Thimme nicely explains this relation between the possibility of a miracle and faith, when he writes:

Das darf freilich nicht so verstanden werden, als ob der Glaube die von seiten des Menschen zu vollbringende Bedingung fuer die Wirkung der Zeichen sei. Wie Luther im Grossen Katechismus von der Taufe sagt, dass der Glaube die Taufe nicht macht, sondern empfaengt, und hinzufuegt: "dass ihm nicht die groesste Macht daran liege, ob der da getauft wird, glaube oder nicht glaube. Denn darumb wird die Taufe nicht unrecht, sondern an Gottes Wort und Gebot liegt alles", so ist auch der Glaube im Verhaeltnis zu den Zeichen nicht die Voraussetzung dafuer, dass dieselben geschehen. Vielmehr liegt ihr Vollzug allein an Gottes allmaechtig wirkenden Wort. Im Glauben aber und nur im Glauben wird dem Menschen der darin handelnde Gott offenbar.⁹⁴

Thank God for the faithful few at Nazareth upon whom "he laid his hands . . . and healed them" (6:5). They saw the Jesus of their Nazareth as no less than the Mighty God at work saving men, body and soul.

Only to the eyes of faith was the secret of Jesus' person and the

⁹³E. C. Messenger, "The Miraculous Element in the Bible," in A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture, edited by Bernard Orchard et al. (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1953), p. 120.

⁹⁴Ephorus Thimme, "Zeichen," in Biblich-Theologisches Handwoerterbuch, herausgegeben von Edo Osterloh und Hans Egelland (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, c.1954), p. 703.

mystery of His mission manifest. There is a hiddenness about Jesus in the Synoptics; the theology of the Gospels allows for a "messianic secret," properly understood. As we have repeatedly noted, even the Twelve are "in the dark" until the crisis and climax near Caesarea Philippi. And their achievement at this juncture is not to be written to their credit, for "the secret of Who Jesus is is understood not by flesh and blood but by the revelation of the Father in heaven (Mt. 16:17),"⁹⁵ It is a divine gift, the gift of faith.

Here, in connection with the "Messianic secret," is the place where we may consider the charges to secrecy enjoined by Jesus after many of His mighty works. The atmosphere in which Jesus worked was charged with false expectancies. There were, of course, "the meek in the land," who had rightly read their Scriptures. But they were far outnumbered by those whose Messianic expectations had sold out to politics; by those who dreamed of the great apocalyptic cataclysm which would forcefully usher in the days of David for the people of God; and by those whose kingdom of God would be realized on the path of ethical achievement. Against these false ideologies Jesus was in constant combat by a reticent use of misunderstood Messianic titles (He chose the "Son of Man" as the title which He could pretty well fill with fitting content) and by guarding against rumors which might make Him out as a wonder-worker, a good and great man, or anything less than what He was. Here is where the charges to secrecy played their role. St. Mark records such charges at 1:25, 31, 43, 44; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26 and even at 8:30 to the disciples at Caesarea Philippi. Richardson maintains that this

⁹⁵ Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, pp. 10-11.

command to secrecy after the performance of some of the miracles is due to the hand of St. Mark himself, and that "he has not worked out his theory very carefully, since in some sections of his Gospel he appears to have overlooked it (cf. esp. Mk. 2:1-12 and 28)."⁹⁶ Against Richardson we would say that St. Mark has employed the charge to secrecy often enough to show that it was the custom of Jesus, and thus need not record it at each and every instance. This reply, of course, suffers from the weakness of any argument from silence. But a consideration of those instances when a command to silence is not recorded yields a plausible explanation of such omissions. Thus, the Healing of Simon's Mother-in-Law (1:29-31) involved a closed and intimate group of friends; the sickness was probably not widely known, and the chances were very good that the story of the cure would not be published abroad. In the case of the paralytic (2:1-12) Jesus was proclaiming Himself as the authority-invested Son of Man; a charge to secrecy would have been an anomaly here. In the case of the withered hand (3:1-6) Jesus was already in the presence of His enemies when He performed the cure. The Stilling of the Storm (4:35-41), the Walking on the Water (6:45-52) and the Withering of the Fig Tree (11:12-14, 20-25) can be reasonably supposed to have been kept by the disciples to themselves. The Issue of Blood (5:24b-34), the Feeding of the Five and Four Thousand (6:30-44; 8:1-9), and the Expulsion of the Demon from the Epileptic Boy (9:14-29) were all performed in the presence of crowds (the latter also in the presence of enemies), where a command to silence would have been foolish. The Expulsion of the Legion from the Gadarene Demoniae (5:1-20) and the

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 102-03.

Expulsion of the Demon from the Syrophenician Daughter (7:24-30) involved Gentiles and were performed in Gentile territory, where a rumor would be likely to cause less damage than in Jewish territory.⁹⁷ In fact, the Gadarene Demoniac is sent home to proclaim the Lord's mercy. And the final case where a command to silence is not given, the Healing of Blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52), in addition to being performed in a crowd, occurred after the "secret was out." Bartimaeus was permitted to proclaim Jesus as "Son of David" without rebuke. Although some of these apologies limp a bit, they certainly offer a better explanation of the missing charge to secrecy than a theory which claims that Mark invented these charges and then failed to carry out his plan consistently.

By and large, these commands to silence were not heeded (cf. 1:45; 7:36). In fact, "often they appear to have acted rather as a provocative to freer speech, a result which can surprise no one acquainted with human nature."⁹⁸ No doubt Jesus knew that His commands would be to some extent ineffectual; and yet He continued to enjoin secrecy on His "patients" and it was up to them to obey or disobey Him. At any rate, the ministry of mighty works had to proceed regardless of the risks involved in undesirable rumors. "The fulness [sic] of His grace must be made manifest even at the risk of temporary misunderstanding."⁹⁹

⁹⁷Although in view of 7:36 and 8:26, this apology is quite weak.

⁹⁸Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels, p. 268.

⁹⁹Ibid.

Our consideration of the hostile responses to Jesus' mighty works has led us to note faith and its necessary predecessor repentance as the two correlatives to miracle, necessary both to its reception and to its proper understanding. The question which now occupies our attention is: What role did faith play in the "characters" of the actual miracle stories? Was faith always demanded as a necessary prerequisite to the reception of a mighty work? Was this faith the full faith in Christ which we think of when we speak of faith today? To these and related questions we now look.

Faith is explicitly mentioned in the Healing of the Paralytic: "and when Jesus saw their faith" (2:5). We take the faith here mentioned to be that of the paralytic and his friends.¹⁰⁰ Jairus is enjoined: "Do not fear, only believe" (5:36), a call to tremendous faith in the face of death itself. The woman with the flow of blood is commended: "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease" (5:34).¹⁰¹ The father of the epileptic boy confesses a "vicarious faith": "I believe; help my unbelief!" (9:24). And to blind Bartimaeus Jesus says: "Go your way; your faith has made you well" (10:52).

It would appear that faith can be inferred in some of the cases where it is not explicitly mentioned without doing violence to the text. Such instances are the Healing of Peter's Mother-in-Law (1:29-31), the Healing of the Leper (1:40-45), the Healing of the Man with the Withered

¹⁰⁰ So also Denney, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

¹⁰¹ Her faith was evidenced by a mere touch, 5:27-31; cf. 3:10; 6:55,56.

Hand (3:1-6), and the Expulsion of a Demon from the Syrophenician Daughter (7:24-30), another case of "vicarious faith."

Inasmuch as the nature miracles are not performed upon persons and are unrequested we are not surprised to find a mention of faith lacking in them. The Stilling of the Storm (4:35-41) does, however, raise the question: "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" And the Withering of the Fig Tree (11:12-14, 20-25) is put to didactic use regarding faith (11:22-24).

In the cases of demon possession no faith is possible to the one possessed and is never required of him.¹⁰² The father of the epileptic boy believes for his son; and the persistence of the Gentile mother would seem to imply her faith for her daughter.

We have yet to mention the deaf and "dumb" man (7:31-37) and the blind man at Bethsaida (8:22-26), which appear to be two instances in which the miracle itself was designed to induce faith.¹⁰³ The general references to healings and exorcisms contain no hint of faith, and the disciples were not instructed to make certain that a person had faith before they performed their cures.

Faith was thus an important factor in the mighty works of Jesus. But the actual role which it played in each instance is not nearly so plain as is often supposed. Those who would consider faith as the absolutely necessary precondition are oversimplifying the actual

¹⁰² Cairns, op. cit., p. 69.

¹⁰³ See Boggs, op. cit., pp. 61-62.

situation.¹⁰⁴ Such a position is unable to cope with those miracle stories in which an antecedent faith is almost certainly lacking. The classic examples are the Impotent Man at the Pool of Bethesda (Jn. 5:1-16) and the Man Born Blind (Jn. 9); in both cases the "patients" do not even know who Jesus is after the cure has been accomplished, although in both cases Jesus later leads them to knowledge and, in the case of the Man Born Blind, to faith. We are able to say in defense of the faith of Jesus' "patients" that there is not the slightest hint of opposition to Him before and while He works His miracle and no consequent hostile reaction. It appears as though faith, although most desirable, was not always demanded as a necessary precondition. Boggs is no doubt correct when he says that "Jesus varied His methods to suit the needs of His patients."¹⁰⁵ In some cases faith was worked in the person concerned by the miracle itself; in some few others faith was given after the miracle. Some instances are so shrouded in silence with regard to faith, that silence concerning them is our best reaction also. But in by far the majority of cases faith is somehow related to the mighty work.

As for the nature of the "patients'" faith, there is general agreement among scholars that it was faith in the person of Jesus for what He

¹⁰⁴Some of the scholars who do so are Hunter, The Work and Words of Jesus, p. 56; Friedrich Fenner, Die Krankheit im Neuen Testament (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1930), p. 94; and Schlatter, who goes so far as to say that faith is "die unerlaessliche Bedingung fuer die Moeglichkeit des Wunders. . . .", Theologie, p. 281.

¹⁰⁵Boggs, op. cit., p. 61.

was, faith in its full Christological sense.¹⁰⁶ No one has expressed this better than Richardson, who speaks of this faith as:

a believing relation and attitude towards his own person as Messiah and Son of God, even though those who came to him to be healed could not have articulated their belief in so precise a formula as this.¹⁰⁷

No other explanation of their faith, feeble and faltering as it may have often been, will satisfy the demands of New Testament theology. The faith of the miracle stories is the faith of Jesus' proclamation (cf. 1:15), the faith made possible by His life and death and glory, the faith for which the Church through all ages has stood and fallen, the faith demanded of us today for the only proper appreciation of the miracle stories of the Gospels, faith in Jesus Christ, the God Man, as personal Savior and Redeemer.

¹⁰⁶ See Schlatter, Theologie, p. 268; Engelland, op. cit., p. 696; Fenner, op. cit., p. 94; Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels, p. 64.

¹⁰⁷ Richardson, "Miracle," p. 153.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Such is St. Mark's record of the miracles and the miracles' record of Jesus Christ. If there is one point which stands out as the result of our study it is, to give a parochial cliché a new twist, that Jesus "practiced what He preached." His words are paralleled by His deeds. If His words fulfilled the Scriptures, so did His deeds. If His words bespoke the power of God, so did His deeds, even more demonstrably so. If what He said proclaimed the arrival of the kingdom, what He did made this truth plain to faithful eyes. If He spoke of defeating the enemy, His deeds portrayed Him as ever gaining ground in the battle. And if He preached an eschatological message, His works pictured the situation that will prevail when eschatology is absorbed in eternity. His was a ministry mighty in word and in deed, describing and depicting Himself as the Messiah.

Such a ministry called for repentance and faith. That mighty works made this call very relevant to Jesus' contemporaries is nicely stated by Dibelius:

If something inexplicable should happen in our world and before our eyes, if someone should cause a person who was lying dead suddenly to get up perfectly well, or if a man should lift himself up into the air without using any mechanical means to help him, the stouthearted would regard the event as a subject for investigation, the timorous would draw away from it, those who disapproved would call in the police, while the enthusiastic would give the news to the press—but nobody, we can be sure, would fall on his knees in prayer! But this is just what seemed to Jesus' hearers the most natural thing to do when confronted by the marvelous. To them, anything that was not instantly explicable was miraculous.

They did not reckon with laws of nature or trouble themselves with attempts at explanation, for it was the supernatural that they sensed at once in the unexplained.¹

Unfortunate, indeed, that the knees of many of them would not bend.

Today the Lord confronts men mainly through His word, a word, let us not forget, that is fraught with the record of His deeds. Our response to the mighty works of Jesus thus dare not differ from that of those who actually saw and recognized God's Messiah at work serving and saving sinners. For the miracle stories, no less than anything else, "are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (Jn. 20:31).

¹ Martin Dibelius, "The Signs of the Kingdom," Jesus, translated from the German by Charles B. Hedrick and Frederick C. Grant (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1949), pp. 80-81.

APPENDIX A

Chronological List of Miracles of Jesus¹

(a) Preliminary Period: From Baptism to Call of Leading Apostles.

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|-----|
| 1. Water made wine | | | | Jn. |
| 2. Cleansing of the temple | | | | Jn. |
| 3. Son of nobleman restored | | | | Jn. |

(b) First Period of Galilean Ministry, to Death of John.

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----|-----|-----|
| 4. Escape from hostile crowd | | | | Lk. |
| 5. Draught of fishes | | | | Lk. |
| 6. Capernaum demoniac | | Mt. | | Lk. |
| 7. Peter's wife's mother | | Mt. | Mt. | Lk. |
| 8. General healings and exorcisms | | Mt. | Mt. | Lk. |
| 9. Leper | | Mt. | Mt. | Lk. |
| 10. Palsied man | | Mt. | Mt. | Lk. |
| 11. Impotent man of Bethesda | | | | Jn. |
| 12. Man with withered hand | | Mt. | Mt. | Lk. |
| 13. General healings and exorcisms | | Mt. | Mt. | Lk. |

¹This list is taken from T. H. Wright, "Miracles," in A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1908), II, 189. The necessary corrections of this list are treated in the following footnotes. There may be items listed here which we would wish to exclude; such is our privilege.

14. Centurion's servant	Mt.	Lk.	
15. Son of widow of Nain raised		Lk.	
16. General healings and exorcisms		Lk.	
17. Dumb demoniac healed	Mt. ²		
18. Tempest stilled	Mt. Mc.	Lk.	
19. Gadarene demoniac(s)	Mt. Mc.	Lk.	
20. Raising of Jairus' daughter	Mt. Mc.	Lk.	
21. Issue of blood	Mt. Mc.	Lk.	
22. Two blind men healed ³	Mt.		
(c) Second Period of Galilean Ministry, to its Close.			
23. Five thousand fed	Mt. Mc.	Lk. ⁴	
24. Jesus walks on sea	Mt. Mc.		Jn.
25. Daughter of Syro-phoenician woman	Mt. Mc.		
26. Deaf and dumb restored		Mc.	
27. General healing of infirmities	Mt.		
28. Four thousand fed	Mt. Mc.		
29. Blind man restored		Mc.	
30. Deaf and dumb epileptic	Mt. Mc.	Lk.	
31. Stater in fish's mouth	Mt. Mc. ⁵		

²Lk. 11:14 may be identical with the Mt. 9:32-34 reference.

³A dumb demoniac was also healed in this context.

⁴Jn. should be added here; this is the only miracle story attested in all four Gospels.

⁵This story is not recorded in Mk.

(d) Ministry in Judea and Perea.

32. Man blind from birth restored				Jn.
33. Impotent woman restored			Lk.	
34. Man with dropsy healed			Lk.	
35. Ten lepers cleansed			Lk.	
36. Lazarus raised ⁶				Jn.
37. Two blind men near Jericho	Mt.	Mk.	Lk.	

(e) Closing Days of Life.

38. Withering of fig tree	Mt.	Mk.		
39. Cleansing of temple	Mt.	Mk.	Lk.	
40. Healing of Malchus	Mt. ⁷		Lk.	Jn. ⁷
41. Falling to ground of soldiers ⁸				Jn.

⁶ A. T. Robertson, A Harmony of the Gospels (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, c.1922), p. 294 places No. 36 before No. 35.

⁷ This incident is recorded only in Lk.

⁸ No. 41 should precede No. 40. Add No. 42, the second draught of fish, recorded in Jn.

APPENDIX B

The Miracles in the Triple, Double and Single Traditions¹

The Eleven Miracles of the Triple Tradition:

1. The healing of Peter's mother-in-law, Mk. 1:29-31; Mt. 8:14,15; Lk. 4:38,39.
2. The healing of the leper, Mk. 1:40-45; Mt. 8:2-4; Lk. 5:12-16.
3. The healing of the paralytic, Mk. 2:1-12; Mt. 9:2-8; Lk. 5:18-26.
4. The healing of the withered hand, Mk. 3:1-6; Mt. 12:9-14; Lk. 6:6-11.
5. The stilling of the tempest, Mk. 4:35-41; Mt. 8:18-27; Lk. 8:22-25.
6. The demoniac of Gadara, Mk. 5:1-20; Mt. 8:28-34; Lk. 8:26-39.
7. The woman with an issue of blood, Mk. 5:25-34; Mt. 9:20-22; Lk. 8:43-48.
8. The raising of Jairus' daughter, Mk. 5:22-24,35-43; Mt. 9:18,19,23-26; Lk. 8:41,42,49-56.
9. The feeding of the five thousand, Mk. 6:35-44; Mt. 14:15-21; Lk. 9:12-17 [also in Jn.].
10. The healing of the lunatic boy, Mk. 9:14-29; Mt. 17:14-21; Lk. 9:37-43.
11. The healing of the blind man at Jericho, Mk. 10:46-52; Mt. 20:29-34; Lk. 18:35-43.

The Seven Miracles of the Double Tradition:

In Matthew and Mark four:

¹ These materials are taken from A. B. Bruce, The Miraculous Element in the Gospels (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, c.1886), pp. 101-02, 128-29.

1. Jesus walking on the sea, Mt. 14:22-23; Mk. 6:45-52; (Jn. 6:14-21).
2. The healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter, Mt. 15:21-28; Mk. 7:24-30.
3. The feeding of the four thousand, Mt. 15:32-39; Mk. 8:1-9.
4. The cursing of the fig-tree, Mt. 21:17-22; Mk. 9:12-14, 20-24.

In Matthew and Luke two:

1. The healing of the Centurion's servant, Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10.
2. The healing of the dumb demoniac, Mt. 9:32, 33; Lk. 11:14.

In Mark and Luke one:

1. The healing of a demoniac in the Capernaum Synagogue, Mk. 1:23-26; Lk. 4:33-36.

The Seventeen Miracles Recorded in a Single Gospel Only:

In Matthew three:

1. The healing of two blind men, 9:27-31.
2. The healing of a demoniac, 12:22.
3. The finding of the stater, 17:24-27.

In Mark two:

1. The healing of one deaf and dumb, 7:31-37.
2. The opening of the eyes of one blind at Bethsaida, 8:22-26.

In Luke six:

1. The miraculous draught of fishes, 5:7-11.
2. The raising of the widow's son, 7:11-17.
3. The cure of a woman with a spirit of infirmity, 13:10-17.
4. The cure of the dropsical man, 14:1-6.
5. The cleansing of the ten lepers, 17:12-19.
6. The healing of Malchus' ear, 22:49-51.

In John six:

1. The change of water into wine, 2:1-11.
2. The healing of the nobleman's son, 4:46-54.
3. The healing of the impotent man at Bethesda, 5:1-16.
4. The opening of the eyes of one born blind, 9.
5. The raising of Lazarus, 10:1-54.
6. The second miraculous draught of fishes, 21:1-23.

APPENDIX C

The Marcan Miracles by Category

- I. Healings:**
- A. Cure of Peter's Mother-in-Law, 1:29-31.
 - B. Cure of a Leper, 1:40-45.
 - C. Cure of the Paralytic, 2:1-12.
 - D. Cure of a Man with a Withered Hand, 3:1-6.
 - E. Cure of a Woman with a Flow of Blood, 5:24b-34.
 - F. Cure of a Deaf and "Dumb" Man, 7:31-37.
 - G. Cure of a Blind Man at Bethsaida, 8:22-26.
 - H. Cure of Blind Bartimaeus, 10:46-52.
- II. Expulsions:**
- A. The Man with an Unclean Spirit at Capernaum, 1:21-28.
 - B. The Gadarene Demoniac, 5:1-20.
 - C. The Daughter of the Syrophenician Woman, 7:24-30.
 - D. The Epileptic Boy with a Deaf and Dumb Spirit, 9:14-29.
- III. Nature Miracles:**
- A. The Stilling of the Storm, 4:35-41.
 - B. The Feeding of the Five Thousand, 6:30-44.
 - C. The Walking on the Water, 6:45-52.
 - D. The Feeding of the Four Thousand, 8:1-9.
 - E. The Withering of the Fig Tree, 11:12-14, 20-25.
- IV. Resuscitation:**
- A. The Raising of Jairus' Daughter, 5:22-24, 35-43.

APPENDIX D

Outline of St. Mark 1-11

- I. The Prologue, 1:1-13.
 - A. The Title, 1:1.
 - B. John the Baptist, 1:2-8.
 - C. The Baptism of Jesus, 1:9-11.
 - D. The Temptation of Jesus, 1:12,13.
- II. The Galilean Ministry, 1:14-6:6a.
 - A. After the Arrest of John, Jesus Enters Galilee, Proclaiming the Arrival of the Kingdom, 1:14,15.
 - B. The Call of the Four at the Shore of the Sea, 1:16-20.
 - C. In the Synagogue at Capernaum, 1:21-28.
 1. Astonishment at His teaching, 1:22.
 2. The expulsion of an unclean spirit, 1:23-26.
 3. Amazement over the expulsion, 1:27.
 4. Jesus' fame spreads through Galilee, 1:28.
 - D. In the House of Simon and Andrew, 1:29-34.
 1. Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law, 1:30,31.
 2. The sick and possessed are brought to Him at sundown, 1:32-34.
 - E. Trip Through Galilee, 1:35-45.
 1. Jesus goes to a lonely place to pray, 1:35,36.
 2. He is sought by the people, 1:37.
 3. Travels through Galilee, preaching and casting out demons, 1:38,39.

4. Jesus heals a leper, 1:40-45.
 - a. Charges him to say nothing to anyone, 1:43,44.
 - b. The charge unheeded, Jesus is forced to stay in the country; people come from every quarter, 1:45.
- F. Return to Capernaum, 2:1-12.
 1. Many gather and He preaches the word to them, 2:2.
 2. Jesus forgives and heals the paralytic, 2:3-12.
 - a. First Galilean dispute with the scribes regarding authority to forgive sins, 2:6-11.
 - b. All are amazed and glorify God, 2:12.
- G. Teaching the Crowd at the Seaside, 2:13.
- H. The Call of Levi, 2:14.
- I. Second to Fourth Galilean Disputes, 2:15-28.
 1. Eating with tax collectors and sinners, 2:15-17.
 2. The question about fasting, 2:18-22.
 3. The question about the Sabbath, 2:23-28.
- J. Jesus Heals a Man with a Withered Hand in the Synagogue, 3:1-6.
 1. It is the Sabbath and He is watched, 3:2.
 2. Pharisees and Herodians plot His destruction, 3:6.
- K. Withdrawal to the Sea of Galilee, 3:7-12.
 1. A great multitude follows Him, 3:7b-9.
 2. Healings and expulsions, 3:10-12.
- L. Jesus Goes into the Hills and Appoints the Twelve, 3:13-19a.
- M. Jesus Returns to His House at Capernaum, 3:19b-35.
 1. The gathered crowd allows Him no time to eat, 3:20.
 2. Jesus accused of madness by His friends, 3:21.

3. Jesus accused of possession by Beelzebub by the scribes; the Fifth Galilean dispute, 3:22-30.
 - a. The binding and spoiling of the strong man, 3:23-27.
 - b. The unforgivable sin, 3:28-30.
 4. Jesus' mother and brothers ask for Him, 3:31-35.
- N. Teaching in Parables at the Sea, 4:1-34.
1. Parable of the Sower, 4:1-9.
 2. Its explanation to a select few, 4:10-20.
 3. Attendant instruction, 4:21-25.
 4. Parable of the Automatic Action of the Soil, 4:26-29.
 5. Parable of the Mustard Seed, 4:30-32.
 6. Much teaching in parables, 4:33,34.
- O. Crossing the Sea of Galilee; Jesus stills a storm enroute, 4:35-41.
- P. In the Country of the Gadarenes, 5:1-20.
1. Jesus expels the Legion from the Gadarene Demoniae, 5:2-19.
 2. All men marvel, 2:20.
- Q. On the West Side of the Sea Again, 5:21-43.
1. A great crowd at the seaside, 5:21b.
 2. The request of Jairus; Jesus goes with him, 5:22-24a.
 3. The healing of the woman with a flow of blood enroute to Jairus' house, 5:24b-34.
 4. Despite the report of her death, Jesus continues to the house and raises Jairus' daughter, 5:35-43.
- R. In His Own City—Nazareth, 6:1-6a.
1. Teaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath, 6:2a.
 2. Astonishment at His words and works, 6:2b.
 3. Offense at Him, 6:3,4.

- a. Only a few sick healed, 6:5.
- b. Jesus marvels at their unbelief, 6:6a.

III. Wanderings and Withdrawals, 6:6b-10:52.

A. Teaching Tour Among the Villages of Galilee, 6:6b-30.

- 1. Jesus commissions and sends out the Twelve, 6:7-13.
 - a. To preach repentance, 6:12.
 - b. To expel demons and heal the sick, 6:13.
- 2. The Herod, Herodias, John the Baptist story, 6:14-29.
- 3. The return of the Twelve, 6:30.

B. Unsuccessful Departure to a Lonely Place for Rest from the Crowds, 6:31-44.

- 1. As they land a great throng gathers, 6:33, 34a.
- 2. Jesus teaches them many things, 6:34b.
- 3. Jesus feeds the five thousand, 6:35-44.

C. Crossing the Sea Toward Bethsaida, 6:45-52.

- 1. Jesus dismisses the crowd, 6:45.
- 2. Jesus prays in the hills, 6:46.
- 3. Jesus walks on the sea to the disciples, 6:47-52.
 - a. They are utterly astounded, 6:51b.
 - b. Their hearts are hardened, 6:52.

D. Landing at Gennesaret; the Whole Neighborhood Flocks to Him with Their Sick, 6:53-55.

E. Healing the Sick in Villages, Cities, and Country, 6:56.

F. Disputes with the Pharisees and Scribes; Instruction of the People, 7:1-23.

- 1. The tradition of the elders, 7:2-8.
- 2. The Corban evasion, 7:9-13.
- 3. The people instructed on real defilement, 7:14-16.

4. Jesus enters the house and explains the parable of defilement to the disciples, 7:17-23.
- G. Withdrawal to Tyre and Sidon; Expulsion of a Demon from the Daughter of the Syrophenician Woman, 7:24-30.
- H. Return from Tyre, Through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, Through the Region of Decapolis, 7:31-8:9.
1. Healing of a deaf and "dumb" man, 7:32-37.
 - a. Zealous proclamation of the cure, 7:36.
 - b. Astonishment, 7:37.
 2. The four thousand fed, 8:1-9.
- I. Crossing to Dalmanutha, 8:10-12.
1. The Pharisees seek a sign, 8:11.
 2. Sign refused this generation, 8:12.
- J. Recrossing to Bethsaida, 8:13-26.
1. Discussion enroute regarding the leaven of the Pharisees; the disciples fail to understand the significance of the feedings, 8:13-21.
 2. Blind man healed at Bethsaida, 8:22-26.
- K. Departure to the Villages of Caesarea Philippi, 8:27-9:29.
1. The crucial question, 8:27.
 2. Peter's confession, 8:28-30.
 3. The first prediction of the Passion; Peter's rebuke, 8:31-33.
 4. Instruction in discipleship, 8:34-9:1.
 5. The Transfiguration, 9:2-8.
 6. The question about Elijah, 9:9-13.
 7. The expulsion of a deaf and dumb spirit from the epileptic boy, 9:14-29.

- I. Jesus Passes Through Galilee Unwares; Second Prediction of the Passion, 9:30-32.
- M. Arrival at Capernaum, 9:33-50.
1. True greatness in the Kingdom, 9:33-37.
 2. John's question about a man casting out demons in Jesus' name, 9:38-41.
 3. Instruction to the disciples, 9:42-50.
- N. Departure to the Region of Judea and Beyond the Jordan, 10:1-31.
1. Crowds gather and Jesus teaches them, 10:1.
 2. The Pharisees' question about divorce, 10:2-12.
 3. Jesus blesses the children, 10:13-16.
 4. The rich young man and attendant instruction to the Twelve, 10:17-31.
- O. On the Road to Jerusalem, 10:32-45.
1. The third Passion prediction, 10:33,34.
 2. The request of James and John, 10:35-45.
- P. Arrival at Jericho; healing of blind Bartimaeus, 10:46-52.
- IV. At Jerusalem, 11:1-33.
- A. The Approach and Entry into Jerusalem, 11:1-11.
1. Preparation for entry, 11:1-7.
 2. Triumphal entry, 11:8-10.
 3. Jesus enters the temple, 11:11a.
 4. Departure to Bethany for the night, 11:11b.
- B. Return to Jerusalem, 11:12-19.
1. Fig tree cursed, 11:13,14.
 2. The cleansing of the temple, 11:15-18.
 3. Departure from the city at evening, 11:19.

G. Return to Jerusalem, 11:20-33.

1. The fig tree withered; instruction on faith and forgiveness, 11:20-25.
2. The question about authority in the temple, 11:27-33.

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