

The Supreme Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ

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About 2000 years ago there walked upon this earth the most powerful, and authoritative, person in the whole universe. He was so vastly powerful that nothing could withstand Him, be they devil, demons, dangerous elements, animals, men, diseases or death.

He said the Father had "*given Him power over all flesh,*" (John 17:2) and John said, "*the Father had given all things into His hand's*" (John 13:3).

Yet He was the humblest, meekest, most loving and compassionate, most understanding, majestic and fearless of men - the only perfect Man.

But He never paraded or publicized His powers for profit, prestige or popularity or for entertainment - as so many pseudo miracle-workers do today.

Was there, is there, ever any person who could claim to be His equal? There has been none. This is because He is both God

and Man, exercising absolute, total and perfect authority and control over all of His creation.

Purpose of His Miracles

His miracles were "signs" (Gk. *shmeion*), pointing to Himself as the long-promised, long awaited Jewish Messiah; the Saviour of the world. John tells us that he selected the seven pre-resurrection miracles to prove His Deity; that we who read them might believe and be saved (John 20:30-31).

To reassure John the Baptist that He was the Messiah, the Lord performed numerous miracles on one particular occasion (Luke 7:19-23; Matt. 11:1-6). His miracles also glorified God the Father (Mark 2:12; Luke 5:26; 7:16). Of course His miracles of healing showed His great compassion, (Matt. 9:36; 14:74) but they were never meant to be an example for anyone to imitate, to show off their "ability", or to impress gullible souls with the Lord's supposed accreditation of them, or to treat illness by circumventing medical treatment.

The Lord Jesus Himself said, "*The sick need a physician*" (Matt. 9:12) and also prayer (James 5:14-16).

Only the Apostles and their immediate associates were delegated powers by Him to

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heal, and this was simply to authenticate their message and vindicate their commission (Matt.10:1; Luke 10:9; Acts 2:43; 5:12; 2Cor.12:72). These healing miracles performed by man completely disappeared in subsequent church history, although God still does work miracles today, directly or indirectly, according to His will, with or without human mediation.

In Matt.7:21-23, the Lord, describing the period immediately before His return to set up His Kingdom, severely warned against attempts to imitate His miracles. These "miracle workers", "in that day," claiming to prophesy, cast out demons and do wonderful works in His Name, would be told - "I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity". We do well to heed this His most serious warning.

Christ's Power

His miracles were wrought in power. Five Greek words are used to describe His infinite, immense power:

Ischus (Ισχυς) - physical strength or ability (Rev. 5:12).

Dunamis (Δυναμις) - inherent power, residing in Him, God Himself (Luke 5:17).

Energieia (Ενεργια) - power in operation (Phil.3:21).

Kratos (Κρατος) - power in manifestation - creatorial power, dominion (1 Peter 4:11).

Exousia (Εξουσια) - authority or absolute freedom to exercise all His power - unrestricted, unlimited, infinite, eternal, which only God possesses (Matt.28:18).

When Christ's power was manifested observers reacted with amazement and so the New Testament writers used another word *thaumasios* or "wonderful," (Matt.21:15) to describe the impact of the miracle.

The word "power" is preferred to "miracles," as power was present at all times (Luke 5:17) and could never diminish, although it could flow from Him, (Luke 8:46) but miracles were only occasional, specific demonstrations of His power, pointing to Him as God.

1. Power Over the Angelic Realm

a) **The Devil.** No Matter how strong the devil is, he is only a created being who will eventually be subject to his Creator. The Lord Jesus, allowing Satan to tempt Him, demonstrated that He is the only One fit to be our Saviour because He could never sin. He then terminated the temptation.

with the command, "Get thee hence!" or "Begone!" (Matt.4:10). And the Devil had to obey.

b) **Demons or Fallen Angels.** These recognized Jesus Christ as the Son of God, pleaded with Him not to "trouble" them and then fled in terror at His command (Luke 4:41).

c) **Holy angels.** These served the Lord, announced His birth, ministered to Him after the temptation and in Gethsemane 72,000 angels (12 legions) stood poised to intervene at His word (Matt.26:53).

Angels announced Jesus' resurrection and the Archangel will announce His return. He is worshipped by angels (Heb.1:6).

2. Power Over the Elemental Realm

For His very first miracle Jesus turned water into wine, He calmed the raging storm, eliciting the awe-filled cry, "What manner of Man is this?" (Matt.8:27). He walked on the turbulent water, convincing the disciples of His Deity (Matt.14:33).

3. Power Over the Animal Realm

Why did Mark make the obscure comment, "And He was with the wild beasts?" (Mark 1:13). Surely it must have been to indicate that no wild animal could hurt

or harm Him, who is their Creator.

And did not the young unbroken colt recognize its Creator, so that it was tamed under His weight?

What about the miracles of the fish? He directed a huge shoal into Peter's net twice, multiplied a couple of fish to feed 5,000 men, and later fed 4,000 men, with women and children. He even instructed one solitary fish to serve Him in a special way (Matt.17:27).

4. Power Over the Botanic Realm

Turning water into perfect wine is an example of the Lord's authority to provide the fruit of the vine without even having any grapes! Multiplying five loaves, then seven loaves on another occasion, He fed thousands and thus exhibited His control over plants, namely cereals.

The barren fig tree (a picture of national Israel), when cursed by Him, withered and died.

5. Power Over the Human Realm

Jesus exercised power over man's body and performed healing miracles. Since He created man He had power over every structure and function - cells, tissues, organs and

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systems! He could heal every part:

i) Muscle cells - A withered hand (dried up or atrophied.) was made whole (Luke 6:6-10).

ii) Nerve cells - The central nervous system (brain cells) was restored in an epileptic boy (Luke 9:37-42).

iii) Bone cells, ligaments etc: - A woman bowed or bent double walked freely (Luke 13:10-17).

iv) Skin - Lepers were healed and made clean (Mark 1:40-45; Luke 17:17).

v) Cardiovascular system - A man with dropsy or oedema, was healed (possibly due to lung, kidney or liver causes) (Luke 14:1-6).

vi) Reproductive members of the body and haematologic (blood element) systems were cured when the woman with an issue of blood touched the hem of Jesus' garment (Luke 8:43-48).

vii) The sensory organs such as the eyes (Luke 18:35-43), ears, tongue and larynx were made to function again (Mark 7:31-37).

viii) People with traumatic, long-term paralysis were released from bondage (Luke 5:18-26; Matt.8:5-13).

ix) The severed ear of Malchus was restored (John 18: 10; Luke 22:50-51).

x) Acute infections (micro-organisms) were overcome when Peter's mother-in-law and the nobleman's son were delivered from a severe fever (Luke4:38-39; John 4:47,52).

xi) Degenerative conditions such as a back bent double with ankylosis or spondylitis yielded to a word from Jesus when He laid hands on the infirmed woman (Luke 13:11-16).

xii) Congenital disease that left a man blind from birth was healed (John 9:1-38). Here is a remarkable incident where the Lord gave a new pair of eyes to a man who had none!

Jesus healing miracles can never be imitated or duplicated and were characterized by the following features that are not seen in today's "charismatic healings". They were:

- a) Instantaneous
- b) Complete
- c) Lasting

They were done by either word, or touch or at a distance (30 km) (John 4:46-54). Healings required no publicity, no fanfare, no stage management, and no healing "campaigns" were organized.

There were no exceptions. All diseases were healed and all patients recovered (Matt.4:23,24; 9:35; 11:5). Not a single person went away disillusioned that the Lord could not heal them.

6. Power Over Men's Minds

Jesus knew what was in man (John 2:24-25) and what others were thinking (Luke 5:22; 6:8; Matt.9:3,4) Without any physical intervention, He prevented His enemies from throwing Him off a cliff (Luke 4:29-30).

He went through their midst, when they would have stoned Him by "hiding" Himself in full view, "in the midst of" of all His enemies (Did He make Himself invisible?) (John 8:59).

No one could lay hands on Him if He did not allow it, when "his hour was not let come" (John 7:30,44; 8:20; 10:39). His Jehovistic "I AM" made the soldiers fall backward to the ground (John 18:6). They were helpless, paralysed, until He allowed them to get up!

Until "His hour was come", no one could thwart His purpose (John13:1). He influenced the decision of the religious leaders to not arrest Him on Passover day so that He would die as the Passover lambs were being sacrificed and thus become our Passover (Matt.26:1-5; 1Cor. 5:7).

Regarding the young ass and the upper room. Did Jesus make arrangements without His disciples including Peter and John knowing them, or even the

owners of the ass and the room having prior knowledge or consultation? Did He direct their obedient minds to His sovereign will? (Matt.21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:29-38; John 12:12-16; Matt.26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-13).

7. Power Over Death

His power over death was total. He raised a little girl a few minutes after death, a young man a few hours after death, and an older man four days after death. But they all died again later on, for He must be the first to rise in resurrection power from the dead and become the "firstfruits of them that slept" (1Cor.15:20).

8. Power Over His Own Death

His control over His own death was supreme and precise. He guided all events and circumstances so that He would be nailed to the cross at 9am, when the Jews offered their morning sacrifice. He breathed His last at 3pm, when the evening sacrifice was offered.

When an ordinary man dies it is God who separates body from the soul/spirit. But when the Lord Jesus Christ died, He dismissed His spirit (Greek, apheimi) (Matt. 27:50), delivered

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His spirit to His Father, (Greek, paradidami) (John 19:30) and voluntarily breathed out His very last breath (Greek, ekpneo) (Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46). He died as the Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world and offered Himself through the eternal Spirit to God.

9. Power Over His Resurrection

The Lord's lifeless body was gently taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb (Matt. 27:59-60).

When the Lord died His soul/spirit went to the paradise section of hades (Acts 2:27,32; Ps.16:10) but did not remain there. On the third day He rose from the dead, never to die again! This is the greatest miracle of all. He had said earlier to all people:

"I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:17-18).

The Father, the Son the Holy Spirit all were involved in His resurrection (Acts 2:24; 2:32; 1Peter 3:18).

His spirit, soul and body were reunited in His resurrection

"Therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in

heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil.2:9-11).

Our Lord Jesus Christ has authority, power and control over all things, all circumstances, all events, all people, all time, yesterday, today and forever!

He died for all our offences, and was "raised again for our justification" (Rom.4:25). Only He could die for our sin in a unique death that was the perfect ending to a unique life, only to rise again in a unique resurrection! What a powerful Saviour we have in our Lord Jesus Christ!

All creation was subject to Him even while He was on earth. It is the height of folly not to believe in Him as Saviour and acknowledge Him as Lord. And when He returns, He will rule the world with all authority, power, dominion, and might. Hallelujah! What a Saviour.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24-25).