

God's Road to Miracles

Part 2 of 2

#0997

Study given by W.D. Frazee

We're going to study about miracles some more tonight. We began a study on this wonderful subject of miracles last Friday night. And our poster will recall to those who were here that the way to *get* miracles is to *accept* the assignment that God's providence arranges and *believe* His promise. Go right ahead. That's what the A and B stand for, Accept and Believe. But the C and D in red indicate how to *get stopped* instead of *going* in this road to miracles. And what does the C stand for? [Audience responds: Complaining.] Complaining. And the D? [Audience responds: Doubting.] Doubting. So we don't want to complain; we don't want to doubt, but instead, we want to accept what God arranges, and believe.

And as I pointed out last Friday night, *if we accept, we'll never complain*. If we complain, we are not *accepting* God's Providence. And if we believe, we don't doubt; belief and doubt are as *far* apart as the east and west. So let's *go* on the road to miracles, accepting God's assignment and not complaining, believing His promise, and never doubting. This evening I want to study with you two *wonderful* experiences of miracles, one from the Old Testament and one from the New.

Let's turn over to 1 Kings and the experience of the prophet Elijah, and we'll notice in the 17th chapter how God provided *miraculously* for this man of faith. By the way, what is there *peculiar* about Elijah that happened to him later that has only happened to one other person so far? What happened to him? [Audience responds: Translated.] Translated. Who was the other one? [Audience responds: Enoch.] Do you think there will ever be anybody else have that experience? Do you think there will be? Anybody here planning to go that way? Well, friends, it might be good for us to learn the experiences that Elijah went through getting ready for that space trip. He learned to depend on God for something to eat.

You remember as the 17th chapter begins, Elijah is witnessing to the wicked king, Ahab, that there isn't going to be any dew and rain for a while because Israel has forsaken God. And Elijah quickly vanished from the palace and went off where God told him to and hid himself by the brook. Well now, the brook gave him water for a period of time until it went dry. There was nothing miraculous about the water. It was flowing down the brook as it had for hundreds of years before. But there was no *food* out there. But you notice what God said in the fourth verse:

"And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there" 1 Kings 17:4.

Now can you imagine breakfast brought to you by a bird? Breakfast brought to you by a *bird*? Several years ago over in China, something similar to this happened. This was several years ago, before the communists came in, and Christian missions were making their way there. There was one dear old man who had accepted the Gospel, and he was quite poor. In fact, he was so poor that he was largely dependent on his relatives for something to eat.

When his son would bring him some food day by day, this dear old Chinese man would take it and he would say, "My Heavenly Father's blessing."

Well, this heathen son got tired of that and he said, "This isn't your Heavenly Father's blessing. *I'm* bringing it to you."

"Oh," but the father said, "I'm thanking the *Lord* for it. *He's* the one."

So the son said, "All right, I'm going to quit bringing it to you, if that's the way you talk."

And sure enough, the son quit bringing food to his aged father. But do you know what happened, friends? There was a bird that came and brought that Chinese man some food. That's right. There was a bird that had some food and he brought it and dropped it right there for that Chinese man.

And so of course, by and by the son came around to see how the man was faring without [Elder Frazee laughs] the son's help and he asked him.

And he said, "Oh, I'm eating all right. My Heavenly Father's blessing."

So it isn't just back in Elijah's time. Do you remember what I read you last week? These experiences written in the Bible were not written here just so we could read and wonder. But that the same faith that wrought in God's servants of old may work in His children today in no less *marked* manner. He worked then. Will He work now?

"...Wherever there are hearts of faith to be channels of His power" *Prophets and Kings*, page 175.

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" Romans 15:4.

Tell me, friends, wouldn't it be rather *tantalizing, aggravating*, to read all these things and to feel and know that *none* of it could happen to *you*? Wouldn't it? Bless the Lord, these experiences are designed by the Lord to awaken faith in our hearts, that God will do for us just what He did back there.

But remember, I pointed out to you last Friday night, and this is one of the most *important* lessons in this *whole* study. That's this: miracles are not to take the place of hard work. They're not to take the place of sacrifice. They're not to take the place of thinking through our problems. Miracles happen at the *end* of our rope. [Break in tape].

[When we venture beyond our visible resources, and for Jesus' sake undertake more than we have to accomplish, then God, for the honor of His name, can step in and work miracles.

So it was with Elijah. He was doing what God told him to do.] If he had exhibited himself in the cities of that time, the king would have got him and *executed* him. But God *hid* him out there, gave him water from the brook and food in this miraculous way.

But now watch... By and by, what happened to the brook? Well, it went dry. Now God could have supplied the miraculously like He did for Israel in the desert. But our heavenly Father has how many ways? [Audience responds: A thousand.]

“Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing” *Ministry of Healing*, page 481.

How many ways? [Audience repeats: A thousand.] A thousand ways of which we know *nothing*. And so, in this case God didn't see fit to work a miracle to make the water run anymore. He said, “Elijah, it's time to move. I'm going to move you from this brook *way* over here on the east of Jordan. I'm going to move you clear across Palestine over near the sea coast to Zarephath which belongs to Zidon, and there's a widow woman over there that's going to take care of you.”

Now you know, there are some people, friends, it just *humbles* them, *humiliates* them, to take charity from anybody. Imagine this man. He's a full grown, able-bodied man. He had spent his life in the mountains of Gilead. He was active. He had doubtless made his way ever since he was a boy. Now God says to him, “Elijah, I'm going to send you over there to that village, and there is a widow woman who is going to take care of you.” Would you like that? I don't know whether you would or not. I don't know whether *Elijah* did, but the point is *this*: he did just what God *told* him to do. That's the way to get a miracle, friends. It's the *only* way to get a miracle—to do *just what* God tells you.

So he went over there and when he arrived, he saw this woman out by the edge of the city. She was gathering a little wood. You know in those countries, many people *every* day gather up a little wood so that they can make a fire. Many of them live from hand to mouth, and this widow *certainly* was living from hand to mouth because when Elijah saw her, he asked for a drink of water. I don't know whether he'd had a drink since he left the dry brook or not, but at any rate, he asked for a drink of water. As she went to get the drink of water, he said, “Will you please give me something to eat too?” Doubtless, he had been walking a long way, and he was hungry.

“Well,” she said, “I don't have a thing in the house that's prepared.” She said, “The truth is, all I have in the house is just a little bit of meal and a little bit of oil, enough just for one last meal for my boy and myself. That's all there is. We're going to eat that and die.”

The famine was getting pretty bad due to this drought that had come on all the land because of the rebellion against God.

Now notice what Elijah said in the 13th verse, and I want you to see it right *in* the Scripture:

“And Elijah said, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth” 1 Kings 17:13-14.

Now, will you get that picture friends. Here's that widow. She *knows* that all she's got back there in the house is just a little bit of meal and a little bit of oil. And here is this prophet who comes along and says, “I know that's all you've got, but make some for *me* first.”

Was Elijah selfish? Who told him to say that? *God* told him to say that. He was God's representative. And with that command he gave the promise of God:

“For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth” 1 Kings 17:14.

If that would happen the way the prophet said it would, what would that be? [Audience responds: A miracle.] A *what*? [Audience repeats louder: A miracle.] Wouldn't it? Wouldn't it? For a little bit of meal, enough for just *one* meal, *one* day... For that to last? A whole *year*, the Bible says here! How long is *that*?

Now what did the widow *do*? What's the next verse say?

“She went and did according to the saying of Elijah...”
1 Kings 17:15.

Now, *why* did she do it? She *believed*. She was up there on the 'green' side, ready to *go*. She took *all* she had and made a little cake for the prophet of God. He had a meal. He had his water, had his meal. But low and behold, she had enough left to feed herself and her son. But my, that's just for today! But when she went to get breakfast the next morning, what was there? A whole *bushel* of meal. A *barrel*. A truck had come in the night and just unloaded sacks of flour. Huh? Isn't that the way *you'd*

like to write it if *you* were the widow? We'd just love to have it: the back porch *full* and the kitchen *full* so we could relax and quit worrying.

I wonder if she got ulcers during that year. Come now, you dear 'mothers in Israel', what would you do if *every* day you used up *all* the food in the house? I fancy I hear some people wondering when '*they* are going to do something about it', whoever *they* are. But did they eat every day? But think how near they came to *starvation*! Was it a miracle? Yes. How often? Every day, a miracle. Every day.

Would you like to have a miracle? Are you sure? Would you really? Did you ever get anywhere that *near* a miracle? Did you? Did you ever get that near to a miracle? Your resources all gone? It may not be with meal and oil. There are a lot of other things we have to have besides food, aren't there?

Let me tell you something, friends. God loves to work miracles for hearts of faith that will venture out beyond what we see, and attempt something for God that taxes our resources to their *utmost*. And it isn't that God is trying to tantalize us. He's just trying to develop our *faith* muscles.

Now I want to tell you something, friends. That paper doesn't weigh very much and holding it up here, I don't develop very much muscle. Do I? No, no. If somebody wanted to develop my muscles by lifting weights, they'd start in and keep doing what? Increasing the weight, increasing the size, the pounds of the weight, wouldn't they? Sure. This is what God was doing, you see. This is what He's trying to do with all of us, trying to get us to *undertake* for Him something *beyond the ordinary*. But as long as we *faint* at difficulties and *complain* when we don't have all the money we *wish* we had, or all the food we *wish* we had, or all the strength we *wish* we had, or all the health we *wish* we had, or all the helpers we *wish* we had, we'll *never* see very many miracles.

Well, now let's read on:

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days" *Ibid*.

The margin says a full year. Think of it, friends, 52 weeks! Week after week, day after day, a *constant* miracle.

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which He spake by Elijah" 1 Kings 17:16.

What do you say? [Audience responds: Amen.] Now do you know what 'Amen' means? 'Let it be so' or 'may it be so'. Now *which part* of this is it that you would like to have come true? Would you like to get that near the bottom of the barrel? Would you really?

The rest of the chapter is a wonderful story too because this boy that was in the home finally got sick and finally he *died*. But Elijah, by the power of God, worked a mighty miracle and brought the boy back to *life*. What greater miracle in a physical way can you have than *that*, friends? Oh, that God may give us the spirit of faith because we're going to see the dead raised, friends. We're going to see the dead raised. They did it in apostolic times, and it's happened at least *two* times that I know of in the history of this Advent movement. I could tell you about that, but I'm going on to something in the New Testament pretty soon now, about another miracle.

But I want to read you something here, in the book *Prophets and Kings*, in comment on this story of this widow:

"The widow of Zarephath shared her morsel with Elijah, and in return her life and that of her son were preserved. And to all who, in time of trial and want, give sympathy to others and assistance to others more needy, God has promised great blessing. He has not changed. His power is no less now than in the days of Elijah. No less sure now than when spoken by our Saviour is the promise, 'He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward.' Matthew 10:41.

"...Our heavenly Father still continues to place in the pathway of His children opportunities that are blessings in disguise; and those who improve these opportunities find great joy. 'If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday... Isaiah 58:10-11.'" *Prophets and Kings*, pages 131-132.

What's 'disguise' mean? You can't see it. God is giving His blessings in *disguise*.

Now over to the New Testament, the sixth chapter of John. Jesus is by the Sea of Galilee. And as Matthew and Mark tell the story, they bring in other details, but we're going to notice some things here from John. Jesus and His disciples had been out in missionary work, and they were weary. In fact, the excitement and interest were so great there in Capernaum that there was no leisure so much as to eat, the Bible says. Mark tells us that.

So one morning Jesus said to His disciples, "Let's just pull away over here, out in the wilder part of the country, where we can be alone and have opportunity to talk and to pray." So they went over there, going in their little boat. But you know, the multitude saw them, and one way or another they got over there and so Christ and His disciples didn't have very much time alone. All day long Jesus ministered to them, teaching and

preaching and healing. And finally, as the sun was nearing the western horizon, Jesus looked out over that vast multitude, and the *Desire of Ages* says that He Himself...

I want to read you a statement here before we notice something in the Bible. *Desire of Ages*, page 365:

"At length the day was far spent. The sun was sinking in the west, and yet the people lingered. Jesus had labored all day without food or rest" *The Desire of Ages*, page 365.

The general manager shouldn't have allowed a thing like that to happen, should He? He should have seen that Jesus had some relief. What was the matter with them anyway, that they didn't give Jesus enough help? And if I may say it reverently, friends, for I want you to think, what was the matter with *God* that God *allowed* a situation like this?

I want to tell you something, friends and oh, I wish I could help everybody here to believe it and learn it: as long as you and I have the idea that somebody is to *blame* if we have to work extra hard, we'll never see very many miracles. Let me read this again:

"At length the day was far spent. The sun was sinking in the west, and yet the people lingered. Jesus had labored all day without food or rest. He was pale from weariness and hunger, and the disciples besought Him to cease from His toil. But He could not withdraw Himself from the multitude that pressed upon Him" *The Desire of Ages*, page 365.

All right. Now we're ready to read what Jesus said here, the sixth chapter of John and the fifth verse:

"When Jesus then lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" John 6:5.

What does 'whence' mean here? 'From where?' Where are we going to get the food to feed this multitude? The record says there were 5,000 men, besides women and children, I suppose a crowd of at least 10,000 people. Now Jesus said, "Where are we going to get the food to feed these people?"

Notice the next verse:

"And this He said this to prove him: for He himself knew what he would do" John 6:6.

Who was the 'him'? Phillip. Jesus asked this question to test Phillip; for he Himself knew what he would do. Jesus wasn't depending on Philip and it's a good thing He wasn't.

Friends, if you depend on Philip you may be as disappointed as Jesus was. It doesn't make any difference whether Philip's name is Joe or John or Judy or what it is, friends. If you are depending upon any *human* being, you may be disappointed. But Jesus knew what He would do. He was going to depend on His heavenly Father.

Oh, I wish everybody here would just had faith to believe that God will help you do *anything* He wants you to, no matter whether anybody else helps you or not. I wish we would believe that. It would just solve a lot of problems and open the way for mighty miracles.

You say, "But I have to *have* help."

Well, if you do, *God* can provide it. If *men* won't do it, God will have *angels* around to do it.

"Ah, but that doesn't happen."

Well, then, very well. Why not do what God *arranges* for you to do instead of what you think you'd *like* to do? What do you say, friends? Why not be *content* to accept the providence of God and undertake what you *think* God wants you to do and go as far as you can? That's what *Jesus* did, and that's what He's asked *us* to do.

"All right," so He says to Philip, "where are we going to get the food to feed these people?"

"Well," Philip said, "even if we had two hundred pennyworth of bread, it wouldn't be enough."

Finally, one of the disciples looked around and he found there in the multitude *one* little boy that had a lunch with him, five loaves and two fishes. The other evangelists, in writing the story, tell us that some of the disciples said, "Shall we go out into the villages and *buy* food? Where shall we go? *Somewhere*, get hold of *somebody* that can solve our problem."

But what did *Jesus* say? He said, "Give ye them to eat. Have the people all sit down." He organized them in companies of 50 and 100. Then He took that bread, those five little buns and the two little fish and He prayed. Just watch *all* those multitudes sitting down on the grassy hillside, and they see this *dear* man, pale with weariness and hunger, [break in tape] [take the bread and lifting it up to heaven asks God to bless it. **It needed it**] No, I mean it. It *needed* it, didn't it? It needed it because unless God worked a *miracle*, the whole thing would end in utter defeat and foolishness. But *Jesus knew* that His Father would take care of the matter.

But now notice, and don't miss this: Jesus didn't start eating. He may have been the hungriest, neediest person there but He didn't start eating. Neither did He say, and don't miss *this* either, He didn't say, "Well, now here are My disciples. They're My inner circle. They've been working hard all day. In fact, we pulled away to try to get time to eat and be alone. And the multitude came in on us and I'm going to feed Peter and John and all these others first." Did He? He set them at work doing what? *Feeding* the multitudes. Do you know when Jesus and the disciples ate? *After* the others were all fed.

Could *you* do that? Could you solve the problems of others *before* you take up your own problems? All the while, I hear of people who are planning to do something for God *as soon* as they can do this and this and this and this. Do you know what I mean? They have this plan and that plan, like the man that said, "I've bought three yoke of oxen and I have to go to prove them. You'll have to excuse me." Another one said, "I've bought a piece of land, and I won't be able to come." Another said, "I've married a wife, therefore I can't come."

My dear friends, multitudes of people have loaded themselves down with *human-made* problems, and they are so *full* of those problems that they can't take on the problems of others. I warn you of all that. If you want a miracle, don't seek first of all a miracle about your *own* problems. Look around you for somebody who needs help, and ask God to help you work a miracle in solving the problems of others.

Wasn't that what Elijah told the widow? "Take that little bit of meal and make a little cake for me first, and then God will work the miracle for you." So Jesus is teaching the same lesson to the disciples. "Take this little bit of bread, Peter, and start passing it out to this company over here. Matthew, take this basket of bread and start passing it out over here." They kept on until there in the twilight, *every* mouth was satisfied, *every* body given its needed nourishment. And as Jesus and His disciples sat there in the gathering gloom and ate of that bread, how the hearts of the disciples must have thrilled.

Oh, friends, I thank God for miracles. What do you say? I thank God for miracles and praise His name. I've seen Him work miracles now for nearly half a century. That's why this work is here. This *whole* program has been built up with miracles, one after the other. There are hearts here tonight, the reason you're here is because *God* has worked a miracle. *God* has worked a miracle. And there are more wonderful ones ahead. Let's press in, what do you say? Let's *believe* God. Let's just *do* what He says.

Remember, Jesus *died* to make this possible for you.

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"
Romans 8:32.

Now, I'm going to invite somebody to come up here to the platform and give a witness tonight. I'll tell you who I want to come. First, I'll tell you who will be excused. If you spoke last Friday night or the Friday night before or the Friday night before, don't come tonight. Don't come tonight. But if you *haven't* spoken in the last three weeks, and tonight your heart is *responding* to what you've heard, if you're saying, "Yes, Lord. I'm going to quit *complaining*. I'm going to quit *doubting*. I'm going to accept whatever assignment you give me and believe your promise," that'll make music in Jesus' ears. Come right now. We can have several, sitting right here on this front seat and you can come up and speak.

[Testimony service follows.]

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