

Title

"God Of Miracles"

Scripture Reading: Mark 6:20-44

20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;

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22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

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25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

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28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

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31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and out went them, and came together unto him.

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34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

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37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

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40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And they did all eat, and were filled.

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43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

Even secular leaders recognized that the world is no more the same. My Prime Minister said this: the coming election is about recognizing much is at stake in a new environment in this world.

On a more personal level, we have concerns with friends and family with serious ongoing medical needs and death.

To add to that, there are many concerns going on in our lives and mind as well, especially the squeeze of the high cost of living.

These are real life issues which I am sure affected you too.

But God has given us a message of hope rooted in the Word of God.

God is a God of miracles. The Lord often leads us step by step, involving us in the work of God in this world. Against the backdrop of the global world and our daily burdens and desperation, we should recognize, learn to live, and see the miracles of God.

1. The Global World

Mark 6:20, 'For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.'

Mark 6:26-27, 'And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison.'

This Global World will continue as it is, until the coming of Christ. And we are given a snippet of the Global world in this passage of Scripture. Herod did not want to kill John out of fear of the multitudes – and because he knew that John was a just and holy man. But Herod's need to impress his friends and family overshadowed his fear and his conviction on what is right and wrong. Herod is an example of the typical leader in the Global World we are in right now.

John the Baptist was obviously in the will of God. He boldly denounced sin, even Herod's sin.

To be bold in this global world, you need to immerse in God's word. To be faithful to God's word, we must stand up against what is morally wrong.

The **'apostles'** is the only term in Mark's Gospel. Usually he calls them **"disciples."** **"Apostle"** comes from a Greek word meaning "to send." In Greek and Jewish sources, the term was used of someone sent as an official representative: as an **'ambassador.'**

2. The need for Privacy

Mark 6:29-31

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse (John the Baptist), and laid it in a tomb.

30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while.' And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

Mark 6:30 states that 'the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him **all things.**' When you are troubled, you need to tell Jesus all things. How did Jesus react? As Jesus needed to get away from the press of crowd, so too I needed to get away for some time with God and some privacy, especially living in this troubled world.

The boat represents a space away from the crowd, from the troubled world.

We are also told that the crowd 'ran there together on foot from all the cities.'

As Christian, instead of judgmental eyes, we need to see people as they are:

Jesus said they are sheep without a shepherd. Sheep are always in a lot of trouble. They can't fend for themselves against predators and have a hard time finding the food and water they need.

The crowd in this world is that way. They needed spiritual wholeness, not just physical restoration and Jesus was able to meet both needs and so must we be in the power of God.

And you can only perform this function when you have privacy with God. Jesus told the disciples 'Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.' Jesus knew we needed a time of rest: resting in the presence of God.

3. The Miracles of God

Mark 6:41-44

And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. ⁴² And they did all eat, and were filled. ⁴³ And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. ⁴⁴ And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

God is a God of miracles often leading us step by step.

With the multitudes, the disciples said, '**send them away, for they have nothing to eat.**' But Jesus and the disciples saw exactly the same need among the multitude. The disciples' solution was to get rid of the need by getting rid of the needy. Jesus saw a different solution and wanted the disciples to see it also.

God's way of provision always begins with what we already have.

The idea of praying before a meal isn't to bless the food; it is to bless God in the sense of thanking and honoring Him for blessing us with the food.

Jesus had people He loved over for dinner, and there will always be *more* than enough food.

When Jesus provides, don't be surprised if He provides simply. Also don't be surprised if he provides extravagantly.

Getting back to point 1 and point 2. The global world is constantly changing and not in our favor. As part of the global world, we are a burdened people, a desperate people. Yet in the midst of all this, we can witness the miracles of God in our lives step by step. **The bible says in Psalms 1, 'He prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies.'**



Family in Thailand



Family meal in joy's house



Jan's brand new car



Meal with joy and jan



Meals at devonshire road



Noah



Swimming with elise

In conclusion, we are frightened by a global world that is changing so fast and beyond our control. We are burdened by our families, our careers and our secular works. We even become desperate like the citizens of this world, living as if there is no help for us. The busyness of life affected us physically and we forgot there is a God and we did not look for him in the privacy of our lives. We failed to see miracles in our lives even though they exist and these miracles are few and in short supply. But God sent Jesus into this world 2000 years ago.

Jesus was born during the Roman Empire, witnessing the reigns of the cruellest rulers in history. His world was worse than many of us. When he was a baby, they tried to kill him. His parents had to run to Egypt, waiting for the cruel Herod to die before finally settling in Nazareth. Jesus was not born rich, thus experiencing the same burden and desperation like all Citizens. The only difference between Jesus and us was He was in favor with God and man. Miracles after miracles took place in his life.

Yet he went to the cross and died for our sake so that we too can connect back with God and see miracles step by steps in our lives. The veil is thorn because of Jesus so that we can boldly come to the throne of God to ask for miracles. We don't have to be overwhelmed by this global world, like the citizens of the world filled with burdens and desperation because God is with us everyday ready to help.