The Healing Of Malchus’ Ear

Luke 22:49-51

All four Gospel writers record that one of Christ’s disciples cut off the ear of a “servant of the high priest” (Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50; John 18:10). Only Luke records the miracle of restoration (22:51). Matthew, Mark, and Luke do not identify who it was that took the action of severing the ear of the servant, saying only; “one of them” (Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50), but John records that it was Peter (John 18:10). Matthew, Mark, and Luke do not give the identity of the one who had his ear severed, saying only that it was a “servant of the high priest” (Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50), but John records; “The servant’s name was Malchus” (John 18:10). John would mention him later, without giving his name (John 18:26).

I. THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE MIRACLE

1. Jesus Goes Forth To Gethsemane:

Following the Passover meal, and the institution of the Lord’s Supper with the eleven, Jesus led them out into the darkness of the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:30, 36; Mark 14:32; Luke 22:39; John 18:1). From these four accounts we learn that Gethsemane was a garden in the Mount Of Olives and it was a place where Jesus often went to pray (John 18:2). As Jesus and the eleven apostles arrived at Gethsemane, Jesus said; “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder” (Matthew 26:36; Mark 14:32). He then took Peter, James, and John further into the garden with Him (Matthew 26:37; Mark 14:33). As He was doing so, He began to feel the weight of the sins of the people given to Him of the Father before the foundation of the world, and in addition to feeling this great weight of sin, Satan, in an attempt to prevent Christ from going to the cross sought to kill Him. The consequence of all of this was a great sorrow and heaviness (Matthew 26:37; Mark 14:34). He then instructed Peter, James, and John to tarry, and He went a little way from them (Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:35; Luke 22:41) and while engulfed with sorrow, anguish, affliction, torment and torture of soul, He prayed three times; “let this cup pass from Me” (Matthew 26:39-44). The “cup” does not have reference to the cross, but rather to what He was experiencing at that very moment! HE WAS NOT LOOKING TO AVOID THE CROSS, HE WAS PRAYING THAT HIS LIFE WOULD BE SPARED SO THAT HE COULD GO TO THE CROSS!
Jesus Goes Forth To Be Arrested:

After praying, and enduring an intense battle with Satan, and after Judas had made his agreement to betray Him, Jesus arises with a spirit of readiness and eager anticipation to go forth in the path that would lead to the cross (Matthew 26:46; Mark 14:41-42; John 18:4). It was while Jesus spoke these words that Judas arrived with a group to arrest Christ (Matthew 26:47). Judas arrived with “a band of men (a tenth part of a legion, approximately 500 men), and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees.........with lanterns and torches and weapons” (John 18:3). They came with “lanterns and torches” because they believed that Christ would attempt to hide, and with “a band of men..........and weapons” because they believed that Christ would have to be taken by force! IN THEIR MINDS, CHRIST WOULD HAVE TO BE CAPTURED! But this was not the case! JESUS WENT UNTO THEM, asking; “Whom seek ye?” (John 18:4). They answered (John 18:5), and in response, Jesus said “I am” revealing the glory of His Person, with the direct result being; “they went backward, and fell to the ground” ((John 18:6). Though they came with “a band of men..........with lanterns and torches and weapons” CHRIST WAS IN ABSOLUTE CONTROL OF THE SITUATION! Jesus repeated His question, and they repeated their answer, and Jesus again said “I am” followed by the instruction; “if therefore ye seek Me, let these (the apostles) go their way” (John 18:7-8). Jesus was saying; “Here I am, take Me, but let these go free” This is a beautiful illustration of the work of Christ for His people! From all of this, it is clearly manifested that Christ voluntarily and willingly offered Himself to arrest and ultimately to the death of the cross! He readily, intentionally, and deliberately submitted Himself! THE CALMNESS OF CHRIST IS VERY MANIFEST! There is the lesson; that the time during which evil is permitted to triumph is limited by God (Luke 22:53), and that God is sovereign over everything! The wicked can do nothing without His permission!

The Severing Of The Ear Of Malchus:

Luke records that when the apostles realized that this “band of men” were going to take Christ, that they asked Christ; “shall we smite with the sword?” (22:49). It was about this time that that this “band of men” reached forth to take Jesus, and Peter in his zeal, and without waiting for Jesus’ answer wielded his sword (one of two swords that they possessed verse 38) with the intent of beheading Malchus, but due to the sovereign power of God he missed and only cut off his ear (Matthew 26:50-51; Mark 14:46-47; Luke 22:50; John 18:10). THERE ARE MANY LESSONS IN THIS EVENT! Christ has already manifested that He is in complete and absolute control of this situation, yet Peter in his zeal, took matters into his own hands, without considering the will of the Lord! IT IS ALWAYS DANGEROUS TO TAKE MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS! Christ lovingly rebuked Peter for his action (Matthew 26:52-54; Luke 22:51; John 18:11). He was saying to Peter, “if you think this is the way you will be protected, you are wrong” and then He again reiterated (whether Peter understood it or not) “that all of this was necessary for the work of God the Father had given Christ” Peter had not
really surrendered to the truth that Christ revealed to Him back in Matthew 16:21. CHRIST WAS COMPLETELY SURRENDERED TO GOD’S WILL, PETER WAS NOT! 

Peter acted from a zeal without knowledge, and in unconsidered haste, and such is very dangerous! Peter’s behavior at this time was emotion driven, and was completely reactionary, and though Peter, no doubt loved the Lord, and no doubt wanted what was best, his behavior brought harm and destruction! Peter acting in such haste was really the result of a failure to heed Christ’s word; “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41). THERE IS MUCH DANGER IN NOT GIVING HEED TO SUCH! 

We see from Peter’s action; that more than excitement, zeal, and good intentions are required in the service of the Lord! This was not the first time that Peter acted with unwise zeal, and in hastiness, Peter was a very impulsive person, as seen throughout the Gospel accounts. In Matthew 16:21-23 he actually thought that he had a better way than Christ and rebuked Him. He manifested his impulsiveness on the Mount Of Transfiguration, and Christ had to say; “Hold on Peter, lets not give equal status to Jesus, Moses, and Elijah” (Matthew 17:1-5). On the night of the Passover, Jesus was washing the feet of the apostles, and when He came to Peter to wash his feet; Peter’s response to Christ was “No way are you washing my feet!” (John 13:4-8). And now, on the night of Christ’s arrest, Peter once again reacts with unwise zeal, and in much haste! This action of Peter, along with the personal profile of Peter serves as a warning! Though Peter loved the Lord, and was a valuable servant, he was the most rebuked of the apostles by the Lord!

II. THE MIRACLE

1 Christ Restores The Ear Of Malchus:

Again, Luke is the only one who records the actual miracle, simply writing; “And He (Jesus) touched his ear, and healed him” (Luke 22:51). Luke, being a physician; this absolutely amazed him! The ear of Malchus was probably hanging by a thread, and Jesus simply reached forth and “touched his ear” and the immediate result was that Malchus was healed (as if his ear had never been severed). Once again, this illustrates the power of Christ’s touch (Matthew 8:15; 17:7; Mark 1:41; Luke 7:14). THERE IS RESTORING POWER IN THE SIMPLE TOUCH OF THE LORD! In one act, and in one moment, CHRIST BROUGHT RESTORATION! The damage that was done was nullified by the intervention of Christ! This is yet another example of the transforming, restoring power, and sufficiency of Christ, and the difference that He can make! In this event, there is a manifestation of Christ’s power to destroy (as seen in the fact that they fell backward at the revelation of Christ), and His power to heal (as seen in the restoration of Malchus’ ear). This miracle manifests the hardness of heart in man, as seen in the fact that it had no effect upon them!
This Is A Manifestation Of Christ’s Mercy:

Malchus was an enemy of the Lord, and acting with hostility and enmity toward Christ when his ear was severed, and yet we read; “And He touched his ear, and healed him” OH, WHAT GRACE AND MERCY! The Lord is gracious and merciful (Exodus 34:6; 2 Chronicles 30:9; Nehemiah 9:17, 31; Psalm 116:5). Grace is “God’s favor that gives us blessings that we do not deserve” Mercy is “God withholding what we deserve” “And He touched his ear, and healed him” As in all the healing miracles of Christ; THIS IS A MANIFESTATION OF GRACE AND MERCY!

The miracle of restoring the ear of Malchus brings to light that the Lord can and does fix the damage that man can cause! MAN CAN CAUSE GREAT HARM, BUT THERE IS A MIRACULOUS WORKING POWER IN THE LORD! All through the Gospel accounts there are recorded the miraculous works of Christ! Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit give eye-witness account of the various miracles of Christ. They give account of Christ’s miraculous power over nature, over human ailments, and disability, over demonic forces, and over death! These are attributed to Christ (John 2:11, 23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2, 14), and are called “mighty works” (Mark 6:14; Luke 10:13). These were done to authenticate the mission of Christ (Luke 7:20-22; John 5:36; John 10:25, 38). On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:22), Peter declared; “Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which (miracles, wonders, & signs), God did by Him (Jesus Of Nazareth), in the midst of you (they were done publicly), as ye yourselves also know” (there was no doubt that He had done these things).It was by these miraculous works that Jesus was set forth as the Christ, as the Almighty One, and as the Lord of all! These miraculous works revealed that He was and is the one and only Savior, the one and only Emancipator, who is above all, beyond all, superior to all, and the One who takes precedence over all! These miraculous works were done to promote and strengthen faith (John 10:37-38; 14:11; 20:30-31), to portray the needs of man, and the salvation and sufficiency that is in Christ! It is important to remember, that the recorded miracles of Christ, are only but a small portion of His miraculous works. John records, that if all the miracles of Christ were recorded, that the world could not contain the books that would be required (John 21:25). What a blessing, when we can identify with these marvelous miracles of Christ! Such should fill us with faith, courage, conviction, humility, thankfulness, and praise! Keep in mind; that the miracles performed by Christ during His earthly ministry brought personal responsibility, and accountability (Matthew 11:20; John 15:24), and even the reading and hearing of such makes one responsible and accountable!