

What Can We Learn From the Miracle Worker?

<u>Matthew 9:35</u>: (NASB) Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.



Special Guest: Tom Ruggirello

As Christians, we all love to read and recount the marvelous accounts of Jesus working miracles. We are inspired by his compassion and his ability to change the lives of those whom he touched. Today we want to once again find that inspiration, but our path to it will be somewhat different as we will recount the incredible story of a woman who was called a Miracle Worker in her day. She touched one life - she changed one life and through that change, she touched the world. What a great picture of Jesus!

Our guest, Tom, is a non-denominational minister in the Chicago area and has been a guest of Christian Questions for other programs. On this program, he discusses lessons learned from Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller and what we can learn to help our own Christian walk. We will paraphrase Tom's comments in purple throughout this Rewind.

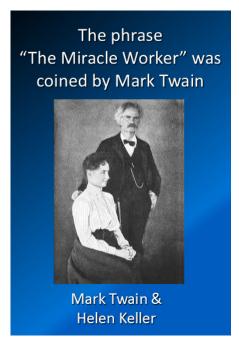
<u>Isaiah 53:6</u>: (NASB) All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on him.

The journey of mankind through the perils of life has created an endless source of lessons and examples that will form part of the world's memory for eternity to come. From time to time we are made aware of an extraordinary life or experience someone has had and we can see plainly wonderful lessons in their story. The experience of Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller is like that.

Both Anne and Helen had difficult childhoods.

Most of us know the story in general, but when you look into the specifics of their lives, the symbolism just jumps out at you. It parallels the work God is doing with mankind in his fall and recovery. It is a human interest story full of profound truths that connect with Scripture.

The phrase "The Miracle Worker" was coined by Mark Twain. He used it to describe Anne Sullivan and the work she did with Helen Keller. Mark Twain once said, "The two most interesting characters of the 19th century are Napoleon and Helen Keller." He was so impressed with what Anne could do with a deaf and dumb child.





A ship without a compass, Anne Sullivan's Life, YouTube.com

• (Helen Keller describing herself) I was a phantom. Robbed as an infant of my sight and hearing, I lived like a creature of the deepest ocean waters, feeling my way through a world without light or sound and only vaguely aware of the concept of life or even of my own existence. Until I was seven years old I was like a ship at sea in a dense fog groping my way to shore. Only I was a ship without compass or sounding line, and I had no way of knowing how near the harbor was.

Helen was six years old when Anne became her teacher. For the first six years of her life, her description fit her perfectly - "a ship at sea in a dense fog." She couldn't see or hear; she was totally oblivious to her surroundings. Her parents thought she had a mental deficiency because she could not communicate. She received no discipline or education.

Essentially she was cut off from the rest of the world.

Her parents did not know how to deal with her, so they let her do whatever she wanted. They wouldn't set a place for her at the dinner table. She would just wander around the table, feeling everyone's plate and taking whatever food she wanted. She would stuff it in her mouth and that was her way of eating a meal. Her parents loved and adored her, but they just did not know how to educate her because they saw her deficiency as mental.

Helen Keller lost her sight and hearing when she was 19 months old, as a result of a serious illness, possibly scarlet fever or meningitis. As a young girl, Helen was described as almost a feral child. A feral child is a child who lives isolated from human contact from a very young age and has no experience of human care, loving or social behavior, or even of human language.

She was like a wild animal throwing a tantrum if she did not get what she wanted. They would appease her by giving her candy to quiet down.

Anne Sullivan had many of her own problems, however. She had a disease called trachoma, and began to lose her eyesight due to corneal scarring at age three, and was virtually blind by the age of five. Through various benefactors, Anne received a series of operations to correct her vision. Eventually her sight was restored enough that she could read for short periods but she was always in pain.

When she was eight, her mother died of tuberculosis. When she was ten, her father, an abusive alcoholic, abandoned both her and her younger brother at a poor house. Her brother also suffering from tuberculosis soon died.



In spite of her own problems, Anne was very intelligent and determined. Helen was six years old and Anne was 20 years old when Anne arrived at Helen's home in 1886. She was qualified to help Helen because of her own circumstances.

The trials of Anne Sullivan are a picture of God's own Miracle Worker, Jesus.

Jesus had to learn obedience and how to do the will of God above all other things:

Hebrews 5:7-8: (NASB) ⁷In the days of his flesh, he offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his piety. ⁸Although he was a son, he learned obedience from the things, which he suffered.

This prepared Jesus to be a merciful high priest for the world of mankind. He knew how to obey from his previous life as the Logos in heaven, but this was under adversarial circumstances. He saw how difficult it was to do God's will in an earthly environment.

How do you teach someone who doesn't even know how to communicate? By an immovable tower of discipline!

"When the student is ready, the teacher will appear."

Most important day of my life, Anne Sullivan's Life, YouTube.com

• "Light! Give me light," was the wordless cry of my soul. Then one day, the most important day I can remember in all my life, the women who would guide me to shore, my teacher who would reveal all things to me, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrast between the two lives this important day connected.

"Give me light!" She did not know what she wanted, but she knew she wanted to be part of the world. "I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrast between the two lives this important day connected." Her connection with Anne revolutionized her life and she was transformed. That transformation was difficult!

When Helen was two years old, her mother read an account written by Charles Dickens of the successful education of a blind girl from 50 years earlier. She pursued this and was eventually referred to a special institute for the blind in Boston. The director of the school asked former student Anne Sullivan to become Helen's personal instructor.



"If you want to help your daughter you have to discipline her."

At the first family dinner Anne attended, she watched in horror at the way Helen was allowed to help herself from everyone's plate. Anne demanded to know why they allowed this. The parents explained simply that it kept the peace. It allowed them to have an adult conversation.

Anne then got up from the table, took the food out of Helen's hands and even out of her mouth. She put the spoon in her hand and a brawl began. She had never been treated this way and was a spoiled child! No one had ever challenged her actions before.



An unbelievable scene of chaos followed, but Anne would not back down. She demanded that everyone leave the room and leave her alone with Helen. She locked the two doors of the dining room and proceeded to force Helen to sit and eat with a spoon. Every time she put a spoon in Helen's hand, Helen would throw it across the room, spit out the food and run away. Spoon after spoon went flying.



"Kitchen Brawl" scene from the movie, The Miracle Worker, portrayed by Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke.

Finally after a long while, they came stumbling out the door to the mother sitting on the porch. Anne says to Helen's mother, "She ate from her own plate, with a spoon and she folded her own napkin. The room is a wreck, but her napkin is folded." The mother couldn't believe it. They had never been able to teach Helen to do anything. They just didn't know how.

Anne knew the first thing Helen needed was discipline, which the parents never provided for her.

What an important lesson for us as we look at God's Miracle Worker, Jesus, and understand the depth of the discipline all mankind needs.

God's Miracle Worker, Jesus, a tower of discipline and love:

<u>Isaiah 53:3-6</u>: (NASB) ³He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we did not esteem him. ⁴Surely our griefs he himself bore, and our sorrows he carried; yet we ourselves esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was pierced through for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon him, and by his scourging we are healed. ⁶All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on him.

The world of mankind is like Helen Keller in many ways -an unruly child who does not honor or respect God and is blind and deaf.

One of the great parallels is still yet to come:

Revelation 2:26,27: (KJV) ²⁶And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: ²⁷And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Here is the discipline Anne Sullivan provided Helen Keller. The rod of iron wasn't pleasant but it was for her own good and eventually Helen knew that. Someday mankind will see the iron rule in the kingdom will be for their benefit and they will appreciate it.

Discipline is love, not cruelty. You do not discipline someone you hate.



How did Anne get to be the way she was?

Anne's life in the Almshouse, Anne Sullivan's Life, YouTube.com

• The conditions of Teacher's life at the Almshouse were almost beyond description. Every rejected form of humankind it seemed had been deposited there. Day after day, she walked among the mentally and physically afflicted. Night after night she slept with children who were sick or near dying. Death and disease were constant companions. Within three months of their arriving, Jimmy (Anne's brother) passed away from tuberculosis. Time stood dead still in the Almshouse. It was almost as if time were part of the bricks and mortar in the walls which held Teacher captive.

There was great frustration in dealing with this child. In one emotional scene in the movie, Anne comes over to Helen, and grabs her and says something, knowing Helen doesn't understand a word of it. But Anne needed to get it out. She said, "I wanted to teach you everything the earth is full of, Helen. Everything on it is ours for a wink, and it's gone. And what we are on it, the light we bring, we leave behind in words. Why, you can see 5,000 years back in the light of words. Everything, we feel, think, know and share in words as long as a soul's not in darkness or done with, even in the grave. But I know one word and I can put the world in your hand, and whatever it is to me I won't take less. But how, how do I tell you that this (sign language she drew on her hand) means the word, and the word means a thing?"

She couldn't communicate with words but tried to teach Helen sign language by drawing it on her hand. Anne had the high, noble idea of wanting to show Helen the world and teach her the language of life.

Anne's dream was of transformation of Helen to a viable citizen of humanity. When we go to the great Miracle Worker, Jesus, it is more than just a dream of transformation; it is the work of transformation over a long period of time for all of mankind.

Another difference is Anne wasn't sure she could *ever* reach Helen. Helen's parents resisted a lot of what Anne tried to do and Anne didn't know Helen's capabilities. Jesus *knows* that mankind has the capability to be developed. God's plan for man is sure and there is no doubt.

Self-pity is our worst enemy and if we yield to it, we can never do anything wise in this world.

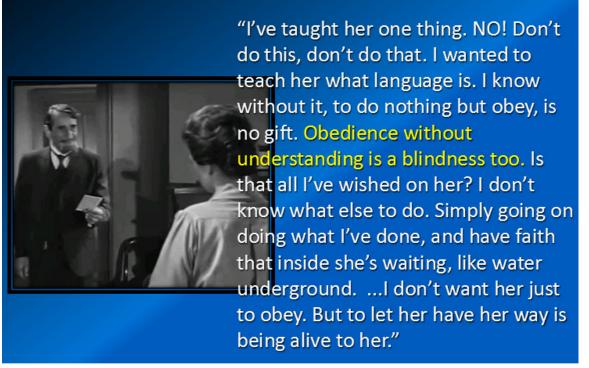
- Helen Keller

How do you teach someone who is unreachable?

After some initial success at controlling Helen's behavior, her father came to Anne with her first month's salary and he said, "This doesn't pay our debt for what you've done."

But Anne responded bluntly, and she said, "I've taught her one thing. NO! Don't do this, don't do that. I wanted to teach her what language is. I know without it, to do nothing but obey, is no gift. **Obedience without understanding is a blindness, too.**"





Helen was trained like any animal. An animal doesn't necessarily understand why you are asking them to do a certain thing. Anne was seeing beyond the training and wanted Helen to understand concepts and principles. Helen's father would have been happy with just obedience.

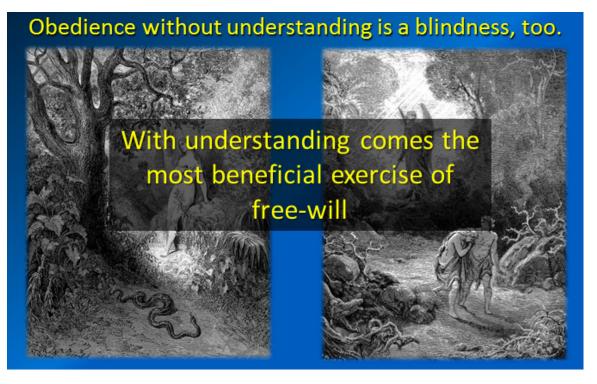
God's Miracle Worker lived the discipline necessary to show us godly discipline for our lives:

<u>Hebrews 1:8-9</u>: (NRSV) ⁸But of the Son he says, Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.

Hebrews 12:7-8: (NASB) ⁷It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

That is an amazing description of why God has permitted evil to come into the world. "Obedience without understanding is a blindness, too." Doesn't that describe Adam and Eve? They were told not to eat of one tree. But they were blind to the reason why. They didn't understand that God would always have their best interests at heart, no matter what the immediate circumstances might look like. God would not make a rule that would harm them, and He could be trusted in everything. This lack of understanding in Adam and Eve led them to disobey. The point God will instill in mankind is to understand principle. You love the principle, and that is why you obey it; not out of blind obedience.





God doesn't just want obedience. He wants people to understand principles. He desires them to do what is right and good because they see the value in those things. Righteousness brings consequent blessings. Blind obedience might be okay for a child, but in the end it's not the noblest reason for our actions.

Though Helen's parents loved her, they weren't really good parents because they didn't know how to discipline their disobedient daughter. They felt sorry for her but did not do what she needed them to do.

Anne Sullivan was the real hero here. Without her, Helen would have been institutionalized and would have never reached her potential. I would submit that Helen's potential was reached to a higher height because of this experience than had she been a "normal" child with all her senses.

Once there is a breakthrough in understanding, how do you get to profound learning?

Anne graduates and teaches me, Anne Sullivan's Life, YouTube.com

 Anne went to school. In just six years, having had no other formal education, she graduated Valedictorian of her class from Perkins Institute for the Blind. Her desire to assault the effects of blindness and deafness were born at the Institute. When the time finally came for her to teach, she was assigned to me. I was her first and last student.



"Her desire to assault the effects of blindness and deafness were born at the Institute." She saw the great need. The parallel with our Lord is fantastic. Jesus observed what was happening to humanity and that sparked the desire to be part of the answer of salvation.

Anne saw that Helen's family was undoing everything Anne was trying to do. They let her do anything, but Anne knew discipline was necessary. Anne went to the parents to ask permission to take Helen away, and the father really resisted. He finally relented to two weeks at the small cottage they had on their property. The family was banned from communicating with Helen for those two weeks.

During the two weeks of intense training, Anne was really able to get through to Helen regarding her behavior. After two weeks when they came back to the house, the parents were so thrilled her behavior had improved that they had a wonderful dinner and made all the food Helen liked. Helen sat at the table, started eating with a spoon, but she dropped her napkin on the floor. They picked it up for her. Then she dropped it again. They picked it up again. Then she began eating with her hands. She was going back to her old ways.

Anne is so angry with this that she grabs Helen's hand like she did before and takes the food out of her hands and out of her mouth. She was testing her parents to see if they would be more lenient than Anne Sullivan had been. And they were. They said, "We're so glad to have her back with us. What harm will it do to let her have her way just this once?" But Anne was furious and said, "You're going to undo everything I've done with her." And then she made another profound statement. She said, "She will live up to just what you demand of her."

Helen grabbed a pitcher of water and douses Anne with the water! Anne was so angry that she dragged Helen outside to the water pump to refill the pitcher as a consequence.

Anne is teaching Helen freedom, but she is teaching her that you can't have freedom without accountability. True freedom is in the context of the discipline of life. The brilliance of this 20-year old was to be able to stand firm and do what was necessary. When we take a look at Jesus, the true Miracle Worker, and the plan of salvation for the world of mankind, we see there is freedom with accountability.

God's miracle worker provided the price necessary to give each human being freedom with responsibility:

Jeremiah 31:27-30: (NASB) ²⁷Behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. ²⁸As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the LORD. ²⁹In those days they will not say again, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. ³⁰But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.

The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision. - Helen Keller



While they were filling the pitcher, Helen had one hand under the water while Anne spelled out the word "water" into Helen's other hand. She was always teaching!



As Helen felt the water running over her hand, a light came on! She understood that what Anne was doing to her hand was describing what was coming out of the pump! She never made that connection before. We sometimes say this is the "aha!" moment. She stops pumping, throws the pitcher down, takes Anne's hand and spells out the word "W-A-T-E-R." Anne knew that Helen finally was getting that these signs in her hands represent things.

Helen learned 30 new words that day.

In the next six months she learned some 350 new words.

This is what Anne wrote about that morning:



My heart is singing for joy this morning! A miracle has happened! The light of understanding has shone upon my little pupil's mind, and behold, all things are changed! - Anne Sullivan

This describes the feeling Jesus would have had at his first advent when he was performing miracles. A lot of people just came for the show, but a lot of people "got it," that these miracles were intended for a greater purpose. When he saw the light go on in their minds, that this is something greater, he had the same sense of appreciation as a student getting it!



The bronze statue of Helen Keller that sits in the U.S. Capitol shows the blind girl standing at a water pump. It depicts the moment in 1887 when her teacher, Anne Sullivan, spelled "W-A-T-E-R" into one of her pupil's hands while water streamed into the other. This was Keller's awakening, when she made the connection between the word Sullivan spelled and the tangible substance splashing from the pump.

God's Miracle Worker provided truth and understanding:

<u>John 4:13-14</u>: (NASB) ¹³Jesus answered and said to her, everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.

- The first year and the next 50 years, Anne Sullivan's Life, YouTube.com
 - All through that year of 1887, I did nothing but explore with my hands and learn the name of every object I touched. And all through that first year as in the fifty years that followed my teacher was at my side seizing the right moments to impart knowledge to me. Anyone can take children to the classroom, but only a teacher can lead them to learn. They must feel that liberty is theirs; they must feel the flush of victory and they must also feel the heart sinking of disappointment. They must feel these things.

Disappointment is part of the education process. If you don't feel disappointment, you can't have a sense of what is joyful and righteous. It is a real rounded education she received and that the Lord is giving.

Now at age six, Helen has realized the world has opened up to her because of a young woman willing to put her life on the line on her behalf. The answer comes through water.

Interestingly, Jesus made a connection about water:

John 4:13,14: (NIV) ¹³Jesus answered, Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Zephaniah 3:9: (KJV) For then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.



Helen hated Anne up until this point because she made her do things Helen did not want to do. But now after realizing she was trying to teach her something, Helen goes to her mother and takes two keys out of her mother's pocket. They were the keys to the dining room Anne used to lock the doors in order to teach Helen how to sit down and eat with a spoon. When they came back from the two weeks of being away from the family, the first thing Helen did was to take the keys out of the doors and hide them in her mother's pocket so Anne could not do that again. She realized this was a friend, someone trying to help her.

So Helen gives the keys back to Anne, as if to say, now I understand why you did that. I won't fight you anymore. She asked Anne who she was by pointing to her chest. Anne signed in Helen's hand, "I am the teacher." Helen went to her mother and signed "teacher" in her hand. It was a wonderful breakthrough moment.

Through their 50 years together, Helen always calls Anne "Teacher." We need to know who our teacher is.

We must truly know who God's Miracle Worker is!

John 14:1-6: (NASB) ¹Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way where I am going. ⁵Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going, how do we know the way? ⁴Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.

<u>John 8:12</u>: (NASB) Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, I am the Light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.

This is the desire of God's heart. It comes in two stages. For Christians who love Christ and devote their lives to him, they are already past the "aha" moment. They realize their lives can only be fulfilled by Christ. So we cooperate with him. We love our teacher! We recognize him and follow him as closely as we can. That hasn't happened for the world of mankind...yet! But it will in God's earthly kingdom.

When we look at Anne's experience with Helen, it really does parallel the experience of Jesus bringing the world out of their dark, miserable condition into a condition of actually understanding the light of God's love and plan.

The description we read earlier in Revelation of *ruling with a rod of iron* is the rules and laws enforced during the kingdom. At first I think there will be rebellion against them. People don't like to be told what to do! But when discipline is understood by mankind, they will have their own "aha!" moment and realize why God is doing it. They will be forced to obey righteousness and then learn to love goodness.

The pathway Anne took with Helen is similar to the pathway the world will have to take.



We imagine that we want to escape our selfish and commonplace existence, but we cling desperately to our chains. - Anne Sullivan

She originally wanted to stay in her comfort zone! I think in the kingdom mankind is going to want to go back to what they are comfortable with until they realize that is not for their ultimate good.

I am gripped by the might of the destiny she (my teacher) has laid out for me. - Helen Keller

How do you go from profound learning to truly seeing?

Teacher passes; her work still lives, Anne Sullivan's Life, YouTube.com

• With the passing of time came the passing away of my teacher. In her separation from me, I have often remembered and taken comfort in her saying that real independence is obtained through your mind and spirit. This was the very center of Teacher's work with me: to lessen my physical dependence on her and make it possible for me to someday continue my work without her. Teacher believed in me and I have resolved not to betray her faith. Conscious of her always, I have sought for new ways to give life and get more life to men and women whom darkness, silence, sickness, and sorrow are wearing away, and at times it seems my teacher, who touched my night to flame, is still about her work using me to kindle other fires for good.

"Real independence is obtained through your mind and spirit." This is exactly what Jesus is striving to see in us - for us to obey because we love the principles. "Teacher believed in me." Our Lord believes in us and the potential in the world.

Are we willing to get out of our own way and follow in obedience what Jesus is teaching us to do? We are to trust what he is teaching us is for our good. It is a mutual relationship that as we have more confidence in him through our life's experiences, we see what he is teaching us does help us, improve us and make us more like him. We can go on step-by-step from there.

After Anne dies, Helen becomes famous! Yes, she becomes world renowned, meets presidents, writes books, she even speaks!

Her old age comfort, Helen Keller, biography.com

• In old age, she took comfort in her belief that after death she would be reunited with her beloved teacher, Anne Sullivan, and then for the first time she would see the face and hear the voice of the Miracle Worker who opened the world for her famous pupil, Helen Keller.

So, will Helen ever get to see her teacher? Absolutely! There is no question about it. That is why Jesus as the Miracle Worker came.

Helen became world famous. Perkins School for the Blind that Helen went to saw an increase in funding and it became famous as well. (It is still there! See www.perkins.org.) It really helped show those blind and deaf that there is hope.



So, what was the ultimate reason that Jesus was such a Miracle Worker?

All of the healings Jesus did were temporary. He raised Lazarus from the dead, for example, but he eventually died again. Is it cruel to give the feeling of great hope when they would all die anyway? Why did Jesus do what he did?

I believe there was something in his heart that moved him to have compassion. So many times the Scriptures tell us *he was moved with compassion and healed them*. It indicates Jesus loved the people he dealt with. He loves mankind and he was moved when he saw suffering.

But he also had to establish who he was and where his authority came from. These miracles helped establish that he was the Savior who had come to do the will of God.

<u>John 5:36</u>: (NASB) But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about me, that the Father has sent me.

Humanity is drawn to things that are out of the ordinary, no matter what age we live in. If something unusual is happening, we all stop to look.

What is interesting is the type of miracles he chose to do. Healing is something that affects us personally when we are sick or have diseases. He didn't do a magic show; he healed peoples' diseases. He also had control over nature, such as with some miracles like the stilling of the waters and changing water into wine. He also cast out demons. This is everything that affects mankind: diseases, nature - control of this earth - and the spiritual realm. It shows the complete authority given to him by God.

It is like the way he taught in parables - they were simple stories that meant something much bigger. His miracles fit into that same category. They were essentially small in the scope of the big world, but they meant something bigger. They were only confined to the land of Israel. But the theme text for this program is very significant:

<u>Matthew 9:35</u>: (NASB) Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Notice as he is healing, he is *teaching in the synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom*. In essence, he is saying this healing is an indication of what is going to happen in the kingdom. He is making the connection that yes, on a small scale, I'm healing just a few as an illustration of what is going to happen in the kingdom where that healing is worldwide.

There are some Christian denominations who try to promote healings, but that wasn't the point of it. The point is much bigger.



<u>Matthew 9:8</u>: (NASB) But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

It stopped the crowd in its tracks when Jesus did what he did. It was extremely unusual - especially raising the dead. It showed his ability to control even death. He raised a few people, but Lazarus was unique because he had been dead for four days. It showed that even time was not a roadblock to his ability to raise the dead.

One of the raisings he did was of a young girl who had just died. Another was someone during a funeral procession and finally someone already decomposing. It was all phases of death.

Lazarus was the last one and Jesus told his disciples it was to teach them something. What else could it have taught them since he already raised the dead? It taught them that time was no problem for him.

The miracles of Jesus were much bigger than just individual acts. That is profound!

<u>John 20:30-31</u>: (NASB) ³⁰Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in his name.

Anne describes early method, H. Keller and A. Sullivan Newsreel Footage (1930)

(We recommend typing "Helen Keller 1930 Newsreel" at YouTube to view.)

• When I saw Helen Keller first she was six years and eight months old. She had been blind, deaf and mute since her nineteenth month as a result of an illness. She had no way of communicating with those around her except a few imitative signs that she had made for herself. A push meant go and a pull meant come and so on. She had observed that we did not use the hands. We were talking to each other, and I let her see by putting her hands on my face how we talk with our mouths.



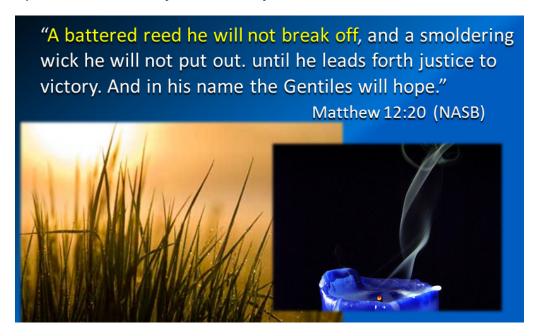
Walking with a friend in the dark is better than walking alone in the light. - Helen Keller

Light comes in many forms. An enlightened mind is better than an enlightened eye. This was based on touch and human connection.

<u>Luke 6:17-19</u>: (NASB) ¹⁷Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place; and there was a large crowd of his disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. ¹⁹And all the people were trying to touch him, for power was coming from him and healing them all.



By performing miracles, Jesus truly identified with the people's suffering: Matthew 12:20: (NASB) A battered reed he will not break off, and a smoldering wick he will not put out, until he leads justice to victory.



So often we read of Jesus' tough words he had for the Scribes and Pharisees because he was angry at the way they were really "un-educating" the people. But when it came to someone who had some faith but still was struggling, he wanted to nurture them and bring them along. A battered reed he will not break off. An example of this was the father who brought his young son to Jesus to exorcise a demon. Jesus told him, I can do all things if you believe. Very honestly the father says, I believe; help my unbelief. Jesus healed the son and presumably the father never doubted again. This man, a battered reed, had doubts in his mind. Jesus nurtured him. (See the full account in Mark 9:17-27.)

Anne nurtured Helen and never lost faith. They are a good, physical human example for us to see the reason for Jesus living his life in sacrifice. Frankly, the world doesn't respond to Jesus right now. The world doesn't care about Jesus right now. But he did not "not" die for them because he knew they would be apathetic toward him. He died for them because they were apathetic towards him. The world is in bad shape!

He sees the potential in the world for greater good. So he will nurture that potential and bring it along and develop it more than it could have been developed otherwise. It is a transformational process.

It happens in two ways. Today it happens for cooperative Christians who want to be transformed; in the next age it will happen for mankind who at first is disciplined but then gets the idea of what is happening and then they cooperate as well.



Anne describes early method, H. Keller and A. Sullivan Newsreel Footage (1930)

• She felt the vibrations of the spoken word. Instantly she spelled: "I want to talk with my mouth." That seemed impossible. After experimenting for a time, we found that tracing her hand in this position - the thumb resting on the throat right at the larynx, the first finger on the lips, the second on the nose - we found that she could feel the vibration of spoken words.

It would seem impossible for Helen to be able to speak. It seems impossible Jesus died as a ransom for all the world of mankind, but it is not!

It is because we have a teacher who knows how to do it. When you look at all the cultures, religions and beliefs in the world, you think how can everyone come to Jesus? But because of his ability, his authority to perform miracles, resurrect the dead and establish an iron rule in the kingdom - because of all the things he knows how to do and has the ability and authority to do - all the cultures and religions will come to recognize him as the one true Savior of all.

Mankind will have to go back to very fundamental basics: Who is God? Who is our Savior? What is the truth?

Jesus, by performing miracles, was proclaiming the kingdom!

<u>Matthew 9:35</u>: (NASB) Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Matthew 11:2-5: (NASB) ²Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, are you the expected one, or shall we look for someone else? ⁴Jesus answered and said to them, Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

The miracles of Jesus were the beginning of a process of transformation, not only for Christianity, but the world as well. Profound truths change people!

Will the world ever see sight restored to the blind and hearing to the deaf?

The mission of Jesus:

Philippians 2:7-11: (NASB) ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Once the obedient ransom sacrifice was complete, then:

⁹For this reason also, God highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.





As a result of this sacrifice and glorification, what happens?

<u>John 5:28-29</u>: (NASB) ²⁸Do not marvel at this; **for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice**, ²⁹and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

This is a very significant text! We should read it ten times just to emphasize the importance of this! ALL who are in their graves...not some, not just Christians, not just a few whom God likes, but ALL who are in their graves. And then it gives us the two parts - those who have done good deeds to a resurrection of life - those are consecrated, dedicated Christians in this age (transformed already) who are cooperating with the Teacher, who know the plan and who are working with it.

But then the other group who is resurrected - those who have done evil deeds - are resurrected to judgment. That is the Millennium. The Millennium is the Day of Judgment for mankind. Satan will be bound, the evil influence he provides will be taken away, man will be taught and educated, but then they have to decide - are they with the program or not?

That is the transformation process for the rest of the world.

Helen Keller could have said, "I don't want anything to do with you," but she didn't. She cooperated. There was a conversion there, in a sense.

Resurrection means healing for the nations!

<u>Isaiah 35:5-7</u>: (KJV) ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. ⁷And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

This really brings us back to the miracles of Jesus because he opened up the eyes of the blind; he unstopped the ears of the deaf. Those who were unable to speak, he gave them the ability to speak. But this is talking about not a momentary transformation, but a permanent healing.

We might add the word "all" - then ALL the eyes of the blind shall be opened... In Jesus' day, there were only a few he touched. In fact, the Gospels record only 37 miracles he did. (It says he did others but it was very limited.) This is now on a universal scale for all of mankind. Like we have been saying, there are two levels of blindness, two levels of deafness. He will not only heal the physical deficiencies of man but he will heal more importantly the spiritual deficiencies.

There is a magnificence to the message Jesus sent in his miracles. His miracles were just like a parable of something much bigger and greater to come later on in the Day of Judgment, which is really the Day of Transformation.

Let's not make a mistake here. Many Christians believe the earth is going to be burned up and destroyed. Absolutely not. <u>Ecclesiastes 1:4</u>: (KJV) One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever.

This is what will happen on the earth - there will be an earthly kingdom for the benefit of all humanity.



Let's go back to Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan one last time for a tiny glimpse of this healing:

(1930) I am not dumb now, H. Keller and A. Sullivan, Newsreel Footage

• The first word she learned to articulate was the little word "it." With the hand in this position. I made the vowel /i/ she felt it, and then I made the /t/. She feels it with the finger on my lips. Then I put the two letters together to form the word "it" and the first word was formed. After her seventh lesson, she was able to speak the sentence word by word, "I am not dumb now."



She spoke! How could that possibly have happened? But the transformative process of being taught the right things in the right way, with great patience and love and kindness and mercy and discipline, she could actually speak with her mouth. That is a real life picture in a very small way of what this prophecy is talking about.

Mankind is going to learn the language God speaks. They don't know it now, but they will be able to articulate it in many ways not just in words but in actions. We look at the world today and think how are they ever going to believe in Christ? And yet they will.

<u>Isaiah 35:10</u>: (KJV) ⁸And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

There is a process. There will be a highway where all the obstacles are removed so the transformation can actually work.

The highway is called the Highway of Holiness. A highway is to get you from one point to another. The destination here is holiness. Mankind is going to reach holiness because of the Teacher and their willingness to cooperate.

So the miracles of Jesus were a small microcosm, a tiny little picture of what the age of transformation through the resurrection and the Great Day of Judgment is going to bring to all the world of mankind.

It brings great hope! There is nothing like the hope of the kingdom!

We have been talking about Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller. In my mind, the real hero to this story is Anne Sullivan. She knew what to do with Helen; she knew how to bring her out of darkness. We have used that to illustrate Jesus as the great Savior of mankind, the great Miracle Worker who will bring cultures and peoples who are far from God to the ability to learn about God and worship Him. They will achieve holiness because of the ability of our Teacher and because of the willingness of mankind to finally recognize the Teacher and what he is doing in their lives. They will cooperate with the work



of making them holy. It is a great illustration. This was a little life touched by one person. Christ is going to touch every life that has ever lived.

This story helps us to put in a practical, real life sense the miracle of the plan of God.

I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble. - Helen Keller

Helen wanted to help other people. Those of us who have come to Christ have that same obligation to share the message of Christ with others. That spirit will be part of the kingdom work. People, as they come into the program, will want to share that with others as well.

Our part of this whole thing is to do those small tasks as if they were great tasks. The world will be transformed because the plan of God says so and Jesus the Miracle Worker showed us how it is all going to happen.

So, what can we learn from the Miracle Worker? For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...

Think about it...!



And now <u>even more</u> to think about... only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!

A bit on Anne Sullivan's life from Wikipedia:

Sullivan was born on April 14, 1866 in Feeding Hills, Agawam, Massachusetts. According to her baptismal certificate, her name at birth was Johanna Mansfield Sullivan; however, she was called Anne or Annie from birth. She was the oldest child of her parents Thomas and Alice Sullivan. Anne's family came to the United States as immigrants from Ireland who left during the Great Famine. When Anne was only five years old she contracted a bacterial eye disease known as trachoma, which created painful infections and over time made her nearly blind. When Anne was eight, her mother passed away and her father abandoned the children two years later for fear he could not raise them on his own. Anne and her younger brother James ("Jimmie") were sent to an overcrowded almshouse in Tewksbury, Massachusetts (today part of Tewksbury Hospital). Jimmie, who suffered a debilitating hip ailment, died three months into their stay. Anne remained at the Tewksbury house for four years after Jimmy's death, where she had eye operations that offered some short-term relief for her eye pain but ultimately proved ineffective.

Due to Anne losing her sight at such a young age she had no skills in reading, writing, or sewing and the only work Anne could find was as a housemaid; however, this position was unsuccessful. Another blind resident staying at the Tewksbury almshouse told Anne of schools for the blind. During an 1880 inspection of the almshouse, Anne convinced an inspector to allow her to leave and enroll in the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston, where she began her studies on October 7, 1880. Although her rough manners made her first years at Perkins humiliating for her, she managed to connect with a few teachers and made progress with her learning. While at Perkins, Anne befriended and learned the manual alphabet from Laura Bridgman, herself a graduate of Perkins and the first person with deafblindness to be educated there. Also while at Perkins, she had a series of eye operations that significantly improved her vision. In June 1886 Anne graduated from the Perkins School at age 20 as the valedictorian of



her class. She stated "Fellow-graduates: duty bids us go forth into active life. Let us go cheerfully, hopefully, and earnestly, and set ourselves to find our especial part. When we have found it, willingly and faithfully perform it...

Sullivan's teachings to Keller involved a very strict schedule with constant introduction of new vocabulary words; however, Sullivan quickly changed her teachings after seeing they did not suit Keller. Instead, she began to teach Keller vocabulary based off the child's own interests, where she spelled each word out into Keller's palm; within six months this method proved to be working when Keller had learned 575 words, some multiplication tables, as well as the Braille system. Sullivan strongly encouraged Keller's parents to send the child to the Perkins School where she could have an appropriate teaching. When they agreed, Sullivan took Keller to Boston in 1888 and stayed with her there. Sullivan continued to teach her bright protégée, who soon became famous for her remarkable progress. With the help of Anagnos, Helen Keller became a public symbol for the Perkins School and this increased funding and donations, making it the most famous and sought-after school for the blind in the country. However, an accusation of plagiarism against Keller was very upsetting to Sullivan: she left and never returned to the campus, but did remain influential to the school. Sullivan remained a close companion to Keller and continued to assist in her education, which ultimately included a degree from Radcliffe College.

Sullivan had been seriously visually impaired for almost all of her life, but by 1935 she was completely blind in both eyes. On October 15, 1936 Anne fell into a coma and then she died five days later on October 20 at age 70, in Forest Hills, Queens, New York. Sullivan died with Keller holding her hand. Keller described Anne Sullivan's last month as being very agitated, but during the last week was said to return to her normal generous self. When Keller died in 1968, her ashes were placed in the Washington National Cathedral next to those of Sullivan.

A few other prophecies regarding the future time of healing for the world:

Acts 17:30-31: (NASB) ³⁰Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, ³¹because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.

Israel to play a major role!

Zechariah 8:20-23: (NASB) ²⁰Thus says the LORD of hosts, It will yet be that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities. ²¹The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go. ²²So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD. ²³Thus says the LORD of hosts, In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

<u>Isaiah 62:1-2</u>: (NASB) ¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet, until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, and her salvation like a torch that is burning. ²The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; and you will be called by a new name which the mouth of the LORD will designate.

This new order will be complete and everlasting!

<u>Isaiah 2:2-4</u>: (NASB) ²Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it. ³And many peoples will come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways and that we may walk in His paths. For the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war.



Daniel 2:44: (NKJV) And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.



"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved."

Helen Keller