

Further Evidence of Jesus's Identity

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Date: 13 March 2022

[0 : 00] Let us worship God by singing to His praise from Psalm 147. That's in the Sing Psalms part of the Psalter, page 192, Psalm 147.

O praise the Lord! How good it is to sing Him songs of praise! How pleasant to give thanks to Him for all His gracious ways!

The Lord builds up Jerusalem, Tidus alone who reaches out to Israel to bring the exiles home. He heals His people's broken hearts, restores the bruised and lame.

He sets the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord, and great in power His wisdom is profound.

The Lord sustains the meek, but casts the wicked to the ground. Let us sing these verses. O praise the Lord!

[1 : 18] O praise the Lord! How good it is to sing Him songs of praise!

How pleasant to give thanks to Him for all His gracious ways!

The Lord builds up Jerusalem, and He it is alone.

He heals His people's broken hearts, restores the Lord, and He heals His people's broken hearts, He heals His people's broken hearts, restores the bruised and limb.

He heals His people's broken hearts, restores the bruised and limb. He sets the number of the stars and calls them each by name.

[3 : 08] Great is our Lord, and great in power His wisdom is profound.

The Lord sustains the meek, but casts the wicked to the ground.

Amen. Let us engage in prayer. Amen. O Almighty God, grant us the spirit of true praise, so that as we come before Thee, we may indeed be possessed of the spirit of the psalmist, and we too may come giving praise to thy great name, because thou art the one who builds up Jerusalem.

You are the architect of Jerusalem, and you are its builder, and one day Jerusalem will be seen.

Coming down from heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, we thank thee that nothing, but nothing can thwart the purpose of Almighty God in building up Jerusalem.

[4 : 57] And bring them near.

Through Christ Jesus thy Son, we give thee thanks that that work is ongoing throughout the whole world.

And we pray, O Lord, that that work will continue as it must, whether we see its glorious conclusion before we die or after we die.

We thank thee that thou art the one who heals and the one who restores. And in a paradoxical way, thou art the one who breaks the hearts of those who are healed.

For hard hearts required to be broken by the power of thy spirit in applying the truth, so that they might be healed, so that they might be healed.

[6 : 45] Thou art the one who restores. And thy servant demonstrates to us that the great God, who has brought the galaxy into being, is the God who is extremely mindful of his own people in life.

Thou art the one who's made of life. They may feel incredibly small. They may feel more than useless. But we thank thee that the great God of power does not view them in this way, but that he sees them as precious in his sight.

Thou art the God of infinite wisdom, as well as the God of great power. Thou art the one who's made of life. And as we come before thee this evening, help us to acknowledge our need of wisdom, our need of enlightenment, and our need of power.

For in and of ourselves we can do nothing. We thank thee that the power that is possessed by thee is able to overcome the hardest heart.

The life that is most rebellious. And bring them into subjection to thine own will.

[8 : 16] For thou art the God of great mercy, and the God of eternal love. We pray thy blessing this evening on this congregation, to all that is ongoing within the congregation.

Those who are involved with youth work, with Sunday school, and those who are office bearers in the congregation. We pray for thy servant whom thou hast set over them in holy things. Lead them and guide them and bless the ministry that he exercises under thine hand in this part of thy vineyard. Bless, we pray thee, those unable to be present this evening, although desirous of being here.

Those who are in ill health. Those who are under thine hand in illness. Those who may be in advance in years and are frail.

Lord, we bring them before thee in the knowledge that thou art aware of all their needs, of all their desires.

[9 : 30] For they are known to thee in a way which they are known to none other. Remember us as a world in days of trouble.

We would again pray for the Ukrainian people, for those who are displaced, those who are fleeing for their lives, children that are orphaned, Lord, we pray that in mercy thou might intervene and bring about a cessation of hostilities as we witness the daily onslaught being perpetrated by the aggressor, the many false stories being perpetrated by the aggressor.

O Lord, grant that thou wouldst bring about peace. We pray for those who are involved in diplomatic efforts to have cool heads.

For it is so easy to be hot-headed when one is oppressed and under oppression. grant, O Lord, that thou wouldst give wisdom to the leaders of nations at this time, that peace may break out and that a broken nation may once again be restored, that they may enjoy harmony and peace.

Lord, we know not what these things might bring about, but we believe firmly that God is in control because thou art a sovereign God, great in power and might.

[11 : 29] Help us as we turn to thy truth. lead us, and guide us, we pray thee. And we would remember, especially at this time, the Reverend Nigel Anderson as he begins a new ministry in the Isle of Skye, in a place that is dear to our heart.

O Lord, be with him, uphold and sustain him, and bless him and the people who are under his pastoral care.

Cleanse in the blood. In Jesus' name we ask it with forgiveness of sin. Amen. Amen. Let us now read from the Gospel according to John, in chapter 18.

The Gospel according to John, in chapter 18. When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, in which he and his disciples entered.

Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place. For Jesus often met there with his disciples.

So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

[13 : 09] Then Jesus, knowing that all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, whom do you seek? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus said to them, I am he. Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, I am he, they drew back and fell to the ground.

So he asked them again, whom do you seek? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I told you that I am he.

So if you seek me, let these men go. This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken. Of those whom you gave me, I have lost not one.

Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

[14 : 18] So Jesus said to Peter, Put your sword into its sheath. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?

Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his truth. Let us further sing to his praise from Psalm 41, page 262, if you're using the Psalter.

Psalm 41, page 262, verse 5. Those that to me are enemies, of me do evil say.

When shall he die, that so his name may perish quite a way? To see me if he comes, he speaks vain words.

But then his heart heaps mischief to it, which he tells when forth he doth depart. My haters jointly whispering, against me my hurt devise.

[15 : 34] Mischief, say they, cleaves fast to him. He lieth and shall not rise. Yea, even mine own familiar friend, on whom I did rely, who ate my bread, even he his heel against me lifted high.

These verses from Psalm 41, those that to me are enemies, of me do evil say. Rosa, to me are enemies, of me do evil say.

When shall he die, that so his name may perish quite a way?

To see me if he comes, he speaks vain words, but then his heart heaps mischief to it, which he tells when forth he doth depart.

heart. My hater jointly whispering, against me my hurt devise.

[17 : 35] Mischief, say they, cleaves fast to him. he hath and shall not rise.

Yea, ye, mine own familiar friend, on whom I did rely, who ate my bread, him he is here against me lifted high.

Let us now turn to the passage that we read together from John's Gospel in chapter 18. And we may read again from verse 1.

John's Gospel when Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley where there was a garden which he and his disciples entered.

And I'd like this evening for a short time to highlight to highlight some of the things that occurred in this garden as we are informed in the passage that we read.

[19 : 19] In an earlier chapter, John tells us how Jesus and his disciples gathered together in the upper room. it was to be their last time of fellowship and instruction prior to the crucifixion of the Lord.

And you will remember how Jesus took the role of a servant in that small gathering. Something that apparently appears to have been indelibly engraved in the mind of John.

Because John was up in years, we understand when he wrote his gospel. And yet, the fine detail of what occurred in that room is set before us by John in his account of what took place.

He writes of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. He tells how they observed the Passover meal. Jesus and in relating that information to us, the readership, Jesus tells us how Jesus is fully aware of the thoughts and intentions of Judas Iscariot.

So, when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then, after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him.

[20 : 52] Jesus said to him, what you are going to do, do quickly. It is apparent that none of the disciples present then understood the implication of what was said.

And John records that after receiving the morsel of bread, Judas immediately went out and it was night. And John contrasts light and dark throughout his gospel.

And he is not just telling us that it was night in the literal sense, but that it was true night in the life of this man who was intent on betraying the Lord.

We know from the Bible how Judas went to the religious authorities and agreed with them his act of betrayal. And in this chapter we are told of the betrayal and arrest of Jesus.

John records for us how the church represented by the Jewish religious leaders and the state represented by the Roman power come together.

[22 : 12] And we are told of how a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees came along with Judas to arrest Jesus.

Now John's gospel, remember, was written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And in pursuing that thing, you find that the teaching material in John's gospel is frequently embedded in conversations that take place.

And with that in mind, let us look at three further examples of the identity of Jesus highlighted for us in the passage that we read.

In a garden, and the garden, of course, is Gethsemane, Jesus reveals his regal authoritative power. In a garden, Jesus reminds Peter and us of his redemptive purpose in the world. And thirdly, in a garden, Jesus restores the ruptured ear of Malchus.

[23 : 35] So in a garden, he reveals, he reminds, and he restores. Firstly, then, in a garden, Jesus reveals his regal authoritative power.

The picture that is set before us by the gospel writers in general, and alluded to here, is that a large group came to arrest Jesus.

We are told that they came prepared to meet any resistance that might be offered. Matthew tells us, in his account, a great crowd with swords and clubs came to arrest him.

Some are of the opinion that hundreds of soldiers were in this band of soldiers. The word translated band speaks of a unit of a legion.

Now, there would be about 6,000 soldiers in a legion, so that a unit would be one-tenth of that, 600 soldiers.

[24 : 45] commentators are of the view that there could be 200 in this group that came to arrest Jesus, Jew and Gentile, coming together to arrest the Savior of the world, to arrest the very person who came to break down the dividing wall of hostility.

united in their animosity towards Jesus. The fact that they had lanterns and torches could suggest that they may have to conduct a search to find their prisoner.

Remember, this was the time of the Passover, and the Passover was always held at the time of full moon. We're not told what the weather conditions were.

It may have been cloudy. The moon may have been obscured. We don't know. It's not something that is disclosed. The fact that they were in possession of swords and clubs may not just tell us that they thought they would meet resistance, but it also could indicate their own sense of fear in apprehending Jesus.

The impression that you get is that the world felt intimidated by Jesus, certainly intimidated by the holiness of Jesus.

[26 : 25] Given the numbers that came to arrest him and the weaponry that they have, you would think they were coming to arrest a highly dangerous armed lawbreaker.

He himself states in Matthew's account, have you come out as against a robber with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day, he says, I sat in the temple teaching and you did not seize me. He rebukes them for their cowardice. Why did you not come to arrest me when I taught in the temple? Why indeed? Was it not because they feared the reaction of the people and so they come under the cloak of darkness?

Why with swords and clubs? He wasn't armed, nor was he using arms. And it's as if Christ is shaming them for the manner in which they come. Judas who betrayed him was standing with them.

There are three brief references to the name of Judas in the context. Remember the conversation in the upper room. And what was divulged there when John asked the question as to who should betray him?

[27 : 43] And it's as if Jesus is saying, watch my hand. When he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. And John in these brief references is telling us how this Satan controlled man is now operating.

he has revealed his true self and he stands with those who are opposed to Jesus. He was there as a guide for as John tells us, Judas also knew the place, for Jesus often met in the garden with his disciples.

Now, John doesn't give us all the details, he doesn't tell us of the kiss by which Judas identified and betrayed the Savior. in his account, John also leaves out the intense and agonizing wrestling that took place in Gethsemane, although he himself was there, albeit a stone's throw away.

It's as if John approaches events from another angle altogether. He wants us, the reader, to see that Jesus was in full control of what was taking place.

His arrest was not unexpected, it was something he anticipated. nor was the betrayal of Judas unexpected, he knew it was to occur. These were events that took place according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

[29 : 11] And so the person they sought comes forward to meet them, writes John. Jesus knowing all that would happen to him. John is emphasizing the knowledge of Christ and he greets them with the question, whom do you seek?

Although they had lanterns and torches, many of the soldiers probably would not have recognized Jesus. They would need some confirmation of his identity.

And that confirmation is given to them, I would suggest, at the end of verse 5, where John records Judas who betrayed him was standing with them.

God said, but what I believe that John wants us to see is that nothing lies outside of the jurisdiction of Jesus.

Did you notice how John wants to emphasize that point? When the mobs say they are looking for Jesus, Jesus the Nazarene, Jesus says in verse 5, I am he.

[30 : 18] and in the original it is just I am. And when to my mind that is highly significant, Jesus is making reference to the divine name that we hear first of all in the book of Exodus.

Several times in his gospel, John has drawn attention to the number of times that Jesus had begun a sentence of personal identification and declaration of identity with the words I am.

For example, I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the door. I am the good shepherd. I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way and the truth and the life. And you notice how John records the response to Jesus when Jesus says I am.

When Jesus said to them I am, they drew back and fell to the ground. They are overcome. The evident, majestic, regal authority of his voice and presence made them draw back and fall to the ground.

And you see what John is saying as he describes to us this incident. In the most vulnerable place, in the earthly life and ministry of Jesus, perhaps only the temptation in the wilderness comes close to this.

[31 : 50] In the garden of Gethsemane when Jesus is arrested by soldiers with swords and clubs, John is saying, do you see, this is God here. This is the Lord of glory here.

God is the God of glory and I think you could apply the words of Psalm 27 to Christ here. When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. God of glory in the garden, Christ reveals his authoritative power. It is, there is as it were an emission of some flash of the brightness that was veiled for the most part.

But that was enough to prostrate with a strange awe these soldiers. And the application of this point, friends, if but a little glimpse of the majesty, power and authority of Jesus during the days of his humiliation can have this effect, what will it be like when he appears in the glory, majesty and power of his exaltation?

Remember, they were mainly military personnel. You don't normally associate being easily frightened with those who make up military personnel.

[33 : 35] And the reaction tells us of his authoritative power, his kingly power. power. And let us ask ourselves this evening, have we been reconciled to this Christ of power?

If not, should we not therefore urgently flee to Christ while we are in a day of grace and mercy? Because here we have it as it were, a picture of, in miniature, of what will take place on the day of his most glorious appearing accompanied by the angelic host.

And all until then who have stubbornly refused to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, who have defiantly refused to worship him, yet when he appears in glorious, triumphant majesty, inevitably must bow down before him, so that the name of Jesus, as Paul writes, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

There will be no exceptions to that. There won't be one knee that will not bow down before him. And I believe there is much encouragement here too for the believer, because Jesus demonstrates the power he exercises over evil, unbelief, idolatry, and all forms of wickedness, even over all the powers of darkness itself.

And when he speaks these words, I told you that I am he, so if you seek me, let these men go. And the note of royal authoritative power continues.

[35 : 32] Notice how protective he is of his disciples. in this potentially inflammatory, hostile, and dangerous situation.

For Christ is not just demonstrating his perfect submission to the will of his Father in his voluntary submission to death on the cross, but he demonstrates that he is indeed the good shepherd in his protective care of his disciples.

It seems to me, if I understand the events related here, that it may also have been in the minds of those who came to arrest Christ, to also arrest his followers.

And that may be one further reason for this demonstration of his authoritative power, in order to subdue and curtail the plans of those who came to carry out the arrest.

In a garden, Christ reveals his authoritative power. they drew back and fell to the ground. They arrest Christ alone.

[36 : 39] Secondly, in a garden, Christ reminds Peter and us of his redemptive purpose in the world. Now, I am sure that many of us are grateful that there are a number of incidents from the life of Peter recorded on the pages of Scripture.

Because we can identify with Peter, can't we? And here, the very moment that Jesus has commanded the release of the disciples, we read, then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cut off his right ear.

The servant's name was Malchus. Now, this incident, interestingly, is disclosed in all the gospel narratives.

But the identity of the disciple who drew the sword is not disclosed by the other gospel writers. Only John tells us who gives us the identity.

Why? Well, the only answer I can give is that John was up in years when he wrote his gospel and Peter would already have been put to death.

[38 : 09] The gospel writers, for the main part, do not tell us the name of the person who was injured in this incident. Again, only John gives this information.

The other gospel writers tell us it was the servant of the high priest, but his identity is concealed. In all likelihood, Peter intended the death of Malchus.

But either because of Malchus' quick reflexes or Peter's lack of skill with the sword, his ear was sliced off.

You could say that this was a flash point at a very dangerous time. It was a potentially volatile situation.

Some might consider Peter to be fearless and courageous in the face of such overwhelming numbers and behaving in this way. I rather think that this was the impetuous action of zeal without knowledge on the part of Peter.

[39 : 25] There was much ignorance in his action, however well intentioned it might appear. For had Christ not taught repeatedly why he had come into the world.

He came on a mission. He came to fulfill the types and promises of the Old Testament scriptures and by fulfilling these types to provide salvation for sinners.

He came for the sole purpose of being the true lamb of God, the true Passover lamb. He came of his own free will to be the scapegoat upon whom the sins of his people would be placed.

His heart was set on accomplishing this great work. Couldn't be done without the hiding of his power for a time. To do it, he became a willing sufferer.

And perhaps we might be tempted to think and retreat into a self-righteous tower and say we wouldn't do what Peter did.

[40 : 35] Well, let me ask, friend, how many things have you already done in your ignorance and misplaced zeal that was not at all God glorifying?

Do we not have to hold up our hands and say guilty, guilty, guilty? And you see, here in this potentially explosive situation, Jesus is teaching a very valuable lesson, a lesson that is taught by the prophet of old or by God through the prophet Zechariah.

It's not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. The victory is not achieved by the things that we might think of as might and power, which are limited in their extent, limited in every sense.

but the spirit's power is unlimited, unable to overcome the hardest hurt, the most rebellious life, and bring that life into subjection to the Lord of hosts.

We are not waging war, writes the apostle Paul in the New Testament, according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but of divine power to destroy strongholds.

[42 : 17] And Christ emphasizes this, especially in Matthew's account, do you think that I cannot appeal to my father, who had once sent me more than 12 legions of angels.

Remember 6,000 in a legion, 72,000 angels. You see, it's not by military power and armament that the church grows in the world.

Bishop Royal makes a very pertinent observation, it seems to me. We should learn, he says, from these verses, that it is much easier to fight a little for Christ than to endure hardship and go to prison and death for his sake.

There is much to learn from this episode. To suffer patiently for Christ is far more difficult than to work actively.

To sit still and endure calmly is far more hard than to stir about and take part in the battle. Crusader, says, Royal, will always be found more numerous than martyrs.

[43 : 36] The passive graces of religion are far more rare and precious than the active graces. Work for Christ, he says, may be done from spurious motives, from excitement, emulation, party

spirit.

You know, if they did it, can we not do it? Or from the love of praise. Suffering for Christ, he says, will seldom be endured from any but one motive.

That motive is the grace of God. And we shall do well to remember these things and form in our estimate of the comparative grace of professing Christians.

Some poor unknown believer who has been lying for years on his or her back, enduring pain without a murmur, love, may prove at last to have brought more glory to Christ through his or her patience, to have done more good through his or her prayers than the public action of others who may preach, speak, and write, and who may earn the adulation of the church, but may be not of God.

And it seems to me that Royal is making a very pertinent observation there as one who is an obvious student of human nature.

[45 : 04] The grand test of grace is patient suffering. Remember God's words about Saul of Tarsus, I will show how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.

And you can be sure that Peter didn't do half as much good by his impetuous, zealous act in drawing his sword as he did when he stood calmly before the Jewish council as a prisoner and said, for we cannot but speak what we have seen and heard.

Seems to me that there is a great reminder here about our acceptance of the hard providence of God in our lives and the role that that plays in our witness to Jesus Christ.

And so the Lord reminds Peter of the purpose of his coming. Put your sword into its sheath. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?

And Jesus takes this opportunity as he always does and even in this most volatile situation he teaches a lesson. He takes an Old Testament metaphor which you find in several places but particularly in Isaiah 51.

[46 : 27] The cup which was symbolic of the wrath of God. The cup which is about to drink to its very last dregs. The cup which the other gospel tells as he struggles with and says my Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me.

Who knows the depth contained in this cup and the intensity of suffering associated with it. We might say only the one who filled the cup and the one who drank from it.

But only one person can speak from experience of the ingredients in the cup and that is the person who drank from it and who emptied it.

Anticipation of its contents caused him to be prostrated in the dust of the garden of Gethsemane. The Lord of glory in our nature prostrated in the dust.

The one of whom it was true all things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made. He alone drank the wine the undiluted wine of the wrath of the divine just judge.

[47 : 42] As the content of the cup is revealed to his human understanding in all its awful depths his sweat fell as drops of blood such was the intensity of pressure in his wrestling with heaven.

What was in the cup? I have already stated that the contents were a display of the judgment of the divine judge and the exercise of the penalty demanded by the holy law of God for sin.

What did the holy law of God demand as the penalty for sin? Was it not death? Eternal death. What was in the cup?

Death was in the cup. What a bitter drink. You see at the heart of the curse is death separation from God and all that entails.

And in the reminder given to Peter John wants us to see another angle. He wants us to see that Jesus took the cup that he resolved to take his servant ministry to the bitter end.

[48 : 57] That he would suffer the unmitigated wrath of God against sin. Not his sin but our sin. He would go to the very end and he would drink the last dregs of that cup.

A cup his father had given. A cup that contained the curse in order that rich and precious blessings might come to unworthy sinners who were deserving of the curse.

Who deserved to die and experience the curse and all its intensity. Until you say look Peter I understand why you brought out your sword but it's wrong.

It's the wrong approach. I am intent on going to the very end of my resolution to be the covenant mediator. and he doesn't flinch.

Oh how indebted we are to an unflinching savior who took the place of undeserving sinners.

[50 : 21] And you see he is teaching Peter that to be strong is to watch and pray not to take up physical arms.

And so Peter and we the readership are reminded of the purpose of his mission. He must drink the cup. He must do the work entrusted to him for no sinner could ever be saved unless he drink the cup.

No cup drunk. No salvation for poor sinners like you and me. zeal without knowledge can be very dangerous.

The zeal of Peter potentially destructive a threat to the very lives of his fellow disciples in that situation. In a garden Christ reminds Peter and us of his purpose in the world.

He must drink the bitter cup in order that sinners like you and me might receive the sweet cup of eternal blessing and be drinking it not only in this life but throughout the endless ages of eternity.

[51 : 57] In a garden Christ reveals his authoritative power and finally in a garden Christ restores the rapture ear of Malchus.

John records for us the first miracle performed by the Lord. It was to turn water into wine at the wedding of Canaan Galilee.

And the final miracle that he performed prior to his crucifixion was the healing or the restoration of Malchus's ear.

Now John doesn't tell that but the gospel writer Luke tells us Jesus touched his ear and healed him. Remember Luke was a physician.

He had more interest in these things than most. And I suppose if people were placing the miracles in order of importance or if you were giving marks for miracles.

[53 : 02] I'm not sure how you would mark them but let's say you were marking them out of ten. I would suggest that this miracle might be near the bottom of the list or would get low marks out of ten.

Because humanly speaking there were many miracles that he performed which seemed to be far more wonderful than this one.

He raised people from the dead. He expelled unclean spirits.

He fed thousands with very little. And I'm almost tempted to say but it may be wrong, tempted to say that this miracle is like an anticlimax.

and yet the four gospel narratives refer to it. So there must be a particular purpose. The Holy Spirit had in mind that this miracle would be mentioned in all of the gospel.

[54 : 15] It's a miracle that he undertook just hours before he was to be put to death. death. And it is performed in a place where he had so recently been in an agony.

And as we are told he prayed more earnestly, his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. The other gospel writers just tell us it happened.

But Luke alone tells us he touched his ear and healed him. we don't know if the ear was completely severed or how badly wounded Malchus was or how deep the cut.

But it seems to me that the healing was instantaneous. He touched his ear and healed him. There's no rushing to A&E;, no ICU's, no stitches, no antiseptic bungs.

Of course, most of that wasn't there. He attaches the blood vessels, the nerve endings. Could you see a scar where the ear was restored? Well, personally, I'm persuaded that you could not.

[55 : 30] I don't think you'd be able to tell. Looking at Malchus, which ear had been cut off, it would have been perfect healing. Would he experience deafness or any other disability?

And in my view, no. And the strange thing is, there is no report of any conversation taking place between Jesus and Malchus.

But if there had been, could Jesus not say to him, you are the servant of the high priest, I too am a high priest. He pays you a wage, but I can give you something free, eternal salvation.

There is Malchus and he's standing between two high priests. and the one, you could say, is totally merciless, and the other is merciful and faithful, the true high priest, the ultra compassionate high priest who is able to bless.

The one who stands between the living and the dead. And in restoring Malchus' ear, Christ performs this miracle in the presence of his enemies.

[56 : 47] He demonstrates his power. Did Malchus' life change course? Did Malchus repent?

Did Malchus believe? Did Malchus experience the pains of the new birth? Because the wind was blowing where it wishes around the garden of Gethsemane?

Was he at a later date amongst those who stated truly this was the Son of God? We don't know. But wouldn't you like to know? We're not told.

But you see, ultimately, the question is not about Malchus, but about us, about you and me.

Because we too are like Malchus, we have been touched by Christ.

In that we have sat under the proclamation of the ministry of the gospel. And the same call that is addressed to Malchus is addressed to you and me.

[57 : 53] Are we willing to have this person as our high priest? Because if we are, we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin.

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Are we willing to be servant to this high priest?

By nature, we are slaves to the prince of darkness. The great high priest, the merciful high priest who came according to the order of Melchizedek speaks of mercy and deliverance.

So my friend, if we have not sought his restoring power to repair, to recreate a life broken, battered, bruised by sin's destructive power, oh will you not cry out now for mercy so that you come to experience the marvelous security of the intercessory work of the great high priest.

Malchus could testify, he healed my ear, but can you and I testify this evening, he healed my soul.

He healed my soul because if we trust in him, then we too shall know eternal restoration.

[59 : 35] from the healing hand of a merciful and a gracious high priest. In a garden, Christ reveals his authoritative power.

In a garden, Christ reminds Peter and us of his redemptive purpose in the world. In a garden, Christ restores the ear of Malchus.

And in the garden of the world, Christ is able to restore broken, sinful lives like mine and yours, and make you perfect in him.

Would you not like that? Let us pray. O most merciful and gracious God, you who have provided a glorious means of salvation that brings helpless, broken lives to the knowledge of faith in Jesus Christ Christ.

And in doing so, restores and heals so that ultimately they reflect the work of your hand and will appear in perfection before your throne.

[61 : 13] Lord, may it please thee to visit all our hearts this evening to heal us and the glory shall be thine.

In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Let us conclude by singing to God's praise from Psalm 103, page 135 of the Psalter, if you're using the Psalter.

Psalms 103, page 135 of your use in the Psalter. Praise God, my soul, with all my heart.

Let me exalt his holy name. Forget not all his benefits. His praise, my soul, in song proclaim.

The Lord forgives you all your sins, heals your sickness and distress. Your life, he rescues from the grave and crowns you in his tenderness.

[62 : 20] He satisfies your deep desires from his unending stores of good, so that just like the eagle's strength, your youthful vigor is renewed.

The Lord is known for righteous acts and justice to downtrodden ones. To Moses, he made known his ways, his mighty deeds to his real sons.

Let us sing these verses, and let's sing Psalms version. Praise God, my soul. Praise God, my soul, with all my heart.

Let me exalt his holy name. Forget not all his benefits, his praise, my soul, in song proclaim.

The Lord forgives you all your sins, and gives you sickness and distress.

[63 : 38] Your life he rescues from the grave, and crowns you in his tenderness, and crowns you in his tenderness.

He satisfies your deep desire, from his unending stores of good, so that just like the eagle's strength, your youthful vigor is renewed.

The Lord is known for righteous acts, and justice to doubt throned was, to Moses he made your earnest ways, his mighty deeds to Israel's sons, his mighty deeds to Israel's sons.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit, rest on and abide with you all, now and forever.

Amen. Amen.