

Connecting faith and daily life

Ordinary miracles

Gillian Cooper *reflects on* 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c
 and Luke 17:11-19

Your faith has made you well," says Jesus to the grateful leper. It is not the faith shown in saying thank you that has contributed to his healing. It is the asking: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" And then it is the willingness to follow instructions. When there is no instant miracle, how tempting to shrug one's shoulders and give up. But the lepers do as they are told, and it is not until they're walking along the road to see the priests that their miracle happens.

One of our choices for the Old Testament reading today tells the story of Naaman the Syrian commander, another leper. A proud and important man, he wants spectacular magic, not secondhand advice to take a bath in the river. He has to learn that God's healing miracles can sometimes look quite ordinary.

The miracle of healing comes to us in many human ways: through the skills of doctors and the research of scientists; through the support of those who love us; through time and patience; through taking our pills and following instructions. And yet, like Naaman and the leper healed by Jesus, we return time and again to give thanks to the God, who is the ultimate source of all healing and wholeness. 🍵



Healing God, we praise you for the daily miracles that restore us to wholeness. Give us thankful hearts, and help us to look in faith for that day when all the world's hurts will be healed in your kingdom. Amen.

How to keep faith in a wobbling world

Part 6 – embrace the word of God

by Caroline Hodgson

In a wobbling world there's great wisdom and solace to be found in the Bible. For me this comes, at least in part, from the knowledge that people have always suffered, but that they have always found joy, love and comfort in connecting with God. There are some truly wonderful words, which can be used in prayer and meditation, such as those in Isaiah (41:10): "Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your

God; I will strengthen you, I will help you."

It can be all too easy to chuck a Bible quote at a problem and think it will make everything right. As with everything in life and faith, going through the motions simply won't do. God meets us in word when we're prepared to approach God. A little regular time spent engaging with scripture, reading (or listening to) passages, revisiting familiar words and praying for a fresh perspective on them, can be deeply grounding. 🍵

Finding God on the smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

Although this is a tiny farm where we raise animals, vegetables and fruit to feed ourselves it has also become a place where people come to find space to rest and re-orientate themselves. It's been our hope that we can share what we grow and the delight that living closer to the rest of creation can provide. We learned that such a journey can't be rushed and there are

no shortcuts. My elderly parents had a cabin built here to live in their old age. Their deaths in their nineties made it possible for there to be a place for others to stay, where before there was just a caravan. The search in people for wisdom and health, for depth and richness of living, is a place where God meets them and us too. It doesn't have to involve sheep and Welsh mud, it can happen anywhere, but it does happen here with God and the smallholding. 🍵

“Mercy... is the most profound form of justice. It opens the door to heaven itself, because mercy is love's second name.”

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