Miracles in the Temple

Last week we looked at Heron of Alexandria as the inventor of the vending machine. This wasn't his only invention. He had many inventions using gasses. He was famous for using air compression and steam to make things work. While there were many engineers before him, he was one of the first to use all of the elements (earth, fire, air, water) in his inventions. He created things such as a water organ, a force pump, and even a type of steam engine.

Many of his inventions were made to do some neat things. Some of them were for homes and theaters to add special effects. However, the most likely place to find one of Heron's machines was where magic and miracles were only to be expected—in the temples (The Rise and Fall of Alexandria: Birthplace of the Modern World; Pollard and Reid).

Similar to what we find in New Testament, miracles were performed in the pagan temples to confirm their message. Unlike what we find in the New Testament, these pagan miracles were actually sleight of hand. Heron had inventions to help just that. He had doors that would automatically open (similar to what you might see in Star Trek), he had other devices that would seemingly move on their own at the right time to show god's moving in the temple. But it was all "part of the show."

What does our worship in the temple look like? Is it all a show? There have been some who have created "miracles" to bring people in. Whether it is by "faith healers" and people fainting on the ground or by inanimate objects doing humanly things, they are designed to keep people believing their message.

The church shouldn't function that way. Is Jesus enough? Are His words throughout scripture enough for us to believe or do we think we need more (Luke 16:31)? Are His miracles enough for us to believe His message or are we selfish in our desire to follow (John 6:26)?

What are we choosing to use to bring ourselves closer to Jesus? Are we falling for a cheap trick or the Son of God who is the only one or thing that can save?

--Alex Swango