

# Considering Miracles

Lest Thou Forget

Joseph Dulmage

***Mark 6:52***

*For they considered not the miracle of the loaves:  
for their heart was hardened.*

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## Introduction

Some miracles announce themselves like Jesus healing a blind man or raising the dead; while other miracles make less noise. Consider Jesus inexplicably disappearing in the midst of an angry crowd which seeks to kill him. Or Jesus knowing the exact number of years a person suffers with a disease. Or Jesus reading his accusers' minds and answering their thoughts. Scripture beckons careful examination. Bible students may read a miracle too fast. Rather like driving a familiar highway and passing an exit, never taken because we never knew it led to a place worth going.

The Apostles anguished in circumstances they could not control, because they considered not the miracle of the loaves. The very miracle they participated in by distributing food to thousands of people. Even today, Christians witness supernatural works of God without considering what's happening, at least not carefully. Perhaps life's circumstances overwhelm us too?

Miracles share similar qualities with parables, and should be considered prayerfully. God designs miracles and parables to teach and influence believers. In fact, miracles performed two thousand years ago, keep delivering extraordinary effects on God's people. And that itself is miraculous.

An attempt has been made to organize New Testament miracles thematically, as opposed to the chronological order they occurred. That being said, a miracle's setting matters, time and place matters. *Considering Miracles* written for Bible students, teachers, and preachers. My prayer is the work pleases Jesus Christ.

**Proverbs 24:32 (KJV)** *Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction.*

**Isaiah 48:6 (KJV)** *Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.*

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## Defining Miracles

- An extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs.
- An extraordinary event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers; therefore assumed to be supernatural.
- An event or effect considered as a work of God.
- A highly improbable or extraordinary event, development, or accomplishment that brings very unexpected consequences.
- An event or effect manifesting the work of Satan.

The word *miracle* appears thirty-seven times in the Bible. Five times in the Old Testament, thirty-two times in the New Testament. Of course, the Bible records many more actual miracles without declaring them as miracles. But considering the scriptural rule of first mention, (the way God uses a word the first time) it's important to examine the way God discusses the word.

**In the Old Testament**, the word miracle appears one time in singular form and four times plural. In each case the context involves miracles Moses preformed in Egypt. Aside from the obvious divine endorsement of Moses' authority, the miracle's intention proves God's words. God declared each plague before it hit Egypt. God spoke through Moses, and God meant what he said; therefore, miracles prove the authority of scripture.

**The New Testament** uses the word miracle thirty-two times. Nine uses are singular; twenty-three are plural. Most New Testament miracles prove Jesus is God. Twenty-nine scriptures prove the authority of Jesus Christ (Word of God). When the Bible uses a capital W in word, it speaks of Jesus Christ. When the Bible employs a lower case w, it refers to the words of God.

Three verses employing the word miracle describe supernatural powers of Satan. Thus Christians learn a serious warning discerning supernatural phenomena.

***1 Corinthians 2:15 (KJV)*** *But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.*

# John the Baptist's Birth

Luke 1:11-19

**Location:** Temple in Jerusalem

**Recipient:** Zacharias

**Witnesses:** Zacharias

John the Baptist's birth is not a miracle, but the announcement of his birth is supernatural. The angel Gabriel confronts Zacharias the priest, declaring he will soon have a son. An elderly couple finding themselves expecting a baby is unusual enough, but an angel prophesizing their son's birth, and commanding the father to name him John certainly qualifies for a miracle. Zachariah also learns his son will herald Israel's Messiah. John the Baptist introduces Jesus Christ to Israel and the world. For in depth consideration on John's ministry see chapter: *Was John the Baptist Elijah?*

The miracle comes with consequences. Due to Zachariah doubting Gabriel's words, he suffers the inability to speak until his son is born and circumcised. This means Zachariah lives without talking for nearly one year.

John the Baptist and his mother, Elizabeth, are the first persons in the New Testament to be filled with the Holy Ghost. *Lk. 1: 15, 41.* Notice God speaks of John as a whole person while he is a fetus. According to the flesh, John the Baptist and Jesus are second cousins.

**Luke 1:11-20 (KJV)** *And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a*

son, and thou shalt call his name John. **14** And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. **15** For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and **he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.** **16** And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. **17** And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. **18** And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. **19** And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. **20** And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

**Luke 1:36-42 (KJV)** And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. **37** For with God nothing shall be impossible. **38** And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. **39** And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; **40** And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. **41** And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and **Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:** **42** And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

**Thought to ponder:** Although scripture does not label John the Baptist a Nazarite (separated one) the implication is

there. He abstained from wine and strong drink his entire life. The vow of the Nazarite was usually temporary, only three men in the Bible were ordained Nazarites from birth. *See Nazarites in chapter notes.*

1. Samson Judges 13:7;
2. Samuel 1 Sa. 1;11
3. John the Baptist. Lk 1:15

## **Chapter Notes/ Scripture Harmonies**

### **Naming John the Baptist**

**Luke 1:57-64 (KJV)** *Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. 58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her. 59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. 60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. 61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. 62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. 63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. 64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.*

### **Nazarites:**

**Numbers 6:2-4 (KJV)** *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the LORD: 3 He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. 4 All the days of his separation shall he eat*

*nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk.*

### **Samson**

***Judges 13:7 (KJV)*** *But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.*

### **Samuel**

***1 Samuel 1:11 (KJV)*** *And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.*



# Mary

## Luke 1:24-37

**Location:** City of Nazareth

**Recipient:** Mary

**Witnesses:** Mary

Approximately six months after the Angel Gabriel made known to *Zacharias* that his wife, Elisabeth, was going to have a child (who would be known as John the Baptist) the same angel confronts a young virgin named Mary. Elisabeth and Mary are cousins.

Mary stands destined to become the most famous woman in the Bible, and consequently the most famous woman who ever lives. God the Father chooses Mary to birth his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The miracle changes heaven and earth for all eternity.

The Bible calls Mary's firstborn son Emmanuel; which means God with us. And just so no one can reduce the name's meaning to imply less than a literal interpretation, observe scripture also identifies Jesus Christ as the mighty God and the everlasting Father. The idea the Bible never says Jesus Christ is God is nonsense; an allegation which exposes either an ignorant theory by persons who never read the Bible, or a blatant satanic lie. While recording the Lord's incarnation, Luke's Gospel also presents the holy trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost- *Lk. 1:32-35*

**Luke 1:24-37(KJV)** *And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, **25** Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men. **26** And in the sixth month*

the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, **27** To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. **28** And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. **29** And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. **30** And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. **31** And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. **32** He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: **33** And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. **34** Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? **35** And the angel answered and said unto her, **The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.** **36** And, behold, **thy cousin Elisabeth**, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. **37** For with God nothing shall be impossible.

### **Chapter Notes/ Scripture Harmonies**

**Matthew 1:22-23 (KJV)** Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, **23** Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

**Isaiah 7:14 (KJV)** Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

**Isaiah 9:6-7(KJV)** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. **7** Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

**Hebrews 1:8 (KJV)** But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

**Psalms 45:6-8 (KJV)** Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. **7** Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. **8** All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

**Psalms 110:1 (KJV)** A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

**Matthew 22:42-46 (KJV)** Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. **43** He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, **44** The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? **45** If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? **46** And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

**John 10:30 (KJV)** I and my Father are one.

**1 John 5:7 (KJV)** *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

**John 14:9 (KJV)** *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?*

## Immaculate Conception

A common misunderstanding needs be addressed concerning a doctrine called the Immaculate Conception. Most people presume this term describes Mary miraculously conceiving the Lord Jesus Christ. But the teaching has nothing to do with Jesus' conception or his birth. The term promotes the idea that Mary herself was conceived without sin. In other words, Mary's mother conceived Mary without imparting the stain of Adam's sinful nature. The doctrine of Immaculate Conception is the sole possession of the Roman Catholic Church. This false teaching delivers a first step toward deifying Mary. It is completely contrary to Biblical truth or doctrine.

In divine rebuke to this false teaching, the Bible teaches Mary was a sinner just like the rest of the human race, and she was in need of Jesus Christ the Saviour to save her soul. Mary confesses this truth herself. Observe Mary becomes the first person in the New Testament to identify Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.

***Luke 1:46-50 (KJV)*** *And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.*

***Isaiah 43:11 (KJV)*** *I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.*

***Isaiah 45:21(KJV)*** *Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient*

*time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.*

## **Chapter Notes**

The doctrine Immaculate Conception was defined December 8, 1854, by Pope Pius IX in his papal bull *Ineffabilis Deus*.<sup>[2]</sup> The Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8.

“We declare, pronounce and define that the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instant of her conception was preserved immaculate from all stain of original sin, by the singular grace and privilege of the omnipotent God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the saviour of mankind, and that this doctrine was revealed by God, and therefore must be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful.” (from papal bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*, quoted in the Tablet, December 12, 1953)

# Joseph's Dreams

Matthew 1:18-25

Joseph (Mary's husband) experienced miraculous angelic encounters in dreams four separate times. Each miracle examined in this chapter. Joseph's character is also scrutinized.

Several months after the angel Gabriel meets with Mary, Joseph discovers his betrothed wife is with child. In those times, during the engagement phase, Jewish society considered the couple married. Mary's pregnancy proposed quite a problem because Joseph had not yet known her intimately; the physical union which officially consummates marriage. Not believing Mary's story about the baby being God's child, Joseph is ready to call off the wedding. The angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream and validates Mary's story. And the wedding is back on.

God makes a fascinating assessment of Joseph's character before any miracle took place. Scripture narrative declares "*Joseph being a just man*" that is Joseph behaves mindful and concerned with justice and God's laws (Mt. 1:19). Although Joseph did not believe Mary's story, he decided to end his marriage privately and not embarrass Mary or subject her to legal consequence. A Pharisee or any modern legalist should ponder Joseph's intentions in great detail. Under the letter of the law, adultery was punishable by death (Lev 20:10) Yet Joseph, being a just man, seeks no punishment other than to quietly end his marriage. Joseph's merciful response reminds us of the way Jesus handled the woman taken in the literal act of adultery (*John 8:1-11*). Both Joseph and the Lord exhibited mercy under the law. Justice need not always include punishment. He that is spiritual judgeth all things, (*1 Cor. 2:15*).

Although the angel in Joseph's dreams goes unnamed, he is probably Gabriel. As we have already seen, Gabriel connects extensively with events precipitating Jesus' birth. Some Bible students think the angel of the Lord manifests a visit from God himself. Either way, an angel in a dream, is a miracle. Four times an angel deals with Joseph in a dream. Twice scripture identifies the angel as "the angel of the Lord" *Matthew 1:20, Matthew 2:13* and once as "an angel of the Lord" *Matthew 2:19*

Joseph and Mary live in the city Nazareth. An important point when considering Jesus' childhood, and especially the journey of the wise men. The wise men brought their gifts to Nazareth, not Bethlehem. Remember the wise men arrived in Jerusalem two years after Jesus was born. After speaking with Herod and Jewish priests, the wise men did indeed leave Herod's palace and initially head for Bethlehem. Based on their understanding of scripture, the priests' best guess was the Messiah was still in Bethlehem. But, the angel star intercepted their travels and directed them away from Bethlehem to Nazareth. See chapter: *Wise Men and the Star*

### **Dream Number One**

***Matthew 1:18-25 (KJV)*** *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22 Now all*



*this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, **23** Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. **24** Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: **25** And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.*

### **Old Testament scriptures fulfilled:**

***Isaiah 7:14 (KJV)** Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

***Isaiah 9:6 (KJV)** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

### **Dream Number Two**

Nearly two years later, Joseph's second dream coincides with the visit of the wise men from the east. Joseph, Mary and the young child Jesus are living in a house in Nazareth. The wise men traveled to Israel specifically to present Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. (See chapter: *Wise Men and the Star*)

After the wise men leave the house, the angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream and commands him to move his family into Egypt. Herod is about to begin a murderous rampage killing all male children two years of age and under. That very night Joseph flees Nazareth taking his family to Egypt.

**Matthew 2:11-14 (KJV)** *And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. 13 And when they were departed, behold, **the angel of the Lord** appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:*

### **Concerning Herod murdering children**

Since King Herod is an old man and almost dead, the order to kill Jesus is not going to protect his own throne. Satan directs the child murders attempting to eliminate the seed of God. This horrible historical fact remains painful to think about. And unless we suppose Roman soldiers took the time to examine the genitals of each little child they killed, we may presume that numerous female children were also slain. As well as multiple parents, especially fathers, who desperately tried to defend their children. Observe Prophet Jerimiah's prophecy concerning the horrendous deed; Jerimiah does not deliberate gender. Nor does the New Testament's reporting the same event.

**Jeremiah 31:15 (KJV)** *Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.*

**Matthew 2:17-18 (KJV)** *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was*

*there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.*

**Acts 13:23 (KJV)** *Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:*

**Galatians 3:16 (KJV)** *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, **And to thy seed, which is Christ.***

### **Dream Number Three**

A third dream happens while Joseph and his family are living in Egypt. An angel informs Joseph that Herod is dead and it is now safe to return to Israel.

**Matthew 2:19-21** *But when Herod was dead, behold, **an angel of the Lord** appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, **20** Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. **21** And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.*

### **Dream Number Four**

Joseph's fourth and final dream does not mention an angel. God warns Joseph to settle in Galilee. Joseph returns to his original city, Nazareth.

**Matthew 2:21-23 (KJV)** *And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. **22** But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being **warned of God in a dream**, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: **23** And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth:*

*that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.*

### **Thought to ponder**

Dream miracles merit consideration. Is the angel literally in Joseph's dream? Or is he just dreaming the angel is there? The question is worthy of reflection because the spirit world is a big part of a Christian's life. Where the spirit world's environment exists and what happens therein remains largely undefined. Dreams play a bigger role than some of us might believe. Especially in the West where Christians consider dreams relatively unimportant. While many dreams demonstrate bizarre or fragmented pieces of our daily conscious thoughts morphing into human subconscious; do not be deceived. All dreams are not created equal. Throughout the Bible, God accomplishes much with dreams. The Bible informs us we entertain angels unawares. No doubt angels (good and bad) manifest in our physical world indistinguishable from the men with whom they socialize. And angels also operate in an invisible spirit world. A human being's dreams and subconscious could well be part of God's spiritual universe, an environment accessible to angels, just as easily as humans leave their house and go for a walk in the woods.

**Job 33:14-17 (KJV)** *For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. 15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; 16 Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, 17 That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*

**Colossians 1:16 (KJV)** *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

**Hebrews 13:2 (KJV)** *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

**Ephesians 6:12 (KJV)** *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

**Hebrews 11:1** *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

## **Chapter Notes**

### **Joseph and Mary live in Nazareth**

**Luke 2:1-4 (KJV)** *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)*

**Luke 2:39 (KJV)** *And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.*

**Matthew 2:21-23 (KJV)** *And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.*

# Shepherds Witness Angels

Luke 2:8-19

**Location:** Pasture near Bethlehem

**Recipient:** Several shepherds

**Witnesses:** Several shepherds

Coinciding with Jesus' birth, angels appear in great numbers to shepherds watching their sheep in fields outside the city of Bethlehem. The miracle unfolds in stages. First a solitary angel appears to the shepherds with a specific message for them. This is no dream. The angel appears in the physical world while the shepherds are fully awake. He tells the shepherds to go and see the baby in the city of David lying in a manger. Although the baby is born to the Jews, observe the angel declares the baby is good news for all people (not just Israel). Scripture identifies the baby as the Saviour, Christ, and the Lord. Immediately after the angel's pronouncement, a huge number of heavenly beings appear praising God. Whether the angels are singing we can't be sure, however, it seems to be a choir. Once again the message includes all people. They proclaim peace on earth and goodwill toward men. When their message concludes, the angels return to heaven.

After the spectacular encounter with these visitors from outer space (third heaven) the shepherds compose themselves and immediately go to Bethlehem, where they find Jesus lying in a manger, just as the angel said. The shepherds tell Mary and Joseph and anyone else who listens about their encounter with the angels. Most importantly they tell everyone what the angels said about Jesus. God ensures the whole event gets written down. The human race still talks and reads about it today. Sometimes

things happen that no one ever gets over; the birth of Jesus Christ establishes the ultimate example.

Concerning the month of the angelic announcement. Shepherds pastured their flocks in open fields from about springtime until autumn. December 25 is much too late and cold for sheep to abide in open fields. Early autumn seems likely for the miracle.

**Luke 2:8-19 (KJV)** *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.*

## **City of David**

Forty-four Bible verses reference the city of David as Jerusalem; however, in context of this passage the city of David is Bethlehem. Geographically, Bethlehem sits five miles south of Jerusalem. No doubt the scripture's logic for identifying Bethlehem as David's city is King David was born in Bethlehem. And the ongoing tax census required persons to travel to the community that kept their birth records. Joseph and Mary also of the lineage of David, so the location zeros in on that particular suburban town of Jerusalem.

**Luke 2:3-5 (KJV)** *And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.*

**1 Samuel 17:12 (KJV)** *Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehemjudah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul.*

**1 Samuel 17:15 (KJV)** *But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.*



## **Chapter Notes**

### **City of David references:**

*2Sa 5:7,9; 2Sa 6:10,12,16; 1Ki 2:10; 1Ki 3:1; 1Ki 8:1; 1Ki 9:24; 1Ki 11:27,43; 1Ki 14:31; 1Ki 15:8,24; 1Ki 22:50; 2Ki 8:24; 2Ki 9:28; 2Ki 12:21; 2Ki 14:20; 2Ki 15:7,38; 2Ki 16:20; 1Ch 11:5,7; 1Ch 13:13; 1Ch 15:1,29; 2Ch 5:2; 2Ch 8:11; 2Ch 9:31; 2Ch 12:16; 2Ch 14:1; 2Ch 16:14; 2Ch 21:1,20; 2Ch 24:16,25; 2Ch 27:9; 2Ch 32:5,30; 2Ch 33:14; Ne 3:15; Ne 12:37; Isa 22:9; Lu 2:4,11*

# Wise Men and the Star

Matthew 2:1-12

**Location:** Eastern Sky, Jerusalem sky

**Recipient:** Undisclosed number of wise men

**Witnesses:** The wise men

The passage actually records two miracles: a star and yet another dream with supernatural intervention.

A miracle star appears in the night sky; an astronomical luminary that suddenly rises. In other words, a light that did not exist and then suddenly shines in the heaven. The star became visible about one year after Jesus was born. As to the physicality of the star, scripture often calls angels stars. This particular star eventually comes down to earth and stands directly over a house in the town of Nazareth, the house of Joseph, Mary and the young child Jesus. The star is undoubtedly an angel. *See chapter notes: Stars called angels.*

The wise men's interest in the new star relates directly to their interest in prophecy. They traveled from a region east of Jerusalem, probably Syria. We may infer the men are Gentiles. Their statement, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" does not sound like Jews asking the question. Furthermore, the scripture to which they refer *Numbers 24:17* was spoken by a Gentile prophet who lived 1,500 years earlier in Aram Syria. The prophet's name was Balaam. Contrary to myth, these wise men are not kings; they are Bible believers looking for the coming Jewish Messiah. Nor does the Bible tell us the number of wise men, but since they come bearing three gifts, three is a good guess.

Being familiar with the historical decrees spoken by King Cyrus, and then reiterated by Prophet Daniel, the wise men discern signs of the times. 480 years had passed since King Cyrus issued his decree to rebuild Jerusalem. And then like now, Jerusalem is the key to prophecy. Many people in those days, Jews and Gentiles, were expecting Israel's Messiah to come. Discerning the signs of the times, in much the same way people today look for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

After arriving in Jerusalem, the wise men start asking questions concerning the prophesied king's whereabouts. In genuine excitement (and naivety) they expected the Jewish community to know all about their Messiah's birth. King Herod learns of the wise men's visit and brings them to his palace, where he feigns sincerity and appreciation. Herod's consults with Jewish chief priests and scribes to help locate the child. Scripture identifies Bethlehem as the town whence the Messiah originates, (*Micah 5:2*) Herod and the priests direct the wise men toward Bethlehem, imploring them to let them know when they find the child so they also may join in celebration. The wise men have no idea Herod's and the priests' interest is wholly evil.

The priests direct the wise men to Bethlehem, a distance of about five miles to the south. Herod expected them to be gone only a short time. However the same miracle star appears again and leads them to Nazareth, a distance of about seventy-five miles to the north. The wise men never went to Bethlehem. A fact that interferes with not a few sermons, Christmas cards, beloved hymns, manger scenes, and theatrical presentations.

Observe the star moves before the wise men guiding them, probably a hundred feet or so above their heads. An astronomical star (sun) could not go before a small group of travelers navigating tiny terrestrial distances; nor does it stand directly over

a house. More evidence this star is an angel. ...and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

### **Chapter Notes/ Scripture References**

**Matthew 2:1-12 (KJV)** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, **2** Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. **3** When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. **5** And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, **6** And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

**Matthew 2:7 (KJV)** Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. **8** And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. **9** When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. **10** When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. **11** And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. **12** And being warned of God in a

*dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.*

### **Balaam's Prophecy of the star**

**Numbers 24:15-17(KJV)** *And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said: **16** He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: **17** I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.*

**Numbers 23:5 (KJV)** *And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.*

**Numbers 23:7 (KJV)** *And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel.*

### **Times anticipated for Messiah's First Coming**

**2 Chronicles 36:22-23 (KJV)** *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, **23** Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.*

**Daniel 9:25(KJV)** *Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

**Micah 5:2 (KJV)** *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

### **Stars called angels**

**Job 38:7(KJV)** *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

**Revelation 1:20 (KJV)** *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*

*(See also: **Judges 5:20, Isaiah 14:13, Daniel 8:10, Re 6:13, Re 9:1**)*

**Matthew 2:9 (KJV)** *When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went, till it came and stood over where the young child was. before them*

### **Jesus Christ called the morning star**

**2 Peter 1:19(KJV)** *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

**Revelation 2:28(KJV)** *And I will give him the morning star.*

**Revelation 22:16(KJV)** *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

## Jesus' Baptism

Mt. 3:13; Mark 1:9; Lk. 3:21; Jn. 1:29

**Location:** Jordan River

**Recipient:** John the Baptist

**Witnesses:** John the Baptist

One of two miracles recorded in all four gospels. The only other is the miracle of the loaves, (feeding of the 5,000). Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14.

The heavens open and the Holy Ghost descends in bodily form like a dove settling on Jesus. God's voice booms from the sky. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

God designed this miracle exclusively for John the Baptist. Previously, the Lord told John when he saw the Spirit of God descending from heaven in a bodily form like a dove, and settling on a particular person, that sign identifies God's only Son, the Lamb of God. According to John's eyewitness account, he gives no indication anyone else witnessed the visuals of the miracle. Regarding the audio, however, it seems possible everyone present at Jesus' baptism heard God's voice.

### **Thought to ponder:**

This is the only miracle John the Baptist witnessed concerning Jesus Christ. John never saw Jesus do any healing miracles; he only heard about them (or read about them). Like believers today, John had to believe by faith those miracles happened.



## Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies

**Heaven opens** eight times in the Bible, three times in the Old Testament and five times in the New Testament. When heaven opens very significant events take place. Seven openings happened in the past- one is yet to come. For a complete listing of heaven's openings: *See Part Two chapter: Heaven Opens*

**John 1:29-34 (KJV)** *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*

**Matthew 3:13-17(KJV)** *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

**Mark 1:9-11(KJV)** *And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of*

*John in Jordan. **10** And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: **11** And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

***Luke 3:21-23 (KJV)** Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, **22** And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. **23** And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,*

## Satan tempts Jesus

Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13

Immediately after the Lord's baptism, Jesus departs to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. The devil being allowed to tempt Jesus (God the Son) certainly qualifies as miraculous. Within the course of their meeting, several additional miracles occur. We learn a new official name for the devil, scripture calls him the tempter. And here he tempts God the Son; Lucifer's hubris can reach no further. The passage displays the devil's insuperable courage; upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear (*Job 41:33*).

Jesus fasts forty days, not a miracle but quite a feat. The only other person who fasted that long was Moses. And he did it twice. In Moses' case, the fast was a miracle because he didn't even drink water. *See chapter notes, Moses' Fasts.*

Satan knows Jesus is fasting and taunts him to turn stones into bread. The first time the devil appears in the Old Testament, he tempts Eve and Adam to eat from a forbidden tree. And the first time he shows up in the New Testament he tries to get Jesus to eat something. Seems the devil enjoys provoking people to succumb to appetite (of all kinds?).

This miraculous encounter intensifies when the devil literally transports Jesus physically to a pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem. The quote from Psalms appropriates wisdom, knowledge, and mockery at the same time. The ensuing dialog epitomizes good versus evil utilizing God's words. No doubt about it, Satan is a master swordsman with scripture, deliberately omitting and adding words from *Psalms 91:11-12* he cleverly focuses only on a point he wants to make. Unless one juxtaposes the texts, his quote appears accurate; but the phrase "to keep

thee in all thy ways” is missing. And “at any time” is added. In Mt. 4:7 Jesus quotes from *Deuteronomy 6:16*.

***Psalms 91:11-12*** *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

***Matthew 4:6*** *And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

***Deuteronomy 6:16 (KJV)*** *Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.*

Again Satan transports Jesus bodily to the top of a very high unnamed mountain. Satan employs miraculous ability to transport physical bodies from one point to another, rather like a scene from a science fiction movie. And from this vantage point, he materializes all the world’s kingdoms and their glory. How Satan transports matter and displayed the kingdoms is a great a wonder. Perhaps holographs, or live scenes? No doubt the special effects were mesmerizing. The anointed cherub definitely employs advanced physics and transcendent math. Miracles performed here likely preview Satan’s deceptive powers executed during the Tribulation period. *See chapters: Image of the Beast and Satan’s encounters with God.*

More astounding than supernatural optics is Satan’s commitment to give the world’s kingdoms to Jesus if only the Lord worships him. The devil’s promise merits careful consideration. Apart from being outrageous, the statement reveals much about Satan’s power. If the world’s kingdoms did not belong to Satan, Jesus would know he was lying, and therefore no temptation. Satan knew Jesus presently lived in human flesh, and

consequently subject to weakness; the extent of that weakness the devil had no way of knowing, but he definitely gave it his best shot. However, the devil learns, he must still obey God's commands. Observe when Jesus says "*Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*" The devil leaves. Satan must obey Jesus Christ.

Scripture reveals Satan desires worship more than anything. He willingly offers all his political and governmental power over the world in exchange for Jesus' to bow before him. Satan's primary arena is spiritual and religious. If Satan can't receive worship, his next objective persuades people to deny Jesus Christ. False religions and cults base their faith on denying Jesus Christ is God. Islam is but one example. False Religion also encourages belief in the supernatural, just as long as Jesus' deity remains denied. Hollywood entertainment follows close behind, hence the ever increasing fascination with death, demons, ghosts, vampires, and false perceptions of life after death.

As the Second Coming of Jesus Christ looms ever closer, Christ's enemies become more overt. Hatred of true Christianity, Jews, and the Bible grows daily. At the same time, man's flesh devolves into a state of depravity all its own. Much of what the old serpent gets blamed for is actually inspired by man's own sinful nature: Sexual sin, drunkenness, drugs, gluttony, greed, etc. The lust of the eye, and the pride of life *1 John. 2:16*. Satan remains far more interested in Sunday morning than Saturday night.

## **Chapter Notes**

See Part Two Satan's direct encounters with God.

***Matthew 4:1-11*** *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had*

*fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*

**Mark 1:12-13** *And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. 13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.*

**Luke 4:1-13** *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. 3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. 4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. 5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms*

of the world in a moment of time. **6** And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. **7** If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. **8** And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. **9** And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: **10** For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: **11** And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. **12** And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. **13** And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

### **Moses' Fasts**

**Exodus 34:28 (KJV)** And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

**Deuteronomy 9:9 (KJV)** When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water:

**Deuteronomy 9:18 (KJV)** And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

# Jesus sees Nathanael

John 1:45-51

**Location:** Under a fig tree

**Recipients:** Nathanael

**Witnesses:** Nathanael, Philip

As miracles go, this one is rather small, but not to the person to whom it benefited. Nathanael knew no one saw him under the fig tree; he was alone. But clearly Jesus knew all about it. This impossible knowledge so impressed the future disciple that he immediately confessed Jesus was the Son of God and King of Israel. What exactly happened beneath the fig tree remains undisclosed, only Nathanael and Jesus know. Imagine meeting a stranger and he told you something you did in the privacy of your own home hours (or days) earlier. That's Jesus for you.

***Proverbs 15:3*** *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

## **Is Nathanael one of the Twelve Apostles?**

In this phase of the Lord's ministry, he is choosing his apostles. In fact, Nathanael's miracle happened shortly after Andrew introduced Peter to Jesus, both men are future Apostles. Nathanael may well be another name for Apostle Bartholomew. Consider as soon as Philip, a future Apostle, believes Jesus is Messiah, he finds his friend, Nathanael and leads him to the Lord. Although the name Nathanael is not found among the twelve apostles, in three lists of the twelve, the names Philip and Bartholomew appear side by side: *Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:14-19; Luke 6:13-16.*



## Chapter notes

**John 1:45-51** Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! 48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. 49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

**John 1:50-51 (KJV)** Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. **51** And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

**Luke 6:13-16** And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; **14** Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, **Philip and Bartholomew,** **15** Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, **16** And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

# Jesus makes Wine

John 2:1-11

**Location:** Cana of Galilee

**Recipients:** Wedding guests

**Witnesses:** Disciples and servants

Jesus turning water into wine marks the first miracle in Cana of Galilee. Several observations may be made about the passage. Jesus making wine is his first miracle of substance where an observable physical phenomenon takes place. The event takes place at a wedding feast. This is not street ministry. Since weddings are invitation only, it appears those hosting the dinner know Jesus' family. This miracle revealed Jesus' power to only a few persons, whereas many miracles display Jesus' deity to all persons in a given vicinity. Observe also the benefactors of the miracle never knew it happened.

When Mary informs Jesus the people have no wine, his answer seems almost curt. Jesus contrasts the moment to a particular hour. The hour to which Jesus refers concerns his crucifixion (*see chapter notes, Mine hour*). It is worthy to ponder that at the time, no one knew what hour Jesus was speaking about. Therefore, the Lord's answer to Mary's concern about the people having no wine, deserves considerable thought.

**12:4** *Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.*

Although the Lord asked Mary, "What have I to do with thee?" Readers should answer the same question? What does Jesus have to do with you? What kind of issues do you bring to the Lord's attention?

Bearing in mind the rather private audience, Bible students tend to focus on the servants (after the wine) because they knew what Jesus did, while the majority of the wedding guests had no idea what happened. Those actively serving the Lord often receive blessings hidden to the multitude. But the miracle seems directed at Mary, Jesus' mother. In fact *John 2:3-5* concern Mary almost entirely, and most importantly, those verses precipitate the miracle. The passage concludes in verse 11 which tells us plainly the miracle manifested the Lord's glory causing his disciples to believe on him. Let us not forget Mary was also one of the Lord's disciples, *Luke 1:47*. Ironically, the intention of this miracle has little to do with making wine.

Unlike the waterpots themselves, the exact volume of a firkin is not set in stone. A consensus among historians determines a firkin is about nine gallons. Thus each stone waterpot held about twenty-five gallons of liquid. Needless to say, Jesus made a lot wine. Six waterpots translates into about 150 gallons.

Jesus making wine is a favorite resource for Christians who want to justify drinking alcohol, but this miracle lends no support to drinking. As to what kind of wine did Jesus make? Jesus made supernatural wine that tasted tremendous. No one should presume supernatural wine contains alcohol. If one wants to speculate wisely, the wine probably tasted exactly like grapes before the Fall of Adam and Eve. In other words before the earth was cursed. No doubt the Garden of Eden produced delicious grapes, incapable of corruption or spoilage. And since Jesus is God, I theorize the vintage miracle wine was from the Age of Innocence, or at least it was biologically identical.

## Chapter Notes

**John 2:1-11 KJV** *And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. 3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. 4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. 5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. 6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. 7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. 9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, 10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. 11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.*

### Mine hour

**John 12:23** *And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*

**John 13:1** *Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*

**John 17:1** *These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:*

**Luke 1:46-47** *And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

# Jesus disappears in Nazareth

Luke 4:16-31

**Location:** Nazareth

**Recipients:** Synagogue's congregation

**Witnesses:** Synagogue's congregation

The miracle occurs in *Lk 4:29-30*. For full understanding Christians need to read the entire passage. Although people know Jesus in his home town of Nazareth, he had not yet declared himself. In other words he had yet to announce that he was Christ, Israel's Messiah. In no uncertain terms, Jesus does so in his local synagogue.

Participating in the synagogue's Sabbath day service was as normal for Nazareth's Jews, as Christians attending Sunday morning worship in their home church. And that's exactly what's happening here. Jesus participates in a service among fellow believers whom he had grown up with in Nazareth. Jesus' custom or duty was to read designated scriptures to the congregation. After being given the Bible (Old Testament) Jesus turned to Isaiah 61:1; he also reads Isaiah 42:7. He then closes the book and gives it back to the minister, and sits down. With all eyes fixed upon him, Jesus declares, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." The impact of his declaration cannot be over stated.

Scripture does not record Jesus' whole message, but his opening alone declares himself as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, the Messiah who ushers in the golden kingdom age. For Israel to enjoy glory and preeminence among the world's kingdoms, the Jews must first accept Jesus as the promised deliverer of Israel. Basically, the people listen in shock to Jesus deliver his sermon.

As the congregation begins to comprehend the full gravity of Jesus' words, their reactions swell into rage. Imagine someone in your own Sunday morning church service, standing up and declaring he was the Lord, and he was prepared to usher in the Millennium kingdom age. Now imagine the person is someone you have known since he was a child. Such an analogy is not far removed from how that ancient congregation perceived Jesus Christ that fateful day.

***Isaiah 61:1-2 (KJV)*** *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;*

***Isaiah 42:7 (KJV)*** *To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*

### **The miracle**

Once the people fully grasp what Jesus said, they not only rejected him; they hated him. The synagogue's loving congregation transforms into an angry mob. Filled with wrath they rose up and thrust him out of the city. Dragging Jesus along, they headed to a place atop a hill where they intended to "cast him down headlong." That probably means being thrown over a cliff? Whatever the case, Jesus eludes the mob by simply walking away. Now how does anyone inside the custody of an angry mob escape? But Jesus simply walks away. Quite a disappearing act. "*But he passing through the midst of them went his way,*" Lk. 4:30." Notice the verse closes with a comma. In the next verse Jesus is teaching in Capernaum. So much for Nazareth.





## Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies

**Luke 4:16-31 (KJV)** *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. **17** And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, **18** The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, **19** To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. **20** And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. **21** And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. **22** And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? **23** And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. **24** And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. **25** But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; **26** But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. **27** And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. **28** And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, **29** And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. **30** But he passing through the midst of them went his*

way, **31** *And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.*

# Healing Miracles

Immediately after the Lord's baptism, Jesus departs to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Soon after the devil's temptations, Jesus selects twelve apostles and the healing miracles begin. In a world filled with suffering, disease, and afflictions, Jesus continually provided miraculous healings and relief from pain. Not surprisingly, wherever Jesus traveled huge crowds gathered. Matthew 4 provides a good synopsis of Jesus' activity throughout his ministry in Galilee and eventually the whole region.

**Matthew 4:23-25** *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. 24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. 25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.* (Gospel Harmonies Mark 1:37-39; Luke 4:13-16)

**Matthew 15:30-31** *And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: 31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.*

**Gospel healings identify Jesus Christ as Israel's Messiah.**

About 700 BC, Prophet Isaiah predicted healing miracles would identify Israel's messiah. Healing miracles prove the deity of Jesus Christ. Observe Matthew's reference to Isaiah right in the verse. Scripture declares the prophecy fulfills when Jesus performs the miracles.

***Matthew 8:16-17*** *When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: 17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.*

***Isaiah 53:4*** *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

The gospel healings fulfill Isaiah 53:4. Although it is not a direct quote, the New Testament interpreted the Old Testament, correlating Matthew 8:16-17 to Isaiah 53:4. The verses (Isaiah 53:4 and Matthew 8:16-17) depict miraculous physical healings identifying Jesus is Israel's Messiah.

### **Rightly dividing**

Understanding when Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled is crucial to rightly dividing the words of truth. Readers sometimes mistakenly run Matthew 8:16-17 to Isaiah 53:5 which deals with Jesus' stripes; his brutal whipping received just prior to his crucifixion. But it is not a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:5. Matthew 8:16-17 fulfills Isaiah 53:4.

"By whose stripes ye are healed" is all about atonement for sin. Examine the words God uses in the verse: Transgressions and iniquities are sins. Indeed the passage corroborates with 1 Peter 2:24, which also concerns atonement for sins. But "by

whose stripes” has nothing to do with physical healings. Jesus’ stripes are part of the atonement to save us from our sins. Healing in Isaiah 53:5 and 1 Peter 2:24 is salvation.

***Isaiah 53:5*** *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

***1 Peter 2:24*** *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*

This is a very big deal! Matthew’s Gospel tells us Isaiah 53:4 was *fulfilled* in chapter 8. The word *fulfilled* is past tense! This is before Jesus received his stripes. The healings recorded in the Gospels happened before Jesus went to the cross. How could healings be declared fulfilled in Matthew chapter 8, if they are due to the stripes Jesus receives in Matthew chapter 27?

### **Interpreting healing miracles: Historical, Doctrinal, and Spiritual**

On yet another level, the various types of healings represent spiritual truths; each unique physical infirmity illustrating a spiritual type. Scripture often contrasts the physical sense of hearing and seeing with one’s spiritual senses to know God. Just as being deaf or blind proves hugely difficult in navigating the physical world, while refusing to listen or see God results in even more devastating consequences.

***Deuteronomy 1:43*** *So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill.*

**Deuteronomy 29:2-4** *And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; 3 The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles: 4 Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.*

**Ezekiel 12:2** *Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house.*

**Jeremiah 13:10** *This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing.*

**Jeremiah 29:19** *Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.*

**Revelation 3:18** *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

### **Observations concerning physical healings**

Before looking at individual miracle healings, it is important to acknowledge the environment surrounding the event. Specifically, the persons being healed may be categorized into one of four distinct spiritual conditions. As Bible students studying healing miracles, we recognize them all.

1. A sick person's faith moves God to heal.
2. Faith of another person moves God to heal the afflicted person.
3. God heals without anyone asking or praying.
4. Another person's empathy (although insufficient faith) moves God to heal an afflicted person.

# Leprosy

The physical world often mirrors spiritual truth; and leprosy is a type of sin. What leprosy does to one's physical flesh, sin does to one's soul. The characteristics of the disease helps us understand sin. Not just an individual's personal sins, but including the sinful Adamic nature inherited by the entire human race since the fall of Adam and Eve. (Romans 5:12-19). Because leprosy typifies sins, this study also examines Old Testament episodes of the disease.

Outside of Moses' leprosy sign before Israel, God records four additional miraculous leprosy healings, two episodes happen in the Old Testament, *Numbers 12:1-5; 2 Kings 5*. And two in the New Testament, *Matthew 8:1-4; Luke 17:12-19*. See *Part Two: Old Testament Leprosy Miracles*

Leprosy begins invisibly, the victim unaware of its presence. Leprosy starts as a single spot somewhere on the body. As the disease progresses it infects the entire person. Like the evolution of sin, the end results are tragic and hideous. Likewise, the word spot connects with leprosy and therefore represents sin. Remember God commanded that sacrificial lambs were without blemish or spot. Apostle Paul exhorts Timothy to keep his commandments without spot, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

***He. 9:14.*** *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God.*

*Jude 23 implores Christians toward evangelism by saying, Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*



**1 Peter 1:19** *But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

**2 Peter 2:13** *And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;*

**1 Timothy 6:14** *That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

**Jude 1:12** *These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;*

## One Leper

Mt. 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-14

**Location:** Capernaum

**Recipient:** one unnamed Leper

**Witnesses:** undisclosed

The first miraculous leprosy cure in the New Testament involves a single leper who confronts Jesus soon after the Lord delivered his Sermon on the Mount. This particular leper has the faith to be healed. The leper immediately kneels before Christ and confesses Jesus is Lord. Notice however, that he prefaces his request with "if thou wilt." In other words, he does not demand the healing. Here, the cleansing of leprosy equates with healing. Jesus tells the man he is willing, and then heals him immediately with a touch of his hand.

Curiously, the Lord orders the healed leper not to tell anyone. Jesus commands him to go to the priests and offer a sacrifice according to the Law of Moses. Even though the Lord heals and cleanses the leper, the cleansing is not legal until the Levitical priesthood pronounces it to be so. This miracle presents Jesus teaching Jews to obey the law. Remember the Church Age has not yet started; this is Old Testament doctrine.

**Matthew 5:17-19** *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. **18** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. **19** Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

## Keeping Quiet

As to Jesus ordering the man not to tell anyone: Why? Did the Lord simply mean the legalities need be handled according to the Law of Moses, before he told anyone? Maybe. But Jesus did not say after the priest pronounced him clean, then he was free to tell everyone. Furthermore, if the matter was handled by law, which includes offerings, it could take weeks before the priest could officially proclaim him clean. (*See Old Testament Leprosy Miracles*) This account, covered by three Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all record the same command. Jesus clearly says don't tell anyone. However, the point becomes almost moot because the leper goes out and tells everyone.

This is not the only healing miracle where Jesus tells the recipient to keep quiet, there are several: Three of many examples: A deaf man Mark 7:35-36; the mount of transfiguration experience Mark 9:9; raising a dead girl, Luke 8:54-56.

In *Matthew 12:17-21*, Jesus gives the command not to tell anyone about himself. But this time scripture explains why. Jesus does not go about demanding people listen to him, nor does he inflict punishment on those who hate him. He is not boastful or pushy. Such mannerisms typify the Lord's behavior during First Advent. It is a fulfillment of prophecy. Behold the Lamb.

The same prophecy also contains a direct revelation that Gentiles will trust him. God temporarily sets aside the Gospel of the Kingdom (his plan for Israel) and builds his Church through the Gospel of the Grace of God. But all things in their proper order.

***Isaiah 53:7 (KJV)*** *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb*

*to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

**Isaiah 42:1-4 (KJV)** *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. 2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*

**Matthew 12:17** *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. 19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. 21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.*

**Isaiah 44:7 (KJV)** *And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.*

### **The crowd theory**

A popular explanation suggests Jesus forbids the leper to tell people because the crowds would get too big. Although healings do result in large crowds, I do not think that's why Jesus ordered him to keep quiet. Jesus is perfectly capable to handle larger crowds.

## **Spiritual/practical applications for keeping quiet**

Jesus can do something miraculous for you, even today, that should remain between you and him. In fact, sometimes extraordinary events happen that wisdom suggests you keep to yourself. Especially when people doubt your story. Or worse they think you are lying.

**Matthew 7:6** *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

**Proverbs 2:11** *Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:*

**Proverbs 12:23** *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.*

**Psalms 25:14** *The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.*

**Proverbs 17:28** *Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.*

**Proverbs 29:11** *A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.*

## **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**Matthew 8:1-4** *When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. 2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, **if thou wilt**, thou canst make me clean. 3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his*

leprosy was cleansed. **4** And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

**Mark 1:40-45** And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. **41** And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. **42** And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. **43** And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; **44** And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. **45** But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

**Luke 5:12-16** And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. **13** And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. **14** And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. **15** But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. **16** And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

# Ten Lepers

## Luke 17:12-19

**Location:** Certain village, near Jerusalem

**Recipient:** Ten lepers

**Witnesses:** Apostles, villagers

The second and final leprosy miracle in the New Testament deals with a group of ten lepers. Bible students obtain interesting and valuable knowledge when comparing this episode to the single leper healed.

Initially, not one among these ten lepers acknowledge Jesus as Lord. They call him Master. Compare to the single leper in *Matthew 8:1-4* who calls Jesus Lord straightaway. The single leper humbly bows before Jesus in worship even before his healing while these ten stand afar off and beg for mercy.

**Luke 17:12-19** *And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: **13** And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. **14** And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. **15** And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, **16** And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. **17** And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? **18** There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. **19** And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.*

No one here gets healed with a touch of Jesus' hand or even a word. In fact, Jesus does not even mention what he's

going to do. The only similarity with the single leper is Jesus orders the ten to go show themselves to the priests. When the ten lepers walk away from Jesus, they still have leprosy. As they walk toward the priests, the miracle happens. Without saying a word, Jesus heals them. Neither does scripture say the lepers' faith has anything to do with their healing. God's will and power healed them.

Upon noticing his healing, one among the ten runs back to Jesus. Several profoundly interesting observations now occur. The thankful man returns to glorify God. Notice he bows before Jesus giving thanks. Scrutinize the passage; the antecedent for the word "him" in verse 16 refers directly to the noun "God" found in verse 15. Therefore the text proclaims the deity of Jesus Christ. Throughout the gospels, Jesus always accepts worship. In fact, he expects it. Being worshipped is not something God shares with anyone or anything. The Bible is very plain. Only God is to receive our praise and worship. (*See chapter notes*)

Next Jesus engages with the man by asking him the whereabouts of the other nine lepers. Even though, Jesus told them to show themselves to the priests, he clearly implies they all should have returned to give him thanks. In verse 19, Jesus acknowledges the man's faith, by stating "thy faith has made thee whole." Remember the physical healing already happened without the lepers' faith. Jesus now refers to this particular leper's salvation, because the man believes and confesses Jesus is Lord. A serious lesson learned in this account observes one can be miraculously healed and still not be saved. Ultimately salvation of your soul is what matters, the flesh profits nothing (John 6:63).

And finally the man saved is a Samaritan, which in this case is a Samaritan. This statement implies the other nine lepers were



Jews. And the Jews in Israel, were largely rejecting Jesus Christ. The Jews, as a nation, do not believe in Jesus until the Tribulation.

## **Chapter Notes**

**Matthew 23:37** *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*

**Romans 11:25-26** *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

### **Only God is to receive our praise and worship.**

**Exodus 20:2-3** *I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

**Exodus 20:5** *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;*

**Hosea 13:4 (KJV)** *Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me.*

## Centurion's Servant

Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10

**Location:** Capernaum

**Recipient:** Centurion's servant

**Witnesses:** Undisclosed number of servants

Palsy is a rather vague term usually depicting a neurological condition resulting in paralysis of some part of the body, often debilitating. Sometimes the disease included involuntary tremors. In New Testament times, the disease represents a devastating health condition.

A military centurion commands one hundred men in a Roman legion. Basically, his responsibilities included looking after his soldiers while in camp and in battle. Since Roman armies occupied Israel at this time, the presence of centurions was common. The set up for the miracle supplies a tremendous lesson in humility and respect toward God.

A Roman commander orders Jewish elders to approach Jesus and ask for help in his behalf. Trying to win Jesus' favor, the Jews explain to Jesus the Roman centurion does much for Israel; he even built them a synagogue. The Jewish elders' strategy for seeking Jesus' help is interesting when compared to the commander's strategy. While Jesus travels to the centurion's house, the Roman commander sends out others with additional information. Last of all, the centurion, himself, meets Jesus.

When the centurion meets Jesus, there is no bragging about his character or good works. Actually it's quite the opposite. He confesses how unworthy he is and says Jesus need not trouble himself by going to his house. The Roman commander's attitude goes far beyond respect; he calls Jesus Lord. The centurion

assumes Jesus can command supernatural events to happen as easily as a military commander orders his own soldiers. The military logic appeals to Jesus and proves the man's faith. Observe the sick servant's faith has nothing to do with the healing, the granted miracle is solely due to the prayer and faith of a Gentile centurion. Observe also the Roman commander's request is not for himself, but to help someone else.

In Mt 8:10-12, Jesus contrasts the centurion's great faith to Israel's lack of faith. In fact, he says no one in Israel displays as great faith as this Gentile centurion. Several Gentiles receive benefit from Jesus during his First Advent ministry. However, Gentiles receiving benefits acknowledge Jesus' primary relationship to Israel. They always display humility and honor toward a Jewish Messiah. Also noteworthy is they do not need convincing to believe in Jesus.

In Mt. 8:11, the Lord comments on the Millennium. A time when many Gentiles enjoy the Jewish Kingdom's blessing, while many Jews, who rejected Jesus, are denied, judged, and thrown into hell. Although Israel remains God's chosen nation, an individual Jew's salvation requires faith in Jesus Christ. Simply being Jewish does not save one's soul.

### **Chapter Notes: Gospel harmonies**

**Luke 7:1-10 (KJV)** *Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. 2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. 3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. 4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: 5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. 6 Then Jesus went with them. And*

*when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: **7** Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. **8** For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. **9** When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. **10** And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.*

**Matthew 8:5-13 (KJV)** *And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, **6** And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. **7** And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. **8** The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. **9** For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. **10** When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. **11** And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. **12** But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **13** And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.*

# Nobleman's Son

John 4:46-5

**Location:** Cana of Galilee

**Recipient:** A nobleman's son

**Witnesses:** Undisclosed number of servants

Returning to Cana, Jesus meets a man identified only as a nobleman. The nobleman traveled from his home in Capernaum to Cana, a distance of about seventeen miles. His son is severely ill, and Jesus will heal him. Before doing anything for his son, Jesus says, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."

Do not misinterpret Jesus' words as a question. The Lord states a fact about Israel's leadership. (And many common Jews as well.) This includes the nobleman. Faith pleases God, a virtue that Israel's ruling class sorely lacked. Asking for a sign is a unique privilege God provides to Jews. Although even for Jews, signs and wonders were not displayed to every generation.

This also presents an uncomfortable passage where Jesus seems to minimize a person's physical and psychological suffering when compared to the importance of faith. Likewise compare Jesus healing the paralyzed man. (*See chapter: Through the Roof*).

Nevertheless, the man clearly believes Jesus has power. Or perhaps in desperation Jesus remains the last chance to save his son. The nobleman begs Jesus to accompany him to Capernaum or else his son dies. Jesus refuses the offer to travel, but tells the man to go his own way, his son lives. Now the man exercises faith; the man believes the Lord. The next day the nobleman returns home. Even before arriving home, his servants

meet him with happy news, his son is healed. With a little investigation the nobleman discovers his son's fever broke the same hour in which Jesus said, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." The miracle healing convinced everyone in the nobleman's house to believe in Jesus Christ.

## Chapter Notes

**John 4:46-54 (KJV)** *So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. 48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. 49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. 50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. 52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. 54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.*

## Signs for Israel

**1 Corinthians 1:22 (KJV)** *For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:*

**Hebrews 11:6 (KJV)** *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

### **Speaking to Moses:**

**Exodus 4:8 (KJV)** *And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.*

### **Speaking to Gideon:**

**Judges 6:16-17 (KJV)** *And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. 17 And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.*

### **Speaking to Apostle Thomas:**

**John 20:25 (KJV)** *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.*

**John 20:29 (KJV)** *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

## Through the Roof

Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26

**Location:** Capernaum

**Recipient:** Paralyzed man

**Witnesses:** Pharisees and doctors of the law

Matthew, Luke, and Mark record this extremely interesting palsy healing. Luke's account is chosen for examination. Several miracles inhabit the passage:

Scripture precedes the primary miracle with a description of the audience. Jesus is teaching in a large house. Many important persons are present, Pharisees and doctors of the law from every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. This is a big deal. The audience is the main reason for the miracle. The crowd represents national Israel. Focusing only on the sensational physical healing overlooks extremely important components of the whole episode.

- Spiritual power to heal (signs to convince) Israel's national leaders.
- Salvation for a paralyzed man.
- Mind reading; Jesus answers his critics thoughts.
- Physical healing for the paralyzed man

**Luke 5:17-26 (KJV)** *And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. **18** And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. **19** And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the*



*multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. 20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. 21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? 22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? 23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? 24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. 25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. 26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.*

In Luke 5:17, observe “the power of Lord was present to heal them.” The “them” to whom scripture refers are the Pharisees and doctors of the law who came to hear Jesus. Although none of these Pharisees and doctors are physically ill, an invisible power from the Lord is present to heal them, therefore God provides these Jewish leaders with supernatural persuasion and powerful signs for them to believe that Jesus is indeed their Christ and King. The paralyzed man with the palsy has not yet even show up! They are about to witness the fulfilling of Isaiah 53:4. (*See chapter: Healing Miracles*)

**Luke 5:17** *And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.*

Luke 5:18-20 introduces readers to a paralyzed man about to receive two miracles: forgiveness of sins (salvation) and physical healing. The man's friends, so determined to get him to Jesus, they climb to the roof and literally take apart ceiling tiles, producing a hole to lower him to Jesus. The Lord rewards their faith and forgives the man's sins. Observe God forgives the man's sins before he is physically healed.

### **Mind reading**

Jesus often engages in mind reading; a miraculous skill that always unnerves his critics. After hearing Jesus tell the man his sins were forgiven, the scribes and Pharisees think to themselves *Who can forgive sins, but God alone?* Jesus reads their minds and answers their question. The rhetorical answer is obvious, only God can forgive sins. Jesus accepts their question as appropriate and asks them what they think would be easier, forgiving sins or healing cripples? Since only God can do either one, Jesus demonstrates his power and authority. But notice the miracle primarily proves Jesus can forgive sins. In other words Jesus proves he is God. It is a sign to Israel.

### **Spiritual application for the church age**

Remarkably, the most visible part of Jesus' earthly mission was to relieve pain. Everywhere Jesus went he healed the sick, cured the deaf, brought sight to the blind, and cast out devils. Without a doubt this made him tremendously famous. Scripture makes it very clear, the healing miracles identified Jesus as the Messiah, thereby establishing his authority to forgive sins. Jesus' primary purpose was to save a person from their sins, which allows those who believe into heaven.

**Observation:** This is an informative account on suffering. Notice the man is sick of the palsy. What's the palsy? The palsy

is some undefined illness; therefore it represents disease in general. The man is so sick he can't even walk. The illness is killing him. The person with the palsy is a type (or picture) of you. And some day, a disease or affliction is going to kill you too. (Raptured saint's only exception) With that in mind let us examine the text.

Physical health is very important to us, but to God it's the forgiveness of sins that ultimately matters, because forgiveness of sins allows people into heaven. This is very hard doctrine for a person with a debilitating illness, or for persons watching loved ones suffer. Nevertheless it remains a salient truth about pain and suffering.

***John 6:63 (KJV)*** *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*

When Jesus asks: What's easier, forgiving sins or miraculously healing a terminally ill person? The answer is only God could do either one. Read *Matthew 9:6* carefully. The reason Jesus healed the man was to identify himself as the one who could forgive sins. The physical healing was secondary. In fact the Lord seems to trivialize the physical pain. Jesus tells the man, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee*. Even though the man is sick and in misery, Jesus' primary mission was already accomplished when he forgave the man's sins, because now the man is ready for heaven.

But the facts remain, the man is still sick, his friends and family are still anguished and upset when Jesus says to be cheerful! No one felt like being cheerful. True, the man is about to be healed, but the man (or his friends) did not know that. They hoped Jesus would heal him, and they knew Jesus could heal him. But would he? The man received his physical healing after Jesus

forgave his sins. By the way, this scenario presents exactly what happens to a Christian. Ultimately, a Christian gets his physical health (redeemed body) in the future.

This window into the way God views our suffering exemplifies a great truth. A believer's grief, no matter how severe is only temporary; heaven is forever. Sometimes the only thing we can do is to weigh our pain against everlasting life, an eternal weight of glory. Let's say a person suffers terribly for seventy years, then dies and goes to heaven. 10,000 years later the earthly suffering will be a tiny sliver of distant memory.

But can we hope for a miracle now? Is it possible to be healed today by faith? Yes, God heals people today. God expects us to pray for healing when our loved ones or we experience afflictions. And prayer often moves God to heal, but don't conclude anything negative about God or yourself if the healing does not come. No amount of prayer changes the written words of God. And God has not promised us perfect health while living in our present bodies. If a Christian's prayer moves God to work a miracle- Glory to God! But if a Christian does not get healed it does not mean he/she has little faith, or that God does not love him/her. Why some Christians live with illness and affliction and others do not remains God's business. Tragic situations do not defeat God's will, in fact, they may accomplish things impossible for us to comprehend.

Many situations cannot be understood this side of heaven. Although you may live in great distress, pray God gives you wisdom and strength to trust him. Faith, hope, and charity are powerful weapons in the battle against pain. Through faith and hope, we know God is good, and he promises us an eternity of happiness.

Throughout the ages, God's people lived a life of faith in spite of their circumstances. Occasionally God displayed miracles, but the spectacular miracles were always the exception, not the rule. Faith pleases God. Pain and heartache are nothing new. Believers' endured hardships and suffering for thousands of years. When and where mighty signs and wonders show up is God's business.

Suffering and pain exist within the body of Christ; those who deny it choose fantasy over truth. Unless we are raptured, our future here ends in hospital beds and graveyards. Every healthy day we enjoy on earth is due to God's mercy and his grace. Our health is something we thank God for, it is not something we demand. All creation waits for deliverance from pain.

## **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

### **Jesus Home town: Capernaum or Nazareth**

Since nearly all commentators conclude Jesus' "his own city" Matthew 9:1, is Capernaum, while over twenty verses link Jesus to the city of Nazareth, the location merits some discussion. Observe Jesus leaves Nazareth and does indeed dwell in Capernaum. However Jesus spends his pre-ministry life in Nazareth. Hence his title being called a Nazarene.

***Matthew 2:23*** *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.*

***Matthew 4:13*** *And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:*

**Matthew 21:11** *And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.*

**Luke 4:16** *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*

**Matthew 9:1-8** *And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. 2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. 3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? 5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? 6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. 7 And he arose, and departed to his house. 8 But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.*

**Mark 2:1-12** *And again he entered into Capernaum, after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. 2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. 3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. 4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. 6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, 7 Why doth*

*this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? **8** And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? **9** Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? **10** But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) **11** I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. **12** And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.*

## Blind Healings

Scripture often likens a person's physical sense of vision with understanding and the ability to recognize God's truth; those who reject Jesus Christ as Saviour are blind. Of course physical blindness does not forbid salvation. When it comes to knowing God, thousands of physically blind persons see very well indeed. But the metaphor remains consistent throughout the Bible. The accounts of Jesus healing the blind, provide powerful sermon illustrations.

**Mark 8:18 (KJV)** *Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?*

**Matthew 13:13 (KJV)** *Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*

**Matthew 15:14 (KJV)** *Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*

**Isaiah 43:8** *Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.*

**Revelation 3:17 (KJV)** *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*



# Two Blind Men

Matthew 9:27-32

**Location:** A house near Capernaum

**Recipient:** Two blind men

**Witnesses:** Undisclosed

**Matthew 9:27-32 (KJV)** *And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. 28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. 29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. 30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. 31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.*

From examining previous miracles in Matthew 9, Jesus appears to be departing Capernaum. By this time Jesus is quite famous. Wherever Jesus travels, as soon as the town or community knows, throngs of people pursue him. Just imagine a true miracle worker healing all diseases. The people's response would be tremendous.

Two blind men follow Jesus along the road, most likely by tracking the noise of the crowd, no mention of them having companions or friends. With no one to help them, they seem forgotten by the world, but they are determined to meet Jesus. Their need was great; never before were they filled with such hope.

Jesus stops along the way and enters into a house. Somehow the two blind men manage to get inside the house

where they begin to cry out for Jesus. By calling Jesus the Son of David, they acknowledge Jesus is Israel's promised one. When the Lord asks if they believe he can heal them, they answer yes Lord, thus confessing Jesus' deity. The blind men's faith presents a major ingredient for this miracle.

Jesus physically touches their eyes and heals them both. Although their healing happens inside a house away from the multitude; observe, the crowd remains just outside. Once again we encounter Jesus's command not to tell anyone. And once again Jesus' command is ignored; the men go out and tell everyone they can find.

As to why Jesus instructs some of his miracles kept quiet, we can only speculate. This topic considered carefully in a previous chapter: (*See chapter: Healing Leprosy*). Some theories are practical, but no theory definitively answers the question. Making a spiritual application, Jesus may do something miraculous for you that wisdom suggests you keep quiet.

***Proverbs 29:11*** *A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.*

***Matthew 7:6*** *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine*

# Trees Walking

Mark 8:22-26

**Location:** Bethsaida

**Recipient:** A blind man

**Witnesses:** No witness

**Mark 8:22-26 (KJV)** *And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. 23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. 24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. 25 After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. 26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.*

This healing takes place outside the town of Bethsaida, a city in Galilee, near the northern shore of Lake Gennesaret. Unidentified persons bring a blind man to Jesus and ask the Lord to touch him. Obviously they want the man to see.

The healing stands remarkable for several reasons. Consider the passage's emphasis on physical feeling and interaction. Jesus immediately honors the request to touch the man by taking him by his hand. Jesus leads the blind man out of town, away from crowds. When the Lord selects his desired location, he spits on the man's eyes, and puts his hands upon him. Truly an unusual set up for a miracle. How far Jesus and the man walked away from Bethsaida, we are not told. But it had to take a little time, and thus far not a word spoken by the blind man or the Lord. Only after the spitting and putting his hands on the blind man again does Jesus speak.

Consider the Lord's question. "if he saw ought" The Lord is not asking what he sees? But Rather Jesus asks if his vision is as it should be? How would a blind man know how he ought to see? He would not. Unless the man was not born blind; but lost his sight later in life. Being conscientious Bible students, we need to consider the blind man's moral obligation. *Is he seeing as he ought to see?*

Webster's dictionary defines the word ought as *-used to express obligation*: "Men ought to pay their debts." Biblically, the first use of the word, *Ge 20:9*; agrees with obligation or responsibility.

***Genesis 20:9 (KJV)*** *Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that **ought not to be done.***

Therefore this blind man is not seeing for the first time; observe, Jesus restored his vision, *Mk. 8:25*. And restored means the man once saw. Spiritual application: This is not a picture of a lost man getting saved, it is a picture of a backslider getting right.

The blind man's answer is intriguing. He sees men as trees walking. So he sees large undefined shapes moving about. As the man begins to see again, he does not see too clearly. For backsliders returning to the fold, perceiving and understanding what's happening takes a while. Restoration requires repentance, and personal interaction with the Lord before they see things clearly once again. In other words seeing things as they ought.

Identifying the miracle as a restoration helps explain the extraordinary process Jesus takes to heal the man. Indeed, the Lord interacts with backsliders in ways unique to the person. Like a concerned father dealing with his wayward son, once Jesus completes the restoration, he tells the man to look up. Which

means to focus on God instead of this earth. Jesus then sends the man to his house. Jesus also commands him not to return to town or tell anyone in the town about the miracle. A spiritual application concludes the man lost his way in Bethsaida. Christians ought not to inhabit places of temptation.

**Mark 8:25** *After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.*

Backsliding damages Christians in many ways. Grieving the Holy Ghost results when Christians disobey God. It definitely affects (blinds) one's ability to understand spiritual truth. God rebuked the Laodiceans for their sins, and God told them to anoint their eyes with eyesalve so they may see clearly. Jesus' saliva amounts to eyesalve.

**Revelation 3:18 (KJV)** *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

**Ephesians 4:30 (KJV)** *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

### **Correlating Scripture Texts**

Jesus the good shepherd takes the man by the hand and leads him to where restoration takes place. A good picture of this is the parable found in *Matthew 18:12-14*.

**Matthew 18:12-14** *How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it,*

*verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.*

Notice the sheep goes astray; the shepherd did not lose the sheep. The man typifies a good pastor taking care of God's congregation. One sheep goes astray. In other words the believer backslides, becomes wounded, or gets in trouble. Whatever the reason, he/she leaves the church and goes back into the world. In deep concern for the troubled believer, the pastor tries to find, and restore the sheep to the fold. Thus he acts like a loving, caring shepherd. Contrasted to the parable in *Luke 15:4* where the pastor's neglect provoked the sheep to wander. (*For more thorough commentary see author's What Might This Parable Be?*)

### **Chapter Notes**

Concerning Jesus spitting in the man's eyes. Human saliva comprises 99.5% water. Consider: Jesus' saliva amounts to eyesalve.

**1 John 5:6-7** *This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

**Ephesians 5:26-27** *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

**John 19:34-35** *But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.*

## Blind Bartimaeus

Mt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43

**Location:** Road near Jericho

**Recipient:** Bartimaeus and another blind man

**Witnesses:** Disciples, a great number of people

Blind Bartimaeus holds the honor of being the only man Jesus ever healed where scripture provides his name. Mary Magdalene holds the honor for women. Such distinction alone is worthy of careful consideration. The name Bartimaeus means "son of one esteemed or honorable." Which leads us to investigate his father whom scripture also names. His father is Timaeus whose name means "highly prized." Alas, nothing more is said of Timaeus.

The Gospel Matthew tells us two blind men are healed whereas Mark focuses solely on one of them. The scene and location being identical, we may conclude Mark emphasizes only Bartimaeus. Mark's Gospel does the same thing with the devil possessed man in the Tombs of Gadarene. He reports only one man while Matthew reports two men. In much the same manner, Kings and Chronicles report on same events with different perspectives. Different points of emphasis and focus does not mean one gospel or book contradicts another. Bible students need search all scriptures for the whole accounting.

The setting for the miracle resides alongside a well-traveled road leading out of Jericho. Accompanying Jesus are his disciples along with a great crowd. When two blind men sitting beside the same road become aware that Jesus passes by, they cry out loudly and desperately for his mercy. It seems Bartimaeus cries the loudest; perhaps his boldness impressed Mark exceedingly?



**Mark 10:46-52 (KJV)** *And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. 48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. 49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. 50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. 51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. 52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.*

Bartimaeus cries out to Jesus. Observe his plea for mercy includes the declaration that Jesus is the son of David. Quite an endorsement of belief, and a statement the crowd immediately rebukes. The same is true today.

Notice the multitude refers to our Lord only as Jesus of Nazareth. But Jesus is no ordinary citizen from Nazareth, such a title falls short of the whole truth. Likewise, modern crowds eagerly define Jesus Christ with similar epitaphs: Jesus is not just a prophet or a great teacher. Jesus is not just a moralist or a philosopher. Jesus being the Son of David constitutes a much greater title indeed. Jesus is the promised Saviour of the world, King of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus Christ is God almighty.

The multitude rebukes Bartimaeus and his blind friend telling them to keep quiet. When people sincerely seek the Lord, the world's voices always get in the way. As usual, the wide and

well-traveled road fills with people who try and stop sinners from meeting the Lord. But Jesus hears those who call out to him. Bartimaeus calls for mercy a second time.

**Matthew 20:31 (KJV)** *And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.*

**Matthew 7:13-14 (KJV)** *Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: **14** Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

In spite of all the distracting noise, Jesus hears the cries of those in need. God always listens and has compassion. Jesus physically touches these men's eyes and heals them. For this miracle Jesus gives no instruction to keep quiet. The healing happens in front of the world. And the men healed immediately follow Jesus. No doubt those who tried to stop the men from seeing Jesus, will soon attempt to discourage the new believers.

Mark 10:49 provides a good place for preachers to emphasize. *And Jesus stood still.* A perfect illustration of God hearing a prayer from anyone who seeks him. No matter who you are, or what condition you may be in. In the midst of all the world's noise, Jesus hears you. And he stops to listen. He stands still. Within the same verse notice Jesus commands him to be called. The Lord orders disciples to bring the blind man to Jesus. The spiritual application commends Christians to bring the lost to Jesus Christ that they might believe and be saved. Today, the Lord calls whosoever will through the spiritual voice of the Holy Ghost. And through preaching the determined intentions of God's words. To those who have never chosen to be saved, the most important question: "do you hear the Lord calling you?"

Blind Bartimaeus heeds the call and the disciples lead him to Christ. Bartimaeus casts away his garment, eager to leave behind his old life. As mentioned earlier, Bartimaeus already believes Jesus is Israel's Messiah, but head knowledge of the facts must journey to one's heart. A person acts upon belief. One must leave the wide road of perdition, take the exit ramp passed by those who choose to die in their sins.

Jesus asks Bartimaeus directly what he wants, he pleads for his sight. Jesus heals Bartimaeus, simply declaring him to be whole; the miracle is done. Imagine living life without sight, living in darkness? Suddenly, Jesus calls you, and you rise up and go to him. He heals you. And the very first thing you see after a life lived in darkness, is the face of Jesus Christ.

Blind Bartimaeus' story records his salvation and his miraculous healing. Jesus does not order Bartimaeus to keep quiet; indeed, he performed the miracle on a wide street inside a crowd. The concluding verse tells us he received his sight and follows Jesus in the way.

***John 12:26*** *If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.*

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

Luke's Gospel's writes a very similar accounting; however, differences need be considered. Luke provides no proper name for the blind man healed. And the proximity to Jericho seems to be as one enters the city as opposed to Mark's clear depiction of Jesus leaving Jericho. However entering or leaving is a perspective of which way an individual travels. It all depends upon which side of the street he's on, thus same location different lane. Aside from these added details, the records are nearly identical.

**Luke 18:35-43** And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: **36** And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. **37** And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. **38** And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. **39** And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. **40** And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, **41** Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. **42** And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. **43** And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

**Matthew 20:29-34** And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. **30** And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. **31** And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. **32** And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? **33** They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. **34** So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

# Jesus Makes Clay

John 9:1-41

**Location:** A road near Jerusalem

**Recipient:** A blind man

**Witnesses:** Disciples and a great number of people

In several ways this miracle stands alone:

- Jesus directly tells his disciples why he is doing the miracle; Jesus defines the purpose for the miracle.
- No faith is involved. The healed man does not even know Jesus.
- Jesus forces an entire community to contemplate, discuss, and consider the miracle. Christians should do the same.
- God devotes an entire chapter to this miracle and its consequences.

**John 9:1-41 KJV** *And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? 3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him*

The location for the miracle is difficult to prove; however, John chapter eight closed with Jesus leaving the temple. The place swarms with Pharisees and priests, so Jerusalem seems likely.

While Jesus walks along a road he sees a blind man. Scripture informs us the man has been blind since birth. Jesus' disciples, disturbed by the man's tragic condition, presume his blindness results from some personal sin committed by him or his

parents. In other words, they believe the man's condition reveals God's judgment, thus he deserves it. They do not even entertain for a moment any other reason.

Jesus' answer rebukes his disciples and eliminates divine punishment as the reason. God takes full responsibility. The reason the man was born blind demonstrates the works of God. Quite an answer for religious (including saved) people to hear. Giving disciples the benefit of the doubt, they tried explaining a cruel and unfair affliction with righteous reasoning. But if moral fault explains birth defects, then persons born without birth defects must be morally superior.

Self-righteousness often reveals itself when people compare their lives with others. Attempts to explain a person's misfortune or pain as his own fault, unconsciously asserts that you personally deserve good fortune. Seems everyone sees themselves better than they truly are. Have you ever noticed the sins you don't do are the worst ones?

***Exodus 4:11*** *And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?*

Jesus continues answering by declaring he is the light of the world. He spits on the ground which mixes with the dirt and makes clay. He then rubs the mixture of earth and spittle on the man's eyes. Remember God made man from dust; it seems the creator is remaking his creation, similar to a way an author revisits and edits a text. Next Jesus instructs the blind man to wash in the pool of Siloam. After following these instructions the man is able to see. Remember, the man knows very little about Jesus other than his name. Therefore the man's faith has nothing to do with this miracle. At this point in the narrative the man is still lost.

**John 9:4-7 (KJV)** *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. 6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, 7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.*

The news of Jesus healing the beggar spreads like wild fire. The entire community knew the blind man who begged on the side of the road; he had been doing it for years. But now they see him walking around with perfect vision. All his neighbors, friends, and acquaintances inquire what happened. And he tells them exactly how he was healed. A man called Jesus healed me by anointing my eyes with clay and told me to wash in the pool of Siloam. Curious and disturbed, the community takes him to the Pharisees for further examination. In front of the Pharisees, the man tells his same story again.

At the time, Jesus was extremely popular, but his popularity was not appreciated by everyone. Religious leaders fully oppose everything the Lord does. In fact, any Jew even entertaining the idea that Jesus is Israel's Messiah is put out of the synagogue (excommunicated, dis-fellowshipped, churchd). But Jesus' deity gets harder and harder to deny. With each day the miracles keep coming and more and more common people believe in him.

**John 9:8-15 (KJV)** *The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? 9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. 10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? 11 He answered and said, A man*

*that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. 12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. 13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. 14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. 15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.*

With the healed man standing before them, Israel's leaders debate the miracle. Finding fault with the healing performed on the Sabbath, some of them try and convince themselves that proves Jesus is not from God. In their view, any work done on the Sabbath breaks God's law. Others determine the miracle proves Jesus is the Messiah. Someone suggests the whole thing might be a trick. The man who stands before them only impersonates the blind man, so as to deceptively promote Jesus. In desperation they call the man's parents to verify their son's identity, and confirm he was born blind. But this does not bode well for the Pharisees, the parents appear just as amazed as everyone else. When asked how their son now sees perfectly, they say "ask him."

**John 9:16-23 (KJV)** *Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. 17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet. 18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. 19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? 20 His parents*



*answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: **21** But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. **22** These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. **23** Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.*

The religious leaders then ask the healed man again how he sees. Actually the scene is becoming quite amusing. With facts staring them in the face, those denying Jesus Christ make fools out of themselves. The Pharisees resent a commoner expressing any contrary opinion especially as they see the evidence moving in Jesus' favor. They revile the man and accuse him of being Jesus' disciple. After asking him, once again, what Jesus did to him, the healed man has had enough and answers everyone with bold truth, and a little sarcasm.

Basically the man says, "No one wants to hear what happened, you all just want to pin something on Jesus. You all keep going over the same things. Look at the facts; Jesus healed me. If I tell you again maybe you'll be his disciples too. Never in history has anyone miraculously healed the blind. If he were not of God he could nothing. You guys are in denial."

***John 9:24-33 (KJV)** Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. **25** He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. **26** Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? **27** He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? **28** Then they reviled him, and*

*said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. 29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. 30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. 31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. 32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. 33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.*

The Pharisees concluding answer remains a profound character illumination for lost humanity. And it's just as true today as it was 2,000 years ago. It epitomizes self-righteous modern humanist scholars, evolutionists, and religionists. How dare anyone question or accuse their way of understanding the world as false. And compared to them, anyone else is stupid.

***John 9:34 (KJV)*** *They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.*

And lest we think such arrogant pride comes only from highly educated Pharisees. Ponder how closely it resembles the theological thinking of Jesus' own disciples when they presumed the blind man's birth defect was due to God's judgment. As usual Jesus reveals human reasoning a moral failure. All mankind is a fallen, corrupt miserable mess? God respects no man's person. Your station in life, IQ, college degrees, or good works mean nothing when it comes to going to heaven. Whosoever rejects Jesus Christ chooses hell.

***John 9:2*** *And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*

**Acts 10:34** Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

**John 3:36** He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

After the religious bosses banned the man from attending his home synagogue ever again, he went somewhere to contemplate all that's happened. His first day of sight turned out to be quite an eye-ful. Ironically, he sees quite clearly the true self-righteous character of those in his former house of worship. Even his own parents seem to side with the Pharisees.

Jesus finds him and asks if he believes on the Son of God. The man asks the most important question of his life. "Who is he, Lord?" Jesus tells him that he is the Son of God. The man believes and worships Jesus. Jesus always accepts worship. Historical records show this included not only kneeling and confessing him as Lord, but Jesus accepted expensive gifts, kissing his feet, falling down and wiping his feet with their hair, (*Matthew 2:11; Mark 14:3; Luke 7:45; John 20:28, Acts 7:59*) Such action bestowed on anyone but God would be acts of disgraceful blasphemy.

**John 9:34-38 (KJV)** They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. **35** Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? **36** He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? **37** And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. **38** And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

Some Pharisees followed the healed man, they still wonder if Jesus is Messiah. No doubt these are the same Pharisees who disagreed with the majority and considered Jesus in a positive way (John 9:16). Although these Pharisees are not saved, they are wrestling with their conscience. They ask Jesus if they too are blind. The Lord gives an astounding answer. The truly blind have no sin, but those who claim to know God while rejecting Jesus Christ are accountable for their sins. This also includes secular persons who deceive themselves into believing that they are righteous. True spiritual sight means knowing Jesus Christ is Lord.

**John 9:39-41 (KJV)** *And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. 40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? 41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.*

Jesus Christ defines all humanity as lost sinners needing redemption. No amount of education, good works, or religion can justify you. Human beings need forgiveness and mercy from Jesus Christ. (*See chapter: Your greatest Miracle*)

# Deaf Man

## Mark 7:31-37

**Location:** Coasts Galilee near Decapolis

**Recipient:** A deaf man

**Witnesses:** Disciples, a great number of people

We have seen the Gospels record Jesus healing people in diverse ways. Sometimes with only a word or the touch of his hand. Sometimes Jesus heals from a distance, not saying anything or even being in the person's presence. Sometimes Jesus requires faith, sometimes faith from the person's family or friends, at other times he requires no faith all.

Since there is no devil involved, the deaf man's physical condition derives entirely from disease or birth defect. A deaf man, who speaks with an impediment, is brought to Jesus. The Lord fully involves himself in this mysterious healing miracle. He separates the deaf man from the crowd. Away from the crowd Jesus puts his fingers in the man's ears, spits, and touched his tongue. Picture Jesus standing in front of a person with his fingers in the man's ears, and then after a moment, he tells the man to open his mouth and he touches his tongue. Add to the visual, Jesus spitting and we have an unusual scene indeed.

Perhaps most curious, however, is that Jesus sighs before commanding the man to hear and speak. This particular healing proves very unusual. Scripture provides no dialog proving the man has faith, before or after the healing.

**Mark 7:31-37 (KJV)** *And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. 32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his*

*speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. 33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; 34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. 35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. 36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; 37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.*

### **Spiritual Application (theory)**

When one sticks his own fingers in his ears this signals the refusal to hear what another person is saying. When the Lord stops your ears that typifies an entirely different matter. Jesus silences whatever it is this lost man hears from the world. The man's speaking impediment literally means he speaks imperfectly. Before one comes to Christ, he must stop talking and listen. All lost people explain themselves with an impediment. Fools are exposed in a multitude of words. And even a fool is considered wise when he holds his tongue.

Jesus separates the man from the crowd. Before one gets saved or starts to listen carefully to God, he/she must lose the crowd. Even if the crowd cares about you. If that crowd is the world, they care not for your soul. Quite often the biggest obstacle stopping people from getting saved is refusing to leave the crowd; thus a decent person who the Lord calls many times, refuses to listen and stays with his friends? This could explain Jesus sighing. Like a father who deals with a wayward son over and over, but the son persists in not hearing. More than a few parents sigh over a rebellious child. Methinks this typifies a person

that Jesus called many, many times? It also shows Jesus going to extraordinary lengths to get a person to listen.

As to Christ spitting. Like the previous miracle when Jesus spit and made clay to anoint a blind man's eyes, Jesus is remaking his creation. (*See chapter: Jesus Makes Clay*) Only this time no clay is used, not as much editing is required.

After Jesus heals the man the crowd reemerges. Jesus tells all those witnessing the miracle to tell no one. In this instance however, there is no evidence that the crowd knows the Lord other than recognizing he does miracle healings. Nevertheless the command not to tell anyone, is never obeyed. Outside of a few events known only to the twelve Apostles, no one healed keeps quiet about Jesus.

**Matthew 13:9-15 (KJV)** *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. 10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

## Devil Possession

Several miracles in the New Testament involve Jesus casting out devils or evil spirits which possessed a human being. Modern terminology identifies this as an exorcism. Intellectual secularism relegates the belief in devils as ageless myths invented by ancient ignorant people trying to describe disturbing phenomena. The Bible disagrees. Satan applauds the denial of his kingdom; he equally encourages the fascination with it.

Devils and spirits manifest quite diversely. In other words, all evil spirits are not created equal. Just as in human beings, different intellects, and abilities exist, so seems true in devils. Some speak and have intelligence, while others live only to inflict pain and discomfort almost like a virus or a disease. Devil possession can also cause emotional and psychological distress. Consider the woman whose spirit of infirmity produced painful, crippling in her spine, causing a hunch-back condition.

***Luke 13:11 (KJV)*** *And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.*

Jesus directly calls one particular spirit dumb and deaf. This begs the question, is the spirit literally deaf, or does it only render his human host incapable of hearing? Since Jesus differentiates between spirits in various miracles, Bible students need consider them.

***Mark 9:25 (KJV)*** *When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.*



Devil possessed persons react to Jesus Christ in overt ways. In fact, devils know who Jesus is and fear his power. Nor are devils shy about confessing Jesus' deity. Consider the devil possessed man living in a cemetery; the devil itself speaks to Jesus.

**Mark 5: 6** *But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, 7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.*

No such thing as an atheist devil. Atheism remains entirely a human invention. Atheism simply demonstrates one more false religious idea supported by nothing but the faith of its congregation. When it comes to acknowledging God, devils have more sense than many human beings.

**James 2:19 (KJV)** *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.*

Devils need be differentiated from idols. An idol is an inanimate object made from wood or stone, but a devil is a living being, like a fallen angel or spirit. An idol may well represent a devil but the idol itself is not alive. Scripture at times, recognize idols as gods. No doubt due to the admiration and submission the people bestowed upon them. Mt.8:16 equates the word devils with spirits. Of the 106 times the word devil appears in scripture, the Old Testament contains only four: Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; 2 Chronicles 11:15; Psalm 106:37. The New Testament's first use of the word devil refers directly to Satan. Although the word demon is not in the Bible, modern terminology equates the word demon with devil.

**Matthew 4:1 (KJV)** *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

**Matthew 8:16 (KJV)** *When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:*

**Leviticus 17:7 (KJV)** *And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.*

**Deuteronomy 32:17 (KJV)** *They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.*

## Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost

Mt. 12:22-32; Mark 3:22-30; Luke 11:14-23

**Location:** Near Jerusalem

**Recipient:** A possessed man, blind and dumb

**Witnesses:** Disciples, scribes, Pharisees, a crowd

Jesus healing a devil possessed, blind, and dumb man precedes yet another episode of mind reading. (Mt. 12:25; Luke 11:17) Jesus knew the people's thoughts before their words exposed their hearts; a miracle his critics always find unnerving. Interestingly, the Pharisees comment only about the exorcism, they say nothing about Jesus healing the man's blindness or his inability to speak. Indeed, the emphasis of the entire narrative asks the question: What do you believe about Jesus Christ? This question remains as pertinent for persons alive today as for those living two thousand years ago.

Jesus' healings reach a breaking point in Israel; consequently, many common Jews are beginning to believe Jesus must be the promised Messiah. To stop the people from accepting him, the Pharisees accuse Jesus of being in league with Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Jesus responds with a dire warning about the unforgivable sin.

God is willing to forgive men of all sin except blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Defining blasphemy against the Holy Ghost remains a topic of controversy and debate. But careful analysis settles the issue. For a person to commit the sin, the following conditions must exist:

- Jesus must be physically present.
- Jesus commands a devil to leave his human host.

- Those witnessing the miracle deny Jesus Christ by attributing the miracle to Satan.

**Matthew 12:22-32 (KJV)** *Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. 23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? 24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. 25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: 26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? 27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. 28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. 29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. 30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. 31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. 32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.*

As to who or what is Beelzebub? In a hurry to correct the Bible, many commentators fret over the word's spelling and its imagined manuscript etymology. This writer has no such concerns. No doubt Beelzebub is the same as Baal-zebub (1 Kings 1:2). Most importantly, within the Lord's dialog, Jesus identifies Beelzebub as Satan. Which answers all questions as to who is

Beelzebub. Therefore, the Pharisees accuse Jesus of being and/or working with Satan.

At first Jesus argues the Pharisees with pure logic. Why would Satan cast out a devil? Satan does not work against himself. A house divided cannot stand. Jesus asks the Jews by what power do their own children cast out devils, "*And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?*" This question stumps the Jews. Evidently the priests also performed exorcisms. If the priests cast out devils, what spiritual authority did they employ? Or perhaps they only faked the exorcisms? And then when they saw Jesus actually do it, they couldn't believe their eyes.

### **Concerning Exorcisms**

Show boat religious spectacles have always existed. Religious charlatans abound throughout the ages. Jesus knows about their phony exorcisms (and healings) and he simply mentions them to call their bluff. It's rather like asking; so what's the difference with me doing what you guys claim to do all the time. But suddenly with Jesus, everyone sees the real deal, and the Pharisees try desperately to explain Jesus' success. Of course they won't admit in front of a crowd the fakes they truly are- so they turn on Jesus with lies and hatred.

Jesus' demonstrates power over the physical and spiritual world. The spiritual components to this miracle must not be overlooked. The Pharisees correctly acknowledge a spirit commands the devil's departure. But they lie when identifying the authoritative spirit as the devil, when in reality it is the Holy Ghost. And this is no mere mistake. They know the Holy Ghost does the miracle, but tell the people it's Beelzebub. The Holy Ghost reveals truth and convicts sin even in lost people. Indeed the Holy Ghost testifies within the human mind that Jesus is Lord. Therefore, by

attributing the work of the Holy Ghost to Satan, the Pharisees blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. And they do so in the very presence of the Son of God.

### **Is there an unpardonable sin today?**

Today's common question, "Can a person commit an unpardonable sin?" The answer is no; and actually the question is moot. Once the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ happens, there is no sin too great for Jesus to forgive. The shed blood of Jesus Christ redeems believers from all sins, no exceptions. The closest thing to an unpardonable sin in the Church Age, is when a person refuses to believe in Jesus Christ. In other words when a person rejects the gospel of the grace of God. Ultimately, refusing to get saved is the only sin that damns a soul.

***Ephesians 1:7 (KJV)*** *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

***Colossians 1:14 (KJV)*** *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

### **Are some devils actually deaf and blind?**

Concerning the spirit itself. Is the spirit blind and dumb? Or did it only make the person blind and dumb? In another place Jesus directly calls a spirit dumb and deaf (*Mark 9:25*) Just as in human beings, various health conditions, intellects, and abilities exist, so true in spirits. Thus we learn a diversity of unclean spirits exist, some speak and have intelligence, while others live only to impose pain and discomfort almost like a virus. *.Mt. 10:1; Mk.9:25. See chapter: Possessed Child*

## The Holy Ghost

Although the Holy Ghost does not come upon the whole world until after Jesus' resurrection; throughout the ages the Holy Ghost presented himself whenever God decreed it. The fact human beings even have moral conscience proves the Holy Ghost's existence. The term Holy Ghost is not used in the Old Testament, the term Spirit of God is synonymous. Never the less -God distributes the Holy Ghost differently during our present dispensation. Verses cited to show validity of the Holy Ghost's work in the past.

**Mark 12:36 (KJV)** *For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

**2 Peter 1:21 (KJV)** *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

**Luke 1:15 (KJV)** *For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.*

**Luke 2:26 (KJV)** And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

**1 John 5:7 (KJV)** *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

## Chapter Notes Notes/ Scripture harmonies

### Beelzebub v Baal-zebul

**2 Kings 1:2 (KJV)** *And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebul the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.*

**Luke 11:14-23** *And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. **15** But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. **16** And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven. **17** But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. **18** If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. **19** And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. **20** But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. **21** When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: **22** But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. **23** He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.*

**Mark 3:22-30 (KJV)** *And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. **23** And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? **24** And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. **25** And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. **26** And if Satan rise up against himself, and be*



*divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. **27** No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. **28** Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: **29** But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: **30** Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.*

# Devils in the Tombs of Gadarenes

Mt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-40

**Location:** Country of the Gadarenes, cemetery

**Recipient:** Two possessed men

**Witnesses:** Disciples

Geographically, Jesus is at the southern end of a large fresh water lake called the Sea of Galilee, Mt. 15:29 Also called the Lake Gennesaret Lk.5:1, Lake Tiberias John 6:1; or just the sea.

Extraordinary in scope, a devil possessed man running naked in a cemetery provides a memorable visual. Matthew's Gospel supplements that two men live among the tombs; Mark and Luke focus on only one. These differences provide unique focus and perspectives; they are not discrepancies. Gospel narratives require diligent comparisons for full accounts on any topic.

Jesus steps off a boat in the country of the Gadarenes, and straightaway a naked maniac comes running toward him. Scripture provides numerous descriptive elements about this possessed person, thus we observe devils' behavior exhibit certain affinities:

- Death or places that deal with or celebrate the dead: Cemeteries, tombs, Halloween, Vampires, literature, movies, etc.
- Extraordinary strength.
- Nakedness.
- Engages in actions that wounds his/her body.
- Overt religious vocabulary.
- Recognizes or knows Jesus Christ.

Devils react to Jesus Christ in overt ways. As noted previously, there is no such thing as atheist devils. Atheism remains entirely a human invention. Atheism simply demonstrates one more false religious idea supported by nothing but the faith of its congregation.

The possessed man immediately worships Jesus and confesses him to be God's Son. His confession remains one of the strongest witnesses to Jesus in the New Testament. The devil knows about his coming judgment, yet remains defiant, *Mt. 8:29*. Many human beings share the same attitude.

***Mark 5: 6*** *But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, 7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.*

***Matthew 8:29*** *And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*

Dialog between this devil and Jesus stands remarkable. The devil's name is Legion because many devils inhabit this poor man. A military term, legion identifies 6,000 soldiers in the Roman army. Since Rome occupied Israel at the time, the number 6,000 seems horrible, but easily understood. Fascinatingly, Jesus address the man with single and plural pronouns. It seems Jesus speaks sometimes to the commander of hordes of devils, and sometimes to the devils themselves.

Thousands of devils inhabiting a single human being is frightening enough, but where did these devils originate? That of course is the 6,000 pound question in the narrative. Nor is it easily answered. However, if the deep, to which Legion seems so afraid, refers not to any earth based body of water, but rather to the

deep which lies above the second heavens, we can hypothesize intelligently. Remember Legion knows and dreads his coming judgment. Therefore, Luke 8:31, and Mt. 8:29 provides a clue. See also Mk:5:7.

**Luke 8: 31** *And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.*

**Matthew 8:29** *And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*

## **The Deep**

**Genesis 1:2 (KJV)** *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

**Psalms 148:4 (KJV)** *Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.*

After God created the heaven and the earth, he made it void. And he filled the heaven with water. This water is called the deep. God voided his creation by filling it with water- literally the universe flooded with water. Noah's global flood, compared to this flood, was minuscule. Why God obliterated his initial creation is not revealed in Genesis 1. The Lucifer/ angelic rebellion is a logical and educated guess. God judged the pre-adamite world by obliterating it with water called the deep. Perhaps these spirits inhabited that preadamite world? And they logically associate their final judgment with that body of water? Whether or not this origin theory is correct, the fact remains evil spirits exist and are afraid of the deep.

Scripture, at times, refers to the deep as the sea. Of course, context must be considered. At the future Great White

Throne Judgment, this sea holds spirits or beings of some kind. Observe the sea held these entities until the final judgment. Much like hell imprisons souls of human beings until the GWTJ. After the final judgment, God recreates heaven and earth without the sea.

***Revelation 20:13 (KJV)*** *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

***Revelation 21:1 (KJV)*** *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

## **Legion makes a deal**

Dialog between Jesus and the devils continues. The Lord grants their request to possess a nearby heard of 2,000 swine. Someone pointed out rather unflatteringly, if a devil can't possess a man, his next choice is a pig. As soon as the devils enter their new animal hosts, the tormented swine run frantically down a steep hill and drown themselves in the Sea of Galilee. This, of course, generates further questions. Once the pigs drown, are the devils released? And once released, do they search for another unfortunate soul to inhabit? These questions go unanswered here, but scripture tells us that devils seek whosoever allows their fellowship.

***Matthew 8:31*** *So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. 32* *And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.*

**Matthew 12:43-45 (KJV)** *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. 44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. 45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.*

### **Clothed and in his right mind**

The swine's keepers witnessed the entire miracle and realizing Jesus just ruined their thriving livestock business, they are none too happy. Raising swine shows how much these particular Jews care about God's law, *Le. 11:7*. Nevertheless, they run into town and tell everyone what happened. Immediately, the townspeople travel to the lakeside to view the carnage, 2,000 rotting corpses floating hideously in the water. Even more disturbing however, is the infamous demoniac, sitting clothed and his right mind at the feet of Jesus. Rather than repenting and asking Jesus to save them, the people beg Jesus to leave their jurisdiction. Hence the spiritual application stands obvious. When someone gets saved, the response from those around the person often meets with social fear and resentment. Believers fortunate enough to be raised and saved among gospel believing people know little about such reactions. Those of us saved among the world's darker societies know all too well similar responses from friends and loved ones.

This extraordinary passage closes with the miraculously saved man wanting to stay with Jesus and his disciples. What follows remains a clear example for how Christians should respond to their own miraculous new birth.

**Luke 8:38** Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, **39** Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

## **Chapter notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**Mark 5:1-20 (KJV)** And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. **2** And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, **3** Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: **4** Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. **5** And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. **6** But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, **7** And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. **8** For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. **9** And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. **10** And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. **11** Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. **12** And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. **13** And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. **14** And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what

*it was that was done. **15** And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. **16** And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. **17** And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. **18** And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. **19** Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. **20** And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.*

**Matthew 8:28-34 (KJV)** *And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. **29** And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? **30** And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. **31** So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. **32** And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. **33** And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. **34** And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.*



**Luke 8:26-40 (KJV)** *And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. 29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) 30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. 31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. 32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. 33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. 34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 36 They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. 37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. 38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the*

*whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him. **40** And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.*

# Possessed Dumb Man

Matthew 9:31-34

**Location:** Capernaum

**Recipient:** A possessed man

**Witnesses:** Disciples, and a multitude

**Matthew 9:31-34 (KJV)** *But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country. 32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. 33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. 34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.*

The miracle happens immediately after Jesus heals two blind men in a house. Interestingly, the two blind were told to keep their healing quiet. An order they ignored and told everyone. (*See Two Blind Men*) But this particular dumb man's deliverance is quite public, and no such order is given.

Most human illness is not caused by devil possession. But this man's inability to speak is not a birth defect nor is it psychological; it is devil possession. Apparently his affliction happened later in life, because as soon as Jesus casts the devil out, the man speaks fluently. The miracle causes profound effect on the crowd who are very impressed with Jesus. As usual the Pharisees care nothing for the person delivered from the devil. They remain upset because Jesus proves, once again, that he's Israel's Messiah. Trying to change the multitude's opinion, they attribute Jesus' ability to harnessing the power of Satan. The accusation, of course, is blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. This sin

discussed thoroughly in the chapter *Blaspheme against the Holy Ghost*.

## Possessed Man in the Synagogue

Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:33-37

**Location:** Synagogue in Capernaum

**Recipient:** A possessed man

**Witnesses:** Disciples, synagogue congregation

Performed in a synagogue in Capernaum, on the Sabbath Day. Jesus executed the exorcism so publically his fame greatly increased throughout the region round about Galilee. Prior to the miracle, Jesus taught the people the Bible. Those attending commented on the powerful and authoritative way Jesus delivered his message; in fact, they found his words astonishing. How unlike the drab sermons they endured from their synagogue's ministers and scribes.

Notice the devil possessed man seems familiar to the congregation. Thus we learn devils frequent and feel comfortable inside religious gatherings. Not all devil possessed people isolate themselves or live exclusively in the dark. In the Church Age, Satan himself remains very involved with Sunday morning. And devils always acknowledge Jesus Christ; there is no such thing as an atheist devil. They also know about their coming judgment. In this case, the devils confess Jesus' deity quite plainly. Thus we learn just because someone says Jesus is Lord, does not necessarily prove he is saved. The Holy Ghost permits even a lost person to say Jesus is Lord. *Mark 5:6. (Examined in chapter: Bethel's Tragedy, What evil spirits say)*

The narrative addresses the devil as a single unclean spirit or devil. However when the devil speaks, he refers to himself in plural form. Observe the plural pronouns "*Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us?*" Lk 4:34.

This is not the only time scripture addresses a group of devils as one entity. Compare to the Devils in the Tombs of Gadarenes *Mk 5: 9* *And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.*

We may conclude a multiplicity of spirits or devils can inhabit one person, while God identifies them all as one entity or a single team. Perhaps the devil possessing the man in the synagogue includes his human host when he distinguishes himself with plural pronouns? Devils, like angels, always identify in male gender.

**Mark 1:21-28 (KJV)** *And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. 23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, 24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. 25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. 26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. 27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. 28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.*

**1 Corinthians 12:3 (KJV)** *Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

**James 2:19 (KJV)** *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.*

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**Luke 4:33-38 (KJV)** *And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, **34** Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. **35** And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. **36** And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. **37** And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about. **38** And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.*

## Peter's Mother-in-law

Mt. 8:14-17; Mark 1:29-34; Luke 4:38-41

**Location:** Apostle Peter's house

**Recipient:** Apostle Peter's Mother-in-law

**Witnesses:** Peter, Andrew, James, John.

**Luke 4:38-41 (KJV)** *And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. **39** And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.*

Jesus leaves the synagogue after delivering a devil possessed man and immediately goes to Apostles Peter's house. It's Saturday afternoon. From the preceding text, Peter's house is in Capernaum *Mk. 1:21*, although Peter is originally from Bethsaida *John 1:44* and Bethsaida is close enough (about 5 miles) to consider a possible location.

Apostles Peter, Andrew, James, and John accompany the Lord. Jesus often separates himself from the crowd and spends time with his smaller group of disciples. Jesus as the Son of man, no doubt appreciates a friendly environment as opposed to the ever present hostile majority.

**Matthew 8:14-17 (KJV)** *And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. **15** And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them. **16** When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: **17** That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the*



*prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.*

Apostle Peter's mother-in-law is not devil possessed, nor is she being spiritually oppressed. The unnamed woman suffers from a high fever. But scripture records her story sandwiched between a series of persons who are devil possessed. Namely the possessed man in the synagogue and an entire crowd of devil possessed persons Jesus delivers only a few hours after he heals Peter's mother-in-law.

Soon after Jesus arrives in the house, they inform him Peter's Mother-in-law is ill. The Lord takes her by the hand and heals her instantly. Luke's Gospel adds the Lord stood over her and rebuked the fever. The word rebuke perhaps insinuates the fever is caused by something other than normal human illness, but this is not enough evidence to prove an evil spirit. As we read the Gospels, it is clear wherever Jesus goes, he dismisses all disease and infirmities, whatever the cause may be.

After Jesus heals the woman, she straightaway begins to serve the Lord and his Apostles, a practical lesson of how one should respond to blessings received from Christ. After blessings received, believers should do what they can to help our Lord and his church.

While the Lord and four apostles enjoy a little rest and relaxation, the crowds gather outside. Word travels fast the miracle healer is in Peter's house. By evening time, multitudes gather in hopes of healing or deliverance. They are not disappointed. Although the Bible gives only a few details on the after dinner healing miracles, Jesus lays hands on every person in need and heals them all. Jesus also casts out "many" devils.

Luke's Gospel informs us Jesus rebukes the devils. As the devils leave their human hosts, they cry out: Notice again that devils acknowledge the deity of Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as an unbelieving devil. The Isaiah prophecy, *Matthew 8:16-17* Is dealt with extensively in chapter: *Healing Miracles*.

**Luke 4:41** *And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.*

### **Thought to ponder**

Another observation needs be learned from the passage. The Roman Catholic Church insists Apostle Peter is their first Pope (Papa). And yet they include the peculiar doctrine of forbidding priests, and nuns to marry. Yet Apostle Peter has a wife. So one wonders why they don't follow their alleged leader. Apostle Paul provides the answer:

**1 Timothy 4:1-3 (KJV)** *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**Mark 1:29-34 (KJV)** *And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. 31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. 32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were*

*diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. 33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.*

**Luke 4:38-41 (KJV)** *And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. 39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them. 40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. 41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.*

# Woman with Spirit of Infirmity

Luke 13:10-17

**Location:** A synagogue

**Recipient:** A woman

**Witnesses:** Disciples, a synagogue's congregation

## **The passage reveals two miracles:**

While teaching in a synagogue, Jesus confronts the usual animosity from religious leadership. Happily, Jesus' compassion and wise words convince many parishioners about their leaders' hypocrisy and misinterpretation of scripture. Thus Christians learn a valuable lesson: Study to show thyself approved unto God, *2 Ti 2:15*.

## **Miracle # One**

The congregation includes a woman possessed with a spirit of infirmity. The word infirmity means disease or physical disorder. In this case, a physical disorder caused by a spirit. Thus we learn there is diversity among unclean spirits; some speak and have intelligence, while others seem alive only to afflict pain and discomfort almost like a virus. *.Mt. 10:1; Mk.9:25*.

Unable to stand straight for nearly two decades, the woman suffers from a severe hunchback. Initially, the woman says nothing to Jesus, nor does her faith seem to be a factor. Jesus calls her and lays hands on her. Immediately she stands straight and gives glory to the Lord.

The ruler of the synagogue mocks and discounts Jesus' power and the woman's blessing. Equating the healing miracle with work, he accuses Jesus of breaking the law by working on the Sabbath day. He cares nothing for the woman. All that

matters to him is trying to discredit Jesus Christ. As usual, nearly all Israel's religious leaders are incapable of understanding the intention of God's laws. Jesus publicly reveals their hypocritical position by rehearsing several acts of "work" they would do, no matter if it was the Sabbath day or not. And by using an ox and a donkey in the teaching illustration, Jesus proves the synagogue's ruler cares more about animals than he does people in his own congregation. Quite a humiliating, but skillful analogy. *Lk. 13:15*

### **Miracle # Two**

In the course of rebuking the synagogue's ruler, Jesus performs a second miracle. Observe Jesus mentions the exact number of years the woman suffered with her infirmity, eighteen years, *Lk. 13:16*. Now how Jesus knows the exact number of years a stranger suffers with a particular disease is inexplicable. Unless, of course, Jesus is God, and knows everything about all persons. One wonders if this revelation bothered the synagogue's ruler after he went home and verified Jesus' arithmetic was correct.

***1 John 3:20 (KJV)*** For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

***Psalms 37:18 (KJV)*** The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

***Luke 13:10-17 (KJV)*** And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. **11** And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. **12** And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. **13** And he laid his hands on her:

*and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. **14** And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. **15** The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? **16** And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? **17** And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.*

**Mark 3:4 (KJV)** *And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.*

## Man with a Withered Hand

Mt.12:9-21; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11

**Location:** A synagogue

**Recipient:** A man

**Witnesses:** Disciples, a synagogue's congregation

On the Sabbath day, in the midst of a synagogue's congregation, Jesus heals a man with a crippled hand. Before the healing, the synagogue's leadership confronts the Lord. Earlier in the day, Jesus rebuked these same Pharisees when they accused his disciples of law breaking for picking corn on the Sabbath. *Matthew 12:1-8*. In fact, the Lord's skillful referencing scriptures proves the Pharisees not only ignorant about the Bible, but counted their own customs, rules, and convictions as important as scripture. (A familiar religious phenomenon that endures through the ages.) Needless to say, the Pharisees are already seething mad when Jesus enters their synagogue.

Fully anticipating their resentment concerning the miracle he is about to do, Jesus asks them a question. *What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?* This is the same line of reasoning, Jesus used in a previous synagogue *Luke 13:10-17*. See chapter *Woman with Spirit of Infirmary*. When it came to working on the Sabbath, the Pharisees just can't understand the Law's intention. They only comprehend the letter of the law; the spirit of the Law is lost on them.

Of course no one listens. They already know Jesus is going to heal the man with a withered hand. As far as they're concerned he breaks the law. Jesus' righteous, logical rebuke proves the Pharisees' hypocrisy. Jesus looks upon them with anger, *Mark 3:5*. He orders the man to rise and stand in the midst, and then

Jesus heals him in front of the entire congregation. The man's faith has nothing to do with the healing.

Absolutely enraged, the Pharisees vacate the synagogue and seek out the Herodians, and together they plot how they might destroy Jesus. Even though the Herodians and the Pharisees were enemies, they find common ground in hating Jesus. Hence the ancient world's proverb rings ever true, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend."

**Matthew 12:9-21 (KJV)** *And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: **10** And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. **11** And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? **12** How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. **13** Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. **14** Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. **15** But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;*

## **Behold the Lamb**

Jesus leaves the synagogue and continues preaching in the streets. The people gather into a multitude; street people represent a far less hypocritical congregation. A large number of persons receive healings. Once again Jesus gives the command not to tell anyone about himself. But this time scripture explains why. Although Jesus speaks boldly, his whole ministry stays relatively mild. Jesus does not go about demanding people listen



to him, nor does he inflict punishment on those who hate him. He is not boastful or pushy. Behold the Lamb. Such mannerisms typify the Lord's behavior during his First Advent. It is a fulfillment of prophecy. But Isaiah's entire prophecy will not complete until the crucifixion. The Lord shows judgment to the Gentiles, when Rome oversees the entire trial and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

The same prophecy also contains a direct revelation that Gentiles will trust Jesus Christ. While national Israel officially rejects their Messiah, God temporarily sets aside the Gospel of the Kingdom (his plan for Israel) and builds his Church through the Gospel of the Grace of God. But all things in their proper order and dispensation.

**Matthew (KJV) 12:16** *And charged them that they should not make him known: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, **18** Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. **19** He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. **20** A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. **21** And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.*

**Isaiah 53:7 (KJV)** *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

**Isaiah 42:1-4 (KJV)** *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. **2** He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. **3** A*

*bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*

**Isaiah 44:7 (KJV)** *And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.*

**1 Corinthians 15:23 (KJV)** *But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*

## **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

### **Equating religious convictions with scripture:**

**Mark 7:7-9 (KJV)** *Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. 9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*

**Mark 3:1-6 (KJV)** *And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. 2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. 3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. 4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. 5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man,*

*Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. 6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.*

**Luke 6:6-11 (KJV)** *And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. 7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. 8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. 9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? 10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. 11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.*

# Man with the Dropsy

Luke 14:1-6

**Location:** A chief Pharisee's house

**Recipient:** A man with the dropsy

**Witnesses:** Scribes, Pharisees, number of people

Faith is not a factor in this healing. Jesus heals a man and lets him go without speaking to him. The miracle executed before a chief Pharisee and lawyers.

Once again Jesus faces opposition over healing on the Sabbath. Although a man receives miraculous healing from the dropsy, the main point of the miracle spotlights the hypocrisy and failure of religious leaders to understand the true meaning or intention of God's laws. Miracles done on Sabbath Days continually instigate the same rebuke from religious leadership. How dare Jesus break the law by healing (working) on the Sabbath day. When it came to working on the Sabbath, the Pharisees just can't understand the Law's intention. They only comprehend the letter of the law; the spirit of the Law is lost on them. Examine this miracle together with chapters: *Woman with Spirit of Infirmity and Man with a withered Hand*.

**Luke 14:1-7 (KJV)** *And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. 2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. 3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? 4 And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; 5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? 6 And they could not answer him again to these things.*

A chief Pharisee invited Jesus to his own house for dinner. It appears the Pharisee invited the afflicted man for the purpose of seeing what Jesus would do. The phrase "they watched him" implies a setup or trap.

Before the healing miracle, Jesus asks the lawyers and Pharisees if it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath day. Notice no one answers. A group of highly educated religious leaders, and no one seems capable of answering a simple Bible question. After Jesus heals the man, he asks them another question. This is the same line of reasoning, Jesus uses in two other healing miracles: The questions Jesus asks, proves the main intent of the miracle instructs believers toward correct Bible doctrine.

### **Chapter Notes/**

The dropsy was a severe disease, painful and disfiguring. *drop'-si* (ὕδρωπικός, *hudropikos*, "a man afflicted with *hudrops* or dropsy"): Both forms of this disease occur in Palestine, that in which the limbs and body are distended with water called anasarca, depending generally on cardiac or renal disease, and the form confined to the abdomen, usually the result of liver infection. The latter is the commoner, as liver disease is a frequent result of recurrent attacks of malarial fever. ISBE

Woman with Spirit of Infirmity: *Luke 13:14-17*

Man with a withered Hand: *Matthew 12:9-21*

## Jesus' Transfiguration

Mt.17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36

**Location:** Mountain top

**Recipient:** Peter, James, John

**Witnesses:** Moses, Elijah, Peter, James, John

On a mountain top, Jesus transfigures into a glorious heavenly being, and Moses and Elias (Elijah) appear in front of Peter, James, and John. Hence Christians remember the mountain as the Mount of Transfiguration. Although the mountain is not geographically identified, it typifies Jesus' Second Coming. One of the mountains where God deals with Israel during the Tribulation is Mount Olivet, the exact location where Jesus stands causing an earthquake and an opening in the earth. A time when Jesus Christ is fully glorified before all Israel. (*Zec. 14:4; Isaiah 45:8, Rev 19:11-13*) Therefore, Peter, James, and John witnessed, in part, a vision of the Second Advent. In addition to Jesus' transformation, the miracle implies a prophetic schedule. (See chapter notes: *Forecasting Jesus' Second Advent.*)

Jesus selects Peter, James, and John to accompany him as he prays. While Jesus prays the Apostles fall asleep. A strangely similar scene takes place in Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives just prior to Jesus' arrest and crucifixion. Jesus selects these same Apostles to watch and pray with him, and again they fall asleep. In both episodes Jesus names Peter deliberately, yet James and John sleep as well. Contrasting the two events produces quite a picture. On the mount of Transfiguration Jesus appears as the glorified King of kings while in Gethsemane we behold the suffering Lamb of God. (*See chapter notes: Apostles fall asleep.*)

On the mountain, the Apostles wake to see Jesus in a transfigured glorious form talking with Moses and Elijah. Since

Moses lived 1,500 years BC and Elijah 600 BC, how can the Apostles know their identities? Miraculously the Apostles know the visitors are Moses and Elijah.

Intense in conversation, Moses and Elijah speak with Jesus about his impending death. The Apostles listen, but soon Moses and Elijah vanish. Peter blurts out they should build three structures so Moses and Elijah and Jesus have a place to stay. Scripture informs us Peter spoke without thinking; overcome with excitement and fear, *Mark 9:6*.

Cutting Peter's words short, a dark cloud overshadows the Apostles; they collapse on the ground filled with fear. God the Father's words resonate loud and clear. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.*

The Apostles lay upon the ground trembling in fear. Jesus touches them and tells them to arise and be not afraid. When they dare open their eyes, they see only Jesus. Thus scripture makes a salient point. Even though Moses and Elijah are important prophets, Jesus vastly diminishes them. Jesus tells his three Apostles to keep the whole episode quiet until after his resurrection. The Apostles honor the Lord's command. Finally, a keep it quiet order is obeyed.

As the Apostles descend the mountain, they question Jesus about a prophecy concerning Elijah. Since Jesus is the Christ, and he's talking about leaving, why hasn't all Israel witnessed Elijah's presence? Because Elijah is supposed to come before the Messiah. Notice the Apostles quote the scribes and not scripture for their source. In this case, the scribes get it right, but it's always risky to rely on men. Check the Bible for truth. The scribes and Pharisees were not without cause to ask John if he was Elijah.

*See chapters: Was John the Baptist Elijah; and The Violent take the Kingdom of Heaven by Force.*

## **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

### **Forecasting Jesus Second Advent**

Matthew's and Mark's Gospel precede the event by stating "after six days." Luke says about "eight days." After six and about eight equals seven. Therefore, prophetically the Second Advent happens on the seventh day. And since these individual days each represent 1000 years, (*Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8*) And God created Adam about 4000 BC. Considering 2000 years has passed since Jesus' First Advent. We may conclude soon after 6000 years from Adam's creation, Jesus returns and rules in the Millennium.

### **Apostles fall Asleep**

**Matthew 26:40-41 (KJV)** *And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

**Luke 9: 32** *But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.*

**Mark 14:32 (KJV)** *And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.*

**Luke 22:39 (KJV)** *And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.*



## **Gospel Harmonies**

**Luke 9:28-36 (KJV)** *And it came to pass **about an eight days after** these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. **29** And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. **30** And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: **31** Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. **32** But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. **33** And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. **34** While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. **35** And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. **36** And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.*

**Matthew 17:7-13 (KJV)** ***7** And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. **8** And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. **9** And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. **10** And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? **11** And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. **12** But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they*

*listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. 13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.*

**Matthew 17:13 (KJV)** *And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, 2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. 6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. 9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. 10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? 11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. 12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. 13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.*

**Mark 9:2-13 (KJV)** *And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. 3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. 4 And there*

*appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. **5** And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. **6** For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. **7** And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. **8** And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. **9** And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. **10** And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean. **11** And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come? **12** And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. **13** But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.*

## Possessed Child

Mark 9:14-29; Mt.17:14-21, Luke 9:38-43

**Location:** Near base of the Transfiguration Mount

**Recipient:** Possessed child

**Witnesses:** Scribes and a number of people

Jesus descends from the Mount of transfiguration where Moses and Elias appeared in front of Peter, James, and John.

As soon as Jesus comes down from the mountain he encounters the rest of his disciples and a very agitated crowd, including scribes firing questions at his disciples. When Jesus shows up the crowd pivots their attention away from the disciples and run anxiously toward Christ. Whatever they wanted from the disciples, they seem more inclined to receive from Jesus.

Jesus asks the scribes what they want from his disciples. Observe the scribes do not answer. No doubt the scribes feel relief when Jesus turns his attention to a very distraught man who begs Jesus to help his son. The man's son is his only child, (*Mt 17:18; Lk 9:38*). This knowledge makes the forthcoming information even more heart rendering. A deaf and dumb devil possesses the child and turns him into a lunatic at will. Violent seizures cause the boy to foam out his mouth, gnash his teeth, and leaves him near death. This is not epilepsy. The Bible says plainly it is devil possession. This particular devil consciously seeks out water and fire to torment the child. Furthermore the devil recognizes Jesus, and reacts violently when the Lord confronts him. Although Jesus gave his Apostles authority to cast out devils, this particular evil spirit resists them.

The boy's father informs Jesus the Apostles cannot cast out the devil. And here the narrative takes a remarkable turn.

Jesus actually seems fed up with his disciples and the crowd. Nevertheless Jesus orders him to bring the boy. As soon as the boy encounters Jesus, he starts suffering seizure like symptoms.

The distressed father cries and begs Jesus to help. He also confesses to believe, but then immediately asks Jesus to help him with his unbelief. Quite an admission for any believer. Many Christians deal with the same ambivalence in their own faith. Belief struggles with the painful reality of tragedy; we believe yet we beg God to help us believe even more when faced with awful situations.

***Mark 9:19** He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.*

***Mark 9:23-24** Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. 24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with **tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.***

### **Thought to Ponder**

Concerning the spirit itself. Is the spirit dumb and deaf? Or did it only make the child dumb and deaf? The exorcism, truly in a class by itself, reveals a particular kind of evil spirit. Jesus directly calls the spirit dumb and deaf (Mark 9:25) Just as in human beings, various health conditions, intellects, and abilities exist, so also in spirits. Perhaps this is why fasting was also required to cast out this devil. A deaf and dumb spirit cannot hear a verbal command from a disciple. It must be addressed with prayer and fasting.

***Mark 9:14-29 (KJV)** And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. **15** And straightway all the people, when they beheld*

him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. **16** And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? **17** And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; **18** And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. **19** He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. **20** And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. **21** And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. **22** And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. **23** Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. **24** And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. **25** When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. **26** And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. **27** But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. **28** And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? **29** And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

## **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**Matthew 17:14-21 (KJV)** *And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, **15** Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. **16** And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. **17** Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. **18** And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. **19** Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? **20** And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. **21** Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.*

**Luke 9:38-43 (KJV)** *And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. **39** And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. **40** And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not. **41** And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. **42** And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. **43** And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,*

## Woman of Canaan's Daughter

Mt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30

**Location:** Coasts of Tyre and Sidon

**Recipient:** Possessed child

**Witnesses:** Undisclosed

The miracle takes place along the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. A Gentile woman seeks Jesus to help her devil possessed daughter. None of the girl's physical symptoms are described. This is another example of someone getting healed by the faith of someone else. The recipient of the miracle never meets Jesus. Nor do we know if she ever even believes in him. Mercifully the Lord healed the Gentile stranger.

Not many sermons about the woman of Canaan and her devil possessed daughter. The big story here is the Lord's initial response to a Gentile woman begging for help. A woman acknowledges Jesus' deity and confesses him as the son of David, so her faith is in the right place. She even falls down and worships him. As we've seen many times, Jesus always accepts worship. At first the Lord ignores her. Even the disciples try and get rid of the woman; clearly annoyed with a Gentile asking for help. Jesus displays not only reluctance, he actually makes very demeaning statements. The episode unfolds painfully difficult unless one rightly divides the word of truth; consequently, many Christians remain puzzled or choose to ignore the incident altogether. So what's going on?

**Matthew 15:21-28 (KJV)** *Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my*



*daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.*

### **Send her away**

When Jesus' disinclination to help and his disciples' rude remarks don't dissuade the woman to leave, Jesus makes some difficult comments (to say the least). Jesus says, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

Although the woman is a Gentile, she knows Jesus is the King of the Jews. She still worships him, kneeling, desperate and pleading, a far more righteous and appropriate behavior than Jesus receives from the majority of Israel. Yet the Lord says: *It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.*

Let the reader pause and comprehend the full gravity of God's politically incorrect, racist remark. Jesus presents an analogy likening Gentiles to dogs. And this is not just any Gentile, she is a believer. Still the woman remains undeterred, and answers with wisdom rivaling King Solomon.

*And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.*

As Bible students let us unpack exactly what the woman means by her answer. Her response, by the way, completely

impresses and wins over Jesus Christ. Far from arguing the Lord's analogy, she endorses it. Observe the word masters is a plural possessive noun. She is not speaking of Jesus owning the table, rather she is acknowledging the Jews being masters over the Gentiles. This remarkable woman knew Old Testament prophecy and accepted her place in God's kingdom. Now this is a very bitter pill for most Gentile Bible teachers to swallow.

The passage only makes doctrinal sense, when we acknowledge this is not the Church Age. It happens when Jesus offers the Gospel of the Kingdom to Israel. In other words Jesus preaches the Gospel of the Kingdom; not the Gospel of the Grace of God. Things different are not equal.

***Matthew 4:23 (KJV)*** *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. (see also Mark 1:14-15; Mt. 9:35, Mt.24:14)*

***Matthew 10:5-7 (KJV)*** *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: **6** But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. **7** And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

In the present Church Age no difference between the Jew and the Gentile exists, but in the Kingdom Gospel it's a different story. Racially favoring the Jews in Israel, it was preached by Jesus, and early in Acts until God directed Apostle Paul change course through the Gospel of the Grace of God. (Acts 20:24).

Under the Kingdom Gospel, the Jews must receive Jesus Christ as their King. And only after Israel receives Christ, does the rest of the world benefit from kingdom blessings. Yes there are

individual exceptions, but exceptions prove the rule they do not overrule the kingdom order. God is no respecter of persons, but he most definitely is a respecter of nations, and God favors Israel above all others. The Kingdom Gospel is preached again post rapture and in the Millennium.

***Isaiah 60:11-12 (KJV)*** *Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. 12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*

***Zechariah 8:23 (KJV)*** *Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*

***John 4:22 (KJV)*** *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.*

Understanding the differences between the Kingdom Gospel and the Gospel of Grace make sense out several other similar incidents where Jews treat Gentiles in an unfavorable manner. Consider Apostle Peter's reluctance, and even disdain when God directed him to bring the gospel to Cornelius' household (Gentiles) in Acts 10. And the other Jewish disciples' anger when they heard that Peter witnessed to Gentiles. Years after Jesus death and resurrection, ponder the Apostles' literal surprise that God is saving Gentiles. Why? Because God rescinded the Kingdom offer to Israel, and transitioned into the mystery Church Age. God used Apostle Peter, but especially Apostle Paul to explain the Gospel of the Grace of God to the Jews. Bible

students may view the book of Acts as a bridge doctrinally transitioning from the Kingdom Gospel to the Church Age.

**Acts 10:28 (KJV)** *And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*

**Acts 11:2-4 (KJV)** *And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, **3** Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. **4** But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,*

**Acts 11:17-18 (KJV)** *Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? **18** When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*

### **Gospel of the grace of God, A great mystery revealed through Apostle Paul**

God set the Gospel of the Kingdom aside when Israel rejected Jesus Christ at his First Advent. In other words when that generation of Israeli leaders officially rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah. (Acts 7) Since that time God set aside his offer to Israel, and instructed his disciples, especially Apostle Paul to offer the Gospel of Grace to the whole world. In our present dispensation of grace, Israel enjoys no special favor. The Church Age is a great mystery virtually undisclosed by Old Testament prophets.

**Acts 20:24 (KJV)** *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my*

course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the **gospel of the grace of God**.

**Romans 10:12 (KJV)** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

**Romans 16:25-27 (KJV)** Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26** But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: **27** To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.

**Colossians 1:25-27 (KJV)** Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; **26** Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: **27** To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

**Ephesians 3:1-6 (KJV)** For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, **2** If ye have heard of **the dispensation of the grace of God** which is given me to you-ward: **3** How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, **4** Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) **5** Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; **6** That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

***Ephesians 6:19 (KJV)*** *And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known **the mystery of the gospel,***

### **The Kingdom returns to Israel**

When the Church Age ends, however, God's reinstates Israel's preeminence. With the rapture of the church, Tribulation begins and God offers the Kingdom again to Israel. And by Jesus' Second Advent, Israel receives her Messiah, Jesus Christ as King of kings. And the Kingdom Age (Millennium) commences. During the Millennium Kingdom, Gentiles receive their blessings through the Jew. (Gentiles here are not the Bride)

***Zechariah 8:22-23 (KJV)*** *Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. **23** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*

### **Kingdom Gospel/ Soul Salvation Considerations**

We confuse issues if we conflate soul salvation formulas with the Gospel of the Kingdom message. An individual's salvation has always been by putting one's faith in God. The kingdom Gospel is more about Israel and the kingdom of heaven on earth than it is about soul salvation. Someone could be lost inside the KOH. Consider the war at the end of the Millennium (Re. 20:7-9). The good news of the kingdom gospel happens when Israel is ready to govern the ever expanding KOH.

Likewise John's baptism did not necessarily save one's soul. It prepared the Jew to receive Messiah. John's baptism was valid as long as John baptized. When John stopped baptizing

Isaiah's prophesied messenger's mission was complete. At least until Elijah picks up the directive in the Tribulation. But consider also Elijah's return doctrinally fulfills Prophet Malachi's prophecy, not Isaiah's.

**Isaiah 40:3 (KJV)** *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

**Malachi 4:5 (KJV)** *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:*

**Romans 11:26 (KJV)** *And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

**Isaiah 66:8 (KJV)** *Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.*

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**Mark 7:24-30 (KJV)** *And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid. **25** For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: **26** The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. **27** But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs. **28** And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. **29** And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy*

daughter. **30** And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

**Church Age Gospel of Grace, The great mystery made known to us through Apostle Paul.**

***2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.*****



# Mary Magdalene

Luke 8:2

**Location:** Somewhere in Israel

**Recipient:** Mary Magdalene

**Witnesses:** Undisclosed

***Luke 8:2 (KJV)** And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,*

Mary Magdalene is the only person delivered from devil possession that scripture provides her proper name. Similarly, out of all those healed from physical infirmities, blind Bartimaeus is the only person named. *See chapter Blind Bartimaeus.*

Other than informing us seven devils inhabited Mary Magdalene, scripture provides little elaboration about her exorcism. We know nothing of her symptoms. Once again we learn multiple devils can inhabit a single human host. (See chapter: *Devils in the Tombs of Gadarenes*) Before Jesus saved her she apparently congregated with several women, all of whom were devil possessed; not exactly grandma's knitting circle. Mercifully Jesus healed all the women.

Mary Magdalene goes on to become a truly great disciple. Jesus honors Mary by selecting her to be the first witness of his resurrection. And also the first person to tell his Apostles that Jesus rose from the dead. (*See chapter: Jesus' Resurrection*)

**Mark 16:9 (KJV)** *Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.*

**John 20:18 (KJV)** *Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.*

# Damsel Soothsayer

Acts 16:16-18

**Location:** City of Thyatira?

**Recipient:** Unnamed woman (slave)

**Witnesses:** The woman's masters

Considering mankind's love of money, this account of devil possession may be the most serious warning to a modern world. As opposed to a devil or spirit causing physical defects or illness, this spirit manifests a talent or ability that people perceive as good. There is nothing morbid or ugly about the episode. In fact the devil delivers significant prosperity to all persons infatuated with his program.

The devil possessed woman practiced soothsaying, which means she forecasts or predicts future events without God's authority to do so. Therefore soothsaying remains distinctly different from God approved prophecy. Modern day astrology or fortune telling closely resembles the activity. Soothsaying invariably included witchcraft which God strictly forbid. Also included under the soothsaying umbrella are persons claiming to prophesy in the Lord's name when they actually forecast their own imaginations or, more dangerously, some spirit's inclinations. Even when their prophecies sound good, even godly, if God did not send them they are evil.

***Jeremiah 14:14 (KJV)*** *Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.*

**Ezekiel 13:16 (KJV)** *To wit, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord GOD.*

**Micah 5:12 (KJV)** *And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers:*

It appears the possessed damsel (young woman) introduced herself to Apostle Paul in the city of Thyatira at Lydia's house during a prayer meeting, *Acts 16:14-16*. Evidently, the woman divined quite effectively, her forecasting provided a lucrative business for her human masters. Regardless of her abilities, she lived enslaved to men as well as a spirit of divination. Christians learn several lessons from the passage. Just because something works, doesn't mean it's good. The spirit world is dangerous business and lures people (Christians included) away from God with a diverse assortment of enchanting entertainments, activities, games, and even religion.

**Acts 16:14-20 (KJV)** *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. **15** And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*

**Acts 16:16** *And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: **17** The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. **18** And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.*

**19** And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, **20** And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

### **Repetition**

Like all possessing spirits/devils this one recognizes Gospel truth and even gives testimony. The woman's declaration about the disciples is absolutely true:

- *"These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation."*

But she repeats the statement so many times it becomes unnerving and perverts the truth. Although this incident went on for days, her behavior resembles a behavior Jesus warned believers to avoid while praying. Observe Jesus calls those praying heathen; they are religious lost persons.

**Matthew 6:7 (KJV)** *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.*

When prayers (or song lyrics) repeat ad nauseam, they become meaningless, and disrespectful. At worse these types of religious performances morph into spiritual chants producing hypnotic states, even euphoria in their participants. Be not deceived, spirits thrive in religious environments.

**1 John 4:1 (KJV)** *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

**1 Timothy 4:1 (KJV)** *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

**1 Corinthians 2:15 (KJV)** *But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.*

**Consider also Goddess Diana of the Ephesians Acts 19:24-41**

Compare the events happening in Ephesus during an evangelistic campaign of Apostle Paul. At the time, the city was wholly given to idolatry. In particular the people worshipped the goddess Diana. Many merchants made tremendous profit constructing and selling idols fashionably made from silver.

Many hundreds (if not thousands) of Ephesians engaged in full resistance to the Gospel of grace. And in their rebellion they began chanting "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Those six words yelled over and over for the space of two hours! Such behaviour induces a hypnotic, frenzied euphoria very conducive to spiritual influence. The entire episode recorded in Acts 19, remains current in warning, a chapter well worth studying.

**Thought to ponder**

Concerning the exorcism itself, once Paul decides to act, he simply commands the devil in the name of Jesus Christ to come out. Within an hour the spirit leaves, no elaborate preparations or props required. No exorcism ever requires a priest. Nowhere does scripture call or ordain someone with a specific ministry of exorcism. Devil deliverances were spontaneous and simply done as needed. Observe even though the spirit possesses a woman, scripture narrative addresses it as male, *Acts 16:18*. The Bible identifies all devils, spirits, and angels in male gender.

## **Balaam's Connection**

Interestingly, the Bible's first mention of a soothsayer is Balaam the son of Beor. And Balaam epitomizes a person masquerading as god fearing, when all the while he lives a conflicted life. In fact, reading the historical account of Balaam, (Nu.22-25) one may actually wonder if Balaam is a good guy or a bad guy. Only with diligent study do we learn the prophet's true intentions.

***Joshua 13:22 (KJV)*** *Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.*

To fully understand the evil of soothsaying, consider Balaam's strategies. After seemingly doing the right thing for a long time, Balaam succumbed to an evil desire to secure prosperity. Following Balaam's instructions, a wicked king sent Moabite women into Israel's camp luring the men to false religion via sexual seduction. His evil, yet wise, plan worked perfectly. (Alas, males have never been very difficult to understand.) Balaam's nefarious end game seduced Israel into idol worship.

***Numbers 31:15-16 (KJV)*** *And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? 16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*

***Revelation 2:14 (KJV)*** *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

Balaam stands as one of the few types of the false prophet typifying the third member in the satanic trinity: Satan, Antichrist, False Prophet (study Revelation 13)

**Numbers 22:41 (KJV)** And it came to pass on the morrow, that **Balak** took **Balaam**, and brought him up into the high places of **Baal**, that thence he might see the utmost *part* of the people.

1. Baal: false god pictures Satan
2. King Balak, pictures the Antichrist
3. Soothsayer Balaam pictures the False Prophet

## Chapter Notes

### Diana

**Acts 19:24-41 (KJV)** *For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; 25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. 26 Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: 27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. 28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. 29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. 30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. 31 And certain*



of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre. **32** Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. **33** And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. **34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.** **35** And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? **36** Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. **37** For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. **38** Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. **39** But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. **40** For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. **41** And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

# Exorcism Gone Bad

Acts 19:14-20

**Location:** City of Ephesus

**Recipient:** A chief priest, seven sons of Sceva

**Witnesses:** A chief priest, seven sons of Sceva

Culture, and society's spiritual condition play a huge role in this unsuccessful exorcism. Located in the city of Ephesus, a city of the Roman province of Asia. Apostle Paul spends two years in the region. The city immersed in cult worship of Diana, practiced witchcraft and other curious arts. Later in this chapter, Apostle Paul incites a riot by preaching the gospel of the grace of God. And the people of Ephesus chant a single sentence for two hours! "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" Think about that for a while. Chanting the same sentence for two hours; the whole town seems under a hypnotic trance. (See also chapter: *Damsel Soothsayer/ Repetition.*)

**Acts 19:34 (KJV)** *But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*

## Vagabond exorcists

Due to the spiritual climate of the region, it's not surprising entrepreneurs made a business doing witchcraft. Such were certain vagabonds Jews who invited a chief priest and some local mystics known as the seven sons of Sceva to an exorcism (Sceva means mind reader). Whether these fellows actually did anything for anybody we don't know. They may be religious charlatans or simply cultists preying on people's superstitions and mental illness. Whatever their abilities, they are about to encounter the

real deal, and will never forget what happens when one pretends to know Jesus Christ in the presence of a genuine evil spirit.

Some phony exorcists locate a devil possessed man and attempt to deliver him. They even invite a local mind reading cult and chief priest to watch the show.

*"We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth."*

Such a command fails when wielded by fake Christians. However, that is not to say their order had no effect. The first lesson any person pretending to know Jesus Christ needs to learn is never use the Lord's name in vain, especially in front of a devil. The evil spirit responds quickly.

**Acts 19:15** *And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?*

In fact the command seems to infuriate the evil spirit who overpowers and physically beats up the vagabonds as well as Sceva's seven sons and the chief priest. The spirit rips the men's clothing from their bodies leaving them naked and wounded. Lesson learned: Although you can fool people in your church, your family, and maybe your friends- you never fool a real devil.

News of the botched exorcism goes viral in Ephesus; the entire city hears and is afraid. Many get saved. A revival ensues and a fortune's worth of witchcraft tools and sorcery books are burned. 50,000 pieces of silver worth about 5,000,000 dollars in current money. A revival the astrologers or Ouija Boards never saw coming.

**Acts 19:13-20 (KJV)** *Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one*

*Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. **15** And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? **16** And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. **17** And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. **18** And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. **19** Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. **20** So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

# Troubled Water

John 5:1-16

**Location:** Pool of Bethesda

**Recipient:** Unnamed man

**Witnesses:** Undisclosed

Jesus confronts a man with a serious infirmity. Either the man cannot walk, or he cannot walk very well. His infirmity has plagued him thirty-eight years. The man lies by the pool of Bethesda among a great multitude, persons suffering from a variety of serious infirmities and illness. The pool itself connects to a history of supernatural healings. Every now and then an angel enters the pool and troubles the water. Only the first person entering the water is healed from whatever problems he/she suffers, all others are left in misery. Inside this environment, Jesus singles out one person and heals him. Observe Jesus bypasses the pool entirely, that is he ignores the troubled water. Nor does he heal any other person at the pool. As healings go, this seems out of character. Under scrutiny however, reasons emerge.

Events take place in Jerusalem. Even among miracles, this miracle's setting is extraordinary. We shall examine the passage in three parts:

1. The miracle.
2. The reaction to the miracle.
3. Considering troubled water

## **Part One: The Miracle**

Jesus asks the man if he wants to be made whole. The despairing man explains due to his inability to walk, he never

makes it into the troubled water ahead of the crowd. Someone moving faster always beats him. Jesus tells him to take up his bed and walk. Instantly, the man is healed. He obeys, takes up his bed and walks away. Observe the man does not know Jesus, neither does the Lord introduce himself. There is absolutely no faith involved in the miracle. Observe also that no one else from the sick multitude receives healing.

**John 5:1-9 (KJV)** *After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. 5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? 7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. 8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. 9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.*

## **Part Two: Reaction to the Miracle**

Since Jesus heals the man on the Sabbath day, we can expect trouble from the Jews. As usual no one seems happy the man is healed; they only care about an apparent infraction of the law. The Jews confront the man and question him about who healed him. He does not know. He can only say, a stranger at the

pool of Bethesda. Later Jesus confronts the man while he is in the temple. Jesus tells the man not to sin anymore. After Jesus identifies himself I think it probable to assume the man now believes in Jesus. But who knows? Interestingly, there is still no mention of faith or even acknowledging Christ. The healed man seeks out the temple leaders, and informs them it was Jesus who healed him. Undoubtedly this confirmed their suspicions. And the Jews intensify their plotting to destroy Jesus.

**John 5:10** *The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. 11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. 12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? 13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. 14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. 15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. 16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.*

### **Troubled Water**

Thoughtfully consider this angel who troubles the water. Scripture's use of the word trouble is interesting. Trouble never means anything good. Everyone waits for troubled water, but only one person from the multitude gets healed. When it happens there is probably a near riot trying to be the first person in the pool. Everyone else loses. They feel abandoned and hurt. Many people probably feel as if God does not care about them? In this writer's opinion, the whole situation is troubling. And I do not

think this is a good angel. The people seem exploited. Their faith placed in troubled water that only helps someone every now and then. It's like a cruel lottery scheme. Perhaps the people at the pool have given up on God? They seek the power of some unnamed supernatural being. That's why Jesus ignored not only the water, but the crowd as well. Don't presume all angels are good guys. Especially angels who trouble water.

**Hebrews 13:2 (KJV)** *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

**Psalm 78:49 (KJV)** *He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.*

**Galatians 1:7-8 (KJV)** *Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. **8** But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*



# Bethel's Tragedy

1 Kings 13

**Location:** Bethel

**Recipient:** King Jeroboam

**Witnesses:** King Jeroboam, Bethel's Citizens

After studying the way evil spirits and devils respond to Jesus Christ, Bible students confront a paradoxical warning from Apostle John. How can devils and evil spirits confess Jesus is the son of God? How do Christians explain 1 John 4:1-3?

**1 John 4:1-3 (KJV)** *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

Apostle John warns about false prophets. The devils and spirits Jesus casts out of possessed people in the Gospels are not false prophets. None of them deny Christ. Nor do they lie or try and deceive anyone. Indeed their very nature and behavior makes deception impossible. The devils encountered in Jesus' deliverance miracles are honest compared to the false spirits Apostle John warns about. However, the Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers, representing national Israel may indeed be categorized with John's antichrists.

John warns about men and women in Christian leadership roles who deny Christ. These antichrists are not running naked in cemeteries, throwing children into fire, or causing disease, and

physical infirmity. In fact these evil spirits do not even possess people. Rather they deceive people, especially Christians with false doctrine. Observe Apostle John speaks to the *beloved*. Indeed, 1 John is a letter written to believers.

Apostle Paul also warns Christians about false doctrine. Beware, just because a Christian leader acknowledges Jesus Christ, does not mean the person teaches the whole truth, nor does it prove they are even saved. Christians need to prove what they learn in church, on television or the internet with the Bible. Like the Bereans of old, search the scriptures daily, to prove if these things are true. Study to show thyself approved unto God.

***Titus 1:16 (KJV)*** *They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*

***Acts 17:10-11 (KJV)*** *And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. **11** These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

***2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV)*** *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

## False Prophets

1 Kings Chapter 13 exemplifies the effectiveness of false prophets. As well as the damages they inflict on believers. No less than four miracles occur in the chapter, lessons and sermon points abound.

As King Jeroboam offers upon an idolatrous altar in Bethel, God answers Israel's apostasy by delivering two miracles against them. A third miracle fulfills 300 years later. During the ceremony, a mysterious prophet appears who rebukes every aspect of Jeroboam's satanic religion. Scripture never identifies the prophet other than to call him a man of God (15 times). In no uncertain terms the man of God speaks directly to the king and the people. His speech begins by cursing the very altar on which Jeroboam performs offerings, invoking a damning prophecy. A king from the line of David named Josiah, will be born and offer the bones of Jeroboam's false priests on this altar. Quite a prediction because more than 300 years later King Josiah did indeed fulfill the prophecy, *2 Kings 23:15-20*.

The man of God's intrusion infuriates King Jeroboam. With a gesture of extending his arm, he arrogantly orders the prophet's arrest. But God defends his prophet, and King Jeroboam's arm cripples and withers in front of everyone. Next the altar cracks in half and its ashes pour out. The dramatic and disturbing scene vindicates the man of God and ruins Jeroboam's ceremony.

***1 Kings 13:1-5 (KJV)*** *And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. 2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. 3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out. 4 And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him.*

*And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. 5 The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.*

Wisely King Jeroboam changes his tone and begs the prophet to intreat the Lord on his behalf. To this request, the man of God obliges his king and prays for Jeroboam. Another miracle restores his arm, and the king tries a different tactic. Observe King Jeroboam shows absolutely no fear of God whatsoever. After witnessing dramatic evidence of God's power, his evil character remains resolved. He deceitfully praises the prophet and even requests he accompany him back to the palace, where pleasures and rewards abound.

**1 Kings 13:6-10 (KJV)** *And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before. 7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. 8 And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: 9 For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. 10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.*

### **False Doctrine**

False prophets, God's enemies, and even backsliders populated Bethel's crowd that day. Some determined God haters, others just backslidden believers looking for an excuse to satisfy their flesh with religious approval. Such were the sons of an old

backslidden prophet. The remaining narrative in chapter 13 concerns Satan's strategies.

When it comes to deceiving God's people, **the goal of all false doctrine persuades Christians to believe God said something that God did not say.** The most effective teachers of false doctrine are not satanic kings like Jeroboam. Rather they are believers, who are themselves, persuaded of some lie. And almost always the root cause is rejection of God's words, even if it is only a few words.

The unnamed man of God delivers his message and leaves Bethel. By standing up to an evil king in front of an apostate crowd, he performed heroically. Few believers in any age manifest such bravery. But now the man of God grows tired, hungry, thirsty, and emotionally drained- and his mission is not complete until he leaves Bethel's city line. He leaves the city, but before clearing Bethel's boundary he sits down to rest. And precisely at this moment-Satan attacks.

The second lesson learned: being physically tired is dangerous territory. Like Prophet Elijah's mountaintop victory, the unnamed prophet's successful mission leaves him exhausted and emotionally drained. Christians can make mistakes when they work themselves into exhaustion.

### **Lying prophet**

As the man of God rests, scripture introduces a second unnamed prophet. Much consternation concerns this second prophet, and Bible students should observe several facts before making any conclusions.

- He is a prophet.
- He identifies himself as a fellow prophet.

- He convinces a believer that God spoke words that God did not speak.
- He is a liar.
- His teaching hurts a believer who is doing God's work.

**1 Kings 13:11-18 (KJV)** *Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. **12** And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. **13** And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, **14** And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. **15** Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. **16** And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: **17** For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. **18** He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him.*

Just for discussion, let's suppose the lying prophet is a backslidden believer. Perhaps he lied because he believes God forbidding the other prophet food or drink until he leaves Bethel sounds ridiculous? Maybe he thinks the man of God must be mistaken about what God said? So the lying prophet makes up a story that he genuinely believes will help his fellow prophet. And no doubt he believes his interpretation is a more accurate rendering of what God actually said- originally?

The lying prophet is a kindred spirit to Balaam, *Numbers 22*, who devises ways to circumvent God's words. Thus he persuades believers to act in ways God forbids. Like Balaam, God also allowed the lying prophet to speak truth. When contemplating men like the lying prophet or Balaam, an immediate conclusion is they are lost false prophets. Another uncomfortable possibility is they are believers who have been deceived concerning some of God's words. **No one hurts Christians as effectively as other Christians. And the most successful false teachers are saved men who truly believe the lies they teach.**

*Numbers 31:16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*

Whatever the case, the lying prophet persuaded the good prophet that God changed his words about eating and drinking in Bethel. Do not dismiss the fact that eating and drinking is something the good prophet's flesh wants to do anyway. Thus any alteration of God's words which potentially gratifies a Christian's flesh has a fighting chance of being trusted and believed. So the two men travel in agreement to the lying prophet's house for dinner.

Even before the meal is over, God suddenly forces the lying prophet to tell the truth. He admits his whole scheme to deceive the man of God. But the damage is done. God rebukes the man of God for disobedience and prophesies his untimely death results in an undignified burial away from home. No doubt the news ruined dinner. And then, in an apparent gesture of good will, the lying prophet saddles his own ass for the man of God to ride

home. Lesson learned: religious liars are often polite, generous, and even gracious.

**1 Kings 13:19-23 (KJV)** *So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. 20 And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: 21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, 22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. 23 And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.*

The story becomes more bizarre. Unhappily, the prophecy miraculously fulfills a short distance from the lying prophet's house. A lion attacks the man of god and kills him. What happens next is peculiar. The lion does not eat the man, nor does it hurt the ass. Inexplicably the ass stays with the body and so does the lion. In fact the lion and the ass (supposedly natural enemies) seem part of the same team. So scripture draws an odd picture indeed: But not necessarily illogical?

Dead man, lion, and an ass. What's wrong with this picture? Travelers continue to use the road and witness the tragic yet curious spectacle. The story spreads through Bethel like wildfire. The man of God is dead, and something supernatural is happening. Perhaps the people believe King Jeroboam is victorious and his counterfeit religion is now endorsed by the gods?



For a spiritual application, the lion typifies the devil, and the ass typifies a lost man. Satan and the religious world often team up (get together) in a multitude of diverse causes for the sole purpose of disrupting Bible truth. **And no disruption reaps more damage than getting a Christian to believe God said something that God did not say.**

**1 Kings 13:24-32 (KJV)** *And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase. 25 And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. 26 And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him. 27 And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him. 28 And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass. 29 And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him. 30 And he laid his carcase in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother! 31 And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones: 32 For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.*

In another statement of truth, the lying prophet declares God's judgment is due to disobedience to the word of the Lord *1 Kings 13:26*. And perhaps in an attempted act of repentance or at least something to mitigate his sin, the lying prophet retrieves the body and buries him in his own sepulchre. Observe also he refers to the man of God as his brother. And for his last will and testament, dictates that upon his death his sons bury him beside the man of God's body. And he reiterates the prophetic truth against the altar and Israel's apostasy.

Once the whole tragic episode is over, King Jeroboam remains committed to his evil ways. Emboldened by his victory, he continues perpetrating ideas which damns the entire northern kingdom, eventually corrupting even Judah. (See author's book Kings Rule.)

***1 Kings 13:33-34 (KJV)*** *After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. 34 And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.*

In truth, God's judgment can be terrible and swift. As in the case of the good prophet who believed an older prophet's lies concerning God's words. It is also true that God's judgment may take a while? As in the case of God's longsuffering toward the same old lying prophet who Satan used to take a good man out. It would seem a happier ending if the lying prophet were killed by the lion. Alas, our ways are not always God's ways. Trusting God is not always easy.

***Romans 11:33*** *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

**Isaiah 55:8** *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*

**1 Peter 5:8** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

**Exodus 13:13** *And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.*

### **Thought to ponder**

Notice specifically in *1 Kings 13:11*, the lying prophet's sons told him about the words the man of God spoke to Jeroboam; therefore, the lying prophet knew the Lord forbid the man of God to eat or drink, even before the man of God told him. God's words are a battle ground. Be advised some Christian leaders: be they college professors, pastors, writers, etc., actively participate in changing the Bible. Sadly, being born again, does not guarantee one believes all God's words. And it certainly does not guarantee one believes God preserves his Bible without error. Questions for any thinking Christian to answer:

- Do you believe God preserved his words without error?
- Do you believe the Bible is God's final authority?
- Which Bible is it?

**Psalm 12:6-7 (KJV)** *The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. 7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.*

## Miracle of the Loaves

Mt.14:15-21; Mk. 6:30-46; Lk. 9:10-18; Jon. 6:1-17

- **Location:** Desert place near Bethsaida.
- **Recipient:** 5,000 men, plus women and children
- **Witnesses:** 12,000 people (conservative estimate)

Jesus references the event as the miracle of the loaves. Interesting because nearly all Christians remember the event as the feeding of five thousand. Jesus feeding the multitude stands as one of two miracles recorded in all four gospels; the other miracle is Jesus' baptism. Within this event several miracles are easily overlooked. In fact, Jesus recalled the miracle to his Apostles to prove their hardened hearts, a reference to their lack of observational skills. When even the Apostles miss something, let us heed the Lord's instruction.

**Mark 6:52** *For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.*

Soon after Jesus hears Herod executed John the Baptist, he departs to a desert place within the jurisdiction of Bethsaida. With the murder of Messiah's messenger, Israel's rejection of the Kingdom Gospel officially begins. Although John's killer, Herod, works for Rome, Jewish leaders remain guilty. Not only did they reject John's message, they plan on killing Jesus. Truly the violent are taking the kingdom by force, *Mt.11:12. (See chapter notes: Killing Jesus)*

Herod murdering the immensely popular John the Baptist deeply affects rank and file Israel. The entire nation seems to exhibit a mood of mourning. Consequently a huge somber crowd followed Jesus into a desert place. Observe this "desert place" is

not sand, rather a grassy plain at the base of a mountainous region *Mt.14:19*.

Before the feeding, the ever swelling crowd spent the day with Jesus listening to him teach. And the Lord healed any sick among them. No doubt hundreds of persons brought family and friends in need of healing. A conservative estimate, including women and children, at least 12,000 people are present. Considering the great multitude, this presents the largest healing event recorded in the Bible. Interestingly, Christians mostly remember the food.

***Ecclesiastes 6:7 (KJV)*** *All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.*

***Mt. 14:14 (KJV)*** *And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.*

***Lk. 9:11 (KJV)*** *And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.*

Since all the people listen to Jesus preach, how do they all hear his voice? No microphones, or sound amplification of any kind. Jesus speaks to thousands of people, outside and sprawled across a desert space probably at least 1/2 mile wide. As evening approaches Jesus is concerned about the people traveling after spending the entire day with nothing to eat. He instructs his Apostles to organize them into groups of fifty. Now how a stadium size crowd obediently organized and set down in groups of fifty may not be a miracle, but then again it might be.

With only two small fishes and five barley loaves, Jesus feeds "about five thousand men, beside women and children."

Scripture further emphasized the small amount of food by stating a child carried it all for his lunch, *John 6:9*. Of course the never ending two fish and five barley loaves constitutes a miracle, but consider also that twelve men distributed the food to the entire multitude. For comparison, imagine 500 people in a controlled environment like a wedding dinner, handled by professional caterers with numerous skilled staff. Perhaps they could feed 400 people in an hour-maybe? That's with the food prepared, and tables already set in a reception hall. So how twelve men organized 12,000 or more men, women, and children- and hand delivered food to everyone reveals a miracle of astounding proportions.

The leftover food was important to Jesus, he specifically said let nothing be lost. They collect twelve baskets full of fish and barley loaves. Needless to say this was considerably more food than they started out with. The number twelve represents the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus proved over and over that he came to be Messiah for the whole nation.

### ***Whom say the people that I am?***

As the crowd began comprehending the miracle's full magnitude, they became more and more excited. The people wanted to forcefully make Jesus king. No matter what the occupying Roman army thought about it. However, large as it is, this multitude did not represent entire Israel. The nation's leadership still rejects Jesus. Observe there is no mention of Pharisees, scribes, or lawyers in attendance. All Israel must receive Jesus Christ as Messiah before he sits on the throne of David, thus the timing was not right. Careful reading also reveals even the present multitude did not perceive Jesus correctly. Right after the meal, Jesus asks his Apostles who the people believe him to be. Observe their answers. The people think Jesus is John

the Baptist, Elias, or some other resurrected old prophet. All those answers are wrong. A modern day equivalent supposes Jesus as only a great teacher, philosopher, or teacher. Compare to Apostle Peter's correct answer.

**Luke 9:18-19 (KJV)** *And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? 19 They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.*

**Luke 9:20 (KJV)** *He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.*

With John the Baptist's death, and knowing the multitude's conclusion about who they think he is- Jesus is hugely disappointed. They wanted to make Jesus king because he healed their bodies and he filled their bellies. In other words, Jesus satisfied their flesh. But they did not recognize his true glory as the Son of God. Jesus directs his Apostles to leave via ship, while he departs alone into the mountain to pray.

### **Thought to ponder**

About one thousand years earlier, King David requested "five loaves" when he was fleeing from King Saul. These are the only times in scripture where exactly "five loaves" are mentioned. The five loaves in David's day were before the Lord in the Temple; while the five loaves in New Testament times, are before the Lord who stands literally in person. In both cases Israel's government rejects God's chosen king and seeks his death.

**1 Samuel 21:3 (KJV)** *Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present.*

**Matthew 14:17 (KJV)** *And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.*

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**Matthew 14:13-22 (KJV)** *When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities. **14** And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. **15** And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. **16** But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. **17** And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. **18** He said, Bring them hither to me. **19** And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. **20** And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. **21** And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children Jesus constrained. **22** And straightway his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.*

**Mark 6:30-46 (KJV)** *And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. **31** And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no*



leisure so much as to eat. **32** And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. **33** And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. **34** And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. **35** And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: **36** Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. **37** He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? **38** He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. **39** And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. **40** And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. **41** And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. **42** And they did all eat, and were filled. **43** And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. **44** And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men. **45** And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. **46** And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

**Luke 9:10-21 (KJV)** And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. **11** And the people, when they knew it, followed

him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing. **12** And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. **13** But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people. **14** For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company. **15** And they did so, and made them all sit down. **16** Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. **17** And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets. **18** And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? **19** They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again. **20** He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God. **21** And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;

**John 6:1-17 (KJV)** After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. **2** And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. **3** And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. **4** And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. **5** When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? **6** And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. **7** Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not

sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. **8** One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, **9** There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? **10** And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. **11** And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. **12** When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. **13** Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. **14** Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. **15** When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. **16** And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, **17** And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

### **Killing Jesus**

**John 5:18 (KJV)** Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

**John 7:1 (KJV)** After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

**John 8:37 (KJV)** I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

**Matthew 26:4 (KJV)** *And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.*

**Luke 22:2 (KJV)** *And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.*

# Jesus and Peter Walk on Water

Mt. 14:22-36; Mark 6:44-52; John 6:15-21

**Location:** Sea of Galilee

**Recipient:** Peter

**Witnesses:** Apostles

Perhaps the most famous miracle is Jesus walking on water. All though the world won't read the details, most everyone knows Jesus walked on water. The world treats the episode as an amusing myth, but the story is true. The event takes place on the Sea of Galilee. Actually, the passage contains five observable miracles.

Soon after the miracle of the loaves (feeding the 5,000) when the crowd fully comprehended the miracle of the never ending food source, they were excited enough to make Jesus king, *John 6:15*. But the appointed time was not yet, and their reasons premature. Jews must see Jesus as Lord of lords and King of kings, not merely a miracle man who puts food in their stomachs (*John 6:26-27*.) Jesus dismissed the multitude and told his disciples to travel via boat unto Bethsaida. Scripture emphasizes Jesus stayed behind alone to pray.

*When evening was come, Mt. 14:23*, tells us the miracle meal finished before 6:00 PM because by that time Jesus was alone praying. Very important because Jesus is still praying six hours later in the 4<sup>th</sup> watch of the night. Therefore, the boat has been gone for hours.

1<sup>st</sup> watch 6:00 PM-9:00 PM

2<sup>nd</sup> watch 9:00PM to 12:00 AM.

3<sup>rd</sup> watch 12:00 AM-3:00 AM

4<sup>th</sup> watch 3:00 AM- 6:00 AM

Although difficult to determine the exact point of origin, Bethsaida is on the other side of the lake, *Mark 6:46*. Their location seems to be somewhere on the southwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. A wind storm arose and made the disciples' boat very difficult to row. While Jesus prays alone a substantial distance from the shore in a mountain, he notices the apostles' difficulty. Considering the size of the boat, (30' or less) And the size of the Sea of Galilee, and the boat is several miles out in the *midst of the sea, Mt. 14:24*. They had rowed about 25-30 furlongs (1mile = 8 furlongs) *John 6:19*. Thus a miracle of supernatural vision doth manifest. How could anyone see people on a small boat, from a mountain three miles away in the dark? Let alone observing they were in trouble rowing against the wind? (See chapter notes: *Sea of Galilee*)

For spiritual application, the passage is fraught with important symbolism. Many great sermons inspire here, and no doubt will continue to do so. The lord tells his disciples to do something, therefore everyone knows they are in the will of God. Why then is it so hard, and the very forces of nature oppose them? Even when God shows up in the storm, his commands frighten them. (*See chapter: Jesus stills the Storm*). The Lord intervenes only after the disciples call out to him.

A little imagination goes a long way interpreting this event. One wonders about the Apostles' conversation before Jesus showed up. Perhaps some expressed frustration the Lord directed them out on the lake in first place? He knew this terrible storm was coming. One thing was sure, they were all afraid. And suddenly they see the impossible; a man walking on the water. At first they thought Jesus was a spirit.

Knowing their fears, the Lord speaks over the sound of the wind and the waves, "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid." That's Jesus for you. Peter, as usual, responds first. "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." God grants Peter's request, and he steps out of the boat.

A word here about all the criticism Peter endures from preachers, (good natured as it may be.) We often point out Peter's brashness, or how he says things without thinking. I should like to consider that no one else had the guts to leave the boat. Often Peter responds to crisis while others appear dumbfounded not knowing what to do. Peter is a man of action, a leader who learns and grows from his mistakes, a man who inspires others. His love for Jesus Christ written for eternity. Personally, I am very much looking forward to meeting Peter in heaven.

Enthralled by the Lord's presence, Peter steps onto the water and begins walking. When he takes his eyes off Jesus and focuses on the wind and the raging sea, he begins to sink. So too for Christians when problems and dangers distract them from important tasks. Although Peter's fear caused him to begin sinking, his prayer for help moved Jesus to save him. The Lord's question O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt, remains pertinent to all Christians whose dire circumstances causes them to falter in their faith and duty.

The Lord sustains Peter and they both walk on water to the boat where the other Apostles watch in awe. When Jesus steps onto the boat, the fourth and fifth miracles of the evening take place. Remember the whole water walking miracle happens in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, but as soon as Jesus steps onboard, the boat instantly arrives on shore. In other words, the

boat and its occupants traveled miles over the water in an instant. Observe also Jesus stilled the storm and calmed the sea.

**John 6:21 (KJV)** *Then they willingly received him into the ship; and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.*

Thus five miracles observed

1. Supernatural eyesight
2. Jesus walks on water
3. Peter walks on water
4. Boat travels several miles in an instant
5. Jesus stills the storm

### **Thought to ponder**

Short memories for believers (in any age) seem all too common. Just hours before Jesus walked on the water, the Lord healed multitudes and fed thousands of people with five loaves and two small fish. But now the Apostles show great fear because of bad weather. When they see Jesus walking on water, they were troubled, amazed beyond measure. And lest we think their state of mind appropriate, observe scripture says *because their heart was hardened because they considered not the miracle of the loaves*. Definitely not a compliment. Apparently Jesus wanted his Apostles to consider the miracle in depth, rather than becoming overwhelmed with any single part. By this time, Jesus had proved to them who he was, many times.

**Mark 6:51-52 (KJV)** *And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. 52 For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.*



## Notes/ Gospel Harmonies

**The Sea of Galilee** also called, Kinneret or Kinnereth, Lake of Gennesaret, or Lake Tiberias, is a freshwater lake in Israel. It is approximately 53 km(33 miles) in circumference, about 21 km (13 miles) long, and 13 km (8.1 miles) wide.

**Matthew 14:22-36 (KJV)** *And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. 33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. 34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. 35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; 36 And besought*

him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

**Mark 6:44-52 (KJV)** *And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men. 45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. 46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. 47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. 48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. 49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: 50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. 51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. 52 For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.*

**John 6:15-21 (KJV)** *When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. 16 And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, 17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. 18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. 19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. 20 But he saith unto them,*

*It is I; be not afraid. **21** Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.*

## Feeding Four Thousand

Mt. 15:29-39; Mark 8:1-9

**Location:** Mountainous area near the Sea of Galilee

**Recipient:** 4,000 men plus women and children

**Witnesses:** 4,000 men plus women and children

Jesus feeding the four thousand shares similarities with the earlier miracle of the loaves. Both chapters should be studied together. Abundant healings make this the second largest miracle healing event in the Bible. Here, too, the number given does not include women and children. The same miraculous organizational skills for crowd control and food distribution apply. And once again a stadium sized multitude hears Jesus teach without any sound amplification.

Differences between the two events, however, need be noted. Only two Gospels cover the 4,000, while all the Gospels cover the 5,000. Feeding the 5,000 was a one day affair concluding with Jesus retreating alone to a mountain. The present meeting goes on for three days before Jesus provides the people a supernatural supper. Which means the attendees brought food with them or spent the time fasting. Clearly thousands went without eating, because Jesus directly mentions their lack of food. *Mt.15:32.*

Seven loaves of bread and a few fishes fed 4,000 men plus women and children. A huge multitude ate to their fill with leftovers. Immediately one wonders why twelve baskets remained in the previous miracle as opposed to the current lesser amount of seven baskets. Hypothesis: Although Jesus continues to offer salvation to individuals, Israel's rejection of the kingdom is now inevitable. At this time, Israel will not rule the world with Jesus sitting on the throne of David. Fulfillment of the kingdom

promise now requires Jesus' Second Advent. Thus the number twelve is absent from the miracle.

Particularly interesting is *Mt. 15:31* where the people "*glorified the God of Israel.*" Such a declaration does not appear in the earlier miracle feeding of the 5,000. *See Miracle of the loaves*, paragraph titled "*Whom say the people that I am?*" To Jesus' question, the people answered incorrectly. Jesus was not John the Baptist or some resurrected Old Testament prophet. But here the multitude glorifies the God of Israel. Admittedly, Jesus did not ask the Apostles who the 4,000 believed him to be, and scriptural narrative does not emphatically express the people equated Jesus with being God, but the inference is possible.

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

Essential to study with chapter Miracle of the loaves

**Matthew 15:29-39 (KJV)** *And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. 30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: 31 Inasmuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel. 32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. 33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? 34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. 35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. 36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes,*

*and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full. 38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. 39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.*

**Mark 8:1-10 (KJV)** *In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them, 2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: 3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far. 4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness? 5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. 6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people. 7 And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them. 8 So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets. 9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away. 10 And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.*

## Jesus Stills the Storm

Mt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-26

**Location:** Sea of Galilee

**Recipient:** Apostles

**Witnesses:** Apostles

Nearly all miracles benefit individuals by correcting a physical infirmity, or deliverance from a devil. But the stilling of the storm, reveals Jesus' power extends far beyond a great physician. Even wind, rain, and sea obey the words of Jesus Christ. Only disciples witnessed Jesus stilling the storm, a salient fact about this miracle. Alas, the world endures the storm, but only believers know God's power. Indeed ministers often use Jesus calming the storm as a metaphor for Christians going through trouble.

The day began with Jesus preaching from a boat to a very large audience standing along the shores of Galilee. Within his sermon, Jesus taught them parables including the parable of the sower. Later that afternoon Jesus separated from the crowd taking with him a small group of disciples. Jesus interpreted the sower parable in great detail to his selected group. Imagine how wonderful to be among those honored few who heard the great parable explained. Ponder also the privilege bestowed upon future readers of the Gospels. Jesus' very teachings in print, preserved for us. Have we not joined those chosen disciples who hear interpretations to the mysteries of the Kingdom of God?

**Mark 4:11 (KJV)** *And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:*

Later in the evening Jesus decides to travel via boat to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Although Jesus and his disciples separated from the multitude, many people kept watching him from a *distance*. The Gospel of Mark observes that other little ships followed, *Mk.4:36*. In favorable weather, the trip across the lake to country of the Gadarenes takes about three hours. Leaving navigation to professional fishermen, Jesus goes to sleep on a pillow in the back of the boat.

Fishing boats in the days of Jesus were not tiny, they're not large either. This particular vessel holds thirteen men with room for a haul of fish. We can assume the boat is around thirty feet long and perhaps seven feet wide. Hardly a craft to harbor a dangerous storm in comfort.

Storms on the Sea of Galilee can be brutal. High winds sweeping down from the mountains quickly turn the lake's calm and pleasant surface into tumultuous waves. One minute the sea is calm as glass, and ten minutes later raging waves. This particular storm poured water into the ship from waves and rain so severely that even fishermen who make their living on the lake fear for their lives. And all the while Jesus sleeps peacefully on a pillow.

A storm on the water is really two storms. Wind and rain pounding from above, and shifting waves beneath your feet. At least on land solid ground supports you. That particular night the Sea of Galilee witnessed the full fury of a most dangerous tempest.

In the night's darkness with waves covering the boat; things were down right terrifying. Incredibly, Jesus sleeps soundly. In desperation the Apostles wake up the Lord. The Apostles are not overreacting. Scripture declares they were in



jeopardy; the boat filled with water and is in danger of sinking. Upon waking Jesus the Apostles ask, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" *Mk. 4:38*

Before Jesus calms the storm, he answers his disciples with a question. After Jesus calms the storm, he asks two more questions. Christians should ponder the Lord's questions just as the Apostles did two thousand years ago. God's reply to something life threatening.

### **Jesus asks:**

1. Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Mt.8:26
2. How is it that ye have no faith? Mk 4:40
3. Where is your faith? Lk.8:25

Initially, does Jesus seem to care? Is he glad to help? How do you think the Apostles feel about what the Lord says? Obviously, they are relieved by what the Lord does, but what about what he says?

### **Why are ye fearful?**

Jesus' first question met with bewildered expressions. Jesus sees everything that's happening: the wind, high waves, and the ship filling with water. Yet his question, "Why are you fearful?"

I think the storm represents life itself. Scripture creates a living allegory that applies to every believer. Just like the Apostles' situation, Christians go through storms where God seems not to care, like he's sleeping through their anguish. Of course the Bible tells us God does indeed care, but in times of trouble, it may not feel like he does.

Jesus knows storms rage. Jesus knows believers are afraid. He also knows we are mortal flesh. Like the Apostles, Christians need storms to make them vessels fit for the master's use. The day is coming, in the evening of your life, when the Lord says to you, "Let us pass over to the other side." And your journey to heaven will complete. Although Christians know this, sometimes in desperation to stay alive, we act as though we have no faith, or very little.

Many saints give testimony of near misses to death where, looking back, God stepped in and saved their life. But some day, somewhere, a final storm will kill you. Therefore, the question "*why are ye fearful?*" Concerns being afraid to die. And the correct answer is- we do not have to be. If Jesus is on board, don't be.

Considering the other little ships following, *Mk.4:36*. The Lord sent the multitude away, yet other little ships persisted in following. Clearly these other boats endured the storm as well as the Apostles. Whether they survived the storm is another question. Jesus is not on board, so their crews faced far more peril than the disciples. In answer to the disciples' prayer, the storm ceased. But we do not know how much water filled the other little ships. Likewise only God knows how many times unbelievers benefit from a Christian's prayer.

**Mark 4:35-41 (KJV)** *And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? 39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto*

*the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?*

### **Where is your faith?**

After Jesus commands the storm to cease, he asks the question, where is your faith? At first I thought the question odd. Jesus says this to believers, to his own Apostles! For Jesus to ask such a question implies mature believers can maintain faith in something other than Jesus Christ. A Christian can divide his faith between God and something else. In a profound way, the question disturbs us.

Of course it's easy to diagnose a lost person's faith being in the wrong place. A lost man might say "My faith is in science. I believe in evolution and education; or my religion. It's my own good works that determines my destiny. But alas, Jesus is not delivering these questions to lost people; he asks them to his own Apostles.

Jesus often teaches by asking questions. Whenever Christians read a question Jesus asks his Apostles, Christians should answer it themselves. If we do that, the text becomes quite personal. Now the question becomes where is your own faith?

### **Faith Divided**

When it comes to dying, Jesus keeps your soul. When it comes to living, what do you depend on? If a Christian's steadfastly focuses on Christ, life threatening storms will not defeat him. But we do not always stay focused. Some Christians

trust far too much in money. Some Christians put their faith in a church. Perhaps a spouse, teacher, or pastor. And if something happens to their earthly source of strength, they lose their spiritual way. Some marriages are like this. So much in love with each other, there is little room for God. All strength, hope, and reason for living abides in another person. They worship the creature rather than the creator.

### **Thought to ponder**

In a storm the environment seems out of control. Something mighty spiritual about storms too. Maybe in some uncanny way we sense the power of the air. Remember Satan received God's permission to control the weather to hurt Job. Perhaps the storm that night on the Sea of Galilee was the devil's doing? Jesus did rebuke the wind, a rather curious word directed at moving air.

***Ephesians 2:2 (KJV)** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

All that live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution and the prince of the powers of the air does all he can to make things tough on you. No doubt about it. There were eleven saved disciples on that boat. Satan held their souls once, but he didn't have them anymore. Maybe he could kill them? Maybe Jesus being asleep was an opportunity for the devil to act?

### **The storm foreshadowed in Psalm 107**

Spiritual application: The great calm is the end of the storm. But this storm is on the water. And when there is no wind the lake turns into a sea of glass. Some storms take heaven to stop them.

**Psalm 107:25-30 (KJV)** For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. **26** They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. **27** They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. **28** Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. **29** He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. **30** Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

### **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

**The Sea of Galilee** also called, Kinneret or Kinnereth, Lake of Gennesaret, or Lake Tiberias, is a freshwater lake in Israel. It is approximately 53 km(33 miles) in circumference, about 21 km (13 miles) long, and 13 km (8.1 miles) wide.

**Matthew 8:23-27 (KJV)** And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. **24** And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. **25** And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. **26** And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. **27** But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

**Luke 8:22-26 (KJV)** Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. **23** But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. **24** And they came to him, and

*awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. **25** And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him. **26** And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.*

### **Believers wrestling with faith**

***Luke 17:5 (KJV)** And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.*

***James 1:8 (KJV)** A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

***Mark 9:24 (KJV)** And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

***Galatians 3:1 (KJV)** O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*

***Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

## Fish Miracles

Before becoming Apostles, at least four of the twelve fished for a living: Peter, Andrew, James, and John. And Jesus told his Apostles to be fishers of men. Catching fish is a type or picture of soul winning. Considering the three fishing miracles: *Money in fish's mouth, Draught of Fish, and 153 fish*, only Apostles witnessed Jesus do them. In all three miracles, Apostle Peter remains the Lord's primary focus. All the fish miracles take place on the Sea of Galilee.

***Matthew 4:19 (KJV)*** *And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*

***Mark 1:17 (KJV)*** *And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.*

Considering the cosmographical design of the universe, the type becomes more profound. The cosmos divided into three heavens is a consequence of the way God made the universe. Earth floats inside the first heaven. Where earth's atmosphere ends, the second heaven begins. The second heaven contains the moon, sun, stars, and galaxies; it is literally outer space. At the end of the second heaven is the deep, a body of water with enough volume to fill the first and second heavens. The deep is a barrier separating the second and the third heaven. The third heaven is infinite; it is where God's temple, and God's Throne are located in heaven's eternal city on the sides of the north.

***Psalms 148:4 (KJV)*** *Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.*

Considering the physical design of the universe, there is water above the heavens. In other words, earth and all its inhabitants live under water. Thus fish typify lost men and

women. For people to someday live in heaven (above the water) they must be caught; that is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Chapter Notes**

### **God's city in the third heaven.**

**Psalm 48:2 (KJV)** *Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.*

**Isaiah 14:13 (KJV)** *For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:*

**2 Corinthians 12:2 (KJV)** *I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.*



# Money in Fish's Mouth

Matthew 17:24-27

**Location:** Capernaum

**Recipient:** Peter

**Witnesses:** Peter

Apostle Peter exclusively witnesses the money in a fish's mouth. Although this miracle is delightful and amusing, it makes several important points. It also inspired this book's cover.

Tax collectors (publicans) ask Peter if Jesus pays tribute. A tribute is a tax, and government revenue collectors were making sure Jesus paid his taxes. At the time Israel was subservient to Rome; consequently, the Jews remained subject to Roman law. Jesus did not forbid or exempt himself from paying taxes. Quite the contrary, Peter plainly answered yes, and Jesus paid the tax. Jesus' response teaches believers are subject to human government.

Before the miracle even happens, the Lord's answer manifests wisdom, and humility while foreshadowing God's kingdom to come. Jesus asks, *What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?*

Earth's kings represent leaders of human government, in New Testament times, most governments were monarchies. So the question, do kings charge their own children or do they tax strangers (citizens/subjects of the state)? The answer, of course, a king's privilege exempts his own family, so strangers pay the taxes.

Jesus is King of kings and God the Son; he is no stranger, God's dominion does not require him to pay tribute. However,

knowing that not paying taxes offends the present ruling system, Jesus pays the tax. And in doing so, Jesus manifests his deity. It goes without saying the fish Peter caught did not carry money in his mouth by accident or coincidence. No doubt, the miracle amazed and delighted the Lord's fisherman. It seems Peter witnessed the miracle alone.

**Matthew 17:24-27 (KJV)** *And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? 25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? 26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. 27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.*

## **Personality and Gospel Writers**

**Who says what?** Each gospel gives an accounting of Jesus' ministry. God used human beings, complete with their own personalities, to write the Bible. Considering the individual writers as they express the Gospel reveals nuggets of gold. No one is more interested in money than tax collectors; thus, no surprise the tax money in the fish's mouth gets Matthew's attention. Only one Gospel writer includes this miracle, and he happens to be Matthew the publican. No doubt tax collectors show great interest in money, and this money miracle spoke to Matthew in a profound way. When Peter told him about it, he never got over it.

Matthew also exclusively reports Judas throwing the money down in the temple. And the priests using the blood money to purchase a cemetery. Matthew also covers other incidents that go unreported by other writers.

**Matthew 27:3-5 (KJV)** *Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. 5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.*

**Matthew 9:9 (KJV)** *And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.*

**Matthew 10:3 (KJV)** *Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;*

## **Doctor Luke**

Although four Gospels cover Jesus arrest, differences occur. When Peter uses his sword and cuts off the high priest's servant, Malchus' ear; only Luke tells us Jesus healed and restored his ear. Luke is a physician and such things are uniquely important to a doctor.

**Luke 22:50-51** *And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.*

***Colossians 4:14 (KJV)*** *Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.*

## **Apostle John**

In the Gospel of John, as Judas leads his posse into Gethsemane to arrest Christ, we learn soldiers carry lanterns and torches. Although the other Gospels record the arrest, only John mentions the lights. John is fascinated with light, especially as it relates to Jesus Christ. Six times light is mentioned in John chapter 1. Jesus is the light of the world.

***John 18:3*** *Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.*

***John 1:4-5*** *In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

# The Day Peter Got Saved

Luke 5:1-11

**Location:** Two boats on the Sea of Galilee

**Recipient:** Peter, Andrew, James, John

**Witnesses:** Peter, Andrew, James, John

A sermon:

The draught of fish miracle witnessed only by believers, speaks to Christians in a profound way. Personally I believe it to be the day Peter got saved. Admittedly, I don't know for sure, but I think I do, and after considering this wonderful miracle, you decide. We'll find out in heaven for sure.

I think the Apostles looked up to Peter. It seems even before they became followers of Jesus. Andrew, James, and John, and quite possibly Nathaniel and Philip, all of them admired Peter. I too, look up to Peter. I love Peter. What he does and says really hits me.

Standing on the shores of the Sea of Galilee Jesus preached God's word to a multitude of people. Two fishing boats sat empty on the shore. The fishermen, Peter, Andrew, James, and John had spent the entire night on the lake and caught nothing. Now they listened to Jesus as they washed their nets.

With the crowd growing ever larger, Jesus commandeered Simon Peter's fishing boat and continued his sermon a little ways out from land. Not only did the boat provide a comfortable preaching location, his voice carried well over the water. When Jesus finished speaking, he told Peter to move the boat away from shore into deeper water. James and John also returned to their boat and were back on the lake.

Observing Peter's dialog using plural pronouns, we know Andrew is also on board. However, Jesus directs conversation exclusively toward Simon Peter *Luke 5:4*. He orders Peter to let down his nets over the side of the ship for a draught. (A load of fish, pronounced draft) Reluctantly, Peter obeys the command, protesting they have been fishing the entire night and caught nothing.

In *Luke 5:6* the miracle happens. The nets suddenly fill with fish, so many fish their sheer weight and mass starts tearing the nets. Peter and Andrew excitedly call to James and John. It will take at least two vessels to hold a catch this size. In just a few minutes both boats jostle side by side, and four professional fishermen engage in a frantic effort to fill their boats. They haul in so many fish both boats begin to sink *Luke 5:7*.

At this point in the narrative, careful analysis requires intelligent interpretation. Each boat is large enough to hold three men and a significant haul of fish. Remember these are commercial fisherman. Their boats are not huge, but they are not tiny either. Historians think they crafts were probably between twenty and thirty feet in length and seven feet in breadth. The boats made use of oars and even sails.

- **How long would it take 4 men to fill 2 boats to the point of sinking?**

Five minutes? Ten minutes? Maybe longer. However long it took them, what do you think Jesus was doing while the Apostles fill their boats with fish? I think Jesus just sits there watching, waiting for them to come to their senses.

As usual it hits Peter first. There's too many fish. Suddenly it dawns on Peter that Jesus tells fish what to do. And then, right in the middle of the catch of a lifetime, the great fisherman does not

care about fishing anymore- at all. Waist deep in fish, Peter slogs his way to where Jesus sits and falls to his knees before Jesus Christ. All at once Peter knows God is sitting in his boat staring at him, knowing everything about him. So much light shining on so much darkness. Peter sees how sinful he really is and how unworthy he is to be with Jesus, he kneels before the light of the world. And for the first time in Peter's life, he calls Jesus Lord. Up till now Peter only called him Master.

***"Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."***  
**Says Peter.**

Pleased with Peter's response, Jesus says, "*Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.*" On the spot, Jesus changes Peter's occupation from fisherman to Apostle. Ironically, the job promotion comes as Peter kneels waist deep in a boat nearly swamped with fish.

***Luke 5:1-11 (KJV)*** *And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, 2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. 3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. 4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. 5 And Simon answering said unto him, **Master**, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. 6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. 7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell*

down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, **O Lord. 9** For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: **10** And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. **11** And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

### **Thought to ponder for a congregation**

Consider and compare your own life to Peter's road toward salvation. The miracle draught of fish is the third time scripture records a meeting between Jesus and Peter. It is in the Gospel of John where Peter meets Jesus for the first time. Peter's brother, Andrew, encountered Jesus through the preaching of John the Baptist. Thus Andrew becomes the first named disciple of Jesus Christ. Straightaway Andrew brings Jesus *to his own brother*.

#### **#1 Peter meets Jesus**

**John 1:40-42 (KJV) 40** *One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42* And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, *Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.*

Can you imagine meeting someone for the first time, and the man looks at you and changes your name? I wonder what Peter thought about that? Remember, at this time Peter is not a believer. If anyone besides Jesus had said that to him he probably would have laughed. But standing there looking at the stranger, whom his brother believed to be the Messiah, he probably started feeling uncomfortable. I bet he marveled at the powerful effect this man



was having on his brother, Andrew. Perhaps on the effect he was having on himself? Maybe he turned away for a moment, thinking about what Jesus meant, and then he looked back. If he did I bet Jesus was still staring at him. There stood Peter looking into eyes that knew him better than he knew himself. Looking into eyes that knew every minute detail of the universe before the universe existed. But Peter did not know that then. Although the Father's drawing power had begun.

Do you remember the first time you considered Jesus? Perhaps someone, who was already convinced that Jesus is Lord tried to convince you. When did you first contemplate that maybe the Bible was true? No doubt someone here today is in that very place?

## **#2 Peter's second meeting**

Peter's second encounter with Jesus takes place on the shores of Lake Galilee. Sometimes Christians confuse Peter's second meeting with the miracle of the draught. The draught miracle is actually Peter's third encounter. Although similar, it is very important to notice the differences. Without subjecting the passage too lengthy analysis, notice Jesus is not preaching to a crowd of people, nor is he in a boat. Jesus walks along the shore and begins selecting the men who will eventually become his disciples. Peter and Andrew are fishing; they are not on shore washing nets. Jesus calls them and they follow him. Then Jesus continues along the beach and calls James and John. They also appear to obey and follow Jesus. At least for the moment.

***Matthew 4:18-22 (KJV)*** *And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.*

*21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.*

What is the same about the second and third meetings, however, is Jesus calls them and tells them to be fishers of men. How far apart these callings were, I do not know. Perhaps weeks, perhaps months? Most importantly Jesus calls them both places- which means they started following Jesus and then went back to fishing.

**Why do people do that?** Go back to what they were doing after they meet the Lord. What are we waiting for? In Peter's case maybe because he hadn't seen Jesus do any miracles? For the other fellas, maybe it was because Peter wasn't really convinced yet. And Andrew, James and John followed Peter. And Peter hadn't really decided to take this following Jesus business serious.

Maybe they were preoccupied with taking care of family problems. Nothing really bad is going on, just busy with life and making an honest living catching fish. Perhaps we shouldn't speculate at all? Whatever the reason, Peter and his buddies went back to fishing. They are not fishing for men yet, they are still fishing for fish.

What is certain, however, is the verses we discussed a moment ago apply to everyone. There is a place in the Bible where Peter was lost (like you) He meets Jesus for the first time. And that's like you too- there was a time in your life when you did not think about Jesus at all, even if other people around you did. You were lost. And then something happened that got you thinking seriously about Jesus Christ.

Do you remember the first time Jesus called you? Or more correctly the first time Jesus sought you? Maybe someone like Andrew introduced you to Jesus? Maybe you were reading a tract, a book, watching TV- And you actually contemplated who Jesus is and what it all means? Do you remember when the Father began drawing you toward Jesus? Do you remember when you were lost? To help you understand my question, do you remember comprehending for the first time that the stories in the Bible are set forth as assertions of truth. Walking on water, healing blind people, raising the dead. That Jesus himself allows you into heaven or keeps you out. Jesus claims to be the only way, the creator of all things! I mean he's got to be kidding? Because if he isn't that means....

This chapter looked at three encounters Peter had with Jesus. I want you to remember if you have had similar encounters in your own life with Jesus.

- When did you first start thinking about Jesus?
- Has he ever called you?
- Did you follow him for a while and then go back to doing what you wanted to do?
- Do you remember the day or the time when you knew for sure that Jesus is God and you asked him to save you?

# 153 Fish

## John 21:1-14

**Location:** Sea of Galilee, on a boat

**Recipient:** Seven Apostles

**Witnesses:** Seven Apostles

### **A post-resurrection miracle.**

This is the third fish miracle. And like the other two fish miracles, the Lord deals with Peter in a powerful way. *See chapters: Money in Fish's Mouth; The day Peter got Saved*

Peter instigates an all-night fishing expedition with six other disciples. Whether it's a conscious violation of Jesus' telling them to leave their nets and start fishing for men is hard to say. The events of the last two weeks have been traumatic, somewhat bewildering, and emotionally devastating. Perhaps a night fishing would calm their nerves. Whatever their reasons an entire night on the lake fishing produces nothing. Although seven disciples are on the boat, once again, Peter seems directly targeted by what's about to happen.

In the morning a man on the shore calls out to them inquiring if they have caught anything. They answer no, and the man says cast your net on the right side of your boat. With nothing to lose, the Apostles give it a try. Instantly the net is filled with fish. Once again, we see Jesus telling fish what to do. Apostle John knows the drought of fish is a miracle; and the man on the beach is Jesus.

As soon as Peter hears John say "it is the Lord" he ties his fisher's coat around his waist, jumps in the water, and swims to shore. Swimming 100 yards, Peter arrives first, the other apostles

bring the boat and the fish to shore. Jesus has a fire going and is cooking fish and bread.

Jesus tells them to bring the fish which they just caught. Peter returns to the boat and drags the net full of 153 fish on to land. Apparently the fish are large and heavy, it is surprising the net did not break. Jesus cooks a meal that does not include the recent draught of 153 fish.

**John 21:1-14 (KJV)** *After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. 2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. 3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. 4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus saith unto them, **Children, have ye any meat?** They answered him, No. 6 And he said unto them, **Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.** They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, **It is the Lord.** Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. 8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. 9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. 10 Jesus saith unto them, **Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.** 11 **Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three:** and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. 12 Jesus saith unto them,*

*Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. 14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.*

### **Thought to Ponder**

Why the emphasis on 153 great fish that Peter is dragging? Scripture records Peter's name a total 156 times. Three times in the Gospels the name is used as a possessive noun to identify something else. If we subtract those three times, scripture declares Peter 153 times. **This means the Bible directly mentions, by name, Apostle Peter exactly 153 times.**

The great fisherman drags (the burden) until he accepts the plan God has for him. Indeed, the rest of the chapter John 21:15-25 deals with Peter's surrender and submission to God's words.

Scripture uses the name Peter identifying something or someone else other than Peter.

***Matthew 8:14 (KJV)*** *And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.*

***John 1:40 (KJV)*** *One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.*

***John 6:8 (KJV)*** *One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,*

## Raising the Dead

Three times in the Gospel's Jesus raises a dead person to life. In addition to those resurrections, he also raised himself. Jesus raised souls from Abraham's Bosom during his own resurrection to the third heaven. And, of course, the future resurrection of the Church (Bride) commonly known as the rapture of the Church. In the book of Acts, Jesus used Apostle Peter to raise a person from the dead, *Dorcas Acts 9:36-42*. Apostle Paul raised a person from the dead. *Acts 20:9-11*. The Old Testament records God using the Prophets Elijah and Elisha to perform three resurrections. *See chapter notes*. This book discusses only resurrections recorded in the Gospels: three people Jesus raised during his ministry on earth.

### Resurrections in the Gospels

1. An unnamed widow's son: Luke 7:11-18
2. Jarius' daughter: Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:22-43; Luke 8:40-56
3. Lazarus. John 11:4-41

All three persons were verified dead, Lazarus was even buried. And by the command of Jesus' words, the dead came back to life. Who but God could do such a thing? Nothing so inhabits loss as does death; and nothing reveals God's power quite like resurrection. Jesus holds this power within himself, and so declares.

***John 11:25 (KJV)*** *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*

**John 14:6 (KJV)** *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

**John 20:31 (KJV)** *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

**Romans 6:23 (KJV)** *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**2 Timothy 1:10 (KJV)** *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:*

**John 3:36 (KJV)** *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

## **Chapter Notes**

### **Resurrections outside the Gospels**

- Elijah raised a widow's son in Zarephath. 1 Kings 17:9-24
- Elisha raises a Shunammite woman's son. 2 Kings 4:1-37
- A dead man raised to life in Elisha's tomb. 2 Kings 13:20-21
- Dead saints (bodies only) resurrected in Jerusalem. Matthew 27:52-54
- Apostle Peter raises Dorcas (Tabitha.) Acts 9:36-42.
- Apostle Paul raises a young man. Acts 20:9-11.



## The Widow's Son

Luke 7:11-18

**Location:** City of Nain

**Recipient:** A widow's son

**Witnesses:** Crowd of people

After healing the centurion's servant of the palsy, Jesus and his disciples visited the city of Nain. (*See chapter: Palsy Centurion's servant.*) Near the gate of the city, a funeral procession passed by Jesus. A large crowd followed the funeral bier. A bier is a coffin or platform on which a dead person is laid. The bier carried by designated persons much like pall bearers carry a casket in modern day funeral services.

Jesus approached the procession and those carrying the bier stood still. The Lord moved with compassion toward the woman whose son had died, told her to weep not. He then touched the bier, and said *Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.* And immediately the dead man sat up and began to speak. The young man's resurrection caused astonishment and great fear among the crowd. Without a doubt, this miracle sky-rocketed Jesus' fame throughout Israel.

Among those deeply affected by the miracle were disciples of John the Baptist. At the time John the Baptist was still alive in prison. His disciples visited John and told him the pervasive and increasing rumour concerning Jesus; more and more people believed Jesus to be a great prophet and God was visiting his people, Israel.

**Luke 7:11-18 (KJV)** *And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. 12 Now when he came nigh to*

*the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. 13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. 14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. 15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. 16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. 17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about. 18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.*

Jesus discussing John the Baptist immediately after the miracle takes place necessitates consideration. Specifically, because the resurrection seemed to deeply affect John's disciples. As John sits in prison, Jesus becomes more and more famous. John probably remembers his own prophecy: *He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3:30.* That was certainly true. John sends two of his own disciples to Jesus with an alarming question. John wants to know if Jesus is truly the Messiah. John seems to doubt if Jesus is the Christ. Jesus' answer is powerful and extremely thought provoking.

**Matthew 11:2-3 (KJV)** *Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, 3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*

**Luke 7:17-23 (KJV)** *And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about. 18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things. 19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? 20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath*

*sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? **21** And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. **22** Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. **23** And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*

Jesus' response to John's imprisonment is disturbing. Imagine how John feels being in jail for doing the right thing. John, no doubt, feels abandoned, and alone. John suffers, and where is Jesus? Why doesn't Jesus do anything? John served God fearlessly and consistently, yet Jesus does not even come to see him.

Before looking at Jesus' answer, consider John's question: *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* John's pain and suffering takes its toll. Is John truly questioning if Jesus is the one? Has John's horrible ordeal provoked disbelief, or do dire circumstances confuse his thinking? Is John angry? What do you think?

Have you ever considered how much Christians have in common with John the Baptist? John never saw Jesus do any miracles; he only heard about them (or read about them). John must believe those miracles happened-by faith. Furthermore, Jesus did not even go to see John. Jesus sent John's disciples back with a report on the supernatural healings he was doing.

Centuries earlier, the Bible prophesized a man was coming who would do healing miracles and preach the gospel to the poor. Prophets proclaimed those signs identify the Messiah, the very signs Jesus did every day. In other words- addressing the

question: Is Jesus the Lord? The answer is written in the Bible; and the scriptures must be believed by faith.

Jesus knew John believed the Bible, and John certainly knew about those specific prophecies. Indeed, Isaiah, the same prophet predicting Jesus, prophesized about John crying in the wilderness. John himself identified Jesus to Israel! (*See chapter notes*)

Jesus sends the disciples back to John with a specific message. *Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.* But that part of Jesus' answer is only academic compared to what the Lord says next.

***And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.***

That was Jesus' answer to one of the greatest heroes of the faith who ever lived. Have you ever been offended because Jesus does not answer your prayer? At least that how it seems to you. Have you ever been offended by something Jesus says? John wants Jesus to come and see him. But Jesus does not come; John is executed in prison without ever seeing Jesus again (till heaven). What if you were in John's predicament? Would you be offended? Would you doubt? Would you still believe no matter your circumstance? Jesus does not always answer the way we expect. The way out of despair must consider the same answer that Jesus gave John the Baptist's disciples.

Believe the miracles that the Bible records. Most importantly believe Jesus did those miracles. Those miracles identify Jesus is Israel's Messiah and the Saviour of the world. There is nothing wrong here that heaven won't fix.

## Chapter notes:

Definition- Offend: to cause (a person or group) to feel hurt, angry, or upset by something said or done: to be unpleasant to (someone or something): to do wrong: to be against what people believe is acceptable or proper.

## John the Baptist

After John fulfilled his mission to completion, and served God his whole life, Herod threw him into prison. John committed no crime. His godly preaching angered King Herod and his wife. When John informed them their marriage was immoral and wrong, Herod's wife was outraged. (Herod had married his brother's wife). The biblical account spares readers the exact details, but the royal couple lived a decadent and sinful life. John was innocent from any wrong doing- guilty only of peaching God's righteousness. And for that Herod sentenced John to prison and eventual execution

**Isaiah 40:3** *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

**John 1:23** *He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.*

**John 1:32-36** *And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. 35 Again the next day after John*

stood, and two of his disciples; **36** And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

**Psalms 6:3-4** My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long? **4** Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

**Psalms 13:1** To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

**Habakkuk 1:2** O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!

**Jeremiah 45:3** Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

# Woman with an Issue of Blood Jairus' Daughter

Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:22-43; Luke 8:40-56

**Location:** Capernaum

**Recipient:** a woman, a girl

**Witnesses:** Jairus and wife, Peter, James, John

Two miracles join in location and time. The entire episode, fraught with typology, needs careful consideration. One cannot read or study the woman suffering twelve years with an issue of blood without encountering Jairus and his twelve year old daughter. The two miracles fuse together forming one event.

Throughout the Bible, the number twelve connects to the nation of Israel over and over again; consequently Jairus, the woman, and the girl represent Israel in some capacity. Although these miracles literally happened to real people, the whole episode unfolds much like a parable.

**Hypothesis:** Both the woman and Jairus-represent Israel's remnant of grace, Jews choosing to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ during his First Advent. (*Ro.11:5*) Observe Jairus comes to Jesus in desperation and the woman actually tries to hide her faith in Jesus from other Jews. While the child about to be resurrected from the dead, represents Israel just prior to Jesus Second Advent. Specifically during the Tribulation when God saves the entire nation of Israel at once.

As Jesus accompanies a synagogue's ruler named Jairus to his home, an adult woman receives healing by touching the Lord's clothing. She has suffered from an issue of blood for twelve years. Hours later, the Lord raises Jairus' deceased twelve year old daughter to life. Consider also the curious correlation between

the child's birth and the commencement of the woman's disease. In other words, the woman started hemorrhaging twelve years earlier, the same year Jairus' daughter was born. Also interesting is the fact that Jesus was twelve years old when he first spoke to national Israel (Lk. 2:42-47)

**Luke 8:40-56 (KJV)** *And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him. 41 And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: 42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him. 43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, 44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd. 45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. 47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. 48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace. 49 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. 50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.*



## **Jairus, and the woman**

Jairus' name means "he will stir up."

Jairus, is a synagogue's ruler, thus he literally represents Israel as a religious authority. Even though Israel's mainstream leadership rejects Jesus Christ, Jairus believes in Jesus. Likewise the Jewish woman with an issue of blood also believes in Jesus Christ. Throughout Jesus' First Advent, only a very small number of Jews believed Jesus was Messiah. Jairus and the woman belong to a remnant of faithful Jews.

**Mark 5: 23** *And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.*

**Matthew 9:20** *And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: 21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. 22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.*

### **An issue of blood**

If any nation ever had an issue of blood, it is Israel rejecting the blood of their own Messiah. The first time an issue of blood appears in the Bible concerns a woman's purification. Notice the offering includes a lamb. (*Leviticus 12:6-7*) Jesus is the Lamb that purifies Israel. He is also the priest offering his own blood which is literally God's blood. Presently, (2018) Israel rejects the atoning blood of their own Messiah. Israel definitely has an issue of blood. (*See chapter notes: Issue of blood*)

**Leviticus 16:30 (KJV)** *For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.*

**Acts 20:28 (KJV)** *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

### **Typology: Israel's death and resurrection**

Once Jesus reaches Jairus' house, the father realizes his worst fear; his daughter has died. Since Jairus rules a synagogue, no doubt the congregation, family, and friends fill the premises. The crowd anguishes over their pastor's loss. Basically Jesus tells everyone not too worry, the girl is not dead but only asleep. Jesus words are laughed at, and he is scorned. The only Jew in the house who believes Jesus (besides the Apostles) is Jairus. (*John 1:11*)

**Mark 5:39-40 (KJV)** *And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. 40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.*

The girl's death typifies Israel' spiritual state between Jesus' First and Second Advent. Those scorning and laughing at Jesus typify unsaved Jews rejecting Jesus during his First Advent. Before the whole nation believes, God removes many Israelites during Jesus' First Advent. Like those Jesus removes from the house (of Israel).

More than 2,000 years later, while Jews suffers in Tribulation, suddenly national Israel is reborn. The exact day coincides closely with Jesus' Second Advent. The twelve year old girl's resurrection typifies Israel's national miracle during the Tribulation. Just like the dead child was completely uninvolved in her own resurrection, so too will the nation of Israel be reborn in the end of the Tribulation, just prior to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The miracle resurrection happens due to the father's love and Jesus' power.

***Romans 11:15 (KJV)*** *For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*

***Luke 13:35 (KJV)*** *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

***Isaiah 66:8 (KJV)*** *Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.*

***Luke 8:40-56 (KJV)*** *And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him. (prophetic application)*

### **Witnessing a miracle**

Jesus, alone, decides who witnesses his miracles. In this case the Lord allows Peter, James, John, Jairus, and the mother of the girl. Thus Jesus segregates five persons away from the scolding crowd, orders all others out, and together they enter the house. Jesus then takes the twelve year old girl by the hand and says arise; restoring her to life.

**Luke 8:51-56 (KJV)** *And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. 52 And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. 53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. 54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. 55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. 56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.*

### **The Wedding Supper**

As to telling the resurrected girl to eat. The Marriage of the Lamb takes place in the third heaven, but the Marriage Supper takes place on earth. And all Israel may now enjoy the feast as wedding guests.

**Revelation 19:9 (KJV)** *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

### **Tell no man what was done**

Jesus told Jairus, his wife, and Peter, James, and John—“see that no man know it.” As we have already seen some recipients of healing miracles are told to keep quiet. (*See chapter Healing Leprosy, Keeping Quiet*)

However, in this particular case, Jesus does not instruct them not to tell about the girl’s resurrection? Everyone at Jairus’ house knew his daughter died, and they also knew Jesus performed the miracle. So what does Jesus mean? Luke’s Gospel says: “*but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.*” Now the only things that the crowd outside the house did not witness were:

1. Jesus taking the girl by the hand.
2. Jesus telling her to arise.
3. Jesus commands the parents to give her meat.

I think the answer resides in what Jesus says to the crowd before he even saw the girl. Remember Jesus told everyone the girl was not dead but only asleep. And they laughed at his words. This constitutes a rejection of Jesus Christ. More important than miracles, is what Jesus says, that is his words. No doubt after Jesus leaves, the people interrogate Jairus and his wife asking them what Jesus did. Unbelievers always look for some particular action, to refute Jesus. So regarding those Jews that Jesus removed from the house, Jesus already told them the truth and they rejected him. People reach a point in denying God where he stops dealing with them- enough is enough. National Israel will not receive Jesus until the Second Advent.

### **Thought to ponder: Considering Virtue**

Six times scriptures employs the word virtue. Scripture's first use of the word shows power emanating out of God to benefit suffering Jews; persons believing and expecting to receive healing from Jesus Christ.

***Luke 6:19 (KJV)*** *And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.*

The second use of the word virtue directly produces a miracle for the woman with an issue of blood, *Mk 5:30*. Observe the woman's faith in Jesus draws the power out of him. She secretly approaches Jesus in the midst of a multitude. The woman realizes she's healed after touching Jesus' clothing. Jesus knows the instant her healing happened because virtue goes out from him.

Therefore, scripture defines virtue as spiritual power emanating from Jesus Christ that connects with a believer's faith. Consider carefully, the miracle occurs within a crowd that throngs about Jesus Christ. In the world today, multitudes of people and religions clamor around Jesus, but only a relatively few persons believe Jesus is God. The woman, a true believer, is like a Christian whose prayer of faith literally draws out power from Jesus. God's power and a Christian's faith (together) results in a miracle. A specific request of faith need not result in physical healing of disease, however, when prayer motivates God's virtue it will produce a miracle. Observe also, it seems extreme need, perhaps even desperation, precedes the delivery of God's virtue.

To illustrate this faith induced phenomenon, consider lightning. And remember things in our physical world represent spiritual truth: Cloud-to-ground lightning comes from the sky down, but the part you see comes from the ground up. A typical cloud-to-ground flash lowers a path of negative electricity (that we cannot see) towards the ground in a series of spurts. Objects on the ground generally have a positive charge. Since opposites attract, an upward streamer is sent out from the object about to be struck. When these two paths meet, a return stroke zips back up to the sky. It is the return stroke that produces the visible flash, but it all happens so fast - in about one-millionth of a second - the human eye doesn't see the actual formation of the stroke. (Source: National Severe Storms Laboratory)

God's virtue emanates from above (heaven) once on the ground it connects to a believer whose faith draws out the power resulting in a miracle (lightning) once a Christian's specific prayer of faith connects to Christ, virtue from God enters the believer.

**Mark 5:30 (KJV)** *And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?*

**2 Peter 1:3 (KJV)** *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

## **Chapter Notes/ Gospel Harmonies**

### **God defines a believer's death as sleep**

Based on Jesus stating the girl is only sleeping, some Bible teachers argue the girl is not truly dead, but rather in a coma. However, let us not forget how God views a believer's death. In just a few weeks, Jesus resurrects Lazarus, a man whom Jesus said was sleeping, yet Lazarus was dead. Scripture equates a believer's death with sleep. When any believer dies, Jesus Christ retains their life and provides resurrection.

**John 11:11-13 (KJV)** *These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.*

**John 11:25-26 (KJV)** *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*

**1 Corinthians 11:30 (KJV)** *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:14 (KJV)** *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

### **Issue of Blood**

**Leviticus 12:6-7 (KJV)** *And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: **7** Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female.*

### **Israel saved in Tribulation just prior to Jesus' Second Advent**

**Zechariah 13:8-9 (KJV)** *And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. **9** And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.*

**Isaiah 66:8 (KJV)** *Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.*

**Zechariah 12:10 (KJV)** *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of*



*grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

**Romans 11:26-27 (KJV)** *And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: **27** For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

### **Gospel Harmonies**

**Matthew 9:18-26 (KJV)** *While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. **19** And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples. **20** And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: **21** For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. **22** But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. **23** And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, **24** He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. **25** But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. **26** And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.*

**Mark 5:22-43 (KJV)** *And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, **23** And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.*

**24** And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. **25** And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, **26** And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, **27** When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. **28** For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. **29** And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. **30** And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? **31** And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? **32** And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. **33** But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. **34** And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. **35** While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? **36** As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. **37** And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. **38** And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. **39** And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. **40** And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. **41** And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. **42** And

*straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. **43** And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.*

# Raising Lazarus

John 11:1-41

**Location:** Bethany

**Recipient:** Lazarus

**Witnesses:** Large crowd of Bethany's citizens

The raising of Lazarus is the most celebrated of our Lord's three resurrection miracles. Although raising the widow of Nain's son was public, it did not receive the same recognition from Israel's rulers. After Lazarus, it becomes glaringly obvious that political, religious, and spiritual forces organize against Jesus Christ. Know also that during the time of Lazarus' resurrection, John the Baptist remains imprisoned and will soon be executed. Astonishingly, Lazarus' resurrection solidifies Israel's leadership to formulate plans to kill Jesus. Therefore ramifications of the miracle need careful evaluation. For a thorough study of these matters, consider chapters: *Was John the Baptist Elijah? And The Violent take the Kingdom of Heaven by Force.*

**John 11:1-4 (KJV)** *Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) 3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.*

The whole context of Lazarus' relationship to Jesus illustrates importance. Scripture reveals little about Jesus' private social interactions, but Lazarus' family is an exception. He and his sisters, Mary and Martha, enjoy an intimate friendship with Jesus Christ. Of course Jesus associates with other people, but scripture

regards Lazarus' family on a personal level. No other family seems so privileged.

**John 11: 5** *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.*

Jesus meets several times with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. At their home in Bethany, Martha and Mary served the Lord dinner. Martha epitomizes the dutiful servant while Mary exemplifies worship. The same Mary is the woman who anoints Jesus with precious ointment and wipes his feet with her hair, *Luke 10:38-42*. More than a few ministers preach a sermon or two on Mary and Martha. (*See chapter notes.*)

Mary and Martha send word to Jesus that their brother is seriously ill. Jesus responds with the enigmatic response; *This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby*. But after hearing the bad news, Jesus stays in Bethabara, a town just outside of Judea beyond Jordan. Lazarus lives in Bethany about twenty miles away. (*John 1:28 with John 10:40*)

Finally Jesus decides to go and see Lazarus. His Apostles try and talk him out of going; being worried about Jesus' enemies in Judea. Besides, Jesus told them Lazarus was sleeping. Since Lazarus was ill, they assumed sleep was good for him.

Then Jesus tells them plainly Lazarus is dead. The Lord also says the miracle about to happen provokes them to believe. Which is curious because he is speaking to his own disciples. Observe also that Jesus knows Lazarus is dead without ever being told. Once Jesus obtains their undivided attention, Thomas Didymus proclaims they should all go so they can die with him. Hard to say what Thomas means? But probably, Thomas presumes Lazarus' death must be some kind of metaphor which

increases a believer's faith. And that's something they all could use.

**John 11; 6** *When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. 7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. 8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? 9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. 11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. 14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. 16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.*

Jesus sent word ahead of his arrival that he was coming. People knew he was friends with the family, and everyone expected Jesus to come days earlier. Being such good friends with Lazarus, people assumed Jesus would heal him. But that was not to be. By the time Jesus finally arrives, Lazarus has been dead and buried four days.

Initially, no one questions Jesus, but the whole community is disappointed. Why would the Lord let this tragedy happen? Martha, never one to keep her emotions inside, confronts Jesus. In spite of her directness, Martha's statements exemplify great

faith. Martha's profession that Jesus is the Christ, is as strong as anything Apostle Peter ever said. *John 11:27*

**John 11:17-27 (KJV)** *Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. 18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: 19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. 20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. 21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. 23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. 24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? 27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.*

Jesus saying thy brother shall rise again, sounds like a statement heard during a graveside burial prayer. In fact, ministers often use the passage to provide hope and comfort during funeral services. The difference here is that Jesus literally stands before them and declares he is the resurrection. This is extremely important because although resurrections are scheduled prophetic events, no resurrection exists apart from Jesus Christ. Whether that resurrection raises one person or billions of souls. Jesus' comments on himself reveal, yet again, an overt announcement that he is God.

After saying what she needed to say, Maratha leaves and goes to her sister. She tells Mary secretly Jesus has asked to see

her. Now why Martha does this secretly is interesting. Jesus may have requested to see Mary, but there is no record of him doing it. On the other hand, perhaps Martha was making sure Mary spoke to Jesus because she believed Mary was so close to Jesus that he just might do something supernatural? Whatever her reasons it seems disappointment in Jesus is overwhelming. Mary immediately leaves the house and goes to see Jesus.

People visiting the family notice Mary leaves with great urgency. Assuming she is going to the grave to mourn, they follow. But Mary is not going to the grave, she goes to Jesus who still remains a short distance outside of town. Upon meeting her Lord, she falls down at his feet and weeps. Notice Mary speaks to Jesus from a posture of worship. That's Mary for you. She also says the exact same thing as Martha. *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.*

Apparently, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus enjoyed tremendous love and respect within Bethany. The community's sadness is palpable. Scripture displays the Lord's empathy. No matter the circumstance or tragedy, Jesus feels our pain. The shortest verse in the Bible manifests a huge character quality of God; *Jesus wept.*

**John 11:29-35 (KJV)** *As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. 30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. 31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. 32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with*



*her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, **34** And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. **35** Jesus wept.*

## **Lazarus Resurrection**

Jesus goes to the graveside, and a growing crowd follows. Bethany's citizens wondering why Jesus did not prevent Lazarus from dying, remain very curious and disappointed. Upon arriving at the cave Jesus commands them to take away the stone. Martha reminds Jesus that her brother has been dead four days and the body will smell. (An amusing side note, Martha is the only woman in the Bible who offers Jesus advice and tells him what to do. That's Martha for you. See also Luke 10:40)

***John 11:36-40 (KJV)** Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! **37** And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? **38** Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. **39** Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. **40** Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?*

Jesus declaration, "I am the resurrection" cannot be overstated. The great I AM standing in a cemetery commands Lazarus to come forth. If he had not specifically called Lazarus by name every human being who had ever died would have been resurrected. What happens next shakes Israel to its core. Lazarus emerges from the cave bound in grave clothes. A mummy, bound hand and foot in grave clothes, coming out of a tomb presents quite a sight. If his legs were wrapped together (as embalmed

mummies usually are) then he levitated out of the cave. Whatever happened demonstrates miraculous power, never to be forgotten. Jesus commands the people to loose him (unwrap) and let him go.

**John 11:41-44 (KJV)** *Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

## **Chapter Notes**

### **Martha and Mary**

**Luke 10:38-42 (KJV)** *Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. 40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. 41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*

**John 12:3 (KJV)** *Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped*

*his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.*

**Matthew 26:13 (KJV)** *Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.*

### **Thought to ponder**

How often do you mention Mary's act of humility, love, and sacrifice when presenting the Gospel? How often do you hear it mentioned during an altar call?

**Mark 14:9 (KJV)** *Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*

# The Violent Take the Kingdom of Heaven by Force.

John 11:45-57

**Location:** Jerusalem

**Recipient:** The world

**Witnesses:** The world, angels, all in Heaven

“The violent” refers to an opposing enemy army. And the violent war against the kingdom of heaven. This enemy army consists, of human government and religious figures, it includes devils, spirits, and evil angels. Not the least of which is the fallen anointed cherub himself, Lucifer. The violent know who Jesus is, yet they war against him. For full context, read chapters: *Was John the Baptist Elijah; Raising Lazarus, and The Kingdom.*

**Matthew 11:12 (KJV)** *And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

**John 8:37 (KJV)** *I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.*

**Ephesians 6:12 (KJV)** *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

The aftermath of Lazarus’ resurrection clearly manifests dark supernatural forces taking control of the kingdom of heaven. (Not the kingdom of God) Jerusalem’s leadership align themselves against Jesus Christ. After Lazarus and the murder of John the Baptist, Israel’s leadership acts purposefully to destroy Jesus. While a number of Jews believe in Jesus, the leadership in

Jerusalem including the high priest, rejects their King. Jesus' earlier statement about the kingdom of heaven suffering violence and the violent take it by force has now happened. Observe carefully the Pharisees and even the high priest's response to Christ.

**John 11:45-52 (KJV)** *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. 46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. 47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. 49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. 51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; 52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.*

These are no longer people confused about Jesus' true identity, they all know. They do not want him. Consider Caiaphas' astounding prophecy that Jesus must die for the nation, and all children of God be gathered together. Of course the high priest does not understand that Jesus crucifixion will provide forgiveness and salvation to all who believe, but he does understand for Israel to remain in Rome's favor, Jesus must die. Their satanic rebellion equates with choosing a fight to enslave mankind. Make no mistake a war ensues, spiritual and physical, against Jesus Christ.

**John 11:53-57 (KJV)** *Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. 54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples. 55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. 56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? 57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.*

Long ago God chose Jerusalem to be the capital of the ever expanding kingdom of heaven. Jerusalem's absolute destiny is not in question, but temporarily (33 AD- 20?? AD) Jews living in Israel reject the kingdom offer. Until such time when Israel repents and believes in their Messiah Jesus Christ- the violent control the kingdom of heaven.

**Matthew 5:35 (KJV)** *Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.*

**Chapter Notes:** See Part Three: The Kingdom

## A Certain Man and Lazarus

### Synthesis of John 11 and Luke 16

Hypothesis the certain beggar named Lazarus in Luke 16, foreshadows the certain man Lazarus in John 11.

Consider this: The exact phrase "a certain man" appears 13 times in the four Gospels. The only occurrence where God gives "a certain man" a proper name is when God identifies Lazarus. Consider also a certain beggar named Lazarus found in the *Luke 16:19-31*. The famous passage concerning Abraham's bosom and hell, usually remembered simply as Lazarus and the rich man.

In Luke 16, the rich man in hell begs God to send Lazarus to return to the land of the living with a warning about the reality of hell. The rich man specifically requested Lazarus go to his father's house. Observe God says it is impossible for anyone alive in Abraham's bosom to travel across the great fixed gulf to hell. He also says no one in hell can travel to Abraham's bosom. But God does not say it is impossible for one leave Abraham's bosom and return to the father's house in the land of the living.

Now consider Lazarus of Bethany does indeed return to the land of the living after being dead and buried four days. Although the Bible provides no record of Lazarus being in Abraham's bosom, unless Lazarus was in a state of soul sleep or suspended animation, he went to Abraham's bosom.

Consider also scripture plainly declares Jewish leaders wanted to kill Lazarus. Why? Because of Lazarus' resurrection, or in other words, because his return to the land of the living causes many Jews to believe on Jesus. Sadly, however, those representing the leadership of the house Israel refused to believe.

Which actually fulfills *Luke 16:31* *And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

**John 12:9-11 (KJV)** *Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; 11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.*

**Luke 16:19-31 (KJV)** *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he*



*said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. **31** And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

## Was John the Baptist Elijah?

Yes and No. The Pharisees asked John directly if he was Elijah. John answers "No." However Jesus says John is Elijah. What do these conflicting statements mean?

**Matthew 11:9-15 (KJV)** *But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. **10** For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. **11** Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. **12** And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. **13** For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. **14** And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. **15** He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

**John 1:19-23 (KJV)** *And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? **20** And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. **21** And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. **22** Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? **23** He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.*

The Pharisees were not without cause to ask John if he was Elijah. In the first place John lived a unique life. Everyone knew about the remarkable events surrounding his birth. And now

that John was grown, he was a famous, eccentric preacher who regularly preached to huge crowds. Although John made many religious leaders uncomfortable, they realized his extraordinary popularity. And making them even more nervous, Israel's common citizens believed John was a prophet. Furthermore Israel's current subservient condition under Roman rule was prophesied to end. The Jews expected national renewal and their Messiah to come. The Pharisees also knew God planned to send Elijah to bring the message of restoration.

When they asked John if he was the Messiah he said No, but confessed to being the prophesized voice crying in the wilderness. He also referenced scripture which proved God pardons Israel and was prepared to restore his kingdom. But individual Israelites had to make themselves ready. And this made John all the more mysterious. If John was the prophesized messenger, how could he not be Elijah?

*John 1:19-23* records what John says about himself, especially his denial about being Elijah. In *Matthew 11: 9-15* Jesus elaborates on John's true identity. Remember a big part of John the Baptist's message included warning the people to prepare themselves for the Lord. A precondition for God restoring the kingdom of Israel includes the Jews preparing themselves spiritually. God required them to repent and strive toward righteousness. And the vast majority of Israel failed to heed John's message.

So the answer to the question: Was John the Baptist Elijah? If the Jews believed John's message. If Israel had repented, and prepared themselves to accept their Messiah. Or as Jesus said **"And if ye will receive it"** John fulfills the scriptures to be Elijah. But since Israel did not receive it, John

was not Elijah. John being Elijah was contingent on Israel's receiving Jesus Christ.

**However, because scripture foresaw Israel's rejection** of Jesus, there literally becomes two messengers: It is important to rightly divide between the two. John the Baptist at the First Advent and Elijah at the Second Advent. What absolutely no one saw coming were two separate advents of the Messiah. Nor did anyone (Jew or Gentile) see the insertion of the Church Age (Christianity) in-between the two advents. Since the Jews rejected John the Baptist's message proclaiming Jesus Christ at his First Coming, Elijah has not yet come. Elijah comes prior to Jesus Second Coming. In other words, John the Baptist fulfills ***Isaiah 40:1-3, and Malachi 3:1*** And Elijah's coming fulfills ***Malachi 4:5-6***.

Notice in Malachi 3:1 that the Lord suddenly comes to his temple. This was fulfilled when Jesus Christ goes to the temple during his First Coming. That action does not occur at Jesus' Second Advent. Notice also in Malachi 4:5-6, the dreadful day of the Lord is not the Jesus First Advent. This references the Tribulation and the Second Advent.

### **John the Baptist**

***Malachi 3:1 (KJV)*** Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

***Isaiah 40:1-3*** Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. **2** Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

**3** *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

**Matthew 3:3** *For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

### **Elijah's coming**

**Malachi 4:5-6** *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: 6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

### **The violent and the kingdom of heaven**

**Matthew 11:12** *And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. 13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.*

Jesus offered Israel the kingdom. Which means nothing less than Israel governing the entire world under the monarchy of Jesus Christ who rules supreme from the throne of David. A repentant Jewish nation stands to receive the custodianship of the ever expanding kingdom of heaven. During Jesus' First Advent, the enemies of Jesus Christ engaged in full battle against the kingdom of heaven. God labels these enemies the "violent" in Mt. 11:12. Their forces consist of Satan, evil angels and devils, religious Jewish leadership denying Jesus Christ, and Gentile governments (especially Rome) in active war against God's plan and purpose. In the days of Jesus' First Advent, the enemies of

Christ appear to win. When Israel rejects John the Baptist's message, the kingdom of heaven was taken by force. For a more thorough exegesis on this topic see chapters: *Raising Lazarus and The Violent take the Kingdom of Heaven by Force*.

Concerning *Matthew 11:13*. John the Baptist is the final chapter in Old Testament prophecy. That means after John's message is rejected, it becomes necessary to withdraw God's offer to Israel (temporarily). The interim becomes a vacuum of space and time filled by secular Gentile governmental powers, and religions attempting or pretending to control the kingdom of heaven, especially the Roman Catholic Church.

Inside God's reality, however, there is no kingdom of heaven offered to any Gentile government or religion. Very soon after Jesus resurrection, God established his church (Christianity) which offers the kingdom of God to any person who believes Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour. The kingdom of heaven was-and will be exclusive territory for Israel. Although God is no respecter of persons, he is a great respecter of nations, and Israel's destiny is rock solid.

**2 Samuel 7:23-24 (KJV)** *And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? 24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God.*

**Micah 7:18-19** *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. 19 He will turn again, he will*

*have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*

**Isaiah 60:12 (KJV)** *For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*

**Isaiah 61:6** *But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.*

**Zechariah 8:22-23 (KJV)** *Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. 23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*

## Jesus curses a Fig Tree

Mt. 21:17-20; Mark 11:12-14

**Location:** Bethany

**Recipient:** A fig tree

**Witnesses:** Disciples

The miracle must be considered with the parable of the Fig Tree: *Mt. 24:32; Luke 21:29; Mark 13:28*. Indeed the parable interprets the miracle.

Many Christians conclude the fig tree represents Israel. However, interpreting the fig tree as Israel is hugely problematic. In fact, a wrong turn here, influences all other discussions about a fig tree. Observe Jesus' prophetic statement in Matthew 21:19. After the curse, this fig tree could not produce fruit ever again! We know the nation of Israel eventually believes in Jesus Christ and produces fruit during the Millennium; therefore the fig tree does not represent the whole nation's existence. Correct interpretation needs be narrowed. Jesus cursed and prophesized against the current generation of Israel's leadership: scribes, Pharisees, and priests who were planted in the land at that time. He did not curse Israel. The curse does, however, forecast the need for a Second Advent.

As we shall see from examining the parable, a fig tree represents a particular generation of Jewish leaders who are planted in the land. If the fig tree is bearing fruit, it is in the Tribulation or Millennium. If the fig tree is fruitless and cursed, it is in the generation surrounding Jesus' First Advent.

***Matthew 21:17-20 (KJV)*** *And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there. 18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. 19 And when*



he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. **20** And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

**Mark 11:12-14 (KJV)** And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: **13** And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. **14** And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

### **Miracle considered with the parable of the Fig tree, and all the trees:**

**Matthew 24:32-34** Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: **33** So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. **34** Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

**Luke 21:29-32** And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; **30** When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. **31** So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. **32** Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

**Mark 13:28-30** Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: **29** So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. **30**

*Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.*

### **Elements needing definition**

Fig Tree's growth process:

Trees' growth process:

This generation: the generation witnessing the signs of the times.

Fig tree:

Throughout Matthew 24 Jesus cites numerous *signs of the times prophecies* about the end of the world. He likens the way a fig tree grows as an example of how to recognize the end of the world. Because Israel being re-established as a nation fulfills prophecy, Christians presume the fig tree is Israel. But more exactly, the fig tree is a particular generation of Jewish leaders who happen to be planted in the land at a particular time. (Observe also the fig tree is referenced in female gender (her) in Mark13; and male gender (him) in Matthew 24).

**Discriminating reading** reveals Matthew 24:32 does not make the fig tree a metaphor, it makes the fig tree's growth cycle a metaphor. In fact, Jesus says to observe the growth of all trees. Notice the parable's metaphor from Luke includes more trees than the fig tree, thus one should be pondering the growth process of trees-not the tree itself.

**Luke 21:29-32 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;**

When a fig tree begins to grow leaves, the mature fruit soon follows. In fact premature fruit coincides with leaf growth. Therefore, when mankind witnesses the signs of the times grouped together, they know the Great Tribulation and the Second Advent soon follow. The nation of Israel is one of those

signs, albeit a very important sign. The generation of believers witnessing all the signs of the times is the generation which sees the end of the world.

### **Elements defined**

**Fig Tree growth process:** likens to signs of the times

**All Trees growth process:** likens to signs of the times

**This generation:** the generation witnessing the signs of the times.

**Fig tree:** A particular generation of Jewish leaders, male and female. They are planted in the land. (If the fig tree is bearing fruit, it is in the Millennium. If the fig tree is fruitless and cursed, it is in the generation surrounding Jesus' First Advent.

## Enemies Grounded

John 18:1-6

**Location:** Garden next to *brook Cedron*

**Recipient:** Band of men, soldiers.

**Witnesses:** Apostles, soldiers, priests

Judas Iscariot returns leading a band of soldiers into the garden. He identifies Jesus by kissing him. The miracle occurs when Jesus says "*I am*"- God the Father compels Jesus' enemies to submit to God the Son. The entire group falls backward and lay on the ground before the Lord. Only Apostle John records the miracle.

***John 18:1-6*** *When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. 2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. 3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

Once Jesus lets them off the ground, he makes them state their objective again, in other words: *What is your mission?* They confess they've come for Jesus of Nazareth.

## **Thought to ponder**

As Judas leads his posse into Gethsemane to arrest Christ, we learn they carry lanterns and torches. Although the other Gospels record the arrest, only John mentions the lights. John is fascinated with light, especially as it relates to Jesus Christ. Six times light is mentioned in John chapter 1. Jesus is the light of the world.

**John 18:3** *Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.*

**John 1:4-5** *In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

## Malchus' Ear

Luke 22:50; John 18:7-13

**Location:** Garden next to *brook Cedron*

**Recipient:** Malchus (high priest's servant)

**Witnesses:** Apostles, Arresting soldiers

**John 18:10** *Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*

**Luke 22:50-51** *And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.*

Jesus' arrest unfolds dramatically. Angry and upset, Apostle Peter draws a sword and cuts off the high priest's servant's right ear. The Lord calms Peter down and heals Malchus' ear. The miracle should have converted Malchus on the spot. Inexplicably, the high priest's sycophant remains undeterred. Once again, the religious police submit to Jesus' commands and let the Apostles leave the area. But the ultimate act of human folly is committed when they tie up the Lord. Such a picture is almost humorous. Manifestly no one is thinking in their right mind. After witnessing two consecutive miracles: (armed soldiers forced to the ground and Malchus' healed ear) the hateful posse tie up God, and convince themselves he can't escape. With mission accomplished, they march off to see the high priest. One can only imagine heaven's angels' amazement as they watch mere mortals, and the son of perdition, act out the insufferable spectacle.

Not only did Malchus ignore his healing miracle, he continues his violent rebellion by trying to get Apostle Peter

arrested outside the high priest's palace. Such behavior can only be explained by satanic motivation. Jesus' enemies are not just confused or making an honest mistake. They know who Jesus is and they hate him.

**John 18:26 (KJV)** *One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?*

### **The arrest continues**

**Mark 14:48-49** *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled.*

**John 18:7-13** *Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: 9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. 10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? 12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, 13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.*

**Matthew 26:55-58** *In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. 56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. **Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.** 57 And they that had laid*

*hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. **58** But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.*

### **Forsaking Jesus**

Notice all the Apostles forsook Jesus and fled, an important observation because Peter often gets accused as being the only Apostle to forsake Christ, but scripture declares all the disciples forsook the Lord.

***Mark 14:50-52** And they all forsook him, and fled. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.*

### **Certain young man**

Mark's Gospel confirms all Apostles forsaking Jesus and fleeing. Mark also records a peculiar passage about a young man losing his clothing shortly after Jesus' arrest. This happened during the frantic aftermath once they tied up Jesus. Apparently the soldiers and priests (emboldened now that Jesus is secured) sought to arrest those with him. They grabbed hold of a young man's clothing, and in the ensuing struggle he literally lost his clothes and ran away. Many commentators believe this to be Mark, the author of the Gospel. Although this is pure speculation, it is possible. Mark, however, is not one of the twelve Apostles, but he is a disciple. Whatever his name, he's part of the story.



## Three Hours of Darkness

Luke 23:44 Mark 15:33 Mt. 27:45

**Location:** Planet earth

**Recipient:** Those witnessing Jesus crucifixion

**Witnesses:** Millions witness the darkness

As Jesus hung suffering on the cross, humanity's absolute moral failure went on display before heaven: The crowd mocked and jeered; Roman soldiers gambled for his clothes, and priests rejoiced in reprehensible congratulation. Coinciding with this spectacle, God's unfathomable grace and longsuffering echo throughout the annals of time, when Jesus says: "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" (Luke 23:34)

At 12:00 noon the sky went dark. And not just the sky above Jerusalem. The Bible is very clear. The whole earth went dark for three hours. The world often suggests a total solar eclipse took place at that time. Sadly, this ridiculous theory is even espoused by modern day clergy. The idea of a total solar eclipse explains nothing except the people presenting the hypothesis do not believe the Bible. Earth's lights went out for three hours not twelve minutes in one town. This is no more localized darkness than Noah's flood was a localized thunderstorm. For many people, the Bible is hard to believe. But it is not hard to understand.

**Luke 23:44** *And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.*

**Matthew 27:45 (KJV)** *Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.*

**Mark 15:33 (KJV)** *And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.*

The sixth hour is 12 noon, the ninth hour is 3 PM. Why? The new day starts at 6 PM and is divided into two major divisions, night and day each containing twelve hours. Therefore the day's division begins at 6 AM. And six hours after 6 AM is 12 noon; and nine hours after 6 AM is 3 PM.

What happens to Jesus Christ during those three hours of darkness cannot fully be grasped by any human being. My comments are made preceded by prayer and an acute awareness of my inadequacy to explain.

The Bible tells us God's perfect sinless Lamb became sin, a terrible awesome metamorphosis. Every sin, committed by every man, woman, and child who ever lived or ever will live somehow infused into the soul of Jesus Christ: Murders, lies, gossip, thefts, rapes, adulteries, fornications, idolatry, sodomy, drunkenness, gluttony, selfishness, pride, heresies, cruelties, unkindness, etc. Somehow Jesus Christ's soul absorbed and took the punishment for all mankind's wickedness and evil. Jesus Christ suffered agony only God's omnipotent soul could endure.

***Isaiah 53:10 (KJV)*** *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

***2 Corinthians 5:21*** *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

***1 John 2:2*** *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

***Darkness ends***

**Matthew 27:46** *And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

When Jesus cried in agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34). The question needs answered by human beings. God the Father forsook God the Son because of our sin. Your sin, My sin. Jesus Christ became our sacrifice and was punished for man's sake. This is why no one can earn or work their way to heaven. One can only believe and receive the free gift of forgiveness provided by Jesus. All people can do is believe and receive salvation. To add any human effort beyond believing disrespects God's sacrifice.

**John 3:16-17** *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

**Ephesians 2:8-9** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

## Temple Veil Rent

Mt. 27:50-54; Mark 15:37-39; Luke 23:44-45

**Location:** Jerusalem Temple

**Recipient:** Israel, the world

**Witnesses:** Priests

When God the Father rips the temple's veil, Satan received further indication Jesus' death accomplished more than he anticipated. As the Passover Lamb, Jesus' blood served as legal sacrifice allowing God to pass-over the sins of the people. God rending the temple's veil reveals Jesus also satisfies the Day of Atonement. In just over three days, Jesus will offer God's blood on heaven's ark which legally clears the guilty.

Coinciding with the moment of death:

1. Inside Jerusalem's temple, God rent the veil from top to the bottom.
2. An earth quake.
3. Graves opened. However- The bodies of the dead do not come out of their graves until after Jesus' resurrection.
4. A Roman military officer (and those with him) so moved by everything that happens, confess Jesus is the Son of God.

**Matthew 27:50-54 (KJV)** *Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. 51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; 52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. 54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw*

*the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.*

**Mark 15:37-39 (KJV)** *And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. 38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. 39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.*

**Luke 23:44-45 (KJV)** *And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.*

### **Day of Atonement**

Once a year, the high priest took the sacrificial blood into the holy of holies, the temple's inner room separated from the sanctuary by a veil (curtain). Inside the holy of holies the Ark of the Covenant resided. The ark contains: a golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant. *Hebrews 9:4*

The mercy seat sits on top of the Ark, whereon the high priest offered blood to atone for the sins of the people. This atonement covered the people's sins which legally granted them temporary forgiveness delaying God's judgement for another year. Extremely important to understand the annual Day of Atonement's sacrifice did not permanently take away sin, nor did it clear the guilty. It served as a temporary act of God's mercy.

**Leviticus 16:34** *And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all*

*their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.*

**Hebrews 10:1-4** *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

**Exodus 34:6-7** *And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and **that will by no means clear the guilty**; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.*

**The Ark of the Covenant was in the temple when Jesus died.**

Much debate among Bible students about whether the ark was truly in the temple when Jesus died. The dialog is understandable because not since Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the temple in 582 BC does scripture even mention it.

Logically, why would God rend the veil opening the way to the holy of holies if the Ark of the Covenant was not even in the room? God revealed to Israel men no longer required a human high priest to intervene on their behalf, because Jesus made a

better way? But we have more than logic to infer the Ark of the Covenant was present, we have the law itself.

Although the ark is not directly referenced, when we observe the law's instructions for a priest's daily obligations, we learn the ark was indeed in the temple. Consider John the Baptist's father, Zacharias a Levite priest- serving in the temple in New Testament times. Zacharias worked busily fulfilling legal priestly obligations upon the altar of incense in the sanctuary when the Angel Gabriel confronted him. Focus solely upon the priest's duties. These daily rituals would not be done if the Ark of the Covenant did not reside beyond the veil. The whole reason for the daily obligations was to minister *before the Lord*- who manifested above the mercy seat in the holy of holies. Compare Luke's passage with *Exodus 30*.

***Luke 1:5-11*** *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. 8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.*

**Exodus 30:1-8** *And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. 2 A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. 3 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. 4 And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. 5 And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. 6 **And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.** 7 **And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.** 8 **And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.***



## Jesus' Resurrection

- **Location:** Calvary's tomb, Third Heaven
- **Recipient:** All believers: Past, Present, Future
- **Witnesses:** 500-600 persons, all creatures in heaven

**Mark 16:9** *Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.*

Mary Magdalene arrived very early to Jesus' tomb on Sunday morning. Jesus instructed her not to touch him because he had not yet ascended to his Father. Although, Jesus had risen from the dead, his ascension was not complete. Remember Jesus said his resurrection takes place the third day; he also said his resurrection takes place after three days. And Sunday was the fourth day since Jesus' death.

**Matthew 16:21** *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, **and be raised again the third day.***

**Mark 8:31** *And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, **and after three days rise again.***

In order for Jesus to rise the third day, and after three days, means his entire resurrection took more than three days. Jesus' ascension continuing even after he arose from the dead is proven by his own words to the first witness of his resurrection, Mary Magdalene.

**John 20:15-18 (KJV)** *Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. 16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 17 Jesus saith unto her, **Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father:** but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. 18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.*

In Old Testament times, God symbolically covered men's sin through animal sacrifice. Men received mercy, longsuffering, and forgiveness, but they were not legally cleared from their offenses. In other words their sins remained on the books. Animal sacrifices served only as a type of the true sacrifice, and could not take away sin. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God was the true and final sacrifice for sin. Although God forgave sins for thousands of years, no sinner was legally exonerated. (See chapter: *Temple Veil Rent*)

The reason Jesus forbid Mary to touch him early Sunday morning, was a legal technicality. In accordance with law, the high priest went through a cleansing ritual before entering the temple to sprinkle blood on the mercy seat that sat upon the ark. No one could touch him until after he offered the sacrificial blood on the mercy seat. (*Leviticus 16*) When Jesus ascended to the Father, he became High Priest; he then entered heaven's temple to offer God's blood on the mercy seat. With the perfect sacrifice offered, God cleared the guilty.

**Numbers 14:18-19** *The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, **and by no***

*means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. **19** Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. (See also Exodus 34:1-8)*

***Deuteronomy 31:25-26** That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, **26** Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.*

***Hebrews 9:24** For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:*

***Hebrews 10:3-4** But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. **4** For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

***Acts 20:28** Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, **which he hath purchased with his own blood.***

In-between the time Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene- and the second time he encountered her- Jesus ascends to the Father in the third heaven and returns to earth. Jesus strictly forbid physical contact during his first meeting with Mary, but encouraged it upon the second. Observe the women held his feet and worshipped him.

***Matthew 28: 9** And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, **All hail. And they came and***

***held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10*** Then said Jesus unto them, *Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.*

### **Paradise/Abraham's Bosom**

Jesus Christ did not ascend to the Father alone, Old Testament saints living in paradise went with him. Before Jesus' resurrection, saved people after death went to a literal place inside this earth called Abraham's bosom. A place so wonderful God also called it paradise. But as wonderful as Abraham's bosom was- it was not heaven. Saved souls did not immediately go to the third heaven because their sins were not yet legally cleared.

***Ephesians 4:8-9*** *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)*

For the saved souls living in Abraham's bosom, it's rather like promising a pardon to a man in prison. (Luke 16:19-31) He knows freedom is coming and eagerly awaits the big day. The prisoner waits until the highest authority (Supreme Judge, Governor, or President) signs the pardon which legally sets the captive free. The prisoner analogy works well because God literally declares Old Testament saints in Abraham's Bosom *captives*. And they remain in Abraham's Bosom waiting for the law to allow them into heaven.

1. God promised Old Testament saints a pardon (or legal redemption) based upon their faith and animal sacrifice under the law.
2. The redemption manifested by way of Jesus Christ crucifixion.

3. God validates redemption and clears the guilty when Jesus offers his own blood on the mercy seat.

On Sunday morning Jesus transported Old Testament captives from the heart of the earth to the third heaven. After a brief stop at God's temple in the third heaven where Jesus Christ the High Priest offers God's blood on the mercy seat, the captives were declared free. This final legal action cleared the guilty, hence the phrase "**free and clear.**"

**Jesus'** ascension after his resurrection from the dead, plays a major role in mankind's redemption story. When Jesus as High Priest offered his own blood on the mercy seat, the legal part of mankind's atonement was finished. With God's law satisfied legal redemption bestowed upon all Old Testament and New Testament believers.

***Hebrews 3:1-2** Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; **2** Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.*

***Hebrews 4:14** Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.*

***Hebrews 9:23-24 (KJV)** It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **24** For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:*

## Chapter Notes

### Jesus seen by hundreds

**1 Corinthians 15:6 (KJV)** *After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.*

**Hebrews 9:1-28 (KJV)** *Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. 3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. 6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place,*

having obtained eternal redemption for us. **13** For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: **14** How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? **15** And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. **16** For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. **17** For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. **18** Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. **19** For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, **20** Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. **21** Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. **22** And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. **23** **It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.** **24** For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: **25** Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; **26** For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. **27** And as it is appointed unto

***men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.***

***Leviticus 16:30-31*** For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. **31** It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.



# Saint's Bodies Resurrected

Matthew 27:52-53

**Location:** Jerusalem

**Recipient:** Many people

**Witnesses:** Many people

**Matthew 27:52-53 (KJV)** *And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, **53** And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.*

Simultaneous with Jesus' resurrection, graves opened and bodies of numerous saints arose and went into Jerusalem. Observe the Bible says *bodies of the saints*, an important distinction as opposed to a person's whole triune being: spirit, soul, and body. These saints' identities remain a topic of great interest and debate. Some suppose they were the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his twelve sons as well as many prophets and kings. But if that was the case, how would anyone know them? If the saints were from antiquity, God enlightened witnesses to know their identities, otherwise the miracle served no purpose. Hence two miracles: the saints' resurrection, living Israelis enlightened to know who they were.

Another possibility, and I think more likely, were recently deceased persons who publically professed belief in Jesus Christ. Townspeople recognized them and realized Jesus bestowed life after death to those believing in him. This would affect the living much like Lazarus' resurrection. Either way this miracle displayed evidence Jesus Christ held power over death.

**Matthew 27:52-53** *And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, **53** And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.*

**Revelation 1:18** *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

## Road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-31

**Location:** Village Emmaus

**Recipient:** Two men, Cleopas and Simon

**Witnesses:** Cleopas and Simon (not Peter)

Two disciples, a man named Cleopas and his friend, Simon, walked to the village Emmaus late Sunday morning. Emmaus was 60 furlongs (about 7.5 miles) from Jerusalem, so it's about a two hour walk. Both men knew about Jesus' missing body and Mary Magdalen's story. As they engaged in earnest conversation, a third traveler catches up with them and asks what they so intently discuss. They told the stranger about Jesus and how Israel's leaders abused and put him to death. Disclosing their passionate disappointment, they hoped Jesus was Israel's redeemer, but now didn't know what to think.

The stranger listens for a while, and then suddenly calls them fools. Using the scriptures, he expounds verse after verse proving Jesus is indeed the Christ. So captivated with his knowledge, Cleopas invites the man to join them in a meal, and they stop at an inn along the way. As the men are about to eat, the Lord opens their eyes, and they recognize the stranger's true identity. They have been conversing with Jesus the whole time. Jesus then vanishes. Cleopas and Simon become the first male disciples to witness the Lord's resurrection.

**Luke 24:13-31 (KJV)** *And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. **14** And they talked together of all these things which had happened. **15** And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. **16** But their eyes were*

holden that they should not know him. **17** And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? **18** And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? **19** And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: **20** And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. **21** But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. **22** Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; **23** And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. **24** And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. **25** Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: **26** Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? **27** And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. **28** And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. **29** But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. **30** And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. **31** And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

## Back to Jerusalem

The men quickly return to Jerusalem to inform other disciples about their experience. The time now is late Sunday afternoon; and the disciples gathered together in a house for fellowship. Hidden nuggets continue appearing in the passage.

Once Cleopas and his friend arrive back in Jerusalem late Sunday afternoon, they proclaim immediately the Lord has risen and appeared unto Simon. This disclosure means almost certainly that Simon traveled with Cleopas. Bible students did not learn the other disciple's identity till this comment. Notice Simon witnessed the resurrected Christ before the eleven; thus Simon is not Apostle Peter.

Observe scripture declares the eleven Apostles (and others) are gathered together. (*Luke 24:33*) Remember it's Sunday afternoon only 4 days since Jesus' crucifixion. Judas is dead and Apostle Thomas is not present; thus only ten original Apostles can possibly be in attendance. Behold God provides evidence he already considers Mathias a legitimate replacement for Judas Iscariot, even though the Apostles will not make the official transaction until *Acts 1*. The unfathomable foreknowledge of God doth manifest. For a complete commentary see author's book Leviathan's Nightmare, Behold the Lamb.

***Luke 24:32-36 (KJV)*** *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? 33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. 35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. 36 And as they thus*

*spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*

**John 20:24** *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.*

### **Chapter Notes**

In Luke 24:21, the statement is made, *to day is the third day since these things were done*. How can this be since crucifixion day, Wednesday, was 5 days earlier? Bible students can handle the difficulty as follows: Remember this is an actual conversation; it does not contradict any prophetic established facts concerning the crucifixion. Their dialog must be interpreted accordingly. The men knew Jesus' crucifixion took place on Wednesday, but they did not know the exact moment of his death. They clearly assumed he died on Thursday, because that's when Joseph of Arimathaea removed Jesus' body from the cross and placed it in his own tomb. News of Jesus's death went public on Thursday after 6:00 PM. When they say this is the third day since these things were done, they simply started counting the first day after Jesus' body was finally buried.

# Part Two

## Old Testament Leprosy Miracles

### Moses' miracle signs

The Bible's first mention of leprosy is a curious spectacle. It involves a miraculous infliction and a miraculous healing. To demonstrate Moses' authority before the Israelites, God empowered his prophet with three convincing signs, one of which inflicted Moses with leprosy. No doubt when the Israelites saw it, they recoiled in horror. After the desired effect on his Jewish audience, God healed Moses immediately. The Jews knew very well that leprosy was an incurable and dreaded disease. Like sin, only God provides the remedy.

Two other signs accompanied the leprosy. Moses' first sign was the ability to turn his rod into a serpent and then back into a rod. For the third sign, he took water from the river and poured it on dry ground where the water turned immediately to blood. These three miracles convinced the Jews that God sent Moses to deliver them. Although God used similar signs against the Egyptians, the leprosy miracle was exclusively for Israel. Remember the miracles encouraged and promoted Israel. In contrast, the miracles employed a destructive force against Egypt.

Asking for a sign (which God provides) demonstrates a peculiar privilege provided to Jews.

***1 Corinthians 1:22 (KJV)*** *For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:*

## Thought to ponder

The word leprosy is in the Bible thirty-seven times. The word miracle is in the Bible thirty-seven times. The first time the word miracle appears, God says it to Moses. In the Old Testament, the word miracle appears one time in singular form and four times plural. In each case the context involves miracles Moses performed in Egypt. Aside from the obvious divine endorsement of Moses' authority, the miracle's intention proves God's words. God declared each plague before it hit Egypt. God spoke through Moses, and God meant what he said; therefore, miracles prove the authority of scripture.

## Chapter Notes

**Exodus 4:28-31** *And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him. 29 And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: 30 And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. 31 And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.*

**Exodus 4:1-9** *And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee. 2 And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. 3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. 4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: 5 That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God*



*of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. 6 And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. 7 And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. 8 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. 9 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.*

### **Leprosy in the Old Testament**

Leviticus chapters 13 and 14 deal exclusively with Leprosy. Observe scripture calls a leprous man unclean as opposed to being sick. A very important observation is the leper does not go to the priest for healing; he goes for cleansing. God performs the healing before the priest can cleanse the leprosy. Likewise no one can do anything to heal your soul from sin except God. It is pure grace and mercy that heals.

### **Cleansing leprosy according to the Law of Moses**

Notice the priest cannot heal the leper. He can only observe if the leprosy is present or gone. In other words the priest can only testify that God already healed. If the leprosy is healed, the tedious and complicated sacrifices commence. After satisfying the law, the priest pronounces the leper clean. Only Jesus Christ healed and cleansed simultaneously.

***Leviticus 13:2*** *When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his*

*flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests:*

**Leviticus 13:8** *And if the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a leprosy.*

**Leviticus 14:1-32** *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest: 3 And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; 4 Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: 5 And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: 6 As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: 7 And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field. 8 And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days. 9 But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean. 10 And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil. 11 And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the*

*door of the tabernacle of the congregation: **12** And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD: **13** And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy: **14** And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot: **15** And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand: **16** And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD: **17** And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass offering: **18** And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD. **19** And the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness; and afterward he shall kill the burnt offering: **20** And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the meat offering upon the altar: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean. **21** And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil; **22** And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering. **23** And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,*

before the LORD. **24** And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD: **25** And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot: **26** And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand: **27** And the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD: **28** And the priest shall put of the oil that is in his hand upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the place of the blood of the trespass offering: **29** And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed, to make an atonement for him before the LORD. **30** And he shall offer the one of the turtledoves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get; **31** Even such as he is able to get, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, with the meat offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed before the LORD. **32** This is the law of him in whom is the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing.

# Miriam

Numbers 12:1-15

**Location:** Wilderness

**Recipient:** Miriam

**Witnesses:** Moses, Aaron, and Israel

The Bible's second leprosy miracle involves punishment. God judged Miriam, Moses' sister, inflicting her with leprosy for seven days, *Numbers 12:1-15*. Aside from Moses' sign to Israel, Miriam is the first person the Bible presents with the disease. And the first miraculous cure.

Moses' siblings, Miriam and Aaron rebuke Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman. The racially mixed marriage went against Jewish societal norms. Nevertheless, God defends Moses and strikes Miriam with Leprosy. Aaron escapes God's punishment only because he is high priest. Aaron confesses their sin and pleads with Moses to intervene and request God's mercy for their sister. Miriam's healing results from Moses' intercessory prayer. God answers Moses' prayer, but only after Miriam is shut out from the camp seven days.

## Chapter Notes

**Numbers 12:1-16 (KJV)** *And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it. 3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) 4 And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. 5 And the LORD*

came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. **6** And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. **7** My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. **8** With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? **9** And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. **10** And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. **11** And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. **12** Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb. **13** And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. **14** And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. **15** And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again. **16** And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.

# Naaman the Leper

## 2 Kings 5

**Location:** Jordan River, Northern Israel

**Recipient:** Syrian Captain Naaman

**Witnesses:** Elijah, several servants

Right in the middle of Israel's history, God tells the story of Naaman the leper, a great military leader. Naaman serves as Syria's highest ranking official. Notice God gave deliverance unto Syria through Naaman and labels him an honorable man, even though Syria remains Israel's enemy.

***2 Kings 5:1 (KJV)** Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, **because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria:** he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.*

Significant for several reasons, God deals with two kings in this extraordinary chapter: King of Syria and King of Israel. Although neither king is addressed by name, at this time Jehoram is king in Israel, and Syria's king is Benhadad. The story occurs during a rare era of peace between Israel and Syria. A profound example of mercy and redemption given to a Gentile who acknowledges Israel as the Lord's nation. Bible students should also ponder the role servants play in this chapter.

- Naaman called the king's servant *2 Kings 5:6*
- Naaman's wife's servant, a little maid
- Elisha's servant
- Naaman's servants

## **Naaman's Wife's Servant Girl**

**2 Kings 5:2** *And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. 3 And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. 4 And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.*

Concerning his leprosy, Captain Naaman faces the tragic reality unless someone cures him, he dies a horrible death. He learns from his wife's servant girl that a prophet in Israel can cure leprosy. The king of Syria sends a letter imploring King Jehoram to heal his captain from the disease. He includes a substantial amount of money.

## **Audacious Letter**

Of course, Naaman and the king get the message wrong. The little maid said nothing about seeing the king of Israel, she clearly said prophet. She also said nothing about money or payment of any kind, yet Naaman sets off with a fortune in silver and gold, and a wardrobe of clothing. The world hears what they want to hear. Big important men, like Captain Naaman, deal with kings. Surely everything important has a price? *Ecclesiastes 10:19.*

**2 Kings 5:5-8 (KJV)** *And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. 6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to*



*thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. 7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. 8 And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.*

When King Jehoram reads the letter, he is outraged. He believes Syria seeks a fight with Israel. The letter is so audacious, it must reflect evil political intentions. The king wisely confesses only God can deliver men from leprosy. Observe Elisha hears about the letter almost immediately. Whether the prophet or his servant were in the palace at the same time the king reads the letter, or whether the king sent word to him straightaway, we don't know. But the fact remains, Elisha offering counsel so soon, proves King Jehoram consults with Elisha. And he takes the prophet's advice, at least in this matter. Basically, Prophet Elisha tells the king to calm down and send Naaman over to him; he'll handle the problem.

### **Elisha's servant addresses Naaman**

***2 Kings 5:9-27 (KJV)*** *So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. 10 And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. 11 But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his*

*God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. 12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.*

So Naaman comes to Elisha's house with all his servants and gifts, and stands at the door waiting. But Prophet Elisha doesn't even answer the door! Rather he sends a servant with very peculiar instructions. Basically he tells Naaman to jump in the Jordan River seven times, and then he'll be cleansed from leprosy.

Naaman views this as an insult. After all- he commands Syria's army. How dare some mere servant tell him to jump in the Jordan River? Human wisdom and pride mocks the remedy. Prophet Elisha doesn't even respect him enough to answer the door and convey the stupid message himself. The important dignitary has no intention of jumping in the river once, let alone seven times. He expected Elisha should do some extraordinary, supernatural act that heals him in a spectacular manner, something worthy of his status and eminent reputation. Captain Naaman leaves Elisha's house in a humiliated rage.

### **Naaman's Servants**

One can imagine the magnificent commander driving his chariot beside the Jordan River with his entourage of servants behind him. Perhaps he kept glancing at the water and shaking his head? Perhaps he slowed his chariot as God dealt with his conscience? And then an unnamed servant courageously gallops up beside him and says, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do some* great thing, wouldest thou not have done *it*? And thus Naaman's pride comes crashing down. He has no power to save himself;

compared to God he is like a flea. When it comes to obeying the words of God, the Lord respects no man's status above another.

The chariot comes to a halt. A humiliated, sick and dying man gets off and wades into the river. He dips beneath the surface once, then twice- repeating the act five more times. Reemerging after seven times God heals Naaman. The leprosy is gone.

**2 Kings 5:13** (KJV) *And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? **14** Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.*

### **Elisha sees Naaman**

**2 Kings 5:15**(KJV) *And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, **Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel:** now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant. **16** But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.*

Cured of disease and pride, Naaman returns immediately to Elisha's house to give thanks. This action is very similar to the Samaritan leper in the New Testament who returns to thank Jesus for healing him. *Luke 17:12-19*. Compare also how Prophet Elisha refuses all praise and honor away from himself and directs it toward God. Whereas the Lord Jesus rightfully receives worship himself. *See chapter: One Leper.*

This time the prophet speaks with Naaman face to face. Naaman confesses the God of Israel as the only true God in all the earth. Not only is this admission of faith spoken to Elisha, but it's done in front of Naaman's soldiers and servants. He urges Elisha to take some reward for God's mighty act of deliverance, but Elisha refuses ensuring Naaman understands his deliverance was an act of God's mercy and grace; God cannot be influenced by worldly wealth.

Once Naaman realizes Elisha refuses all reward, he makes an odd request. Why does Naaman request *two mules' burden of earth*? A few bags of dirt to take back to Syria. It appears he plans on making an altar from Israel's dirt on which to offer sacrifice. Perhaps he hopes Israel's earth, will sanctify a sacrifice offered outside of Israel? Admittedly this is speculation, but Naaman does declare that no longer will he sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord only; thus offerings are in the context. When he makes an offering to God in Syria, at least the altar's foundation will be land from Israel. Let the reader understand, this is not an endorsement of false doctrine, but merely an attempt to interpret what Naaman is thinking. Most importantly it's a Gentile acknowledging the land of Israel belongs to Jews.

More troubling is when Naaman asks Elisha's pardon for accompanying the King of Syria into a temple of a false god, the house of Rimmon. Because in the temple, Naaman will bow giving the illusion he believes in a false deity. Many Bible students wonder why Elisha seems almost accepting of the request. But Elisha only says go in peace, he does not offer pardon. Nor does Elisha acknowledge Naaman's request for the dirt.

**2 Kings 5:17** (KJV) *And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of*

*earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD. 18 In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing. 19 And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.*

### **Elisha's servant**

Sad to say, the story ends tragically. Gehazi, Elisha's servant, witnesses all these events and thinks to himself he could certainly use some of that Syrian money. So he devises a lie to achieve his goals. Waiting till Naaman gets a little ways down the road, he runs after him. Then he tells Naaman visitors just arrived at Elisha's house who need money and clothing. Of course, Naaman happily obliges and Gehazi returns home with a considerable fortune.

*Whence comest thou, Gehazi?* Asks Elisha as his servant steps into the house. Gehazi lies again, but he's caught. Prophet Elisha knows exactly what happened. Gehazi's deeds are judged harshly, the terrible disease of leprosy inflicted upon him and his children for ever.

**2 Kings 5:20** (KJV) *But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. 21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? 22 And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to*

me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. **23** And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. **24** And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. **25** But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, **Whence comest thou, Gehazi?** And he said, Thy servant went no whither. **26** And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? **27** The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

### Chapter notes

With powerful typology 2 Kings 5 draws a beautiful picture of New Testament truths. The spiritual interpretation of this chapter is impressive. Concerning Naaman's reaction to God's order on how to get cured. Have you ever observed the world's reaction to the Gospel? Most folks think it silly to believe Jesus dying on a cross two thousand years ago can save them. To them, scripture proclaiming only the shed blood of Jesus Christ can save your soul- makes as much sense as jumping in a river.

**1 Corinthians 1:18 (KJV)** *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*

### **Thought to ponder**

In the Old Testament, two powerful men get leprosy: Naaman and King Uzziah. One a Gentile, one a Jew. The Gentile gets healed, King Uzziah does not. In fact very few physical healings happen in the Old Testament: Two children raised from the dead. An evil king Jeroboam healed. And Good king Hezekiah healed from a terminal illness.

# Heaven Opens

Heaven opens eight times in the Bible, three times in the Old Testament and five times in the New Testament. When heaven opens very significant events take place. Seven openings happened in the past- one is yet to come

## # 1 Noah's Flood

The first time heaven opens, God judges the world and drowns billions of people. History remembers the event as Noah's flood. (The year 1656 since Adam's creation)

**Genesis 7:11** *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

**Genesis 7:21-23** *And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: 22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. 23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.*

## # 2 Manna

About 1,000 years after Noah's Flood, the heavens open again. (The year 2513 since Adam's creation). The second time heaven opens a miraculous substance called Manna drops upon the ground and feeds the Israelites as they wander in the wilderness. God provides Manna for Israel six days a week for



forty years. Manna means "what is it" Answer bread from heaven. It gave people life. Scripture also calls Manna angel's food and corn of heaven. The Bible records several verses on manna, but Psalm 78:23 proves heaven opens. Jesus compared himself to manna; thus Manna was a type of Jesus Christ.

**Psalm 78:23-25** *Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, 24 And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. 25 Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.*

### **# 3 Ezekiel's Vision of Cherubim**

Ezekiel's vision, about 1000 years after the manna miracle, (The year 3422 since Adam's creation) heaven opens again. The prophet describes four cherubim in extraordinary detail. This could well be the most mysterious of all heaven's openings. When compared to *Ezekiel 10*, these cherubim appear to be transporting God's throne. Once again Israel remains God's focus for the miracle. This time God judges Israel sending his nation into captivity, enslaved to Babylon.

**Ezekiel 1:1** *Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.*

**Ezekiel 1:4-13** *And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. 5 Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. 6 And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. 7 And*

*their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. 8 And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. 9 Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. 10 As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. 11 Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. 12 And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went. 13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.*

***Ezekiel 10:1*** *Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.*

#### **# 4 Jesus Baptism**

The fourth time heaven opens God reveals his only begotten Son to John the Baptist. The descent of the Holy Spirit. (*See chapter Jesus 'Baptism*)

***Matthew 3:16-17*** *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were*

*opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: **17** And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

## **# 5 Stoning of Steven**

The fifth time heaven opens it's for the stoning of Steven, one of the first Christian martyrs, Steven delivers a scathing sermon to a backslidden nation of Israel. The message concludes with Israel's leaders stoning Steven to death. As Steven dies, the heavens open and Steven views Jesus Christ standing on the right hand of God. This event never fails to generate lively theological discussion, and passionate opinions.

***Acts 7:54-60** When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. **55** But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, **56** And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. **57** Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, **58** And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. **59** And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. **60** And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

## **#6 Apostle Peter's rooftop vision**

The sixth time heaven opens, Apostle Peter is shown a vision. God reveals Jesus Christ's crucifixion atoned for all repentant sinners, Jews and Gentiles. It also revealed unclean

animals were now lawful to eat. Law is being superseded by grace.

**Acts 10:9-16** *On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: **10** And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, **11** And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: **12** Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. **13** And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. **14** But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. **15** And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. **16** This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.*

## **#7. Apostle John's translation**

The seventh is John's ascension to heaven. This great journey and adventure results in Apostle John writing the Book of Revelation, the Bible's final book. Many view John's translation as a type of the rapture of the church.

**Revelation 1:19** *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;*

**Revelation 4:1-2** *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. **2** And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.*

## # 8 Jesus' Second Advent

Jesus returns to earth as King of kings. He defeats the armies of antichrist and begins his 1,000 year reign, commonly known as the Millennium. The only opening since Noah's flood where Gentiles witness heaven opening.

**Revelation 19:11-21** *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. **12** His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. **13** And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. **14** And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. **15** And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. **16** And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. **17** And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; **18** That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. **19** And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. **20** And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. **21** And the remnant were slain*

*with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

## Satan's direct encounters with God

Scripture records eight direct encounters between Satan and God. Three meetings initiated by Satan include two-way dialog. The five meetings forced by God, Satan says nothing. In several ways, Satan's seventh encounter with God is the most extraordinary.

### 1. Lucifer's fall

**Isaiah 14:12-15** *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! **13** For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. **15** Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*

### 2. Immediately after Man's Fall

**Genesis 3:14-15** *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: **15** And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

### 3 & 4 - Preceding Job's Tribulation

**Job 1:7** *And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*

**Job 2:1-3** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. **2** And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. **3** And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

## **5. King of Tyrus-Lucifer**

**Ezekiel 28:12-19** Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. **13** Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. **14** Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. **15** Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. **16** By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. **17** Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. **18** Thou hast defiled



*thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. 19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.*

## **6. Over Joshua the high priest**

***Zechariah 3:1-2*** *And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. 2 And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*

## **7. Tempting Jesus (See chapter: Satan tempts Jesus)**

***Matthew 4:1-11*** *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

## **8. Judas Iscariot- Son of Perdition (John. 17:12 with 2 Th. 2:3)**

***John 13:26-27*** *Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. 27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.*

## Satan's Miracles

During the final dispensation before Jesus' Second Coming, Antichrist rules the world. A period referred to as Daniel's Seventieth Week. God calls the last forty-two months of Daniel's Seventieth week the Great Tribulation.

Although Satan conducts miracles and/or supernatural actions throughout history, his powers manifest unrestrained during the Tribulation period. Miracles performed at that time deceive all human beings. Numerous miracles combine to bring about a brief world government, with the antichrist as supreme leader. In mock copy of Jesus Christ's resurrection, the Antichrist suffers a fatal wound and then resurrects from the dead. All this produces quite an effect on a troubled dying world.

The Antichrist (also called the beast) does not rule without help. Satan provides a religious counterpart called the False Prophet. Just as the Holy Ghost convinces people to worship Jesus, the False Prophet convinces mankind to worship Antichrist. Satan, also called the Dragon/ Leviathan, gives him power to work miracles and mighty wonders. Together, the Dragon, Antichrist, and the False Prophet compose a satanic trinity. Although the satanic trinity has existed for thousands of years, its power climaxes during the Great Tribulation. People worship the Dragon in heaven; and they worship Antichrist on earth, while the False Prophet inspires and motivates worship toward Antichrist. A full revelation of the satanic trinity is revealed in Revelation chapter 13. The satanic trinity also controls a vast army of spirits and devils which produce miracles to seduce mankind.

**Revelation 13:3-4 (KJV)** *And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

**Revelation 13:14 (KJV)** *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*

**Revelation 16:14 (KJV)** *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

## Image of the Beast

Satan orchestrates a wondrous miracle called the image of the beast. Antichrist erects an image of himself, and the false prophet makes it come alive. The False Prophet also compels mankind to worship the beast and his image; anyone refusing to obey suffers death.

Perhaps the devil employs similar skills as he did when tempting Jesus? Remember he showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment. Supernatural ability produced those visuals and some kind of supernatural skill creates the image of the beast. The False Prophet gives life to the image. He also brings fire down from heaven. (*See chapter: Satan tempts Jesus*)

### Thought to ponder

A machine (or microchip) which allows a spirit's habitation provides all that's required for an inanimate object to animate. Alas, computation facilitating such wondrous technology arrives in the near future. In other words, artificial intelligence is no longer artificial. Perhaps the future is already upon us? Ultimately, everything constructed or procreated is math.

***Revelation 13:13-15 (KJV) And he great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both***

*...speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

### **Thought to ponder**

Technology, especially wireless energy, plays a huge role in orchestrating Satan's omnipresence. The False Prophet is the ultimate high tech wizard. Satan's many titles include the prince of the powers of the air. As Satan harnesses more and more atmospheric components, electrical technology advances. All things in the physical world represent spiritual truth and the computer itself is a type of god. As mankind stares addicted to an image, Satan convincingly manifests deity, Antichrist takes total control of the world's economic systems, and thereby rules mankind.

### **Computers being god**

1. Omniscient- through search engines and god-like memory.
2. Omnipresent- through internet and camera and imaging capacity.
3. Omnipotent- Computerized god like mathematical ability enables genius programmers to control world economies and armies.

***Revelation 13:17-18 (KJV)*** *And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. **18** Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

***Ephesians 2:2*** *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to **the prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

**Revelation 13:4** *And they worshipped the **dragon** which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the **beast**, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

**Revelation 13:11-12** *And I beheld **another beast** coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. **12** And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, **whose deadly wound was healed.***

### **Final judgment on satanic trinity**

**Revelation 19:20** *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

**Revelation 20:10** *And the **devil** that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the **beast** and the **false prophet** are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

Millions of people alive right now know the Bible isn't a fairy tale. They understand human writers did not invent salvation in Jesus Christ. They know Jesus died and rose again, and they should take Him to be their Saviour. God's patience and long-suffering does not wait forever. And people who refuse the real Jesus Christ eventually believe Satan and his lies. God deludes their minds and causes them to believe the devil. If the reader is not a Christian, I urge you to pray Jesus save you now.

## Part Three

### The Kingdom

**Mark 4:30** *And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the **kingdom of God?** or with what comparison shall we compare it?*

**Matthew 4:17** *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the **kingdom of heaven** is at hand.*

God is building a kingdom. The Bible presents the kingdom's story: past, present, and future. Just like the cover of a book encloses each individual page, the concept of God building a kingdom encloses every truth in scripture, from the creation of Adam and Eve, to the future creation of new heaven and a new earth, from the deity of Jesus Christ to Lucifer's damnation. God's kingdom includes heaven, hell, angels, men, women, Israel, the Church, and anything else in existence. Looking at God's program from this perspective, one sees a constant logical plan steadfastly moving toward completion.

Many parables describe and illuminate God's kingdom building plan. Jesus' parables expound on different elements or dimensions of God's kingdom. Sometimes Jesus used the term "kingdom of heaven" other times he uses "kingdom of God" and still other times he says only "kingdom" Why does the Lord do this? What are the differences? The Bible uses discriminating language for significant reasons. Let us strive to understand his vocabulary.

**What is the difference between *kingdom of heaven* and *kingdom of God*?**

A fast answer is the kingdom of God is spiritual while the kingdom of heaven is physical; however, there are overlapping

similarities. As one begins to consider the differences, a good starting point is by observing the words are different. Heaven is not God; God is not heaven. The kingdom of God is spiritual and dwells inside you. It is also the invisible moral righteousness of God. The kingdom of heaven is outside you. It is the tangible, visible elements in God's government; and Israel is center stage. When Jesus was on earth he offered the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. In the Church Age, he offers only the kingdom of God.

**When God uses only the word kingdom, he is referring to its complete holistic form, including kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God.**

***Matthew 6:10** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

***Psalms 45:6** Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.*

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is in the Bible 32 times; it appears only in Gospel of Matthew. Israel is a constant factor and paramount in understanding the kingdom of heaven. On earth, the kingdom of heaven cannot exist apart from the nation of Israel.

The Bible uses the term kingdom of God 69 times. Numerous parables which seem to be identical, but one gospel uses the term *kingdom of God* while another gospel uses *kingdom of heaven*. A discriminating reader learns they are not synonymous. Although similar- and sometimes identical characteristics are present, distinctions must be made. Letting the Bible interpret itself, consider these defining scriptures dealing with the kingdom of God.



**Luke 17:20-21** *And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: **21** Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

**Romans 14:17** *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

These two verses equate the kingdom of God with salvation. In other words, when one believes the gospel it is not heaven that saves a soul; it is Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God is not something physical or tangible. The kingdom of God is spiritual, an invisible realm dealing with moral righteousness. We see the results of righteousness, but we cannot touch it with our hands. It is like the wind. The wind, itself, is invisible, but its strength bends mighty trees, or as the hurricane moves an ocean, only then do we view its awesome power.

God's spiritual righteousness exists even if we can't see it. Consider air, although air is invisible, it accomplishes many things. Air inside a person keeps him alive. Compare this to a person not breathing, no air inside; that person is dead. The person not breathing corresponds to a person without God's spirit; such a person is dead spiritually. In this sense, the kingdom of God inside a person is salvation. Now consider two people standing side by side; one is a Christian with the kingdom of God inside him, the other is an unbeliever; therefore, he does not have the kingdom of God inside him. However, (and here it gets a bit complicated) the life- saving air surrounds them both-thus they are both inside the kingdom. But only one is born again, because only one chooses to believe. For another comparison consider a local church where the Gospel is preached. Many people inside the church are saved, but not everyone. They are all in the building- but not all believe. So

we begin to understand the discriminating separations, and the overlapping similarities of different kingdom descriptions; it is not always easy.

The kingdom of heaven, however, is always physical. It is the observable, political form of the kingdom. The kingdom of heaven is not inside you. It consists of actual thrones and political offices. It is the tangible structure of God's kingdom. Consider the Second Advent- Jesus returns with heaven's armies. Here we definitely observe or see a physical kingdom. One can literally understand the Second Advent as God bringing heaven's government to earth.

In a strictly doctrinal understanding, the kingdom of heaven cannot exist without the nation of Israel. Israel steadfastly remains central to the kingdom of heaven. When Jesus ministered on earth, he offered both the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. When Jesus speaks to Israel all kingdom descriptions are imminent.

Today- in the Church Age, only the kingdom of God is offered. Christians live in the spiritual environment (*kingdom of God*) And we wait for the physical (*kingdom of heaven*) to arrive.

***Luke 12:30-32*** *For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. 32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

## **ISRAEL –PROTOTYPE OF THE KINGDOM**

One of the Bible's great mysteries is God's relationship with Israel. Israel may be viewed as a prototype of the kingdom. *A prototype is an original model on which the coming final product is built.* The kingdom of heaven's capital is Jerusalem. And the kingdom's managers and leaders will be Jewish. This explains

why Satan periodically influences world leaders like Pharaoh, Ahasuerus, Hitler, and scores of others to try and exterminate the Jew. It also explains antisemitism. In theory, if Satan annihilated all Jews, God's kingdom could not exist. But, of course, nothing can stop God's absolute will. Even before Israel existed, God planned his kingdom according to his predestinated plan for Israel.

***Deuteronomy 32:8 (KJV)*** *When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.*

God's Kingdom contains two major human ingredients, the Church and the nation of Israel. Both groups consist of individuals, and all these individuals are citizens in the kingdom. But just as we made a difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven, we must also make a difference here.

***Romans 11:25 (KJV)*** *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

2,000 years older than the Church, Israel remains a physical nation as opposed to a spiritual entity. Unlike the Church, one cannot join Israel by believing in Jesus Christ. To be an Israelite one must be physically born an Israelite. The only biblical exceptions are when a gentile woman marries a male Israeli, and even then ecclesiastical law must concur. In rare cases a legal adoption is accepted. However, being a Jew does not automatically make one a citizen in the Kingdom of God. For an individual to be saved, faith in Jesus Christ is necessary. In other words, being a citizen of Israel does not guarantee personal salvation.

## **Israel populates outer space**

Unlike the Church, the nation of Israel continues to increase in size forever and ever. Consider the promise given to Abraham some 4,000 years ago concerning population increase. These prophecies coincide perfectly with Isaiah 9:7 "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end..."

**Genesis 15:5** *And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.*

**Gen 22:17** *That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;*

To be numbered as the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea demand more room than the earth can hold. When Abraham looked toward heaven, he viewed the kingdom of heaven's destiny. The Jew populates heaven. In the future, a huge difference between Israel and the Church is men and women in Israel continue getting married and having children, whereas men and women in the Church do not reproduce.

**1 Chronicles 27:23** *But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and under: because the LORD had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens.*

**King David's seed and the Levites also promised an infinity reproduction.**

**Jeremiah 33:22** *As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.*

No other nation receives this promise of expansion. Israel stumbles much on her journey to the stars, but her backsliding is only temporary. In righteous anger, God scattered Jews among all nations, but He has not cast away his people or withdrawn his promises. (see also Romans 11).

***Zechariah 7:14*** *But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.*

***Amos 9:9*** *For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain Fall upon the earth.*

Ironically, the Jewish Diaspora determines the future of Gentiles. God is no respecter of persons, but He is a respecter of a nation, and Israel is a nation formed and shaped by God. Indeed, the future is written and settled. All Gentile nations will end. God's word sets in order things to come.

***Jeremiah 46:28*** *Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; **for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee:** but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.*

***Jeremiah 30:11*** *For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: **though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee:** but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.*

***Isaiah 40:17*** *All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.*

Gentile nations continue to exist even beyond the Millennium walking in the light of New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:23-24), but this does not alter the prophecies. Gentile nations come to an end in the distant future, for wherever God scattered the Jew- (and the scattering went to all nations) that nation ends.

During the Millennium, Israel becomes an absolute hegemony, and Gentiles receive blessings through the Jew. Gentile nations submitted to Israel's authority are made partakers of the Abrahamic covenant. They receive inheritance with Israel and assigned a tribe, thus saved nations are assimilated into Israel. Nations not submitted to Israel are destroyed. If all this sounds disturbing remember, at this time, Jesus Christ rules Israel.

***Isaiah 60:12*** *For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*

***Zechariah 8:22-23*** *Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. 23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*

***Matthew 5:13-14*** *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

Even today Jews remain natural born leaders; however, without Jesus Christ they lose effectiveness, or at least their abilities are diminished. Christians often misapply Mt.5 to the

Church. One may apply the passages to the Church in a spiritual or moral sense, but the doctrinal fact remains- Jesus said this to Israel even though they largely rejected him. Jews are the salt of the earth, not Christians.

Read Moses' address in Deuteronomy 29 carefully. Ponder the prophetic weight of the passage. Give scrutiny to the stranger receiving covenant promises. Those people referenced "**not here with us this day**" refers to future saved Gentiles.

***Deuteronomy 29:10-15 (KJV)*** *Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, **11** Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: **12** That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day: **13** That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. **14** Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; **15** But with him that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day.*

### **Israel subsumes all saved Gentiles**

Do not confuse this program with the mission of the Christian Church; the Church does not increase her numbers via physical childbirth. But even the Church; the Gentile Bride of Jesus Christ, becomes Jewish! Israel's history forecasts the future; God's purpose and intent remains constant. Approved Gentile women who married Israel's men were absorbed by Israel and considered Jews. For example Rebecca, Leah, Rachel, Ruth, Bathsheba, etc.-were all Gentiles who became legally Jewish by

marriage and absorbed into their husband's tribe. When Christians marry the Lord Jesus at the Marriage of the Lamb, they join the tribe of Judah.

The absorption of Gentiles into specific Israeli tribes takes place at the end of the Millennium. More accurately, the legal designation and/or assigning tribes happen at that time. Ultimately, every saved human being becomes Jewish!

Prophet Ezekiel deals with Gentiles in more detail. There is tremendous information on the Millennium kingdom of heaven in Chapters 40-48. The Millennium prophecy below provides more evidence for Israel subsuming Gentiles. The strangers are Gentiles.

***Ezekiel 47:21-23*** *So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel. 22 And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. 23 And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord GOD.*

***Daniel 2:44*** *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

***Isaiah 14:1*** *For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.*



**Isaiah 54:3** For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; **and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles**, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

**Zechariah 2:11-13** And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. **12** And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. **13** Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.

**Numbers 15:15** One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD.

**Isaiah 26:15** Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.

**Jeremiah 30:11** For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: **though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee:** but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

## Your Greatest Miracle Salvation

In the John chapter 3, Jesus made a disturbing statement to a man named Nicodemus:

**John 3:3 (KJV)** *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

**Jesus'** statement is disturbing because Nicodemus believed in God, and thought he was prepared to go to heaven, but Jesus implied he was not ready. Nicodemus asks a logical question:

**John 3:4 (KJV)** *Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?*

What exactly does Jesus mean anyway? Being *born again* is synonymous with salvation, in other words, being ready to go to heaven. The most important decision a person can make is to be born again- "Except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

**Have you been born again? Are you absolutely certain you will go to heaven when you die?**

Many people are like Nicodemus. They believe in God, and they believe they're good enough (at least compared to lots of other people.) Besides, with so much religious confusion, what else can a person possibly do other than be good?

### **Consider this:**

Since Jesus said “you must be born again” therefore there was a time in your life when you were not born again. Do you remember when you were not born again?

Compare this question to asking a married couple when they got married. A married person may forget the day or the year of the wedding, but it is very unlikely anyone forgets being single. In other words, they remember when they were not married. Lots of people forget the exact date of their anniversary, but no one forgets the wedding happened.

### **Do you remember when you were not saved?**

**If you can't remember being lost, you are probably not saved.**

Imagine standing before God on Judgment Day, and God asks. **What have you done to deserve heaven?** What is your answer? Below is a sampling of wrong answers:

Basically I'm a good person.  
Although I'm a sinner, I did my best.  
I am generous with my money.  
I help people whenever I can.  
I'm not that bad, compared to some.  
I believe in God.  
I go to church.  
I pray.  
I have been baptized.  
I have been confirmed.

These answers are all wrong because they imply a person must earn heaven by good works. Most people believe they are good enough to get to heaven on their own moral conduct. They

conclude a loving God lets them in because they're not that bad. But this conclusion rejects one's personal need for a Saviour. What is your belief, your own works or Jesus Christ? When you stand before God, do you want to get just what you deserve?

Personal moral goodness does not earn salvation. One can be religiously and morally good and still reject Jesus Christ. Actually, this is the difference between Christianity and all other religions. After all is said and done, every other religion (including secular humanism) teaches the way people behave (moral conduct) earns their eternal reward. While Christianity teaches the only way to heaven is by making Jesus Christ your personal Saviour. Through faith, God covers your sin with His blood, and gives you the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Salvation is a gift; accepting that gift by faith is the only thing a person can do.

**In our natural** condition we are separated from God by our sin. The whole world is a morally fallen mess. No one is born righteous, good, or in love with God. There comes a time in your life when you must make a choice. And the choice is to get saved or to stay lost.

Have you ever acknowledged your own lost condition? A person can actually believe the Bible and still be trusting in his/her own good works. A lot of church going folks never call on the Lord for their own personal salvation. Do you remember a time in your life when you prayed for the Lord Jesus Christ to save you? If your answer is no, or you are not sure, read the verses below and do it now.

***Romans 10:13 (KJV)*** *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

**There is no other way. No other religion. No other God but the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, alone, is the Saviour of your soul.**

**John 14:6 (KJV)** *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

**1 John 5:12-13 (KJV)** *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

**John 3:15-17 (KJV)** *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

**John 14:9 (KJV)** *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?*

**Romans 10:9-13 (KJV)** *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

**The verses below are God's conclusion on the moral goodness of mankind. As you can see, any bragging about personal goodness is pride and foolishness.**

**Romans 3:10-18 (KJV)** *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: **11** There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. **12** They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. **13** Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: **14** Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: **15** Their feet are swift to shed blood: **16** Destruction and misery are in their ways: **17** And the way of peace have they not known: **18** There is no fear of God before their eyes.*

According to God's Word, we are all sinners and in need of repentance. Repentance means being willing to change or turn from old attitudes, and ideas about God, just as much as it means being willing to change behavior. It may be your life style isn't all that bad, but have you been saved?

Going to church, giving money to worthy causes, and moral goodness is commendable, but beware; you can be a good person and still be lost. When it comes to getting into heaven, the only righteousness God accepts is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And the only way to get Christ's righteousness is to believe in Him and ask Jesus to save you. When a person makes Jesus his/her Saviour, Jesus imputes or gives His righteousness to them.

**Romans 3:21-25 (KJV)** *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; **22** Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for*

*there is no difference: **23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; **24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: **25** Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; s righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;*

***Ephesians 2:8-9 (KJV)** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: **9** Not of works, lest any man should boast. **John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

***Romans 10:9-13 (KJV)** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **11** For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. **12** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. **13** For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

Salvation is in Christ alone. There is no other way. No other God. Without Jesus Christ as your Saviour you are lost.

End

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Joseph Dulmage born 1955, in Detroit Michigan: As a Christian chaplain in The Life Connections Program, he has worked in several federal prisons. He served as the Director of Prisoner Aftercare with Volunteers of America, National Office. Previously, Chaplain Dulmage worked as the Facilitator of the Life Connections Program in FCI Milan. He has been an educator, and contributing writer for Truthought Corrective Thinking, LLC. Graduated from Eastern Michigan University, B.S., Secondary Education, History/ Social Studies. Most importantly, Joseph Dulmage was forgiven of his sins when he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and he was born again. That happened in 1975.