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What You Need to Know About Jesus' Miracles: Demon Casting

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT JESUS' MIRACLES (Part Three)

Special Introduction to the Three-Fold Topical Study Overviewing The Miracles Performed by Jesus Christ

- Study Number One **dealt** with His miracles of healing
- Study Number Two **dealt** with His miracles of feeding, financing, judging and protecting
- Study Number Three **deals** with His miracles of demon casting and resurrecting

Here is a listing of His 33 recorded miracles, followed by an arrangement of the various topical classifications involved.

LISTING OF THE MIRACLES

1. Turning water into wine
2. Healing a nobleman's son at Cana
3. Healing a lame man at the pool of Bethesda
4. First miraculous catch of fish
5. Delivering a synagogue demoniac
6. Healing Peter's mother-in-law
7. Cleansing a leper
8. Healing a paralytic
9. Healing a man with a shriveled hand
10. Healing a centurion's servant
11. Raising a widow's son
12. Healing a blind and mute demoniac
13. Stilling a storm
14. Delivering the Gadarene demoniacs
15. Healing a woman with an issue of blood
16. Raising Jairus' daughter
17. Healing two blind men
18. Delivering a mute demon
19. Feeding the 5,000
20. Walking on the water
21. Delivering a Syrophenician's daughter
22. Healing a deaf mute in Decapolis
23. Feeding 4,000
24. Healing a blind man at Bethsaida
25. Delivering a demon-possessed boy
26. Finding the tax money
27. Healing a man born blind
28. Healing a crippled woman on the Sabbath
29. Healing a man with dropsy
30. Raising of Lazarus

31. Cleansing ten lepers
32. Healing a blind Bartimaeus
33. Cursing the fig tree
34. Restoring Malchus' ear
35. Second miraculous catch of fish

CLASSIFICATION OF THE MIRACLES

A. Healing: Sixteen miracles

1. Lepers (see miracles 7, 31)
2. The blind (17, 24, 27, 32)
3. The deaf (22)
4. The deformed (9)
5. The crippled (3)
6. The fever-ridden (2, 6)
7. The maimed (34)
8. The paralyzed (8, 10)
9. Continuous bleeding (15)
10. Dropsy (29)

B. Casting out of demons: Seven miracles

1. Man in a synagogue (see miracle 5)
2. A blind and mute demoniac (12)
3. The Gadarene demoniac (14)
4. A mute demoniac (18)
5. Daughter of a Syrophenician mother (21)
6. A boy at the base of Mt. Hermon (25)
7. Woman in a synagogue (28)

C. Financing: One miracle

1. Fish with a coin in its mouth (see miracle 26)

D. Feeding: Five miracles

1. Turning water into wine (see miracle 1)
2. First catch of fish (4)
3. Feeding of the 5000 (19)
4. Feeding of the 4000 (23)
5. Second catch of fish (35)

E. Protecting: Two miracles

1. Stilling a storm (see miracle 13)
2. Walking on water (20)

- F. Resurrecting: Three miracles
1. Raising a widow's son (see miracle 11)
 2. Raising Jairus' daughter (16)
 3. Raising of Lazarus (30)

- G. Judging: One miracle
1. Cursing a fig tree (see miracle 33)

STUDY NUMBER THREE: HIS MIRACLES OF DEMON CASTING AND RESURRECTING

SEVEN INVOLVING DEMON CASTING

Delivering a Demoniac in a Capernaum Synagogue (Mark 1:23-28; Luke 4:31-36)

SURVEY

Jesus was teaching on this occasion when He was suddenly and violently confronted by a demon-possessed man. The evil spirit immediately recognized Jesus as the Son of God, and, at the Savior's command, left his victim.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of seven miracles where Jesus casts out evil spirits. For the other instances, see miracles 12, 14, 18, 21, 25, and 28.
- This is the first of at least 3 occasions when evil spirits gave terrified testimony that Jesus was indeed God's Son. Note:

"And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God" (Mark 3:11).

"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" (Luke 4:41).

James would later write of this:

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

- This marks the first miracle performed in a synagogue.

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- It can be truly said that in the demonic world, unlike the world of sinful men, there are no atheists! These evil spirits knew exactly with whom they were dealing. Note:
 1. The demon called Him "Jesus of Nazareth," acknowledging the Savior's humanity.
 2. The demon called Him, "thou Son of God," acknowledging the Savior's deity.

Delivering a Blind and Mute Demoniac (Matt. 12:22; Luke 11:14)

SURVEY

Jesus delivers this poor wretched man of his demon, and restores both his speech and sight. The wicked Pharisees thereupon accuse Him of doing this miracle through the power of Satan.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is both the shortest and most action-packed of all His miracles!

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus probably did more for the person involved than can be found in any other miracle. It would be difficult to imagine being in a more desperate situation than the one that is described at this point. Here was a blind, deaf, mute, and demon-possessed man. But then Jesus passed by. And the results?
 1. The man could see.
 2. The man could hear.
 3. The man could speak.
 4. The man could worship.
- Thus, in a split second he received sight, sound, speech, and (probably) salvation.
- The charge by the wicked Pharisees that He had done this miracle through the power of Satan prompted Jesus to warn them in regards to the unpardonable sin.

"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils... 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. 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" (Matt. 12:24, 31-32).

Delivering the Maniac of Gadara (Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39)

SURVEY

Upon stepping ashore in the land of Gadara, Jesus is confronted by and speaks to the leader of a band of demons who were possessing a violent and uncontrollable maniac. The Savior orders them to leave the victim, and, at their request, permits them to enter a herd of nearby pigs, which results in the death of those animals by drowning as they plunge into the Sea of Galilee.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is perhaps the most graphic and terrifying account of demon possession in all the Bible. Note the recorded facts regarding this man:
 1. His home— "*Who had his dwelling among the tombs*" (Mark 5:3).
 2. His helplessness
 - a. He was naked (Luke 8:27)
 - b. He was "exceeding fierce" (Matt. 8:28)
 - c. He was totally unmanageable (Mark 5:3-4)
 - d. He was constantly crying and cutting himself with stones (Mark 5:5)
 - e. He was seized upon and driven about by a legion of demons (Luke 8:29; Mark 5:9) The usage of the word *legion* here may indicate the man was possessed by as many as 6000 demons.
- This shows just how many fallen angels there may be if Satan could afford to spare 6000 on a worthless madman!
- It is the only recorded extended conversation between Jesus and a demon.
- This is the first of two occasions on which Jesus performed a miracle in a way that had destructive results (the death of the pigs). The other miracle was the withering of the fig tree (Matt. 21:19)
- This is the only miracle where Jesus instructed the recipient as follows: "*Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee*" (Mark 5:19).

This is in stark contrast as seen in the other healing miracles where Jesus commanded the healed **not** to tell anyone!

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- What a contrast is seen in this wretched demoniac following his glorious conversion: He now is:
 1. Sitting, not screaming.
 2. Praising, not cursing.
 3. Dressed, not naked.
 4. In his right mind, not insane.
 5. A convert of Christ, not a captive of Satan.
- This account might well be entitled, *"How A Madman Became a Missionary."* We have previously observed Jesus' instructions that he should tell others what had been done, which he did.
"And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel"(Mark 5:20)

Decapolis (literally, *"ten cities"*) was a league of ten cities characterized by high Greek culture, allied together for purposes of trading. All but one city (Scythopolis) were east of the Galilean Sea and Jordan River. This convert thus became the greatest missionary to Gentiles since the preacher to Nineveh, Jonah the prophet.

- Why did the demons desire the bodies of pigs? Several reasons have been suggested:
 1. To kill Jesus and his disciples. Few animals are more dangerous than angry wild pigs.
 2. To turn the community against Jesus by drowning the pigs. If this was the plan, they succeeded.

Note the tragic reaction of the crowd:

"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... 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"(Luke 8:35, 37).

- These people were more interested in money than in men. They preferred gold to God. They wanted their pigs more than they desired what Christ had to offer. John Oxenham has vividly captured their tragic philosophy in his poem:

Rabbi, begone!
Thy powers bring loss to us and ours; Our ways are not as Thine—
Thou lovest men—we swine.

O get Thee gone, O Holy One,
And take these fools of Thine;
Their souls? What care we for their souls?
Since we have lost our swine.

Then Christ went sadly,
He had wrought for them a sign
Of love and tenderness divine—
They wanted swine.

Christ stands without your door and gently knocks,
But if your gold or swine the entrance blocks
He forces no man's hold, He will depart,
And leave you to the treasures of your heart.

From "*Gadara*, A.D. 31"

- Note the terrible fear exhibited by this horde of demons in the presence of Jesus:
 1. They knew him—"*And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?*" (Matt. 8:29).
 2. They feared him—"*Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*" (Matt. 8:29) "*I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not*" (Mark 5:7b)
- They apparently knew about future judgment. Various New Testament writers attest to this judgment of fallen angels.
 1. Paul: "*Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?*" (1 Cor. 6:3).
 2. Peter: "*For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment*" (2 Peter 2:4).
 3. Jude: "*And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*" (Jude 6).

In fact, Jesus said that hell itself was originally created for the devil and his angels, all of which will eventually spend eternity there.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). "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" (Rev. 20:10).

- The account in Matthew's gospel informs us there were actually **two** demon-possessed men on this occasion (Matt. 8:28). One wonders what happened to the other man. Was he also gloriously delivered? Or, tragically, would he be like the unrepentant thief on the cross? (See Luke 24:39-43)

Delivering a Mute Demoniac (Matt. 9:32-33)

SURVEY

Jesus heals this poor man who immediately begins to speak, causing the watching crowd to gasp in amazement.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the second of two occasions where Jesus was accused of performing His miracles in the energy of Satan. These two are:
 1. *"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (Matt. 12:24).*
 2. *"But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils" (Matt. 9:34)*
- On four other later occasions the wicked Pharisees would accuse Jesus of preaching His messages by the power of the devil.
 1. *"The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?" (John 7:20).*
 2. *"Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" (John 8:48).*
 3. *"Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death" (John 8:52).*
 4. *"And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?" (John 10:20).*

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Charles Wesley's great hymn, "*O For A Thousand Tongues*", beautifully summarizes this miracle. Note the words of stanza number five:

*"Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb,
Your loosened tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Savior come;
And leap, ye lame, for joy."*

- Note the testimony of the crowd following this miracle:

"It was never so seen in Israel" (Matt. 9:33).

How true, for there was never such a man so seen in Israel as this man! Note the following testimonies which confirm this fact:

1. Nicodemus
"The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2).
2. His hometown people
"And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" (Matt. 13:54-55).
3. Some soldiers in Jerusalem
"Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man" (John 7:45-46).

Delivering a Syrophenician's Daughter (Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30)

SURVEY

Jesus begins this miracle by testing the faith of the desperate Gentile mother who begged Him to heal her demon-possessed daughter.

- The Messiah: *"It is not right to take the children's bread (a reference to the Jews) and feed it to dogs (a reference to Gentiles)."*
The mother: *"Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."*

Needless to say, she had passed the test with flying colors and her daughter was delivered that very instant.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the only miracle where Jesus was temporarily silent and non-committal in regard to a miracle for healing.
- It is the second of two miracles involving a young girl. For the first, see miracle 16.

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Note how Matthew introduces this miracle: "*A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, Lord . . . have mercy on me!*" (Matt. 15:22).

W. L. Pettingill writes:

It will not be forgotten that this woman was a Gentile, and not only a Gentile, but a Canaanite, a representative of that race which was under God's peculiar curse. 'Thou shalt drive out the Canaanites'—this was the word to Israel upon their entering the land of Canaan; and the promise of Zechariah 14:21, looking forward to the restored land and restored temple worship, says, 'In that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts.' But grace is without any limit and overleaps all obstacles. Through Israel's failure, this despised outcast receives the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich. It is at first a most astonishing thing to see the Lord Jesus refusing to respond to this woman's cry of need. It is so unlike him, whose ears are always open to the slightest call upon his name. But he cannot answer her. She is calling upon him as the Son of David; and so he is, but as such—as Son of David—he has nothing to do with a Canaanite. (*The Gospel of the Kingdom, Fundamental Truth Publishers, Findlay, Ohio, p. 183.*)

- Usually it was the fickle crowds that kept seekers from Him, but on this occasion and at least one other, it was the disciples themselves! Note:
 1. "*But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us*" (Matt. 15:23).
 2. "*Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them*" (Matt. 19:13).
- This young girl now joins a number of demon-possessed females to be delivered by Jesus. Note:

1. *"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"* (Mark 16:9).
2. *"And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils"*(Luke 8:2).

Delivering a Demon-Possessed Boy (Matt. 17:14-18; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:38-42)

SURVEY

A desperate father begs Jesus to deliver his tormented son from a cruel and vicious demon who would cause him to fall into fire and water, cast him to the ground, throw him into convulsions, and was slowly killing him. Note the ensuing conversation:

The father: *"If you can do anything, please do it."*
 The Savior: *"If you believe, I can do all things."*
 The father: *"Lord, I believe—help thou my unbelief."*

With this, Jesus rebuked the evil spirit and freed the son.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the final of three instances in which Jesus would supernaturally minister to an only child.
 1. He raised from the dead the only son of a widow (Luke 7:12).
 2. He raised from the dead the only daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:42).
- It is the only miracle showing the utter inability of the disciples to help the person in need.
 1. As testified to by the father
"And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not" (Luke 9:40).
 2. As testified to by the disciples themselves
"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?"(Matt. 17:19).
- This is the second of two of the most frightful and graphic descriptions regarding the horrors of demon possession in the entire Bible! For the first, see miracle 14.

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Leaving the Mount of Transfiguration, our Lord enters the valley of disfiguration. On the mountain, the friends of heaven (Moses and Elijah) had comforted Him. In the valley, the foes of hell would challenge Him! In essence, these words serve to summarize Jesus' ministry and mission. He left the glories of heaven and the worship of angels to endure the grief of earth and the wickedness of men.
- As His faithful followers we are called upon to do the same. Note Paul's words:

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ"(2 Cor. 1:3-5).

Thus, in church the believer may sing about "The Sweet By and By" but upon leaving, he enters the world of the "Nasty Now and Now!"

- Note the Father's struggle for faith:

"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief"(Mark 9:24).

This kind of struggling, desperate faith, even though plagued with doubt, will reach the heart of God immediately. The psalmist spoke of this:

"Like a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust"(Psa. 103:13-14).

Question: *How much faith does it take to please God?*

Response: *How much faith do you have?*

Illustration: *Let us suppose you face a million-dollar need but only have a 10-dollar bill. God's plan in solving this is both gracious and simple: Give Him your 10 dollars and he will add the remaining \$999,990. However small our faith, He wants it all. Our problem, however, is that all too often we shortchange Him on the 10 dollars.*

- Why could not the disciples help this desperate father and his demon-possessed son?

On two previous occasions, they had been able to cast out demons.

"And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them"(Mark 6:13).

"And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord even the devils are subject unto us through thy name"(Luke 10:17).

Why then could they not help this heartbroken father? There were at least four reasons.

1. They had too little faith (Matt. 17:20)
2. They had too little self-denial (Mark 9:29)
3. They had too little prayer (Mark 9:29)
4. They had too much bickering (Mark 9:14)

It is so easy to become an Ichabod Christian (meaning *"the glory of the Lord hath departed"*) (see 1 Sam. 4:21-22) without even being aware of it until the crisis comes.

The Old Testament strongman Samson serves as a classic and tragic example of this very thing!

"That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man. And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him"(Judges 16:17-20).

Healing a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10-17)

SURVEY

Jesus encountered this woman who had been bent over for 18 long years while He was teaching in a synagogue. Calling her forward, He said:

"Woman, you are set free from your infirmity."

He then laid hands on her and she immediately straightened up and praised God!

SIGNIFICANCE

- Jesus uses His sharpest rebuke yet in performing this miracle, saying to the critical synagogue ruler, "THOU HYPOCRITE!"
- It is the third of three miracles where the actual number of years is given in regard to the length of their suffering.
 1. In this case, 18 years (Luke 13:11)
 2. That of a woman with an issue of blood, 12 years (Matt. 9:20)
 3. That of a crippled man, 38 years (John 5:5)

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- This woman was probably a believer. Jesus refers to her as *"a daughter of Abraham."* In addition, the text indicates that she was a faithful member of the synagogue (Luke 13:10-11).
- In spite of this, she had been bound by Satan for nearly two decades. Here it should be said that although Satan (or his fallen angels) cannot possess a believer, he can oppress and physically afflict a child of God. There are two classic examples of this satanic physical affliction in the Scriptures.
 1. The example of Job (Job 1-2)—*"So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown"* (Job 2:7).
 2. The example of Paul—*"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure"* (2 Cor. 12:7).
- During His meeting with Cornelius, Simon Peter would speak of this:

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

THREE INVOLVING RESURRECTING

Raising a Widow's Son (Luke 7:11-15)

SURVEY

Jesus meets a funeral procession as He enters the little town of Nain. They were sorrowing over the death of a widow's only son. Approaching the coffin He orders the body to rise, which it does, filling the heart of the grief-stricken mother with joy.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This marks the first of three persons raised from the dead by Christ. The other two are Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:54-56) and Lazarus (John 11:43). The last resurrection had occurred some seven centuries previous to this when the bones of Elisha had restored to life a young man (2 Kings 13:20-22).
- This is the first recorded instance in which Jesus was recognized by the Jewish crowds as a prophet, although the earliest acknowledgment came from a non-Jewish Samaritan woman (see John 4:19).
 1. Jesus called himself a prophet (Matt. 13:57; John 4:44).
 2. Herod Antipas suspected it (Matt. 14:5).
 3. The crowds on two future occasions would acknowledge it.
 - a. During the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:40)
 - b. During the triumphal entry (Matt. 21:11)
 4. The 5,000 men Christ fed believed it (John 6:14).
 5. A former blind man testified to it (John 9:17).
 6. The two disciples en route to Emmaus spoke of it (Luke 24:19).

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- It has been rightly observed that Jesus provided no specific instructions to pastors in regards to the proper conducting of funerals, for He simply dismissed the service by raising the deceased!
- Note the reaction of the amazed crowd:

"God hath visited his people" (Luke 7:16).

This was a direct fulfillment of Zacharias' prophecy given during the circumcision ceremony of his infant son, John the Baptist.

"And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his

people...Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us" (Luke 1:67-68, 78).

Raising Jairus' Daughter (Matt. 9:18-19, 23-26; Mark 5:22-24, 35-43; Luke 8:41-42, 49-56)

SURVEY

At Jairus' request, Jesus agrees to minister to his dying daughter, but the father is told en route that she was already dead. Ignoring this bad news Jesus comforts him, and, entering the little girl's room, raises her up!

SIGNIFICANCE

- There are three "firsts" associated with this miracle:
It is the first time in human history that a female was raised from the dead.
 1. It is the first mention of that special apostolic trio, Peter, James and John. They would be singled out again:
 - a. On the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1)
 - b. In the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:33)
 2. It is the first time the word "sleep" is used to describe the death of a believer. After this, its employment will become very familiar:
 - a. Concerning the death of Lazarus— "*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*" (John 11:11).
 - b. Concerning an event after the death of Christ— "*And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose*" (Matt. 27:52).
 - c. Concerning the martyrdom of Stephen— "*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*" (Acts 7:60).
 - d. Concerning the bodies of departed believers at the present time— "*For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him*" (1 Thess. 5:9-10).
 - e. Concerning the rapture— "*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*" (1 Thess. 4:14).

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Note the pessimistic statement from the officiating clergyman on that occasion:

"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?" (Mark 5:35).

Wrong. This is precisely the time for a believer to *"trouble . . . the Master."* As the song admonishes:

"Got any rivers you think are uncrossable?
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?
God specializes in things thought impossible.
What He's done for others, He'll do for you!"

- This pessimism would later be heard, this time by a crowd at Jericho in regards to the cry of blind Bartimaeus:

"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. 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...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" (Mark 10:47-48, 52).

Raising of Lazarus (John 11:17-44)

SURVEY

After comforting Lazarus' grieving sisters, Mary and Martha, in their hour of sorrow following Lazarus' death, and expressing His own personal grief, Jesus visits the tomb of the dead man. He then utters four statements:

- To Martha: *"take away the stone"*
- To His Father: *"thank you for hearing me. I do this that those watching may believe that you sent me."*
- To Lazarus: *"Lazarus come out!"*
- To those standing by: *"take off the grave clothes and let him go."*

SIGNIFICANCE

- More space is given over to this miracle than to any other of the thirty-five performed by Jesus.
- More individuals are mentioned by name here than can be found in any other miracle (Lazarus, Mary, Martha, and Thomas).
- It marks the final of three occasions where Jesus raised someone from the dead. For the first two, see miracles 11 and 16.

- This is the first of three great cries from the lips of the Savior. All three have to do with the glorious subject of resurrection.
 1. The cry from the cemetery: *"Lazarus, come forth."*
 2. The cry from the cross: *"Jesus when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost 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; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose."* (Matt. 27:50-52)
 3. The cry from the clouds: *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first"* (1 Thess. 4:16).
- Humanly speaking, this miracle would lead to the death of Jesus.

"Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death" (John 11:53).

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Lazarus, Mary and Martha lived in Bethany, a little Jewish town two miles east of the Mount of Olives. At least four key events would transpire here in the life of Jesus.
 1. The resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:44)
 2. His anointing by Mary (Matt. 26:6)
 3. The starting point for His triumphal entry (Mark 11:1)
 4. His final blessing upon the disciples just prior to the ascension (Luke 24:50)
- Observe the frequency of the names Lazarus, Mary, and Martha in John 11:
 1. Lazarus is mentioned six times (11:1, 2, 5, 11, 14, 43).
 2. Mary is mentioned seven times (11:1, 2, 19, 20, 28, 31, 32).
 3. Martha is mentioned eight times (11:1, 5, 19, 20, 21, 24, 30, 39).
- The reason for this can be seen by a statement made during Christ's Good Shepherd sermon, preached just prior to this: *"He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out"* (John 10:3).
- John Chapter 11 can be favorably compared with John Chapter 9.
 1. In John 9 Jesus used the tragedy of blindness as an opportunity to manifest the power of God.

"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:3).

2. In John 11 Jesus used the tragedy of death as an opportunity to manifest the glory of God.

"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" (John 11:4)

3. Both chapters thus refute that terrible lie which claims all suffering is a result of personal sin.
4. More information is provided regarding these two miracles than any other of the 35 Jesus performed.
5. Both miracles would only further harden the hearts of Jesus' enemies.

Note:

"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" (John 9:24).

"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 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...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" (John 11:47-48, 57).

- Upon hearing of Jesus' decision to attend Lazarus' funeral and raise him from the dead, Thomas expressed grave doubts:

"Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11:16).

The New Testament relates three incidents between Thomas and Christ. The Gospel of John records all three. In each of them he lives up to his reputation as Doubting Thomas.

1. Here he doubts the power of Christ.
2. In the Upper Room he doubts the promise of Christ. *"Thomas saith unto him, Lord we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5).*
3. After the resurrection he at first doubted the very person of Christ. (John 20:24-29)

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 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 20:24-25).

- We note that he waited until Lazarus had been dead for four days. He may have done this because of the superstition among the Jews that after death the spirit hovered over the body for three days, and a resurrection up to that time was at least remotely possible. But after this period, all hope was gone.
- Martha, and not Mary, is the heroine of this story. (See Luke 10:38-42 where the opposite was true.)
 1. It was Martha who went to meet Jesus while Mary remained in the house. (John 11:20)
 2. Martha's great testimony here ranks equally as important as that given by Simon Peter on another occasion.

Both contain similar language, but Martha offered hers under far more difficult circumstances:

1. Peter's testimony
"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16).
 2. Martha's testimony
"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? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (John 11:25-27).
- Martha's words to Mary here are the most beneficial and blessed ones a believer can give to another believer in the hour of greatest need.

"She went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee" (John 11:28).

- Upon meeting Jesus, Mary said the exact same thing Martha had just said:

"Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died... 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" (John 11:21, 32).

To rephrase the little poem: "The most useless words of tongue or pen, are these four words, 'IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN!'"

- The account tells us of Jesus' sorrow at this time:

"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept" (John 11:33-35).

- This contains the shortest verse in the English Bible, but in some ways it is the longest. This is the first of at least three occasions on which our Lord wept.

1. He wept over the city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41).
2. He wept in Gethsemane--*"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared"* (Heb. 5:7).

- What caused his tears?

1. He wept because of his true humanity (see Heb. 4:14-16).
2. He wept because of the wicked men he saw around him (see John 11:37, 46).
3. He wept (according to an early Christian tradition) because He was soon to bring Lazarus back from the bliss of paradise to this earthly vale of tears!

- Twice we read of Jesus groaning (John 11:33, 38). The Greek word here is *embrim*, suggesting anger. It is translated "indignation" in Mark 14:5. Thus, the groanings of Christ may have indicated his grief and anger over death itself, a tragic (and unnecessary) result of Adam's sin. (See Rom. 5:12)

- Standing outside the tomb that contained the body of Lazarus, Jesus gives some specific and pointed instructions:

Here we see an example of that desired cooperation God seeks between the Savior and the soul winner in raising dead sinners to newness of life. Jesus issued three commands in accomplishing this miracle. The first and third were directed toward the friends of the corpse, while the second was given to the corpse itself. Note:

1. *"Take ye away the stone"* (John 11:39). The job of the soul winner is to first remove all human barriers so that Christ can come in direct contact with a lost person.
2. *"Lazarus, come forth"* (John 11:43). Only Christ, of course, can do this.
3. *"Loose him, and let him go"* (John 11:44). In a word, this speaks of discipleship, that is, ministering to the new convert.