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## The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Miracles 11-15

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## THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST

### Miracles #11-15:

11. Raising a widow's son
12. Healing a blind and mute demoniac
13. Stilling a storm
14. Delivering the maniac of Gadara
15. Healing a woman with an issue of blood

### ELEVEN: Raising a Widow's Son (Lk. 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 (Lk. 8:54-56) and Lazarus (Jn. 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 (Mt. 13:57; Jn. 4:44).
  2. Herod Antipas suspected it (Mt. 14:5).
  3. The crowds on two future occasions would acknowledge it:
    - a. During the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7:40)
    - b. During the triumphal entry (Mt. 21:11)
  4. The 5,000 men Christ fed believed it (Jn. 6:14).
  5. A former blind man testified to it (Jn. 9:17).
  6. The two disciples en route to Emmaus spoke of it (Lk.24:19).

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- It has been rightly observed that Jesus provided no specific instructions to pastors in regard 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." (Lk. 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" (Lk. 1:67-68, 78).*

## **TWELVE: Delivering a Blind and Mute Demoniac (Mt. 12:22; Lk. 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!
- 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 regard 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." (Mt. 12:24, 31-32)*

## THIRTEEN: Stilling a Storm (Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-29)

### SURVEY

The disciples were caught in a furious storm on the Sea of Galilee which threatened to sink their boat. Awakening Jesus, who had fallen into an exhausted sleep in the ship's stern, the terrified men cried out: "Lord, save us from drowning!" The Savior then stood up and rebuked both the wind and the waves, resulting in a great calm.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the only recorded reference to Jesus being asleep.
- It is the first of two occasions where Jesus saved His disciples from drowning. See also miracle 20.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- One of the most famous Old Testament miracles had to do with a sleeping Hebrew prophet in a boat during a storm. One of the most famous New Testament miracles also had to do with a sleeping Hebrew prophet in a boat during a storm. The Old Testament prophet was Jonah. The New Testament prophet was Jesus. The second would later use the experience of the first as a sign to an unbelieving generation:  
*"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whales belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* (Mt. 12:40)
- Note the phrase, *"they took him even as he was."* Our Lord was a real man, with dirt under His fingernails, sweat on His brow, and on this occasion, weariness in His bones.
- The Greek word here refers to a violent storm, a furious squall of hurricane proportion. The Sea of Galilee, situated in a basin surrounded by mountains, is particularly susceptible to sudden, violent storms. Cool air from the Mediterranean is drawn down through the narrow mountain passes connecting the two bodies of water, and clashes with the hot, humid air lying over the lake. Thus, in a matter of seconds, the quiet Galilean waters can be turned into a howling, life-threatening watery nightmare for all those sailing upon it.
- Note the words as recorded by Mark's account:  
*"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."* (Mk. 4:39)

The language of this verse strongly suggests that the vicious storm may have been caused by satanic activity, perhaps in an attempt to drown Jesus.

1. The Greek word for rebuke is *epitimao*, a word Jesus used in denouncing both Satan and his demons.
    - a. The rebuking of demons (Lk. 9:42; Mt. 17:18)
    - b. The rebuking of Satan (Mk. 8:33; Jude 1:9)
  2. The Greek word for peace, *phimoo*, used only here and in Mk. 1:25 (where Jesus denounced a demon), means literally, "be muzzled, be gagged." This action often referred to the muzzling of a wild dog.
- There are many lessons to be learned today from this miracle. Three questions should be asked when the storms of life beset the Christian.
    1. Is this storm one of punishment or purification? That is, am I being chastened for my sin (as was true in the case of Jonah), or is this simply a trial allowed by God to purify me (as was true here with the disciples)?
    2. Have I made room for Him on board? Am I aware of His presence?
    3. What does He want me to do in the time of the storm? In a nutshell, three things:
      - a. He wants me to thank Him for the storm. *"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."* (1 Thess. 5:18)
      - b. He wants me to fellowship with Him in the storm. *"Pray without ceasing."* (1 Thess. 5:17)
      - c. He wants me to trust Him through the storm. *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."* (Prov. 3:5-6)

#### **FOURTEEN: Delivering the Maniac of Gadara (Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 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*" (Mk. 5:3)
  2. His helplessness
    - a. He was naked (Lk. 8:27).
    - b. He was "exceeding fierce" (Mt. 8:28).

- c. He was totally unmanageable (Mk. 5:3-4).
- d. He was constantly crying and cutting himself with stones (Mk. 5:5).
- e. He was seized upon and driven about by a legion of demons (Lk. 8:29; Mk. 5:9). The usage of the word legion here may indicate the man was possessed by as many as 6,000 demons.
- This shows just how many fallen angels there may be if Satan could afford to spare 6,000 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 (Mt. 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"* (Mk. 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."* (Mk. 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."* (Lk. 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?"* (Mt. 8:29)
  2. They feared Him—*"Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"* (Mt. 8:29)  
*"I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not."* (Mk. 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 Pet. 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."* (Mt. 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 (Mt. 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 Lk. 24:39-43.)

**FIFTEEN: Healing a Woman with an Issue of Blood (Mt. 9:20-22; Mk. 5:25-34; Lk. 8:43-48)**

**SURVEY**

A woman who had suffered with internal bleeding for twelve years, being unable to be helped by her physicians, approaches Jesus in a crowd and by faith touches the hem of His garment, resulting in her immediate healing.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the only miracle where the person in need touched Jesus first.
- It is the only time where Jesus uses the title "daughter." On a previous occasion He had referred to a paralytic who had been healed as "son" (Mt. 9:2).

**SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- This poor woman's condition carried with it religious and social (as well as physical) consequences. According to Leviticus 15:19-30, she would have been considered unclean for twelve long years. Note also she had spent all her resources on her problem. Thus, she was pain-wracked, penniless, and prohibited from social gatherings. But then, we read, she ... *"heard of Jesus."*
- Luke describes the aftermath of this healing as follows:



*"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? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." (Lk. 8:45-46)*

- The two statements of Jesus here point out two profound insights concerning His earthly ministry.

1. His total dependence upon the Holy Spirit:

Note His question, *"Who touched me?"* Even though Christ retained His divine attributes (His omnipresence, His omnipotence, His omniscience) upon coming to earth, He chose not to use them in an independent way, but depended upon the Holy Spirit to lead, advise, and empower Him. In other words, Jesus may not have known at that moment who touched Him. A similar example can be seen later when He was asked concerning the date of the second coming.

His answer was: *"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father"* (Mk. 13:32). (See also Mt. 4:1; Jn. 5:19; Phil. 2:5-8.)

2. The awful demands upon His physical body:

Note His statement, *"Virtue is gone out of me."* The Greek word for virtue here is *dunamis*, and refers to power or strength. How taxing it must have been upon His body to perform His mighty miracles.

A hint of this may be seen through a statement made by some Pharisees during a confrontation with Jesus. Note:

*"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." (Jn. 8:56-58)*

The point of the above is that Jesus apparently looked to be much older than He really was, being mistaken for nearly fifty (an advanced age back then) when in reality He had yet to celebrate His thirty-third birthday! Caring for the sick in the world and, at the same time, carrying the sins of the world was exhausting labor indeed!