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The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Miracles 16-20

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THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST

Miracles #16-20:

16. Raising Jairus' daughter
17. Healing two blind men
18. Delivering a mute demon
19. Feeding the 5,000
20. Walking on the water

SIXTEEN: Raising Jairus' Daughter (Mt. 9:18-19, 23-26; Mk. 5:22-24, 35-43; Lk. 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:
 1. It is the first time in human history that a female was raised from the dead.
 2. 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 (Mt. 17:1)
 - b. In the Garden of Gethsemane (Mk. 14:33)
 3. 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" (Jn. 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" (Mt. 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?" (Mk. 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 regard 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." (Mk. 10:47-48, 52)

SEVENTEEN: Healing Two Blind Men (Mt. 9:27-31)

SURVEY

Hearing the pitiful cries of two sightless men, Jesus asks if they believe He could indeed heal them. Upon their affirmative response, the Savior touches their eyes and restores their sight.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of three occasions where Jesus is referred to as the Son of David by the recipient of a miracle. For the other two, see miracles 21 and 32.

- This is the first of four miracles where Jesus restored sight to the blind. For the other three, see miracles 24, 27 and 32.

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Note the urgent cry of these two men: *"Have mercy on us."* (Mt. 9:27)

It has been said that God will hush every harp in heaven to hear and answer this kind of prayer. This is the first of at least five miracles performed by Christ to answer such a prayer request.

1. The Syrophenician mother (Mt. 15:22)
 2. The father of a demon-possessed son (Mt. 17:15)
 3. Ten lepers (Lk. 17:13)
 4. Blind Bartimaeus (Lk. 18:38)
- Jesus' response, *"According to your faith, be it unto you"* (Mt. 9:29). These words indicate these two men received both physical and spiritual eyesight. Isaiah and David had originally written concerning this two-fold sight:
 1. Isaiah spoke in regard to physical eyesight:
"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened." (Isa. 35:5)
 2. David spoke in regard to spiritual eyesight:
"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (Psa. 119:18)

EIGHTEEN: Delivering a Mute Demoniac (Mt. 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."* (Mt. 12:24)
 2. *"But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils."* (Mt. 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?" (Jn. 7:20)*
2. *"Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" (Jn. 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." (Jn. 8:52)*
4. *"And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?" (Jn. 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" (Mt. 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." (Jn. 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 carpenters son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" (Mt. 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." (Jn. 7:45-46)

NINETEEN: Feeding the 5,000 (Mt. 14:14-21; Mk. 6:34-44; Lk. 9:12-17; Jn. 6:5-13)

SURVEY

With but five loaves of bread and two small fishes, donated by a small lad, Jesus feeds 5,000 men plus their wives and children. After all had eaten to their satisfaction, there remained twelve basketfuls of food.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is Jesus' only miracle recorded by all four gospel writers.
- Obviously there were more individuals involved than in any other miracle.
- It is the only miracle where someone (a small boy) contributed something to the action involved.
- It marks the only attempt by an Israelite crowd to crown Jesus as King (Jn. 6:14-15).
- It is the only miracle where He asks His disciples some questions:

"Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" (Jn. 6:5)

"How many loaves do you have?" (Mk. 6:38)

- It is the only miracle where He asks His disciples to serve Him:

"Bring me the five loaves and two fishes" (Mt. 14:17-18).

"Have the people sit down" (Lk. 9:14-15).

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- At this time, Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of Ezekiel concerning the ministry of the promised Good Shepherd.

"For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. ...I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel." (Ezek. 34:11-12, 14)

- In John 10 Jesus would later describe His role as the Good Shepherd, but here He will demonstrate it! Note:

1. He was the sensitive Shepherd

a. He knew the needs of the twelve

"And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. 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. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately." (Mk. 6:30-32)

The disciples needed this rest, for they had just learned of John the Baptist's martyrdom. In addition, they were approaching the danger of burnout.

b. He knew the needs of the crowd

"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." (Mk. 6:34)

(1) They needed to be taught

Hosea the prophet had once cried out: *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"* (Hos. 4:6).

To counteract this, our Lord invested a great amount of time during His earthly ministry in teaching the Word of God.

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes" (Mk. 1:22). (See also Mt. 4:23; 5:2; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:54; Jn. 6:59; 7:14, 28; 8:2, 20; 18:20.)

(2) They needed to be healed

"And he healed them that had need of healing." (Lk. 9:11)

(3) They needed to be fed

It is estimated that it would have required some fifteen tons of food to feed this great multitude.

2. He was the systematic Shepherd

"And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties." (Mk. 6:39-40)

3. He was the sovereign Shepherd

"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. And they did all eat, and were filled." (Mk. 6:41-42)

4. He was the sufficient Shepherd

"When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. 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." (Jn. 6:12-13)

- There is a note of sorrow at the end of this otherwise fantastic miracle. Rightfully recognizing Him as a prophet, the 5,000 men wrongly attempted to make Him their king. But both their motive and their method were wrong.

1. Their motive was wrong.

Jesus Himself would point this out during His sermon on the following day.

"Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." (Jn. 6:26-27)

In a previous incident, another group of men had made the same mistake.

"Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." (Jn. 2:23-25)

2. Their method was wrong.

Jesus did not come to be crowned by sinful people, but rather to be crucified for sinful people. The Father alone will someday give the Son His rightful kingdom.

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). (See also Psa. 2:7-12; Dan. 7:13-14; Isa. 6:9-11.)

- At least five reasons have been suggested concerning why this miracle was performed:
 1. To demonstrate Christ's compassion upon people—He was concerned not only with their souls, but also with their bodies.
 2. To test His disciples—This undoubtedly strengthened their faith. They would remember it all their lives.
 3. To prove His messianic claims—The Jews had a tradition that when the Messiah came, He would feed them with bread as Moses had once done. Note the following dialogue which took place on the next day between the crowd and Jesus:

"Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven ... And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (Jn. 6:31-32, 35)
 4. To show the value of small things when given over to Christ—Especially is this seen by the giving of the loaves, not only in matters of quantity (five loaves), but also in quality (they were barley loaves). Wheat loaves were the normal diet back then. Barley loaves were eaten only by the very poor.
 5. To illustrate God's faithfulness—In fact, this miracle was simply an unforgettable illustration of a profound principle Jesus had previously taught during his Sermon on the Mount.

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mt. 6:31-32)

TWENTY: Walking on the Water (Mt. 14:24-33; Mk. 6:45-52; Jn. 6:16-21)

SURVEY

Obeying the command of Jesus, the disciples begin rowing across the Sea of Galilee where they are suddenly caught in a severe, life-threatening storm. Just at the moment when all hope had gone, they see Jesus walking on the water toward them, fearful at first that He was a ghost. At Peter's request (upon recognizing the Savior), Jesus permits him to join in the watery walk. Soon, however, the apostle begins to sink. He is then rescued and gently rebuked by Jesus who calms the stormy elements, thus allowing both men to safely enter the boat.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This marks the first of two instances where the disciples thought that Jesus was a ghost (Mt. 14:26; Mk. 6:49). The other occasion would transpire in the Upper Room following Jesus' glorious resurrection:

"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Lk. 24:36-39)

- It records the shortest prayer in the entire New Testament: "LORD, SAVE ME!" (Mt. 14:30)

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- It has been suggested that this miracle serves as a remarkable review of that relationship between Christ and His Church. Note the following comparisons:

1. In Matthew 14, Christ sent His followers away in a boat on the sea and then ascended a hill to pray. The disciples then ran into a great storm on the Sea of Galilee.
2. In Acts 1, Christ sends all His followers away and then ascends into heaven to pray.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:8-9).

As His disciples we often run into great storms on the sea of life.

4. In Matthew 14, Christ remained on the hill for awhile to pray for His own. In Romans 8, we are told He will remain in heaven for awhile to pray for us.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34).

5. In Matthew 14, Christ eventually came for His own. In 1 Thessalonians 4, Christ will eventually come for us.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:16-17)

6. In Matthew 14, He spoke peace to the troubled waters. In Isaiah 2 He will speak peace to the troubled nations.

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2:4)

- In light of all of this, there are six all-important facts the Christian must realize in the hour of his or her storm:

1. Christ allowed me to be here, therefore He knows about the storm.
2. He is watching over me and praying for me during the storm.
3. He will come to me at the proper time in the storm.
4. He will help my faith to grow by the storm.
5. He will see me safely through the storm.
6. He will enable me to help others going through a similar storm.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforted 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)

- It is enlightening indeed to contrast the apostle's reaction following this storm with that of the previous one. Note:

1. Their reaction following the first storm:

"But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" (Mt. 8:27)

2. Their reaction following the second storm:

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, of a truth thou art the Son of God." (Mt. 14:33)

In a nutshell, they were learning!