

# TWO: TOPICAL

A brief consideration of the following topics:

- His Miracles
- His Parables
- His Sermons
- His Prayers
- His Sufferings
- The Usage of the Old Testament by Jesus
- The Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus
- The New Testament Predictions Foretold by Jesus

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GREAT TRUTHS FROM GOD'S WORD

# A LISTING OF JESUS' MIRACLES

1. Turning Water Into Wine ..... (Jn. 2:1-11)
2. Healing a Nobleman's Son at Cana ..... (Jn. 4:46-54)
3. Healing a Lame Man at the Pool of Bethesda ..... (Jn. 4:46-54)
4. First Miraculous Catch of Fish ..... (Lk. 5:1-11)
5. Delivering a Demoniac in a Capernaum Synagogue ..... (Mk. 1:23-28; Lk. 4:31-36)
6. Healing Peter's Mother-in-law ..... (Mt. 8:14-15; Mk. 1:29-31; Lk. 4:38-39)
7. Cleansing a Leper ..... (Mt. 8:2-4; Mk. 1:40-45; Lk. 9:12-16)
8. Healing a Paralytic ..... (Mt. 9:2-8; Mk. 2:3-12; Lk. 5:18-26)
9. Healing a Man With a Shriveled Hand ..... (Mt. 12:9-13; Mk. 3:1-5; Lk. 6:6-10)
10. Healing a Centurion's Servant ..... (Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10)
11. Raising a Widow's Son ..... (Lk. 7:11-15)
12. Delivering a Blind and Mute Demoniac ..... (Mt. 12:22; Lk. 11:14)
13. Stilling a Storm ..... (Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-29)
14. Delivering the Maniac of Gadara ..... (Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-39)
15. Healing a Woman With an Issue of Blood ..... (Mt. 9:20-22; Mk. 5:25-34; Lk. 8:43-48)
16. Raising Jairus's Daughter ..... (Mt. 9:18-19, 23-26; Mk. 5:22-24, 35-43; Lk. 8:41-42, 49-56)
17. Healing Two Blind Men ..... (Mt. 9:27-31)
18. Delivering a Mute Demoniac ..... (Mt. 9:32-33)
19. Feeding the 5000 ..... (Mt. 14:14-21; Mk. 6:34-44; Lk. 9:12-17; Jn. 6:5-13)
20. Walking on the Water ..... (Mt. 14:24-33; Mk. 6:45-52; Jn. 6:16-21)
21. Delivering a Syrophenician's Daughter ..... (Mt. 15:21-28; Mk. 7:24-30)
22. Healing a Deaf Mute Decapolis ..... (Mk. 7:31-37)
23. Feeding the 4000 ..... (Mt. 15:32-39; Mk. 8:1-9)
24. Healing a Blind Man at Bethsaida ..... (Mk. 8:22-26)
25. Delivering a Demon-Possessed Boy ..... (Mt. 17:14-18; Mk. 9:14-29; Lk. 9:38-42)
26. Finding the Tax Money in a Fish ..... (Mt. 17:24-27)
27. Healing a Man Born Blind ..... (Jn. 9:1-7)
28. Healing a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath ..... (Lk. 13:10-17)
29. Healing a Man With Dropsy ..... (Lk. 14:1-6)
30. Raising of Lazarus ..... (Jn. 11:17-44)
31. Cleansing of Ten Lepers ..... (Lk. 17:11-19)
32. Healing Blind Bartimaeus ..... (Mt. 20:29-34; Mk. 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43)
33. Cursing the Fig Tree ..... (Mt. 21:18-19)
34. Restoring Malchus's Ear ..... (Lk. 22:49-51)
35. Second Miraculous Catch of Fish ..... (Jn. 21:1-11)

# A BRIEF SUMMARY OF CHRIST'S MIRACLES

## I. The number of His miracles

### A. General, crowd related miracles. Nine:

1. *"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. 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."* (Mt. 4:23-24)
2. *"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."* (Mt. 8:16)
3. *"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."* (Mt. 9:35)
4. *"But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all."* (Mt. 12:15)
5. *"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick"* (Mt. 14:14)
6. *"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."* (Mt. 14:35)
7. *"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: 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."* (Mt. 15:30-31)
8. *"And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there."* (Mt. 19:2)
9. *"And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them."* (Mt. 21:14)

### B. Specific, individual related miracles. Thirty-five:

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's 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 blind Bartimaeus
33. Cursing the fig tree
34. Restoring Maichus's ear
35. Second miraculous catch of fish

## II. The seven-fold classification of His 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's daughter (16)
  3. Raising of Lazarus (30)
- G. Judging: One miracle
  1. Cursing a fig tree (see miracle 33)

## III. The eight-fold purpose for His miracles

- A. To fulfill O.T. prophecy
 

*"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: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." (Mt. 8:16-17)*

*"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our*

- report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (Jn. 12:37-38)*
- B. To validate His message  
*"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 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. 3:1-2)*  
*"And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased." (Jn. 6:2)*
- C. To reveal His glory  
*"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana, of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory..." (Jn. 2:11 a)*
- D. To increase the faith of His disciples  
*"and his disciples believed on him." (Jn. 2:11 b)*  
*"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? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do." (Jn. 6:5-6)*
- E. To declare His Messianic claims  
*"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." (Jn. 6:14)*
- F. To prove His deity  
*"And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." (Mt. 14:32-33)*
- G. To demonstrate His compassion
1. Upon the hungry multitudes (Mt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32)
  2. Upon the blind (Mt. 20:34)
  3. Upon the lepers (Mk. 1:40-41)
  4. Upon the demon-possessed (Mk. 5:18-19)
  5. Upon the grief stricken (Lk. 7:12-13)
- H. To show His authority to forgive sin  
*"And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? 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." (Lk. 5:20-24)*

#### **IV. The location of His miracles**

- A. At a wedding (see miracle 1)
- B. At a funeral (11)
- C. In graveyards (14, 30)
- D. In synagogues (5, 9, 28)
- E. In homes (6, 8, 16, 29)
- F. By a pool (3, 27)
- G. Beside a tree (33)
- H. In a garden (34)
- I. In a crowd (15)
- J. Outside a village (24, 31, 32)
- K. On a grassy slope (19, 23)
- L. At the base of a mountain (25)
- M. On the seashore (4, 35)
- N. On the sea (13, 20)
- O. Under the sea (26)

# THE MIRACLES PERFORMED BY JESUS

## ONE: Turning Water Into Wine (Jn. 2:1-11)

### SURVEY

During a wedding in Cana of Galilee, Jesus, at Mary's request, transforms approximately 120 gallons of water into wine, the quality of which is highly praised by the ruler of the feast.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- This marks the second of four public encounters Mary had with Jesus. The other three are:
  1. In a Jerusalem Temple (Lk. 2:41-52)  
*"And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing, And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my fathers business?"* (Lk. 2:48, 49)
  2. In Capernaum (Mk. 3:31-35)  
*"There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee."* (Mk. 3:31, 32)
  3. At Calvary (Jn. 19:26, 27)
- It is the first of at least five occasions where the word "hour" is used in reference to Calvary ("*mine hour is not yet come*"). Other references would include:
  1. At the feast of tabernacles - "*Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.*" (John 7:30)
  2. In the temple treasury- "*These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.*" (John 8:20)
  3. In the Upper Room - "*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 13:1)
  4. On the Mount of Olives- "*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said. Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee.*" (John 17: 1)

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus chose a wedding to perform His first miracle, doubtless to emphasize the sanctity of marriage. (See Gen. 2:18-25; Mt. 19:3-8; Eph. 5:22-33; Heb. 13:4.)
- Earthly weddings thus should serve as a reminder of that grand and glorious future wedding between Christ and His Church! (See 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7-9.)
- It should be noted Jesus was invited on this occasion. It is always a wonderful thing when He is made welcome in a wedding!
- Jesus used waterpots to accomplish his first miracle. He desires to do the same today, but now he uses living, earthly vessels. If we allow him, he fills us with the water of God's Word; and when we pour it out (give it out) it becomes the wine of the Spirit.
- While no Christian of course should pray to Mary, all believers would profit greatly from heeding her advice on this occasion: "*His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.*" (Jn. 2:5)
- Jesus thus did this miracle to accomplish a three-fold purpose:
  1. To solve a difficult problem for Mary
  2. To increase the faith of His disciples
  3. To display His glory

*"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." (Jn. 2:11)*

- Was this real wine? The Greek word used here, *oinos*, can refer to either grape juice or wine.
  1. Examples in which it means juice:
    - a. *"Neither do men put new wine [unfermented grape juice] into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out." (Matt. 9:17)*
    - b. *"He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." (Rev. 19:15)*
  2. Examples in which it means wine:
    - a. *"Be not drunk with wine." (Eph. 5:18)*
    - b. *"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomachs sake and thine often infirmities." (1 Tim. 5:23)*
- If it was real wine Jesus created, it bore little if any resemblance to the modern product.
  1. In New Testament times wine was first boiled before storage, then diluted with three to ten parts water before serving.
  2. The Old Testament distinguishes between this wine and the strong, coarse, undiluted wine prepared solely to make one intoxicated.
    - a. Both Noah and Lot became drunk on this wine (Gen. 9:21; 19:32-34)
    - b. Drinking this kind of wine may have caused the death of Aaron's two priestly sons, both killed by God (Lev. 10:1-9)
    - c. It was for the sin of national drunkenness that God would destroy Israel (Isa. 28:1-8)
    - d. Daniel refused to defile himself by drinking this kind of wine (Dan. 1:8)
    - e. The book of Proverbs warns against this kind of wine. *"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:31-32).*
    - f. Habakkuk forbids the giving of this wine to one's neighbor (Hab. 2:14).
    - g. Even the pagan Greeks felt only barbarians drank undiluted wine.
    - h. The rabbis held that undiluted wine could not be blessed.
- Whatever the meaning of the word wine here in John 2, the sincere believer must carefully consider other Scripture passages even in the practice of social drinking. *"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22). "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (1 Cor. 10:31-32).*

## **TWO: Healing a Nobleman's Son at Cana (Jn. 4:46-54)**

### **SURVEY**

A royal official in Cana asked Jesus to come and heal his son in Capernaum. The Savior sends him on his way, saying: *"You may go. Your son will live."*

Upon reaching Capernaum the amazed official discovers the healing had indeed occurred on the previous day at the 7th hour, the exact time Jesus had promised to heal him. This resulted in the father's conversion along with his entire household.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the only recorded miracle which resulted in the spiritual salvation of an entire household.
- It is the first of 5 miracles in which a non-Jewish individual was involved. The other 4 are:
  1. A centurion's servant (Mt. 8:13)
  2. The maniac of Gadara (Mk. 5:8)
  3. A Canaanite girl (Mt. 15:28)
  4. One of the ten lepers (Lk. 17:11)
- It is the first of 3 miracles performed while the recipient was miles away. The other two are:
  1. The centurion's servant (Mt. 8:13)

## 2. The Canaanite girl (Mt. 15:28; Mk. 7:30)

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- The ultimate intended purpose behind Jesus' healing miracles involved the restoration of both bodies and souls.
- This miracle illustrates that all similar prayer requests are instantly heard by and harkened to by God Himself. Various biblical examples record this precious and profound truth:
  1. The nobleman  
*"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."*(Jn. 4:53)
  2. Abraham's servant  
*"And he said O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water; And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder."*(Gen. 24:12-15)
  3. Isaiah  
*"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."*(Isa. 65:24)
  4. Daniel  
*"And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words."* (Dan. 10:10-12)

### THREE: Healing a Lame Man at the Pool of Bethesda (Jn. 4:46-54)

#### SURVEY

Jesus heals a man beside this pool near the sheep gate in Jerusalem who had been an invalid for 38 years.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of at least 4 occasions when Jesus was criticized for healing on the Sabbath. For the remaining 3, see miracles 9, 27, and 28.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- The statement, "Sir, I have no man," is profound in its spiritual implications. Both Luke and Paul later write concerning its importance:
  1. Luke's testimony – *"And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him."* (Acts 8:30-31)

2. Paul's testimony – *"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"* (Rom. 10:14-15)
- While Scripture is clear that personal suffering is not always a punishment caused by individual sin (Jn. 9:1-3), this case seems to be the exception. Note Jesus' warning to him: *"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."* (Jn. 5:14)

#### **FOUR: First Miraculous Catch of Fish (Lk. 5:1-11)**

##### **SURVEY**

Four fishermen (Andrew, Peter, James, and John) had toiled all night without catching one single fish. However, at Jesus' command, Peter rowed out into the deep waters of the Galilean Sea and let down his nets. Immediately they caught so many fish that their nets began to break due to the huge catch, which fish soon filled their boats.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the first of 4 miracles done upon the Sea of Galilee. For the other 3, see miracles 3, 20, and 26.
- It is the first of two miracles resulting in a supernatural catch of fish. Note the contrasts and comparisons however:
  1. The comparisons
    - a. On both occasions they had unsuccessfully fished all night (Lk. 5:5; Jn. 21:3)
    - b. On both occasions they obeyed Jesus' command and were successful (Lk. 5:5, 6; Jn. 21:6)
    - c. On both occasions Simon Peter was the key figure (Lk. 5:3-8; Jn. 21:7-11)
  2. The contrasts
    - a. On the first occasion the fishing net broke. On the second it did not (Lk. 5:6; Jn. 21:11)
    - b. On the first occasion Jesus instructed Peter to *"catch fish,"* while on the second He would command him to *"feed sheep."* (Lk. 5:10; Jn. 21:15-17)

##### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Peter would later fulfill Jesus' two-fold command to catch fish and feed sheep. Thus:
  1. He caught fish!
 

*"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."* (Acts 2:41)
  2. He fed sheep!
 

*"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (I Pet. 2:2-3). "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (I Pet. 5:1-2).*
- It should be noted most of Jesus' apostles were busy at work when He called them, as were the God-called O.T. men. Note:
  1. Moses and David were tending sheep (Ex. 3:1-2; 1 Sam. 16:11)
  2. Gideon was threshing wheat (Judges 6:11-12)
  3. Elisha was plowing a field (1 Kings 19:19-21)
  4. Amos was herding cattle and picking fruit (Amos 1:1; 7:14-15)
  5. Matthew was collecting taxes (Mt. 9:9)
  6. Andrew, Peter, James, and John were fishing (Lk. 5:1-11)

7. Saul of Tarsus was arresting Christians in his misguided zeal as a Pharisee (Acts 9:1-6)

The intended lesson here seems obvious--God's call upon a person is rarely (if ever) dependent upon his (or her) brain capacity, brawn, blue blooded history, or banking achievements, but rather just how busy that individual is at the time!

Abraham's faithful servant had once given an eloquent testimony to this:

*"And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my masters brethren."* (Gen. 24:27)

- Finally, it should be noted that these experienced fishermen did exactly what Jesus told them to do, even though it must have seemed unreasonable at the time. King Solomon once wrote: *"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)

### **FIVE: Delivering a Demoniac in a Capernaum Synagogue (Mk. 1:23-28; Lk. 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."* (Mk. 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."* (Lk 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.

### **SIX: Healing Peter's Mother-in-law (Mt. 8:14-15; Mk. 1:29-31; Lk. 4:38-39)**

#### **SURVEY**

Upon hearing that she was suffering from a high fever, Jesus visits the home of Peter's mother-in-law and raised her from the bed of affliction. The grateful woman then began to wait upon the Savior and His disciples.

## SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of two occasions proving Peter was a married man. For the other, see 1 Cor. 9:5.
- It is the first miracle to be recorded by three gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, and Luke).
- This miracle is followed by numerous occasions where Jesus performed mass healings. Note:
  1. After healing Peter's mother-in-law (Mt. 8:16)
  2. After healing a leper (Lk. 5:15)
  3. After healing a man with a withered hand (Mt. 12:15)
  4. After hearing of John the Baptist's death (Mt. 14:14)
  5. After walking on the water (Mt. 14:35)
  6. After healing a demon possessed girl (Mt. 15:30)
  7. Prior to His sermon on divorce (Mt. 19:2)
  8. After His temple cleansing (Mt. 21:14)

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Upon being healed, she immediately began serving Jesus as did the maniac of Gadara (Mk. 5:18). We have been saved to serve! Paul would later link both these together in his epistle to the church in Ephesus:  
*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* (Eph. 2:8-10)

## SEVEN: Cleansing a Leper (Mt. 8:2-4; Mk. 1:40-45; Lk. 9:12-16)

## SURVEY

A leper approached Jesus, knelt, and begged to be delivered from his leprosy. Filled with compassion the Savior touched him which resulted in immediate healing.

## SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of at least 6 miracles where Jesus was moved with compassion. For the others, see miracles 11, 14, 19, 23, and 32.
- It is the first of 5 miracles where Jesus told the recipient not to broadcast what had been done. For the others, see 16, 17, 22, and 24.
- It is the first of 2 miracles involving a leper. See also miracle 31.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- It is ironic to note:
  1. Back then, Jesus commanded these individuals not to spread abroad his fame, but they did.
  2. Today he commands us to do this, but we don't (see Mt. 28:19-20).
- He ordered the cured man to present himself to the priest for the Mosaic cleansing (see Lev. 14:3-4, 10, 22). This excited request from a healed leper doubtless caused much confusion and amazement in the temple among the priests. Up until this point there was no need for the cleansing ceremony, for no Israelite had ever been healed of leprosy until Jesus came (with the single exception of Miriam--see Num. 12:13-15; Naaman, of course, was a Syrian--see 2 Kings 5:1, 14).

## **EIGHT: Healing a Paralytic (Mt. 9:2-8; Mk. 2:3-12; Lk. 5:18-26)**

### **SURVEY**

Four friends of a paralytic, unable to approach Jesus because of a huge crowd, made an opening in the roof and lowered their companion at Jesus' feet. The Savior immediately both forgave the man of his sins and healed him of his affliction.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This miracle describes the most unique and innovative way of bringing a person to Jesus.
- It is the first miracle where Jesus forgives the sin of the person, thus announcing His deity, for God alone can forgive sin.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Both Paul and Jude may well have had the four friends of the paralytic when they penned the following words:  
*"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."* (1 Cor. 9:19-22)  
*"And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."* (Jude 22-23)
- An unknown author has written the following:  
They will not seek, they must be sought,  
They will not come, they must be brought,  
They will not learn, they must be taught.
- J. Vernon McGee writes: "There are many people who are not going to receive the message of salvation unless you lift a corner of their stretcher and carry them to the place where they can hear the word of the Lord. They are paralyzed--immobilized by sin and by many other things the world holds for them. Some are paralyzed by prejudice and others by indifference. They are never going to hear Jesus say to them, '*Son, thy sins be forgiven thee,*' unless you take the corner of their stretcher and bring them to Him.'" (Lk., p. 74)

## **NINE: Healing a Man With a Shriveled Hand (Mt. 12:9-13; Mk. 3:1-5; Lk. 6:6-10)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus restores this hand in a synagogue on the Sabbath day. Keenly aware that His action was condemned by the legalistic and wicked Pharisees who were watching His every move, the Savior demanded from them:

*"I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good, or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?"*

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This miracle included the only explicit reference to the anger of Jesus in the 4 gospel accounts. Note Mark's account:  
*"And, when He had looked round about on them with anger..."* (Mk. 3:5)
- This miracle led to the first plot to kill Jesus. Note:

"Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him." (Mt. 12:14)

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- This episode may well serve as the ultimate illustration of legalism, which places a higher value on a sheep than on a man!
- Jesus had previously explained the divine purpose of the Sabbath and His relationship to it: *"And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."* (Mk. 2:27-28)

#### TEN: Healing a Centurion's Servant (Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10)

#### SURVEY

This Gentile military officer who loved Israel and had actually built a synagogue for the Jews implored Jesus to heal his dying servant. Jesus agreed to go and heal him. However, the officer replied: "No need Lord, just say the word and it will be done."

The Savior is amazed at this kind of faith. Upon returning to his home the centurion finds his servant healed!

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of two cases involving miracles in which Jesus was amazed at the great amount of faith he found in the one requesting the miracle. Both individuals were Gentiles. The other was the Syro-phenician mother (Mt. 15:28).
- How sad to note that he marveled over the unbelief and lack of faith in his own countrymen. *"But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house...And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching."* (Mk. 6:4, 6)

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Almost all centurions (Roman military commanders of 100 soldiers) in the Bible are presented in a favorable light. Examples:
  1. The one mentioned here
  2. The centurion in charge of Jesus' crucifixion  
*"And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. 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."* (Mk. 15:37, 39)  
*"Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man."* (Lk. 23:47)
  3. The centurion whom Peter led to Christ  
*"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway."* (Acts 10:1-2)
  4. The centurion who was in charge of Paul's first part of his journey to Rome.  
*"And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band... And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself."* (Acts 27:1, 3)
  5. The centurion who later saved Paul from death following the storm.  
*"And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and*

escape. *But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land.*" (Acts 27:42-43)

6. The centurion who allowed Paul to receive visitors during his house arrest in Rome.  
*"And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him."* (Acts 28:16)
- This is in stark contrast to the Jewish rulers who misunderstood their own scriptures and mistreated both Jewish and Gentile believers. Note the following indictments:
  1. By Jesus (Mt. 22:29; 23:33)
  2. By Stephen (Acts 7:51-53)
  3. By Paul (Rom. 9:30-32; 1 Thess. 2:14-16)
  4. By John the Baptist (Mt. 3:7-12)
  5. By John the Apostle (Rev. 2:8-9)

### **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's 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 (Luke 24:19).

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- 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."* (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! 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."* (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. Awakened 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 (Luke 9:42; Mt. 17:18)
    - b. The rebuking of Satan (Mark 8:33; Jude 1:9)
  2. The Greek word for peace, *phimoo*, used only here and in Mark 1:25 (where Jesus denounced a demon), mean 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 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 (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 12 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 consequences 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 33rd birthday! Caring for the sick in the world and, at the same time, carrying the sins of the world was exhausting labor indeed!

## **SIXTEEN: Raising Jairus's Daughter (Mt. 9:18-19, 23-26; Mk. 5:22-24, 35-43; Lk. 8:41-42,49-S6)**

### **SURVEY**

At Jairus's 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 (Mt. 17:1)
    - b. In the Garden of Gethsemane (Mk. 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"* (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 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." (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 regards to physical eyesight- *"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened."* (Isa. 35:5)
  2. David spoke in regards 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 5:

*"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 5000 (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 5000 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**

Obedying 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.
  3. 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).
  4. 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)
  5. 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 pruninghooks: 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!

## TWENTY-ONE: Delivering a Syrophenician's Daughter (Mt. 15:21-28; Mk. 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 regards to a miracle for healing.
- It is the first 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!"* (Mt. 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 Gods 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."* (Mt. 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."* (Mt. 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."* (Mk. 16:9)
  2. *"And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils"* (Lk. 8:2).

## TWENTY-TWO: Healing a Deaf Mute in Decapolis (Mk. 7:31-37)

### SURVEY

Jesus placed His fingers in the ears of a deaf-mute, spit, touched the man's tongue, looked up into heaven, and sighed, "*Be opened* " Immediately the man could both hear and speak.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of three occasions on which Jesus spat when accomplishing a miracle. The other two are:
  1. Upon healing a blind man in Bethsaida (Mk. 8:23)
  2. Upon healing a blind man in Jerusalem (Jn. 9:6)It should be noted that all three cases involved blind individuals.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- The statement of the amazed crowd, "*He hath done all things well*" perfectly summarizes the earthly ministry of Jesus perhaps more than any other in the entire New Testament.
- The first stanza of Fanny J. Crosby's beautiful gospel song, *All The Way My Savior Leads Me*, captures in melody fashion this precious truth:

*"All the way my Savior leads me  
What have I to ask beside?  
Can I doubt His tender mercy,  
Who thru life has been my Guide?  
Heavenly peace, divinest Comfort,  
Here by faith in Him to dwell!  
For I know, what-e'er befall me,  
Jesus doeth all things well. "*

## TWENTY-THREE: Feeding the 4000 (Mt. 15:32-39; Mk. 8:1-9)

### SURVEY

Jesus feeds a hungry crowd who had not eaten in three days, by supernaturally multiplying seven loaves and a few fish. Following the bountiful meal, seven basketfuls of food were collected by the disciples.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the second of two occasions where Jesus fed the hungry multitudes. See also miracle 19.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Some have attempted to show the feeding of the 5000 and that of the 4000 were actually the same event, suggesting that the Gospel writers got their details mixed up. But Jesus himself told us that they were two separate and distinct events. "*When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They said unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven*" (Mk. 8:19-20).
- Note the comparisons and contrasts between these two events:
  1. Compared with the feeding of the 5000: There are several similarities between these two miracles.

- a. Christ showed compassion toward both groups.
  - b. He asked his disciples what should be done.
  - c. He had the people sit down in orderly groups.
  - d. He supernaturally fed them by multiplying a few fish and loaves.
2. Contrasted with the feeding of the 5000: There are a number of differences between these two miracles.
- a. The size of the crowd: One had 5000 men; the other 4000.
  - b. The duration involved: The 5000 men had been with him for one day; the 4000 for three days.
  - c. The original food: Christ used five loaves and two fishes to feed the 5000, while using seven loaves and an unspecified number of fish in caring for the 4000.
  - d. The remains: Twelve baskets were left over at the feeding of 5000, and seven after the 4000.
  - e. The Gospel record: All four Gospel writers record the feeding of the 5000, while only Matthew and Mark speak of the 4000.

## **TWENTY-FOUR: Healing a Blind Man at Bethsaida (Mk. 8:22-26)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus began this miracle by placing His hands on the man and spitting in his eyes.

The Savior: *"Do you see anything?"*

The sightless: *"I see people; they look like trees walking around."*

Jesus touched the man's eyes, causing him to now see clearly and completely.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is Jesus' only miracle accomplished in two stages.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- The spiritual application here is crystal clear and sorely needed today. We need that second touch by Jesus, allowing us to see *"every man clearly"* as God does.
- As can be seen later, Jesus' disciples would often see men as "trees".
  1. Despicable trees  
*"And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."* (Lk. 9:52-56)
  2. Bothersome trees  
*"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."* (Lk. 18:15-17)
  3. Competitive trees  
*"And John answered him, saying, master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his*

reward." (Mk. 9:38-41)

4. Sinful trees

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

5. Unclean trees

*"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: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of four footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."* (Acts 10:9-15)

- As can be seen today, Jesus' disciples do often see men as trees. Thus:
  1. As a Christian leader, do I view my staff and associates simply as servant trees whose main task is to help me in building my own personal kingdom?
  2. As a Christian layperson, do I view my family members and friends merely as enabling trees, existing primarily to meet my needs and enhance my goals?

## **TWENTY-FIVE: Delivering a Demon-Possessed Boy (Mt. 17:14-18; Mk. 9:14-29; Lk. 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 (Lk. 7:12).
  2. He raised from the dead the only daughter of Jairus (Lk. 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."* (Lk. 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?"* (Mt. 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.
- 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."* (Mk. 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"* (Mk. 6:13). *"And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord even the devils are subject unto us through thy name"* (Lk. 10:17).

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

1. They had too little faith (Mt. 17:20)
2. They had too little self-denial (Mk. 9:29)
3. They had too little prayer (Mk. 9:29)
4. They had too much bickering (Mk. 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 Dilliah 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."* (Jud. 16:17-20)

## **TWENTY-SIX: Finding the Tax Money in a Fish (Mt. 17:24-27)**

### **SURVEY**

Simon Peter promises a tax collector that Jesus would pay the imposed temple tax. The following dialogue then occurs:

Jesus: *"Peter, from whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes? from their own sons or from others?"*

Peter: *"From others"*

Jesus: *"Then the sons are exempt. But so that we might not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch, open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."*

### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the only miracle involving a brute creature.
- It is the only miracle resulting in a money coin.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- This temple tax, owed by all Jews from age twenty upward, was two drachma, approximately two days' wages. It was to be used for the temple upkeep and repair. There were three specific occasions recorded in the Old Testament when this tax was collected.
  1. During the time of Moses (Ex. 30:13, 38:26)
  2. During the time of Joash--This Judean king actually had a special chest built and placed outside by the temple gate to receive the tax (2 Chron. 24:9-14)
  3. During the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 10:32)
- Note Peter's thoughtless response to the tax collector's demand:  
They ask: *"Doth not your master pay tribute?"*  
He answered: *"Yes."*  
Here Peter committed a serious blunder. He committed Jesus to do something without first asking Him. Nathan the prophet once did the same thing when advising King David. It also had to do with the temple. Upon hearing David's desire to construct a temple, Nathan responded: *"Then Nathan said to David, Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee"* (1 Chron. 17:2). But then God stepped in: *"And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in"* (1 Chron. 17:3-4). The conclusion of the matter was that God had already determined that Solomon (David's son) would build the temple.
- Jesus told Peter why he should not have to pay the tax:
  1. He owned the temple (Mal. 3:1)
  2. He had previously cleansed the temple (Jn. 2:16)
  3. He was the eternal Son of God (Mt. 16:16)
- He then told Peter why he would pay the tax:
  1. To maintain a good testimony-- *"Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them"*. Here the Savior gave a beautiful example of properly using our Christian liberty, as later echoed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 8-10. *"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."* (1 Cor. 8:9, 12; 9:22)
  2. To increase Peter's faith
  3. To illustrate his work as the second Adam--When correctly understood, this amazing miracle serves to illustrate not only the deity of Christ, but even more, his perfect humanity. What was he doing here? In essence, Jesus was fulfilling the very first command in the Bible given to Adam concerning the world of nature: *"And God ...said ... subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth"* (Gen. 1:28). Our Lord thus, in some mysterious manner (lost to us after Adam's sin), was able to communicate and exercise control over a fish swimming in the waters of Galilee.
- It should be noted here that this fish OBEYED its Creator!
  1. As did the ravens near a brook  
*"And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So*

*he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." (1 Kings 17:1-6)*

2. As did the lions in a den

*"Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God" (Dan. 6:21-23).*

Tragically, the only two creatures able to DISOBEY their Creator are ANGELS and HUMAN BEINGS!

## **TWENTY-SEVEN: Healing a Man Born Blind (Jn. 9:1-7)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus began this miracle by spitting on the ground, making mud with the saliva, put it on the man's eyes, and said: *"Go wash in the pool of Siloam."* The blind man obeyed and was immediately able to see!

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the only miracle where Jesus commanded the person to be healed to do something.
- This is the final of seven miracles where the parents of the recipient are involved. The other six are miracles 2, 11, 16, 21, and 25.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Notice the insensitivity and callousness shown by the disciples here:  
*"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (Jn. 9:1-2)*  
As it can be seen, there was no desire on their part to help this pitiful man. Rather, his condition served simply as a focal point for an academic, theological discussion!
- At first reading, this seems to be a very silly question, for how could this poor, sightless man be suffering for his sin if he was born blind? However, some rabbis felt a baby could sin in its mother's womb, or that its soul might have sinned in a preexistent state. They also held that terrible punishment from God came upon certain people because of the sin of their parents. This grievous error, of course, is totally refuted by both Moses and Ezekiel.  
*"The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (Deut. 24:16). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20).*
- Jesus answered their question as follows:  
*"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." (Jn. 9:3)*  
Here Jesus corrects that terrible teaching that says that all suffering is a direct result of personal sin. The disciples at this point had made the same false assumption that Job's three "friends" had once made (see Job 4:7-8; 8:20; 20:4-5), and that many modern "faith healers" today still make. However, God himself had severely rebuked the companions of Job for their wicked judgment:  
*"And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath" (Job 42:7).*

- After the healing of the blind man the wicked Pharisees interrogated his parents: *"And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind."* (Jn. 9:19-22).

How tragic to contemplate the strong possibility that these seeing parents of a sightless son refused the light offered by Christ and probably died still blinded by their sins. Why did this happen? Solomon gives us the sad answer: *"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe"* (Prov. 29:25). This sad truth is reconfirmed on two additional occasions apart from John 9:

1. *"Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God"* (Jn. 12:42-43).
  2. *"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death"* (Rev. 21:8).
- The Pharisees continued their attack on Jesus:  
*"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."* (Jn. 9:16)

Whenever Jesus enters the scene a division automatically develops. A person might accept his claims or deny them, but he or she cannot ignore them.

*"What will you do with Jesus?  
Neutral you cannot be!  
Someday your heart will be asking,  
What will He do with me?"*

- The amazing response by the former blind man to Jesus' critics must surely rank among the most simple yet sublime answers of all time! *"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. 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."* (Jn. 9:24-25)
- As a final observation, note the progressive revelation given to this healed blind man by the Holy Spirit regarding the person of Jesus:

In 9:11 he calls Him a man.  
In 9:17 he calls Him a prophet.  
In 9:32 he calls him a miracle worker.  
In 9:33 he calls Him a messenger from God.  
In 9:35-38 he worships Him as the Son of God.

## **TWENTY-EIGHT: Healing a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath (Lk. 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 regards to the length of their suffering.
  1. In this case, 18 years (Lk. 13:11)
  2. That of a woman with an issue of blood, 12 years (Mt. 9:20)
  3. That of a crippled man, 38 years (Jn. 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 (Lk. 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)

#### **TWENTY-NINE: Healing a Man with Dropsy (Lk. 14:1-6)**

#### SURVEY

During a Sabbath luncheon in the house of a prominent Pharisee, Jesus encounters a man suffering with dropsy. Turning to the legalistic Pharisees who were present, He asks:

*"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"*

Receiving no answer, He touched the man and healed him.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the only recorded miracle done during a meal in the home of a Pharisee.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- This supper was probably a set-up arranged by the Pharisees to trap Jesus, hoping He would do something unlawful.
  1. It was on the Sabbath.
  2. A very sick man was there who suffered from dropsy. Dropsy was an abnormal accumulation of watery fluid in the body, which caused hideous swelling in the abdomen, legs, and feet. It was symptomatic of cardiac disease. In light of this, it is highly unlikely that this poor, suffering creature would be invited to the home of a Pharisee, especially on the Sabbath. To the contrary, he would have been utterly refused entrance.
- According to the sacred account Jesus touched this man. This was in stark contrast to the legalistic Pharisees who not only would have refused to touch the leper, the blind, the deaf, the maimed, etc., but would actually hurry home in horror to take a ceremonial bath if their shadow should come into contact with the shadow of those unclean outcasts! But not the Savior! He was a "Hands on Healer," as demonstrated by those He personally touched.
  1. A leper (Mt. 8:3)

2. Peter's mother-in-law (Mt. 8:15)
3. A deaf mute (Mk. 7:33)
4. Two blind men (Mt. 20:34)
5. A man born blind (Jn. 9:6)
6. Malchus' ear (Lk. 22:51)
7. Little children (Mk. 10:13)
8. His frightened disciple (Mt. 17:7)

### THIRTY: Raising of Lazarus (Jn. 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."* (Mt. 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."* (Jn. 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 (Jn. 11:44)
  2. His anointing by Mary (Mt. 26:6)
  3. The starting point for His triumphal entry (Mk. 11:1)
  4. His final blessing upon the disciples just prior to the ascension (Lk. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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?"* (Jn. 14:5)
    3. After the resurrection he at first doubted the very person of Christ. (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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 Lk. 10:38-42 where the opposite was true.)
    1. It was Martha who went to meet Jesus while Mary remained in the house. (Jn. 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."* (Mt. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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."* (Jn. 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 (Lk. 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 Jn. 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 (Jn. 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"* (Jn. 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"* (Jn. 11:43). Only Christ, of course, can do this.
  3. *"Loose him, and let him go"* (Jn. 11:44). In a word, this speaks of discipleship, that is, ministering to the new convert.

### **THIRTY-ONE: Cleansing of Ten Lepers (Lk. 17:11-19)**

#### **SURVEY**

En route to Jerusalem, Jesus encounters ten lepers who call out to Him for mercy and healing. Instantly all ten were cleansed and leave to show themselves to the temple priests as instructed by the Levitical law for ceremonial cleansing. Soon however, one of the ten, a Samaritan returned, fell at the feet of the Savior and began worshipping and thanking Him.

- Jesus, regarding the thankless nine: *"Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?"*
- Jesus, regarding the thankful one: *"Rise and go; your faith has made you whole."*

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This miracle regards the greatest number of specific (ten) healings than any other as performed by Jesus.
- It is the only miracle involving a Samaritan.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- This is the second of three miracles demonstrating the tragic fact that the one (or ones) experiencing physical salvation did not apparently experience spiritual salvation. These three cases are:
  1. The cripple by the pool of Bethesda (Jn. 5:1-16)-- *"Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath...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."* (Jn. 5:8-9, 14)
  2. The nine lepers here in Luke 17.
  3. The servant of the high priest whose name was Malchus (Jn. 18:10)--There is no evidence that he accepted Christ after having his severed ear restored.
- The great sin of the nine lepers was that of thanklessness. In some ways this is the ultimate sin, and goes along with pride and self-will, the root of all other sins. Paul says that this transgression in the ancient world caused all mankind to turn from God.
 

*"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."* (Rom. 1:21-23)
- In essence, the cure for and solution to pride does not involve pious attempts to practice humility, but rather simply to be thankful. A thankful person is, by definition, a humble person! As someone has observed:

*"Be careful for nothing,  
Be prayerful in everything,  
Be thankful for anything!"*

### **THIRTY-TWO: Healing Blind Bartimaeus (Mt. 20:29-34; Mk. 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43)**

#### **SURVEY**

Two blind beggars, one named Bartimaeus, sitting outside of Jericho learn that Jesus was approaching. Both immediately cry out for mercy.

The Savior: *"What do you want me to do for you?"*

The sightless: *"We want to see."*

Filled with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes, causing them to instantly reclaim their sight.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- Of the sixteen healing events, involving some 26 people, only one is named, Bartimaeus.
- This is also the only New Testament miracle associated with the city of Jericho.
  1. The most famous Old Testament miracle concerning Jericho occurred in Joshua 6:20 (the shouting down of Jericho's walls).
  2. The final Old Testament miracle concerning Jericho is recorded in 2 Kings 2:18-22 (the purifying of some poisoned water).

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- This marks Jesus' final visit to Jericho. He will now leave for Jerusalem (see Mt. 20:29). Before this, he had told the story of a man who left Jerusalem for Jericho (the parable of the Good Samaritan--Lk. 10:25-37). But now the original Good Samaritan would reverse the trip, leaving Jericho for Jerusalem, where he would soon "fall among thieves".

- Note the spiritual insight of the blind beggar:
  1. He asked the right person - *"Jesus, thou Son of David."*
  2. He asked in the right way - *"Have mercy on me."*  
It has been said that God will hush every harp in heaven to hear this kind of prayer!
  3. He asked at the right time - *"And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."* (Lk. 18:36-37)
  4. He asked for the right thing - *"that I might regain my sight."*

### THIRTY-THREE: Cursing the Fig Tree (Mt. 21:18-19)

#### SURVEY

One morning, a few days before His crucifixion, en route to Jerusalem from Bethany, Jesus views a fig tree. Being hungry, He approached it, only to find much foliage but no fruit. *"May you never bear fruit again,"* the Savior said to the tree, which immediately withered and dried up!

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the only one of Christ's thirty-five recorded miracles that would cause him great pain and sorrow. It was so important that years later the Apostle Paul took three entire chapters (Rom. 9-11) to expand upon its theological implications.
- To explain the above, many believe this tree was a symbol of Israel, that divinely favored but utterly fruitless fig tree. Jesus was therefore, if this be true, setting aside the nation due to the absence of fruit. Later, that same day, He made this clear to the Pharisees, those spiritual custodians of the tree:  
*"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."* (Mt. 21:42-43)
- This particular kind of fig tree found in Israel is different from all other fruit trees in that it bears its fruit before its leaves. This is not the case with apple, pear, cherry, or any other fruit-bearing trees. Even though the tree was apparently blooming earlier than usual, Jesus had the right to see fruit, for the leaves were there.
- This was the first of two miracles performed by Jesus during the final Passover week. See also miracle 34.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- As has been previously noted, Jesus had every right to find fruit upon the tree of Israel. Its green and massive foliage was impressive indeed, for to it was given the tabernacle, the temple, the Old Testament Scriptures, plus the ministries of godly prophets, priests, and kings. But upon close inspection, it bore no fruit.
- The overriding lesson from this miracle is painfully obvious--God desires fruit.
  1. His chosen nation failed to bear fruit. *"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images."* (Hos. 10:1)
  2. His present plan is for believers to bear fruit. *"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."* (Jn. 15:8)
- Jesus later would say that He was the true vine and His followers were the branches (Jn. 15:1). The only function therefore of a branch is to bear fruit. Branch wood is never used for firewood or building material! Furthermore it must be realized a branch does not produce fruit (the vine does this), but rather bears it!

### **THIRTY-FOUR: Restoring Malchus's Ear (Lk. 22:49-51)**

#### **SURVEY**

While in Gethsemane Jesus restores the ear of Malchus, servant of the High Priest, which ear Simon Peter had foolishly severed with his sword.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This was the final miracle performed prior to Calvary.
- It was also the last of 16 healing miracles.
- It no doubt saved Simon Peter from certain death.
- It was the only miracle performed on an enemy.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- It is interesting that although all four gospel writers record the act of Malchus' ear being severed, (Mt. 26:51; Mk. 14:4; Lk. 22:50; Jn. 18:10), only Luke the physician tells us of the restoration by Jesus (Lk. 22:51). Also, of the four, only John's gospel actually identifies the one who cut off the ear, Simon Peter by name (Jn. 18:10).
- Note Jesus' stern rebuke in regards to this act of violence:  
*"Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"* (Mt. 26:52-53)  
One of Jesus' little known but important roles apparently assigned to Him by the Father was to function as supreme commander of heaven's angelic armies. The O.T. describes this role as being "captain of the Lord's Host" (see Gen. 32:1-2; Josh. 5:13-14; 1 Sam. 17:45). Thus, holding this highest of rank, He could have easily (as was pointed out to Peter) instantly enlisted the aid of 12 legions of heaven's mighty warriors, numbering an elite army some 72,000 strong! BUT HE WOULD NOT! Jesus came to die for sinful men, not destroy them.

### **THIRTY-FIVE: Second Miraculous Catch of Fish (.7n. 21:1-11)**

#### **SURVEY**

A short time following His resurrection Jesus appears to seven of His disciples who were fishing on the Sea of Galilee.

The Savior: *"Have you caught any fish?"*

The seven: *"No."*

The Savior: *"Cast your net on the right side of the boat and you will."*

In a nutshell, THEY DID AND THEY DID!

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This was Jesus' final miracle and the only one after His resurrection.
- John's gospel alone records both His first and final miracle.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- This is the seventh of the ten resurrection appearances made by Christ, and the third before His disciples (Jn. 21:14).
- It marks the only appearance in which a miracle was involved.
- Some have wrongly faulted these seven for leaving Jerusalem, accusing them of returning to their old trade of fishing. In fact, nothing could be farther from the truth. On two separate occasions the disciples were instructed to meet Jesus in Galilee after His resurrection!

1. First occasion:

*"But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."* (Mt. 26:32)

2. Second occasion:

*"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you."* (Mt. 28:5-7)

Actually, the backslidden ones were the four who were not there!

- As has been previously noted, John's Gospel alone records both the first and the final miracle of Christ. His first (Jn. 2) occurred at a wedding. His final miracle (Jn. 21) was on a seashore. Both involved food and fellowship. At the wedding there was wine to drink, and at the seashore fish to eat. Both acts were accomplished to increase the faith of his followers.

*"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."* (Jn. 2:11)

*"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 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."* (Jn 20:30-31)

- There may have been a double miracle involved here, for Jesus already had fish and bread available even before the disciples had brought in their catch.

- Following both the miracle and the meal, Jesus asks Peter a question:

*"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs."* (Jn. 21:15)

Jesus' question, *"Lovest thou me more than these?"* may have referred to at least one of three things. He could have meant:

1. *"Do you love me more than you love these men?"*

2. *"Do you love me more than fishing?"*

3. *"Do you love me more than these men love me?"*

It would seem that Jesus had the third meaning in mind, based on Mt. 26:33.

*"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended."* (Mt. 26:33)

- Three times he is asked if he really loves the Savior. Three times he answers in the affirmative. Peter had once denied Christ three times in the presence of the Savior's enemies. Jesus was now giving him the opportunity to affirm his love three times. God is the God of the second chance.

1. As seen in the life of Jonah--*"And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee."* (Jonah 3:1-2)

2. As seen in the life of John Mark. This young man had once failed God by abandoning Paul and Barnabas during their first missionary journey (see Acts 13:13; 15:36-39). But Mark, like Jonah and Peter, served the God of the second chance. Years later, just prior to his martyrdom in Rome, the Apostle Paul testified of this: *"Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry."* (2 Tim. 4:11)

# THE PARABLES OF JESUS

## BASIC FACTS REGARDING JESUS'S PARABLES

### I. The definitions involved (various suggestions)

- A. The word parable literally means, "a placing alongside of."
- B. It is a truth carried in a vehicle.
- C. It is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.
- D. It is a narrative which uses earthly elements to teach spiritual truths.
- E. It is a true-to-life story to illustrate or illuminate a truth.

### II. The importance involved

- A. One third of Jesus' teachings as recorded in the Gospels was in parabolic form.
- B. Nearly one fourth of Jesus' parables were related during the last few weeks of His life.

### III. The purpose involved

- A. To reveal great spiritual truths to the sincere heart.  
*"And the disciples came, and said unto him, why speakest thou unto those in parables?"*  
*"He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven..."* (Mt. 13:10, 11)
- B. To conceal great spiritual truths from the insincere heart.  
*"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."* (Mt. 13:13)
- C. To fulfill prophecy  
*"All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."* (Mt. 13:34-35)
- D. To emphasize His authority  
*"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."* (Mt. 7:28-29)  
*"The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."* (Jn. 7:46)
- E. To clarify and illustrate the kingdom of Heaven.  
Of all the subjects illustrated by Jesus' parables, the kingdom of Heaven was the most frequently referred to by far.
  - 1. Distinguished from the kingdom of God
    - a. On rare occasions the kingdom of God is used interchangeably for the kingdom of heaven (Millennial meaning). Compare Mk. 1:14-15 with Mt. 3:1-2. (See also Acts 1:3, 6.)
    - b. The most common meaning, however, is a reference to the new birth. (See Jn. 3:3, 5; Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31; 1 Cor. 15:50.)
  - 2. Definition of the kingdom of heaven
    - a. First meaning -- That general rule of the Father from heaven over the affairs of men from creation to the Millennium. Both saved and unsaved belong to this kingdom. (See Dan. 4:17, 32; Mt. 8:12; 22:2, 25:1.)
    - b. Second meaning -- That specific rule of the Son from Jerusalem over the affairs of men during the Millennium. Only saved people will enter this kingdom. (See Mt. 6:10, 13; 25:34; 26:29.)

# A LISTING OF JESUS' PARABLES

1. Flavored salt versus flawed salt ..... (Mt. 5:13; Mk. 9:50; Lk. 14:34)
2. Don't darken your light ..... (Mt. 5:14-16; Mk. 4:21-22; Lk. 8:16-17; 11:33-36)
3. The ultimate evil eye: attempting to lead or judge with impaired sight ..... (Mt. 7:3-5; Lk. 6:39-42)
4. Two gates, two goals ..... (Mt. 7:13-14)
5. The solid rock versus the shifting sand ..... (Mt. 7:24-27; Lk. 6:46-49)
6. Facts on fasting and feasting ..... (Mt. 9:14-15; Mk. 2:18-20; Lk. 5:33-35)
7. Never put the new on or in the old ..... (Mt. 9:16-17; Mk. 2:21-22; Lk. 5:36-39)
8. A generation of gripers ..... (Mt. 11:16-19; Lk. 7:29-35)
9. Little love, great love: forgiving the 50 and the 500 ..... (Lk. 7:41-50)
10. A kingdom divided, a strong man subdued. .... (Mt. 12:25-29; Mk. 3:23-30)
11. Seven spirits and a swept house ..... (Mt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-26)
12. The sower, the seed, and the soil ..... (Mt. 13:3-9, 18-23; Mk. 4:3-8, 13-20; Lk. 8:5-8, 11-15).
13. The secret of the seed ..... (Mk. 4:26-29)
14. Satan's tares in the Savior's soil ..... (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43)
15. The mighty mustard seed ..... (Mt. 13:31-32; Mk. 4:30-32; Lk. 13:18-19)
16. The cook's leaven and the kingdom of heaven ..... (Mt. 13:33)
17. Finding a fortune in a field ..... (Mt. 13:44)
18. The price paid for a pearl ..... (Mt. 13:45-46)
19. Sorting out a sea catch ..... (Mt. 13:47-50)
20. A trained man and his treasure ..... (Mt. 13:52)
21. Not the entrance but rather the exit: a diagnosis of defilement ..... (Mt. 15:10-20; Mk. 7:14-23)
22. The forgiven who wouldn't forgive ..... (Mt. 18:23-35)
23. How to know your neighbor ..... (Lk. 10:30-37)
24. Secrets for success: asking, seeking, and knocking ..... (Lk. 11:5-10)
25. A fool in a fix ..... (Lk. 12:16-21)
26. On being ready for the returning redeemer ..... (Lk. 12:35-48)
27. On knowing the divine weather forecast ..... (Mt. 16:1-3; Lk. 12:54-56)
28. On being a winner at the banquet dinner ..... (Lk. 14:7-14)
29. Two fools and a henpecked husband ..... (Lk. 14:15-24)
30. Whether a building or a battle - count the cost ..... (Lk. 14:28-33)
31. The missing sheep, the misplaced silver and the miserable son ..... (Lk. 15:1-32)
32. What the godless can teach the godly ..... (Lk. 16:1-13)
33. When Hades petitioned Paradise ..... (Lk. 16:19-31)
34. When our best is but the least ..... (Lk. 17:7-10)
35. A widow and a weary judge ..... (Lk. 18:1-8)
36. A haughty Pharisee and a humble publican ..... (Lk. 18:10-14)
37. Hourly workers and daily wages ..... (Mt. 20:1-16)
38. Two invested wisely, one wickedly ..... (Lk. 19:11-29)
39. Two sons: one said "no," but did, the other "yes," but didn't ..... (Mt. 21:28-32)
40. Some vicious vine keepers ..... (Mt. 21:33-45; Mk. 12:1-12; Lk. 20:9-16)
41. The wedding guest with no wedding garment ..... (Mt. 22:1-14)
42. The fruitless fig tree ..... (Lk. 13:6-8)
43. The fig tree and the future ..... (Mt. 24:32-35; Mk. 13:28-31; Lk. 21:29-33)
44. Watch and work, for we know not when ..... (Mt. 24:42-44; Mk. 13:32-37)
45. Virgins, vessels, and vigilance ..... (Mt. 25:1-13)
46. A traveler, three stewards and eight talents ..... (Mt. 25:14-30)
47. Separating the sheep from the goats ..... (Mt. 25:31-46)

## THE CLASSIFICATION AND NUMBER IDENTIFICATION OF JESUS' PARABLES

CLASSIFICATION IDENTIFICATION	PARABLE
Baking .....	16
Building World .....	5
Business World .....	32
Compassion .....	23
Criticism.....	8
Defilement .....	21
Demonic World .....	10, 11
Discernment .....	27
Discipleship .....	30
Employee And Employer Relationships.....	37, 40
Farming .....	12, 13, 14, 15, 42, 43
Father and Son Relationship .....	31, 39
Final Judgment .....	14, 19, 45, 47
Fishing.....	19
Forgiveness.....	9, 22
God's Love For The Church .....	18
God's Love For Israel .....	17
Good Works, Testimony .....	1, 2
Hell .....	25, 33
Kingdom Of Heaven .....	12-16, 22, 37, 41, 45, 46
Life's Choices .....	4
Master And Servant Relationships .....	26, 34, 46
Praying, Persistence.....	24, 35, 36
Second Coming.....	26, 43, 44, 45
Shepherding .....	47
Social World .....	29
Weddings .....	6, 28, 41, 45

## ONE: Flavored Salt Versus Flawed Salt (Mt. 5:13; Mk. 9:50; Lk. 14:34)

### SURVEY

Believers are to be the salt of the earth, but if salt loses its flavor, it is worthless for seasoning or matters of preservation.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This is the first of no less than five parables related by Jesus during His initial formal address to the multitudes. For the remaining four, see parables 2, 3, 4, and 5.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Salt played an important role in the Bible.
  1. All grain offerings under the law of Moses were to be accompanied with salt (Lk. 2:13).
  2. In the future millennium all animal offerings will be accompanied with salt (Ezek. 43:24).
  3. God ratified His covenant with David by salt (2 Chron. 13:5).
  4. Paul commands that our very words *"be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how you should answer every man"* (Col. 4:6).
- In the days of Jesus Roman soldiers often received their pay not in gold but in salt.
- As has been observed, Jesus said we are to function as salt. Salt thus:
  1. Flavors  
*"Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?"* (Job. 6:6)
  2. Preserves  
It is ironic indeed that those godless individuals who hate and prosecute believers over the very stability and relative health of their society to the restraining and preserving ministry of those same people!
  3. Purifies  
*"And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land."* (2 Kings 2:20-21)
- It has also been suggested that salt serves to make one thirsty, indicating our daily walk should produce a thirst in the lives of unsaved friends, co-workers, relatives, etc.
- Finally, Jesus warned that savorless salt would be *"cast out, and ... be trodden under foot of men"* (Mt. 5:13).  
Perhaps Paul had these words in mind when he would later write concerning the Judgment Seat of Christ.  
*"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."* (1 Cor. 3:11-15)

## **TWO: Don't Darken your Light (Mt. 5:14-16; Mk. 4:21-22; Lk. 8:16-17; 11:33-36)**

### **SURVEY**

*"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Mt. 5:14-16)*

*"Your eye is a lamp for your body. A pure eye lets sunshine into your soul. But an evil eye shuts out the light and plunges you into darkness. Make sure that the light you think you have is not really darkness. If you are filled with light, with no dark corners; then your whole life will be radiant as though a floodlight is shining on you." (Lk. 11:34-36, NLT)*

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This is but the first of many instances in the New Testament where the nature and function of light is employed to illustrate and describe a believer's testimony.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- As has been observed, Jesus instructs us to function as lights. But in reality we are to serve as light reflectors, for the Savior alone is the only true light!  
John's gospel brings this out time and again:  
*"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not... Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life ... As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world...I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." (Jn. 1:4-5; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46)*
- Here are some elements involved in this light-reflecting ministry:
  1. The testimony of John the Baptist was viewed as a light to the Jews (Jn. 5:35).
  2. The testimonies of Paul and Barnabas were viewed as lights to the Gentiles (Acts 13:4).
  3. We are called the Sons of Light (Lk. 16:8; Jn. 12:36; 1 Thess. 5:5).
  4. We are thus to put on the armor of light (Rom. 13:12).
  5. We are to walk in the light (Eph. 5:8).
  6. We are to shine brightly and blameless in this world of darkness (Phil. 2:13).

## **THREE: The Ultimate Evil Eye: Attempting to Lead or Judge with Impaired Sight (Mt. 7:3-5; Lk. 6:39-42)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus' rule on judging: Be sure you first remove the log from your own eye before attempting to remove a spoke from a friend's eye.

Jesus' rule on leading: One attempting to lead a blind person must himself be able to see.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

*"Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Mt. 7:5)*

- This marks the first of at least 12 occasions where Jesus directly addresses and accuses the

- Pharisees with gross hypocrisy.
- These instances are recorded in Mt. 16:3; 22:18; 23:13-15, 25-29; Lk. 12:1.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- There are two key biblical examples illustrating the tragic results and other hypocrisy of judging falsely:
  1. That of David
 

*"And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child. And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house."* (2 Sam. 11:1-9)
  2. That of Judas
 

*"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. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."* (Jn. 12:3-6)
- Here are some principles that should govern our judging of others:
  1. We must begin by judging ourselves.
 

*"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."* (1 Cor. 11:31)
  2. We must realize to judge harshly is to be judged harshly (Rom. 2:3).
  3. Restoration, not retaliation should be our goal in judging.
 

*"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."* (Gal. 6:1-2)
  4. We must acknowledge that Jesus alone is the ultimate judge.
 

*"For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."* (Rom. 14:11-12)
  5. We must never forget all Christians will someday be themselves judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
 

*"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. " (Rom 14:10) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."* (2 Cor. 5:10)
  6. We are never to judge in non-essential matters.
 

*"Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."* (Rom. 14:3-4)
  7. If we are spirit filled, we will never judge wrongly.
 

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

8. The ones proposing to judge should ask themselves three key questions before proceeding:
  - a. Is it valid? Do I really know and understand all the facts involved?
  - b. Is it sincere? Will it be performed to help the person out, not to straighten him out?
  - c. Is it necessary? Will or can the matter be resolved without my interference?

#### **FOUR: Two Gates, Two Goals (Mt. 7:13-14)**

##### **SURVEY**

Jesus said only a few will find and travel that narrow highway leading to life, while most will travel the wide, broad one leading to destruction.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This marks the first of three instances during His Sermon on the Mount where Jesus contrasts opposing entities:
  1. The narrow gate versus the wide gate
  2. The good trees versus the bad trees (Mt. 7:16-20)
  3. The true disciples versus the false disciples (Mt. 7:21-23)
  4. The wise builder versus the foolish builder (Mt. 7:24-27)

##### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

*"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the food, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."* (Josh. 24:15)

- A number of metaphors can be found in the Bible which vividly describe these two destinies:
  1. Right offering versus wrong offering

*"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."* (Gen. 4:3-5)
  2. Life versus death

*"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil."* (Deut. 30:15)
  3. Blessings versus cursings
    - a. Blessings (Deut. 28:2-14)
    - b. Cursings (Deut. 28:15-68)
  4. Fruitful trees versus worthless chaff (Psa. 1)
  5. God versus Baal

*"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."* (1 Kings 18:21)
  6. Light versus darkness

*"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."* (1 John 1:5-7)
  7. Christ versus Antichrist

*"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 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."* (1 John 4:2-3)

## **FIVE: The Solid Rock Versus the Shifting Sand (Mt. 7:24-27 Lk. 6:46-49)**

### **SURVEY**

The house which is built on a rock will survive all storms, but the one built on sand will soon utterly fall.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the last parable Jesus told during His Sermon on the Mount.
- It is the first of two occasions where He refers to Himself as a Rock. *"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." (Mt. 7:24)*  
*"Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (Mt. 16:12)*

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- In essence this parable is but an extension of the first Psalm. One was wise, the other foolish. Thus:
  1. The wise man described  
*"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psa. 1:1-3)*
  2. The foolish man described  
*"The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." (Psa. 1:4-6)*
- The New Testament epistles have much to say regarding Jesus as the Rock.
  1. He is the smitten Rock to all who will drink (Exod. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; Jn. 4:13-14; 7:37-39).
  2. He is the precious Stone to all who have drunk (1 Pet. 2:3, 7).
  3. He is the chief Cornerstone to the Church (Eph. 2:20).
  4. He is the stumbling Stone to the Jews at his first coming (Rom. 9:32-33; 1 Cor. 1:23).
  5. He is the Headstone of the corner to the Jews at His second coming (Zech. 4:7).
  6. He is the smiting Stone cut without hands to Gentile world powers at his second coming (Dan. 2:34).
  7. He is the crushing Stone of judgment to all unbelievers (Mt. 21:44). Peter says (2:4) this great Stone was "disallowed" by Israel. This word means "to put to a test and then repudiate". After examining Christ for 34 years, Israel rejected Him. He simply was not what they were looking for in a Messiah.  
Note, furthermore, the apostle's statement in 2:6: "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone." Certainly here is the fulfillment of Christ's promise in Matt. 16:16, 18. Peter was not that foundation; Christ was. Finally (see 2:5), all believers are "lively stones, built up (into) a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (See also Rev. 1:6.)

## **SIX: Facts on Fasting and Feasting (Mt. 9:14-15; Mk. 2:18-20 Lk. 5:33-35)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus was criticized for not always instructing His disciples to observe the various fasts as did the

disciples of both John the Baptist and the Pharisees. Jesus defended His action by pointing out wedding guests feast and celebrate when the groom is present with them, and fast and mourn when he is removed from them.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of two occasions where Jesus refers to Himself as a bridegroom (see Mt. 9:15 and 25:1).
- On a previous occasion John the Baptist had referred to Him as the bridegroom. *"Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled."* (Jn. 3:28-29)
- Paul would later employ this analogy:  
*"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."* (2 Cor. 11:2)  
*"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 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."* (Eph. 5:23-27)

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus was not at this point discouraging fasting.
  1. He himself once fasted for forty days (Mt. 4:2).
  2. He laid down rules for fasting (Mt. 6:16-18).
  3. He indicated that fasting on certain occasions was necessary to experience the power of God (Mt. 17:21).
  4. Following his ascension, his followers would fast (Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 7:5; 2 Cor. 6:5).
- However, as long as he was with the disciples (right up to the very hour of Calvary), the main priority of the Savior was to teach and train them.
- In reality the Bible presents three kinds of fasting.
  1. Temporary abstinence from food (Acts 14:23)
  2. Temporary abstinence from sleep (2 Cor. 11:27)
  3. Temporary abstinence from sex (1 Cor. 7:5)

**SEVEN: Never Put the New On or In the Old (Mt. 9:16-17; Mk. 2:21-22; Lk. 5:36-39)**

#### SURVEY

A new, unshrunk patch placed on an old garment will soon peel away from the old, leaving an even bigger hole than before. Likewise, new wine poured into old wineskins will soon cause the old to burst from the pressure.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

This is perhaps the most descriptive of all Jesus' parables illustrating just why His new teaching could not and would not fit into that of the Pharisees.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Warren Wiersbe writes: "In these days of sanforized fabrics, and glass and plastic bottles, the

illustration about cloth and wineskins may confuse some. The Jews did not have preshrunk cloth for their clothing, and they frequently kept their liquids in skins. If a woman sewed a patch on a garment that had already been washed, the next time it was washed the patch would shrink and ruin both the patch and the garment. If new wine was poured into dry, brittle skins, the pressure of the gas from the fermentation would break the skin and the wine would be lost. Jesus was neither a conformer (like the Pharisees) nor a reformer (like John the Baptist). He was (and is) a Transformer. He does not reject either the old or the new: He transforms the old so that it is fulfilled in the new. 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.' (Mt. 5:17). If I have an acorn, I can destroy it in one of two ways. I can put it on the sidewalk and beat it to a pulp with a hammer. Or, I can plant it in the ground where it will die and produce an oak tree. The acorn would be destroyed by being fulfilled. Jesus did not come to patch up the old, worn-out Jewish religion. He came to fulfill it in His life, teaching, and death and resurrection. He transformed the old by fulfilling it in the new. To put new cloth on an old garment would destroy both. To put new wine in brittle wineskins would destroy both. To try to mix Law and Grace, Moses and Christ, would destroy both. But to permit the Law to be fulfilled in Grace, and Moses to be fulfilled in Christ, is what God accomplished." (Meet Yourself in the Parables, Victor Books, Wheaton, Ill., 1979, pp. 38-39)

- Jesus may have hinted at this new teaching during His very first miracle. *"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, 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."* (Jn. 2:9-10)

## **EIGHT: A Generation of Grippers (Mt. 11:16-19; Lk. 7:29-35)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus likened His generation to a group of spoiled and immature children who complained because their playmates did not always play the game according to their rules.

He then offered an example of this: John the Baptist, who abstained from wine and fasted, was accused of being demon-possessed, while Jesus, who did neither was looked upon as a glutton and drunkard!

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

*"But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows."* (Mt. 11:16)

- This was the first of many occasions where Jesus condemned His generation for their sin and unbelief.
  1. *"But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* (Mt. 12:39-40)
  2. *"The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."* (Mt. 12:41)
  3. *"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."* (Mt. 12:42)
  4. *"That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation."* (Lk. 11:50-51)
  5. *"But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation."* (Lk. 17:25)
  6. *"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! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."* (Mt. 23:37-39)

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Perhaps the Holy Spirit had Jesus' generation in mind when he inspired the writing of the following words: *"There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men."* (Prov. 30:11-14)
- The ultimate tragedy here was that this generation which began by criticizing the Savior would end by crucifying him. The gripers would become vipers.
- The sin of murmuring and complaining is one of the most serious in all the Bible.
  1. It was the sin that kept Moses' generation out of the Promised Land.  
*"Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it."* (Num. 14:22-23)  
*"Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word: But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD."* (Psa. 106:24-25)
  2. It is often the sin that keeps New Testament believers from entering God's spiritual Promised Land, that is, His perfect will.  
*"Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."* (1 Cor. 10:10)  
*"So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief... There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God... Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."* (Heb. 3:19; 4:9, 11)
  3. It is the sin of godless apostates.  
*"These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage."* (Jude 16)
  4. It is the sin to be avoided at all costs.  
*"Do all things without murmurings and disputings."* (Phil. 2:14)
- Thus, to complain in regards to our circumstances is not only to deny God's goodness in our lives but to actually question His very motives!

## NINE: Little Love, Great Love: Forgiving the 50 and the 500 (Lk. 7:41-50)

### SURVEY

Jesus spoke of an individual who loaned 500 pieces of silver to one man and 50 pieces to another. However, upon discovering that neither could repay, he freely forgave both. The Savior then asked: *"Who do you suppose loved him more after that?"* The Pharisee (Simon) to whom Jesus was speaking, replied with the correct answer: *"I suppose the one who had the bigger debt cancelled."*

### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the first of at least three parables on the subject of forgiveness. (See also #22 and 31.)
- It marks the first of two occasions where Jesus was anointed. (Compare Lk. 7:37-38 with Jn. 12:3.)
- It is the only parable related during a meal.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Three key concepts make up this parable: Repentance, forgiveness, and affection.
  1. Repentance (from sin) leads to forgiveness (from God), resulting in affection (for Christ).
  2. No repentance (from sin) leads to no forgiveness (from God), resulting in no affection (for Christ).
- Here of course Jesus was not saying that God loves an especially wicked but repenting sinner more than one who is less wicked. What He does seem to observe is the first man may have just cause to be more thankful than the second man. Paul could have had all this in mind when he wrote the following:

*"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Rom. 5:20)*  
*"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 1:12-14)*

## TEN: A Kingdom Divided, A Strong Man Subdued (Mt. 12:25-29; Mk. 3:23-30)

### SURVEY

- Any kingdom at war against itself, or any city or home divided against itself is doomed.
- One cannot enter a house, rob it, and harm its members without first subduing the strong man of that house.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This parable concludes with the only reference to the unpardonable sin in the entire Bible.  
*"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. 12:31-32)*

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus offers a three-fold argument to counteract the accusation that He was casting out demons by the power of Satan:
  1. If the devil empowered Him to do this, then he, Satan, would be destroying his own kingdom.
  2. Jesus was successfully doing that which their own Jewish exorcists had claimed to be able to do.
  3. Since He had cast out one of Satan's demons it only stood to reason that He was more powerful than the devil!
- As has been previously observed, Jesus concludes this parable with a somber warning regarding the unpardonable sin. Much ink has been spilled over these words. What is this unforgivable and unpardonable sin? Who can commit it? Can it be done today? Two main views have been offered to explain this sin.
  1. First view--The first view is that the sin can be committed by any unbeliever today and occurs when a sinner rejects the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit once too often. At this point, the Holy Spirit forever ceases to deal with the sinner and he is hopelessly condemned, with no chance of salvation, however he may later desire it. Genesis 6:3 is sometimes offered in support of this theory. *"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."* However, an examination of the passage shows this meaning is taken completely out of its context. In reality there is no scriptural basis for the first theory.

2. Second view--The second view is that the sin was dispensational in nature, that it was the sin of ascribing to Satan the earthly miracles performed by our Savior and therefore cannot be committed today. This theory is generally held by the majority of Bible students and the passage context would seem to support its accuracy.

*"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. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." (Mt. 12:22-24)*

## **ELEVEN: Seven Spirits and a Swept House (Mt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-26)**

### **SURVEY**

A demon left the person it was possessing and eventually returned, finding that person "empty, swept, and clean." The demon then brought seven other demons, each more wicked than it was, all of whom now occupied that person, making his present condition far worse than before.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This is the only parable dealing with the frightful subject of demon possession.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Here is a case of reformation without regeneration. The man in the parable turned over a new leaf, but not a new life. This can prove to be a very dangerous situation. To illustrate:
  1. An unbelieving drunk through sheer human willpower is able to dry out and become a respectable member of society.
  2. He then is filled with pride and ridicules the saving grace of God, boasting that human determination is sufficient for all things.
  3. In this state he becomes far more valuable to Satan than when he was a poor derelict.
- In this parable Jesus strongly suggests that there are degrees of evil in the hierarchy of the demonic world. Various Scripture verses seem to support this. Note the diverse actions caused by various demons.
  1. Seducing and false spirits--They are associated with false doctrine (2 Cor. 11:4; 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 Jn. 4:1-6).
  2. Unclean and evil spirits--They seem to cause physical suffering (Mt. 10:1; Lk. 7:21; Acts 5:16; 8:7).
  3. Miracle-working spirits--These may attempt to imitate the work of God (Rev. 16:13-14).
  4. Foul spirits--These are linked to sexual immorality (Rev. 18:2-3).
  5. Violent spirits (Acts 19:12-16; 1 Sam. 18:10-11).
  6. Lying spirits (1 Kings 22:22-23).
- Jesus may well have had the nation Israel in mind as He related this parable. Plagued with the demon of unbelief since Kadesh-barnea (Num. 13-14; Psa. 78, 106) the nation had, initially at least, favorably responded to the messages of both John the Baptist (Mt. 3:5-6), and Jesus Himself (Jn. 6:14-15). But all too soon the Jewish leaders would officially reject Him (Mt. 27:15-26), thus making "the last state ... worse than the first" (Lk. 11:26).

## **TWELVE: The Sower, the Seed, and the Soil (Mt. 13:3-9,18-23; Mk. 4:3-8, 13-20; Lk. 8:5-8, 11-15)**

### **SURVEY**

A farmer scattered some seed in a field that consisted of four kinds of soil, all of which yielded different

results.

- Footpath soil: the birds soon came and ate the seed.
- Shallow soil with underlying rock: the plants sprung up quickly, but soon wilted and died for lack of nourishment.
- Thorn infested soil: the tender blades of the plants were quickly choked by these thorns.
- Fertile soil: this area alone produced an abundant crop of 30, 60, and 100-fold return.

## SIGNIFICANCE

This is the first of nine parables explaining and illustrating the Kingdom of Heaven all of which were related by Jesus during an extended lecture given on the banks of the Galilean Sea.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus Himself provided the interpretation regarding these four kinds of soil.
  1. Roadside Soil  
A person who receives the Word without really understanding it. Seed soon stolen by both Satan and his false ministers.
  2. Shallow Soil  
A person who receives the Word without acting fully upon it. Thus, when persecutions and trials arise, he falls away.
  3. Thorn-infested Soil  
A person who receives the Word but attempts to mix it with the pleasures of this life. However, worldly things soon choke it.
  4. Fertile Soil  
A person who receives the Word with an honest, sincere, and understanding heart. This one alone will bear fruit.
- The following suggested applications are offered in regard to these four kinds of soil:
  1. Roadside Soil
    - a. The apostle John would later in a spiritual sense associate demonic doctrine with unclean birds (Rev. 18:2).
    - b. The roadside soil kind of heart refuses to obey God's command as recorded by both Jeremiah and Hosea:  
*"For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns."* (Jer. 4:3)  
*"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."* (Hosea 10:12)
    - c. These kind of people are seen often during Jesus' earthly ministry.  
*"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."* (Jn. 2:23-24)  
*"And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do."* (Jn. 6:6)
  2. Shallow, Rocky Soil  
Jesus summarizes this kind of person in two-fold fashion.
    - a. They have no root. Both David and Paul speak of this:  
*"The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away."* (Psa. 1:4)  
*"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."* (Eph. 4:30)
    - b. They are unable to withstand the storms of life. It has been rightly observed that persecution, pain, travail and tribulation serve as the ultimate tests in revealing the saved from the unsaved, the one having roots from the one without roots.
  3. Thorn Infested Soil. Two factors prevent this soil from producing fruit:
    - a. The deceitfulness of wealth. The rich young ruler had, sadly enough, allowed this thorn to infest his heart.  
*"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the*

young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions" (Mt. 19:21-22). Paul would later warn of this -

*"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."* (1 Tim. 6:10)

*"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia."* (2 Tim. 4:10)

- b. The desire for and pleasure in worldly things. This would be in direct opposition to that attitude once demonstrated by Moses.

*"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward."* (Heb. 11:24-26)

#### 4. Fertile Soil.

The fertile soil thus receives the Word (unlike the shallow heart), understands it (unlike the hard heart), and holds fast to it (unlike the crowded heart).

Is Jesus indicating here that only one out of four (25%) of those witnessed to will be saved?

NO, but He is promising that some will accept Christ. In other words if we sow, we will reap!

In a concluding thought, the 30, 60, and 100-fold harvest produced by the fertile soil seems to tie in with Jesus' vine and branch discourse. Thus:

- a. *"Every branch that beareth FRUIT, he purgeth it..."* (Jn. 15:1a). A reference to the 30-fold.
- b. *"That it may bring forth MORE FRUIT"* (Jn. 15:1b). A reference to the 60-fold.
- c. *"He that abideth in me ... bringeth forth MUCH FRUIT"* (Jn. 15:5). A reference to 100-fold.

### THIRTEEN: The Secret of the Seed (Mk. 4:26-29)

#### SURVEY

The farmer can sow and harvest the seed, but God alone produces the crop in 3-fold fashion.

First, the leaf blade pushes up through the ground.

Second, the heads of wheat are formed.

Finally, the grain ripens.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

This is the first parable to trace the actual spiritual growth of the Kingdom of Heaven.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- As has been already observed, man sows and harvests but only God can grow the seed. Both Paul and James testify to this:  
*"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."* (1 Cor. 3:6-7)  
*"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."* (James 5:7)
- A spiritual application can be drawn along these lines here from the resurrection of Lazarus. Consider:
  1. Man's part:
    - a. The sowing – *"Take away the stone"* (Jn. 11:39).
    - b. The reaping – *"Loose him and let him go"* (Jn. 11:44).
  2. God's part:
    - a. The growing – *"Lazarus, come forth"* (Jn. 11:43).
- This parable describes the development of the kingdom of God, that is to say, God's dealings with

this world in both the physical and spiritual realms. It is a progressive thing. An analogy here can be seen in the divine progressive revelation of our Bible. God did not reveal all of its truths in the book of Genesis, or even in the Old Testament. Centuries were involved in its writing. But by the time one reaches the book of Revelation, the seed sprout in Genesis has become the fully developed plant.

#### **FOURTEEN: Satan's Tares in the Savior's Soil (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43)**

##### **SURVEY**

A farmer planted good seed in his field only to later discover his enemy had secretly sown poisoned weeds in that same field. When asked by his farm hands if they should pull out the weeds, the man replied:

*"No, lest you uproot the wheat also. Let both grow until the harvest, at which time we will sort out both, burning the weeds and storing the wheat."*

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the first parable to explain the why, when, who, and what regarding the Kingdom of Heaven.
  1. Why God allows tares in His field of wheat.
  2. When God will remove those tares.
  3. Who God will use in removing the tares.
  4. What will happen to the tares.

##### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- The three questions in regards to this parable.
  1. What are the tares? The Palestinian farmer called them "bearded darnel." In fact, they are a poisonous rye-grass plant, giving every appearance at the beginning to be regular wheat, until both plants reach maturity. Then the tares are easily recognized.
  2. Who (humanly speaking) are the real tares today? It can be said that they are not the ultra-liberals or scoffing agnostics, but rather those religious individuals who know the vocabulary and concepts of salvation, but who have in their hearts totally rejected the Christ of salvation.
  3. Where (humanly speaking) are the real tares today? For the most part they would not be found in the congregations of the cults, or among liberal assemblies. Rather these people have often succeeded in infiltrating the membership of Bible-believing churches.
- The nine metaphors in this parable:
  1. The man is Christ.
  2. The enemy is the devil.
  3. The field is the world.
  4. The wheat is believers.
  5. The tares are unbelievers.
  6. The harvest is the end of the age.
  7. The reapers are angels.
  8. The granary is heaven.
  9. The furnace is hell.
- The six New Testament passages testifying to this parable:
  1. *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."* (Mt. 7:15)
  2. *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name*

done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mt. 7:21-23)

3. "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. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:28-30)
4. "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." (2 Peter 2:2)
5. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4)
6. "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." (Rev. 2:9)

### **FIFTEEN: The Mighty Mustard Seed (Mt. 13:31-32; Mk. 4:30-32; Lk. 13:18-19)**

#### **SURVEY**

Although the mustard seed is one of the smallest of all seeds, it later becomes the largest of garden plants and grows into a tree, where birds can come and find shelter in its branches.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This parable, as no other, stresses the insignificant beginning of the Kingdom of Heaven (in the Upper Room with only 120 - Acts 2) to a world-wide entity. See Col. 1:6.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- The mustard seed was indeed the smallest of all seeds sown in the field. It took 750 seeds to weigh a gram. As there are 28 grams in one ounce, and 16 ounces in a pound, it would take 336,000 of these seeds to equal a pound. And yet this tiny seed can, in a very few weeks, grow into a mustard plant 15 feet high.

Jesus compares all of this with the Kingdom of God.

1. Christ's first coming and the kingdom--At that time, it was but a tiny seed. The Roman rulers had ridiculed it, and the Jewish leaders had rejected it. In fact, the last question asked of Christ by his disciples just prior to his ascension had to do with the kingdom. "*When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*" (Acts 1:6)
  2. Christ's second coming and the kingdom--At that time, it will become as the mighty mustard plant. "*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)
- The tree here can be compared with the one described in Daniel 4.
    1. As compared: Both trees grew rapidly to a great height, providing refuge for the birds of the air.
    2. As contrasted: The tree in Dan. 4 represented Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire. The tree in Matt. 13 speaks of Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven. The Dan. 4 tree was soon cut down. Nebuchadnezzar would be punished with insanity and his kingdom later be given over to the Persians (Dan. 5).
    3. The Matt. 13 tree will never fall, but will eventually give way to Jesus' 1000-year reign over all the earth!

## **SIXTEEN: The Cook's Leaven and the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt. 13:33)**

### **SURVEY**

The Kingdom of Heaven can be likened to yeast as used by a woman in making bread. Even though she uses a large amount of flour, the yeast permeates every part of the dough.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the shortest of all Jesus' parables.
- It is the only one where the word leaven is used.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- The key to interpreting this parable is one's understanding of the word "leaven." What does it stand for? There are two main views:
  1. It represents the gospel. This is the position of the postmillennialist. He is the one who believes the preaching of the gospel in and by itself will be able to usher in the thousand-year era of peace, at the end of which Christ will return.
  2. It represents the presence of evil. This is the position of the premillennialist. He is one who believes that in spite of gospel preaching, the world will become worse and that only the second coming of the King himself at the beginning of the millennium can usher in that golden era of peace. This seems to be the correct view. In fact, there are three symbols for evil in the Bible. These are:
    - a. Leprosy (Lev. 13-14; Num. 5:2)
    - b. The serpent (Gen. 3:1-2, 4, 13-14; Num. 21:8-9; Psa. 58:4; Isa. 27:1; Mt. 23:33; Rev. 12:9; 20:2)
    - c. Leaven--The New Scofield Bible says the following: "Leaven, as a symbolic or typical substance, is always mentioned in the Old Testament in an evil sense. The usage of the word in the New Testament explains its symbolic meaning. It is malice and wickedness as contrasted with sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:6-8). It is evil doctrine (Mt. 16:12) in its threefold form of Pharisaism, Sadduceeism, and Herodianism (Mt. 16:6; Mk. 8:15). The leaven of the Pharisees was externalism in religion (Mt. 23:14-16, 23-28); of the Sadducees, skepticism as to the supernatural and as to the Scriptures (Mt. 22:23, 29); of the Herodians, worldliness (Mt. 22:16-21; Mk. 3:6)." (Oxford University Press, New York, 1967, p. 1015.)
- Thus, this parable predicts the growth of satanic evil until the whole world is affected. It also answers the question of why Christ has not yet come.
  1. The postmillennialist says he has not returned because things are not yet good enough.
  2. The premillennialist says he has not returned because things are not yet bad enough. (See 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; 4:1-4; 2 Pet. 3.)

## **SEVENTEEN: Finding a Fortune in a Field (Mt. 13:44)**

### **SURVEY**

A man discovered a hidden treasure in a field. In his excitement he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get sufficient money to buy the field and thus secure the treasure.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This parable employs the first of (at least) two symbols for the nation Israel. For the second, see parable numbers 42 and 43.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- The treasure here probably represents Israel, and the man is Christ. Often in the Old Testament, God describes that nation as his special treasure. Note: *"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine"* (Exod. 19:5). *"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth"* (Deut. 14:2). *"For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure"* (Psa. 135:4). *"And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."* (Mal. 3:17)
- Just why God initially chose Israel to be His special people is a mystery indeed. An ancient poem observes:  
How odd of God to choose the Jews.  
Someone however has added the following words to this poem:  
But odder still God's plan to see, To use the likes of you and me!
- In a key passage Moses explains and describes God's relationship with Israel:  
*"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."* (Deut. 7:6-8)

## EIGHTEEN: The Price Paid for a Pearl (Mt. 13:45-46)

### SURVEY

When a pearl merchant found a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Many believe the pearl here is the first allusion to the church in the Bible.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Parables 17 and 18 describe God's two most precious possessions, the nation Israel and the church.
- Both prized possessions are highlighted in the construction of the Holy City, New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1-2).
  1. The twelve gates in the wall surrounding the city consist of twelve pearls (Rev. 21:21).
    - a. Each gate was supervised by a special angel (Rev. 21:12).
    - b. Each gate was named after one of the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev. 21:12).
  2. The twelve foundations of the city are named after the twelve apostles of Christ (Rev. 21:14).

## NINETEEN: Sorting Out a Sea Catch (Mt. 13:47-50)

### SURVEY

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a fishing net that is thrown into the water and gathers fish of every kind. When the net is full, they drag it onto the shore, sit down, sort out the good fish into crates and throw the

bad ones away.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This parable contains the final of three contrasting entities as used by Jesus in explaining the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew 13.
  1. Fertile soil versus barren soil (Mt. 13:3-8)
  2. Tares versus wheat (Mt. 13:24-30)
  3. Good fish versus bad fish (Mt. 13:47-50)

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Angels are presented in this parable as special agents, assigned by God to eventually separate the saved from the unsaved. This truth is a recurring theme throughout the N.T. Note:

*"The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."* (Mt. 13:39, 41)

*"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just."* (Mt. 13:49)

*"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."* (Mt. 24:31)

*"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."* (Mt. 25:31-32)

*"And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."* (Rev. 14:15-20)

#### TWENTY: A Trained Man and His Treasure (Mt. 13:52)

#### SURVEY

A disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a person who brings out of the storehouse new teachings as well as old teachings.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

This is the final of two parables where Jesus contrasts the old with the new. See parable number 7 for the first.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus refers to a scribe in this parable.
  1. A scribe was one who copied, contemplated, and communicated the Word of God in regard to the people of Israel.
  2. Ezra was the most famous of the biblical scribes. *"This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he*

was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7:6, 10).

3. What marvelous truths modern-day scribes (diligent Bible students) can still bring from the ultimate treasure, God's Word. "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!" (Rom. 11:33).
- During a conversation on that first Easter Sunday afternoon with two disciples, Jesus would play the role of the Sovereign Scribe, bring forth both old and new treasures from the Hebrew Bible storehouse. Note: "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? 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? 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: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 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. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Lk. 24:13-21, 25-27)

## **TWENTY-ONE: Not Entrance, but Rather the Exit: A Diagnosis of Defilement (Mt. 15:10-20; Mk. 7:14-23)**

### **SURVEY**

Eating food with ceremonially unwashed hands, or from unwashed vessels does not constitute defilement. It is thus not that which enters the mouth and stomach, but rather what comes out of the mouth and heart, such as evil thoughts, murder, adultery, theft, false testimony, etc.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the final of three parables where, at the request of His disciples, Jesus provided for them its interpretation. These are:
  1. The Sower, Seed, and Soil (Mt. 13:3-9, 18-23)
  2. The Tares and Wheat (Mt. 13:24-30; 36-43)
  3. The Parable on Defilement

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- The theme reflected by this parable is the evil of legalism, which can be defined as follows:
  1. Emphasizing the outward action to the exclusion of the inward attitude
  2. Forcing my personal convictions upon someone else
  3. Judging and condemning all those who dare disagree with me regarding even those minor and petty issues
  4. Substituting the liberty in Christ with the bondage of the law
  5. Living one's life in the flesh and not in the Spirit
- Note the following passages regarding real defilement:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees,

*hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Mt. 23:25, 27).*

*"Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith" (Gal. 3:3, 10, 11). "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (5:17). "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (6:8).*

*"For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thess. 2:14-16).*

- Paul aptly summarizes all this by one concise verse: *"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."* (Rom. 14:17)

## **TWENTY-TWO: The Forgiven Who Wouldn't Forgive (Mt. 18:23-35)**

### **SURVEY**

A king decided to settle accounts with his servants. One of them owed him a vast amount of money but was unable to pay and begged for mercy, pleading that he and his family be not sold into slavery in order to pay on the debt. The king took pity and cancelled his debt. The forgiven servant had a fellow servant who owed him a small amount of money. Like the first servant, he too pled for mercy. However, refusing his plea the forgiven man had him thrown in prison.

Upon hearing of this terrible act of ingratitude the furious king commanded his wicked servant be cast into prison until the entire debt be paid.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This parable, perhaps as no other, illustrates in graphic fashion the cruelty, thanklessness, and utter depravity of the unregenerate heart.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Consider the staggering contrasts concerning both the amounts owed and the attitudes displayed in this parable.
  1. The amount owed to the king--It amounted to 10,000 talents. The servant here was no doubt a tax-collecting governor of sorts, entrusted by the king to rule over a city or province. He had apparently either embezzled or misappropriated vast sums of money collected for the king.
    - a. One talent would purchase a slave.
    - b. One talent represented 20 years' wages for the average workman.
    - c. The total annual tax bill for all of Palestine was less than 1,000 talents. Yet the gracious king forgave all this.
  2. The amount owed to the servant--It was only 100 pence, which amounted to approximately four months' wages (1/60 of a talent). Yet the greedy servant refused to forgive.
- This great principle of the importance for the forgiven to forgive is brought out time and again in the New Testament.

*"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Mt. 6:13-14)*

*" And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's*

*sake hath forgiven you."* (Eph. 4:32)

- Jesus would begin to end His ministry by voicing that wonderful word FORGIVENESS-
  1. During His Sermon on the Mount  
*" And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."* (Mt. 6:12)
  2. During His sufferings on the cross  
*"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."* (Lk. 23:34)

## **TWENTY-THREE: How to Know Your Neighbor (Lk. 10:30-37)**

### **SURVEY**

A man en route from Jerusalem to Jericho was attacked, robbed, beaten and left half dead by some bandits.

Soon a priest and then a Levite, traveling that same road, saw the man but quickly walked on, refusing to help.

Finally a Samaritan stopped, bandaged his wounds, placed him on his donkey, took him to a nearby inn and paid the innkeeper to nurse him back to health.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the only parable where a Samaritan was involved.
- There is also only one miracle where a Samaritan was involved (Lk. 17:11-19)
- Both Samaritans were presented in a very positive way. Thus we see:
  1. The gentleness as exhibited in the parable.
  2. The gratitude as exhibited in the miracle.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- There is a two-fold irony and surprise in this parable:
  1. Concerning the two who should have helped the victim but did not
    - a. The priest--He might have just come from the temple after presenting the sacrifices to God.
    - b. The Levite--He might have just come from the temple after proclaiming the Scriptures. But neither would lift a finger to help a fellow human being.
  2. Concerning the one who should not have helped the victim, but did.  
He was a Samaritan and a member of a race hated by the Jews (Lk. 10:33).
- Jesus related this parable to answer a question posed by a lawyer. The question was, "Who is my neighbor?" The answer, of course, is that my neighbor is anyone I can help.
- Some have accused Jesus of borrowing His words as found in the Golden Rule verse from Confucius, who preached the same message over 500 years prior to Bethlehem. But a quick comparison between these two statements reveal a vast difference. Example:
  1. The Golden Rule as attributed to Confucius--"Don't do to others that which you would not have them do unto you."
  2. The Golden Rule as attributed to Jesus--"*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*" (Mt. 7:12)
- With this background in mind, consider the reaction of the three men who encountered the wounded traveler:
  1. It can be seen that both the priest and Levite followed Confucius' advice in that they did not beat, rob, and leave the victim to die for neither would have wanted this to be done to them.
  2. The Samaritan alone however followed Jesus' advice. He not only did not inflict additional harm upon the victim (Confucius' advice) but then did that which he would have desired someone to do for him, namely, to care for his terrible wounds (Jesus' advice).
- As a final observation, note the three different attitudes seen here:
  1. That of the robbers--"What is thine is mine."

2. That of the priest and Levite--"What is mine is mine."

3. That of the Samaritan--"What is mine is thine."

Thus, the first attitude is devilish, the second, fleshly, but the third divine.

## **TWENTY-FOUR: Secrets for Success - Asking, Seeking, Knocking (Lk. 11:5-10)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus spoke of a man who paid a midnight visit to a friend.

The man: "I need to borrow three loaves of bread to set before a guest in my home who has just arrived."

The friend: "I can't help you. The door is locked and we're all in bed here."

Jesus concluded this parable by saying that if the man continued to knock and request, his persistence would eventually be rewarded.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is the first of three parables of Jesus which emphasizes the importance of prayer. For the other two, see parables #35 and #36.

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Negative:

This parable does not teach we must constantly and persistently beg a reluctant God to answer our requests. In fact, to the contrary. Note Peter's words:

*"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."* (1 Pet. 3:12)

- Positive:

What the parable does teach is that if even an unwilling human friend can be moved by persistent intercession, how much more will God be moved by the requests of His people?

The following verses testify to this:

*"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"* (Mt. 7:11)

*"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb. 4:15-16)

- In reality, some Christians do not receive simply because they either do not ask, or if they do, make their requests with impure motives!

*"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."* (Jas 1:5-7)

*"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."* (Jas 4:2-3)

- The truths stressed here are re-emphasized by Jesus in a later parable, dealing with a persistent widow and an uncaring judge. See parable 35.

## **TWENTY-FIVE: A Fool In a Fix (Lk. 12:16-21)**

### **SURVEY**

The farm of a rich man had yielded such a bumper harvest one year that his barns could not contain. This

foolish and materialistic farmer, assuming he would live many years, decided to build bigger barns and spend the rest of his life in luxury and total self-indulgence. However, that very night God demanded from him his immortal soul!

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This parable records the only occasion in the Bible in which God Himself personally calls a man a fool.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus related this parable to warn a listener concerning the sin of covetousness (Lk. 12:13-15). Warren Wiersbe writes:  
"Covetousness is a desire for things and it can be the beginning of all kinds of sin. Eve coveted being like God and took the forbidden fruit. Lot's wife coveted Sodom and was killed on the spot. Achan coveted some spoils of war and destroyed himself and his family. David coveted his neighbor's wife and plunged himself, his family, and his nation into trouble. The last of the Ten Commandments is, 'Thou shalt not covet'. By coveting, we can break all the other nine commandments." (Meet Yourself in the Parables, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL., 1979, p. 115.) In the New Testament, Paul confessed that this command, more than any other, caused him to realize his own wretched, sinful condition (Rom. 7:7-9).
- A pastor once visited a stingy and bitter old man whose great wealth had apparently not brought him the slightest joy or peace. During the conversation as the miser complained about his lot in life, the pastor suddenly asked him to look out the window of his room.

Pastor: "Tell me, what did you see?"

Man: "Well I saw little children playing, mothers laughing, and men going about their daily work." The minister then handed the old man a mirror and asked him to gaze into it. Pastor: "Now, what do you see?"

Man: "I see myself."

After a moment of silent contemplation the pastor quietly observed:

"You have just looked at two glasses. The first allowed you to see happy and productive people, the second, only yourself? But why this difference? Simply this--The second glass was coated by a thin layer of silver!"

- Why was the rich man called a fool by God?
  1. Because he thought he could satisfy his eternal soul with materialistic goods--Note this statement, "*And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up*" (12:19). (See Jesus' statement in Mt. 4:4; 16:26.) The only real soul food is the Word of God. Our Lord had warned concerning this on two previous occasions: "*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*" (Mt. 4:4). "*For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Mt. 16:26)
  2. Because he smugly assumed he would naturally live to a ripe old age--Again, observe his misplaced confidence: "*Thou has much goods laid up for many years.*" (See Prov. 27:1; 29:1; Psa. 9:12; James 4:13-15.)
  3. Because he was totally self-centered--The personal pronouns "me, mine, and I" are to be found twelve times in this short account.

#### TWENTY-SIX: On Being Ready for the Returning Redeemer (Lk. 12:35-48)

#### SURVEY

The Master will deal with two kinds of servants at His return.

1. The wise and watchful servant will be greatly rewarded.

2. The wicked and careless servant will be severely punished.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

This marks the first of five parables referring to Jesus' second coming. For the other four, see parables 26, 43, 44, and 46.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Many students of Bible prophecy believe the future return of Christ will be two-fold:
  1. First, He comes in the clouds to receive all Christians  
*"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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: 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. 4:13-17)
  2. Finally, He comes to the earth to rule over all nations  
*"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)  
*"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. 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. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 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. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."* (Rev. 19:11-16)
- If this view be correct, Jesus is here describing the final appearance.
- Jesus associates watchfulness with rewards during this parable and in a later one *"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants"* (Lk. 12:37-38). *"Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods."* (Mt. 24:46-47)

#### TWENTY-SEVEN: On Knowing the Divine Weather Forecast (Mt. 16:1-3; Lk. 12:54-56)

#### SURVEY

Jesus is tested by the godless Pharisees.

1. Their request: *"If you are the Messiah, show us a sign."*
2. His response: *"You hypocrites, who boast of your ability to read the weather signs, can't you pick up and understand the spiritual signs? Your Messiah is standing before you!"*

#### SIGNIFICANCE

This is the only parable where Jesus compared the signs of the weather with the signs of the times.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- During Peter's sermon at Pentecost he briefly overviewed the earthly ministry of Jesus by the following words:  
*"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."* (Acts 2:22)
- Furthermore, while the Savior was still on earth Nicodemus testified to this: *"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 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. 3:1-2)
- In fact the gospel accounts record no less than 35 miracles performed by Jesus. These would include healing the sick, transforming the handicapped, feeding the hungry, delivering the possessed, raising the dead, etc. But in spite of all this, the wicked Pharisees were still demanding more signs and wonders from Him. In fact, they had done this on no less than five different occasions! (See Jn. 2:18; 6:30; Mt. 12:38; 16:1; Lk. 11:16.)
- The Apostle Paul would later give sad testimony to this: *"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom."* (1 Cor. 1:22)

## TWENTY-EIGHT: On Being a Winner at the Banquet Dinner (Lk. 14:7-14)

### SURVEY

Jesus gives advice to both guest and host in regards to a banquet dinner.

- To the guest
  1. Negative -  
*"And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them. When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room."* (Lk. 14:7-9)
  2. Positive -  
*"But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."* (Lk. 14:10-11)
- To the host
  1. Negative -  
*"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee."* (Lk. 14:12)
  2. Positive -  
*"But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."* (Lk. 14:13-14)

### SIGNIFICANCE

This is the second of two parables which followed a miracle Jesus had just performed. For the first, see #10.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Warren Wiersbe writes: "Jesus had watched the guests assemble and fight for the best seats. The Pharisees always wanted the best seats at the feasts (Mt. 23:6), and their guests followed their bad example. We laugh at this, but the same mad scramble goes on today. There are more status seekers and pyramid climbers in churches and other Christian organizations than we care to admit. The competition can be strong as Christians argue over who has the greatest church, the biggest Sunday School, or the most sacrificial missionary program. This mad scramble for the top seats only shows how false is our view of success. As if where a man sits can change the man! Paul sat in a prison while Nero sat on the throne of the Roman Empire, yet no one doubts who was the better man." (Meet Yourself in the Parables, Victor Books, Wheaton, Ill., 1979, pp. 93-94)
- Both James and Peter would write concerning this very thing: *"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble ... Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up"* (James 4:6, 10). *"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."* (1 Pet. 5:5-6)
- Two of Jesus' disciples once fell victim of this "scramble - for - supper - seats" syndrome as seen by the following passage:  
*"And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared."* (Mk. 10:35-40)
- According to John the Apostle, Diotrephes was guilty of this: *"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not."* (3 John 9)

## **TWENTY-NINE: The Three Who Requested to Come,**

The Many Who Rejoiced to Come (Lk. 14:15-24)

### **SURVEY**

This parable concerns itself with two kinds of guests who were invited to a lavish supper. Details are as follows:

- The invitation--First guest list (14:15-17)  
A man prepares a great feast and sends out many invitations.  
The invited (14:18)-- All the guests, however, make excuses why they cannot come.
  1. First excuse (14:18)--One person has just bought a field and must inspect it.
  2. Second excuse (14:19)--One person has just bought some oxen and must try them out.
  3. Third excuse (14:20)--One person has just been married.
- The invitation--Second guest list (14:21-24)
  1. The new guests (14:21-23)--They consist of suffering and poor people everywhere, who gladly come.
  2. The old guests (14:24)--They don't even receive the smallest taste of what had been prepared for them!

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This parable contains what must be three of the most miserable excuses on record for not attending a

banquet.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Someone has aptly described these three unresponsive individuals as two fools and a henpecked husband. Note each of their pitiful excuses:
  1. First: Only a fool would buy a field without seeing it.
  2. Second: Only a fool would purchase oxen without trying them.
  3. Third: No comment necessary.
- Note the features of this gracious invitation as recorded in Luke 14:17:
  1. Its urgency-- "Come!"
  2. Its sufficiency-- "All things "
  3. Its availability-- "Are now ready. "
- This is but one of many such invitations issued by God to man. Note but a few:

*"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."* (Isa. 1:18; 55:1-2)

*"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready come unto the marriage."* (Mt. 11:28-30; 22:4)

*"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."* (Rev. 3:20)

### THIRTY: Whether a Building or a Battle-Count the Cost (Lk. 14:28-33)

#### SURVEY

This parable consists of two divine "don'ts":

1. Don't begin construction unless and until you know sufficient funds are available to complete it, lest you suffer derision and ridicule.
2. Don't initiate a battle unless and until you are assured you can muster more troops than the enemy, lest you suffer defeat and ruin.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

This is perhaps the key parable dealing with the cost of discipleship.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- It is a tragic thing to begin something but not be able to complete it. It is a tremendous thing to begin something and to successfully complete.
  1. A scriptural example of the first Belshazzar the king:

*"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the kings palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing; MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."* (Dan. 5:5, 25-28)

2. A scriptural example of the second--Paul the apostle:  
*"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."* (2 Tim. 4:6-8)
- Before declaring war on an enemy, four things must be carefully considered:
  1. What are the strengths of my foe?
  2. What are my strengths?
  3. What are the weaknesses of my foe?
  4. What are my weaknesses?
- Three would-be-followers of Jesus failed the test of discipleship during our Lord's earthly ministry.
  1. First candidate-- *"And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."* (Lk. 9:57-58)
  2. Second candidate-- *"And he said unto another, follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."* (Lk. 9:59-60)
  3. Third candidate-- *"And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* (Lk. 9:61-62)

### **THIRTY-ONE: The Missing Sheep, The Misplaced Silver, and The Miserable Son (Lk. 15:1-32)**

#### **SURVEY**

- This is, in reality, a three-fold parable.
  1. A shepherd, having 100 sheep, seeks and finds one that has strayed from the fold.
  2. A woman, having 10 coins, seeks and finds a misplaced one.
  3. A father, having two sons, waits for and welcomes back a returning wayward one.
- There is great rejoicing on each occasion following the recovery of the sheep and coin, and the return of the son.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This is Jesus' most lengthy parable.
- It features the word rejoicing more than any other parable.
- It is the only parable that seems to highlight the role of the entire Trinity in the work of salvation.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Observations regarding the first part of the parable--the missing sheep. J. Dwight Pentecost writes:  
*"In introducing the first parable--that of the searching shepherd--Christ did not begin, as was often His custom in parables, by referring to a certain man, which would have made the parable impersonal; instead, He personalized the parable by saying, 'Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them' (Lk. 15:4). In this way the Lord caused each of His hearers to immediately take personal interest in what was of value to the one who had suffered a loss. Further, Christ's opening statement caused His listeners to evaluate their own responses to such a situation. The Lord knew that because of the value of what had been lost, any of these hearers would have left the ninety-nine to go seek the lost sheep. The search would not have been casual or of short duration; rather, it would have been diligent and would have extended until the valuable lost sheep was found. The search would have been initiated and pursued because of the value placed on what the owner had lost."*

When the searcher in the parable had found the lost sheep, he showed his compassion for the animal by putting it on his shoulder and carrying it home. Then at his return he summoned his friends and neighbors to share his joy. The restoration of what was of value to him brought such joy to him that he called others to share in his rejoicing. Christ thus taught that when one is lost, God the Father searches persistently and diligently for that lost one and finds sufficient joy in the restoration of that lost one to summon others to share His joy. Lest the Pharisees miss the point, Christ explained, *'There is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.'* (Lk 15:7). Christ was not inferring that the Pharisees, represented by the ninety-nine, were righteous in God's sight. They were righteous in their own sight, and they counted themselves as needing no repentance. The sinner who repented brought joy to God, not the self-righteous Pharisee who rejected Christ's invitation to repentance." (The Parables of Jesus. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1982. Pages, 100, 101)

Perhaps the most graphic and glorious song ever composed regarding this seeking shepherd is Elizabeth Clephane's great musical masterpiece, The Ninety and Nine:

There were ninety and nine that safely lay  
In the shelter of the fold.  
But one was out on the hills away,  
Far off from the gates of gold,  
Away on the mountains wild and bare.  
Away from the tender Shepherds care.  
Away from the tender Shepherds care.

"Lord, Thou hast here Thy ninety and nine;  
Are they not enough for Thee?"  
"This of mine has wandered away from Me;  
And although the road be rough and steep,  
I go to the desert to find My sheep,  
I go to the desert to find My sheep. "

But none of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed;  
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed thro'  
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.  
Out in the desert He heard its cry,  
Sick and helpless, and ready to die;  
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

"Lord, whence are those blood drops all the way  
That mark out the mountains track?"  
"They were shed for one who had gone astray  
Ere the Shepherd could bring him back."  
"Lord whence are thy hands so rent and torn?"  
"They're pierced tonight by many a thorn;  
They're pierced tonight by many a thorn."

But all thro' the mountains, thunder riv'n,  
And up from the rocky steep,  
There arose a glad cry to the gate of heav'n,  
"Rejoice! I have found my sheep!"  
And the angels echoed around the throne;  
"Rejoice for the Lord brings back His own!  
Rejoice for the Lord brings back His own!"

- Observations regarding the second part of the parable--the misplaced silver coin. Again, consider

the words of J. Dwight Pentecost:

"To teach the lesson a second time, Christ used the figure of a woman who had ten silver coins. The coins may have been the bride's dowry that she had been given at her wedding. Such coins were normally mounted on a headband and were worn on the forehead to be publicly seen. The loss of one of the coins would suggest unfaithfulness on the part of the bride to her husband. The coins not only had a monetary value but an emotional value as well, for they signified the bond between the bride and the bridegroom and the faithfulness that such a bond entailed.

In the parable of the lost coin the woman began searching for the coin in her home. Palestinian homes had either a dirt floor or a stone floor. In order to keep down the dust, or to overcome the cold and dampness, the floors would be covered with straw. In order to find a coin that had fallen to the floor, it would be necessary to remove the straw, sift through it, and then sweep the floor. Such a search involved considerable labor, but the coin was of sufficient value that the labor was considered worthwhile. The woman did not shrink from the labor because of the work involved; instead, she searched diligently through the straw until the coin was found. The value of the coin made the labor worthwhile. When she was rewarded for her diligent labor by the discovery of the coin, she experienced such joy that she could not contain it within herself; hence she called her friends and neighbors and invited them to rejoice with her. Once again, Christ, through this parable, revealed that God diligently seeks sinners regardless of the labor involved. When a sinner repents and is restored to God, He rejoices in the sinner's restoration and summons the angels in heaven to join Him in rejoicing over *'one sinner who repents'*" (Lk. 15: 10).

- Observations regarding the third part of the parable--the miserable son.

The account here concerns a father who has two sons. The following outline will prove helpful:

- The younger son (15:11-24)

#### His rebellion

1. The foolishness he exhibits (15:11-13)

- a. In seeking his inheritance (15:11-12): Soon he has wasted his share of his father's estate.
- b. In squandering his inheritance (15:13): Soon he has wasted all his money in wild living and finds himself penniless in a foreign country.

2. The famine he endures (15:14-16)

Eventually he is forced to eat the food of the pigs he feeds.

#### His return

1. The realization of the younger son

*"And when he came to himself, he said, how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!"* (Lk. 5:17)

2. The repentance of the younger son

*"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants"* (Lk. 15:18-19).

- a. This boy is one of at least eight individuals in the Bible to utter those three difficult words, "I have sinned". The others were:

- (1) Pharaoh (Ex. 9:27; 10:16)
- (2) Balaam (Num. 22:34)
- (3) Achan (Josh. 7:20)
- (4) Saul (1 Sam. 26:21)
- (5) David (2 Sam. 12:13; 24:10)
- (6) Job (Job 7:20)
- (7) Judas (Mt. 27:4)

- b. As the context indicates, however, only three of these were genuinely sorrowful for their sin. These were: David, Job, and the prodigal son.

3. The receiving of the younger son

*"And he arose, and came to his father, But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring, hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is*

*found. And they began to be merry" (Lk. 15:20-24).*

- A final quote from Dr. Pentecost is helpful at this point:

"The narrative states, *'while he was still a long way off, his father saw him'* (Lk. 15:20). The original Greek puts the emphasis on the words 'a long way off', indicating that the father did not remain in his house hoping the son would return. Instead, the father expected the son to return, and so each day the father evidently traveled a considerable distance from the house to a vantage point where he could discern the sons return at the earliest possible moment. Thus this father eagerly anticipated the return of his son.

When the father saw his son, he *'was filled with compassion for him'* (Lk. 15:20). The father's love did not begin with the sons return. The father had never ceased to love his son. He loved his son even when the son was worthy of no love. He loved the son even when the son was estranged from him. He loved the son even when the son was squandering his inheritance in wild living. He loved the son even when the son had stooped to become a swineherd He loved the son when the son was unworthy of any love. The father's love prompted him to run to his son, to throw his arms around him, and to demonstrate his love by kissing him (v. 20). The son was showered with his father's love that was spontaneously poured out on him. In this parable Christ was emphasizing that God loves sinners and eagerly anticipates their return. The son began to rehearse the carefully prepared plan that he had devised. He acknowledged his sin, saying, *'I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son'* (v. 21). The father did not let the son continue with his offer to become a servant and to work his way back into his father's good graces. Having already demonstrated affection for the son, the father now gave the signal for the son to receive signs signifying his complete restoration to the privileges of sonship. The father commanded the servants, saying, *'Bring the best robe and put it on him'* (v. 22a). This robe would have the same importance as the robe that Jacob bestowed on Joseph (Gen. 37:3-4), signifying that Joseph had been chosen by his father to be his heir. In Christ's parable, then, the robe signified that this once wayward, but now restored, son was designated as his fathers heir. Further, the father commanded the servants to *'put a ring on his finger'* (v. 22b). The ring was a badge of authority, By impressing the signet ring into wax, business transactions were sealed. The conferring of the ring on the son signified that the father was giving his son the privilege of the ring on the son signified that the father was giving his son the privilege of exercising all the authority that belonged to the father in transacting business in the father's name.

Further, the father commanded the servants, saying, *'Put sandals on his feet'* (v. 22c). Servants went barefooted. Sandals were a sign that the son was not a servant. This one who came to offer himself as a servant was to receive sandals that would set him apart from the servants in the father's household.

In addition, the father expressed his joy at his sons return by commanding the servants to *'bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate'* (Lk. 15:23). The fact that a calf had already been fattened indicates that the father had been anticipating the sons return. The calf that had been prepared in view of the anticipated return of the son was now to be sacrificed. Just as the shepherd found joy in finding the lost sheep (v. 6) and the woman found joy in finding the lost coin (v. 9), so the father found joy in the return and the restoration of his son. This joy was such that it must be shared. Thus the parable teaches that God loves sinners, that God searches for sinners, that God restores sinners, and that God confers the privileges and blessings of sonship on those who return to Him... On the one hand, these three parables adequately refuted the error of the Pharisees who insisted that God hates sinners and rejoices in their death. On the other hand, these parables reveal God's love for sinners and the blessings that God confers on those who return to Him." --(ibid, pages 104,105)

- The older son (Lk. 15:25-32)

*"And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my fathers have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy*

sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my Mend: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." (Lk. 15:25-32)

- At least four questions may be asked concerning this threefold parable:
  1. What is its intended lesson? Here three positions may be seen.
    - a. It speaks of the redemption of a lost sinner.
    - b. It speaks of the restoration of a backslidden believer.
    - c. It speaks of both.
  2. What is the key word found in this threefold parable? It is the word "rejoice," appearing in various forms some seven times (Lk. 15:6-8, 10, 24, 29, 32).
  3. What is the reason for this rejoicing? In all cases it results from the recovery of something that was lost.
  4. Who does the rejoicing which Jesus said occurs in heaven when the lost is found? There are three suggestions:
    - a. The angels are the ones rejoicing.
      - (1) Because they are said to be present at the creation and redemption of this world (see Job 38:4-7; Lk. 2:8-14).
      - (2) Because they are interested in knowing as much as possible about the subject of salvation (1 Pet. 1:12).
      - (3) Because they are said to be ministers to the heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:13-14).
    - b. The Savior Himself is the one who rejoices.
 

Note: "*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*" (Heb. 12:2). "*Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*" (Jude 1:24).
    - c. The redeemed saints in heaven are the ones rejoicing.
 

"*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*" (Heb. 12:1).

### **THIRTY-TWO: What the Godless Can Teach the Godly (Lk. 16:1-13)**

#### **SURVEY**

The following outline will help to survey this parable:

- The crisis (16:1-2)
  1. The dishonesty of a manager (16:1)  
He is accused of wasting his master's possessions.
  2. The dismissal of the manager (16:2)  
He is fired.
- The concern (16:3)  
The dishonest manager is worried about the future.
- The craftiness (16:4-7)

1. The resolve of the manager (16:4)  
He devises a plan to secure his future with some of his master's debtors.
  2. The reductions by the manager (16:5-7)  
He reduces their debts by as much as 50 percent.
- The commendation (16:8)  
His master grudgingly admits the shrewdness of the dishonest manager.
  - The caution (16:9-12)  
Jesus warns believers to be faithful even in little matters so that they can be trusted in larger matters.
  - The choice (16:13)  
One must choose between God and money!

## SIGNIFICANCE

This has been often considered as being one of the most difficult of all Jesus' parables to understand, for at first glance it seems to be commending gross dishonesty!

Dr. Manfred Gutzke and Dr. David Gooding offer the following helpful insights in solving this problem:

- "Sometimes Jesus used parables that seem strange because the principal characters in the story engaged in practices that in themselves seem unrighteous. This is a story of an unjust steward. This man had control over materials belonging to his master. Then he was called upon to give an accounting of what he had done with his master's goods. He was to have his books audited, and he suddenly realized the record would show he had not been a good manager, with the result that in all probability he would lose his job. In such a case he would need friends, and so he turned his situation to his advantage and made friends with the people who owed money to his master.

The point Jesus was emphasizing was that this world should be used in such a way as to advance eternal benefits. The steward could always live with these people whom he had befriended. Jesus was saying money here on earth should be used in such a way that it will bring benefits in heaven. When a person is through with this world and gets to heaven, there will be eternal rewards from the use made of situations in this world. No matter how many may be surprised to note Jesus' seeming approval of the actions of an unjust man, no one ever misses the lesson as to how one could use money for spiritual advantages."

(Manfred Gutzke. Plain Talk on Luke. Zondervan Publishing, 1970. Pages 106, 107)

- "The parable of the prodigal son introduced a young man who wasted his resources in dissolute living (see 15:13). The parable of this second paragraph presents a steward who wasted his master's goods, or so it was said (see 16:1). The first of the two parables teaches us that if we sinfully waste our lives and then, even at the eleventh hour, come back to God in true repentance and faith, the fact that we have wasted our lives will make no difference at all to the pardon we shall receive or to our acceptance with the Father. The second parable puts the other side of the story: if we waste our lives, it will in another sense make an eternal difference.

The steward's methods may not have been altogether just. We are not meant to copy them. But we are to copy his foresight. Realizing that he would soon have to leave his post and that he would not have control of his master's goods much longer, he used his temporary stewardship of those goods to make friends for himself, so that when he had to leave his job, they would receive him into their homes.

We are in a similar position. Nothing we have in this life belongs to us. We brought nothing into this world and we shall take nothing out of it (see 1 Tim. 6:7). We are simply stewards. One day we must go and leave it all. While we have in our control, therefore, what our Lord here calls 'the mammon of unrighteousness' (so called because, in this disordered world, it is unfairly distributed?), we are to use it, not indeed in order to gain salvation, for nothing can buy that: it is a gift; but in order to make friends. Not fickle friends of the sort that the prodigal son is said to have made; but friends who will welcome us in the eternal world, and remain our friends eternally. 'Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles' (16:9).

We need to bring a little practical realism into our anticipation of what heaven will be like. In some respects it may not necessarily be all that different from what life is like now. We should consider that while all believers will be equally welcome in heaven and all be loved equally, not all

will have equally as many friends If when accounts are rendered and it becomes known in heaven that it was your sacrificial giving that provided the copies of the Gospel of John which led a whole tribe out of paganism to faith in Christ, will not that whole tribe show towards you an eternal gratitude which they will not show towards me who spent my spare cash on some luxury for my own enjoyment?"

(David Gooding. According to Luke. Gerdman's Publishing. 1987. Pages 272, 273)

- The thrust of this parable seems to be threefold:
  1. Realize that we are but stewards, controlling things (our time, talents, treasure), but owning nothing.
  2. Realize that someday our Master will check our bookkeeping.
  3. In light of this, we are to plan ahead, make friends, but be honest in all of our dealings.

### THIRTY-THREE: When Hades Petitioned Paradise (Lk. 16:19-31)

#### SURVEY

This is the account of the life and afterlife of two men.

- Their lives
  1. First man: A rich and totally self-indulgent person who lived in the greatest possible luxury.
  2. Second man: A beggar named Lazarus, living in terrible poverty who longed for the scraps of food which fell from the rich man's table.
- Their afterlife
  1. The beggar: Upon death, he was carried by the angels to be with Abraham in paradise.
  2. The rich man: Upon death, he awakens in the flames of hell and earnestly begs two favors from Abraham, neither of which could be granted
    - a. That Lazarus be sent to comfort him in his misery
    - b. That Abraham send Lazarus back to earth and warn the rich man's brothers, lest they also awaken in hell

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is, by far, Jesus' most extended parable on the horrors of hell.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Is this only a parable or was it rooted in an historical event? The answer is probably both! A well known rich man may have recently died. If Lazarus had been at his gate for many years the people would have also been acquainted with him. On occasion Jesus would use current events as a spring board to launch spiritual truths. For another example, see the following:

*"There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."* (Lk. 13:1-5)
- Wealth itself is never presented as a vice in the Bible, nor is poverty looked upon as a virtue. God evaluates people by their attitudes and actions, not by their financial assets. The rich man went to hell because he was lost, and not because he was wealthy. The beggar went to heaven because he was saved, not because he was poor.

Observe that Lazarus was assisted by angels. This is in keeping with their assigned duties as seen in Hebrews: *"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"* (Heb. 1:14)

Observe also the phrase, "Abraham's bosom".

1. It is held by a number of Bible students that before Jesus died, the souls of all men descended into an abode located somewhere in the earth, known as Hades in the New Testament, and Sheol in the Old Testament.
  2. Originally, there were two sections of Hades, one for the saved and one for the lost. The saved section is sometimes called "paradise" (Lk. 23:43), and the other times referred to as "Abraham's bosom" (See Lk. 16:22). There is no name given for the unsaved section apart from the general designation of Hades.
  3. In Luke 16:19-31 the Savior relates the account of a poor believer who died and went to the saved part of Hades, and of a rich believer who died and went to the unsaved section. However, many believe that all this changed after Christ had made full payment for the believer's sins on Calvary. The Scofield Bible suggests that during the time of his death and resurrection, our Lord descended into Hades, depopulated Paradise, and led a spiritual triumphal entry into the heavenlies with all the saved up to that time. Ephesians 4:8-10 is offered as proof of this.
  4. In his book Revelation, the late Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse wrote: "When he ascended on High (Eph. 4:8) he emptied Hell of Paradise and took it straight to the presence of God. Captivity was taken captive ... from that moment onward there was to be no separation whatsoever for those who believe in Christ. The gates of hell would never more prevail against any believer (Mt. 16:18). But what of the lost? The state of the unsaved dead remained (and remains) unchanged after the cross. They remain in Hades awaiting the final Great White Judgment Throne (Rev. 20:11-15). But a glorious change has occurred concerning the state of those who fall asleep in Jesus."  
Note the following Scriptures verses: *"For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better"* (Phil. 1:21, 23). *"To be absent from the body [is to be] present with the Lord"* (2 Cor. 5:8).
- Note the rich man's prayer:  
*"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"* (Lk. 16:24).
- At least three facts may be concluded from this statement concerning the state of the dead:
1. They are not annihilated. God does not destroy the wicked.
  2. They are not unconscious. The doctrine of soul sleep is unscriptural.
  3. They may be given temporary bodies, awaiting their final ones. If this is the case, it applies to both the saved and the lost (see Mt. 17:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:1; Rev. 6:9-11).
- As has been previously observed, the rich man desires that Lazarus be sent back to warn his unsaved brothers:  
*"And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead"* (Lk. 16:30-31).
1. Concerning the words of the rich man--This statement has a prophetic ring to it, for a few months later Jesus would perform his greatest single miracle, the resurrection of a decaying corpse - the body of Lazarus (Jn. 11:43-44). But what was the result of this mighty miracle? Did it result in hundreds of conversions? To the contrary - the foes of Christ became even more vicious in their hatred and opposition.
    - a. They determined to kill Christ (Jn. 11:53)
    - b. They debated the possibility of killing Lazarus (Jn. 12:10). This is the reason why God does not do mighty miracles today. God's will is accomplished through faith and not through signs. After the rapture many miracles and signs will occur during the tribulation, but sinful people will not believe (see Rev. 9:20-21).
  2. Concerning the words of Abraham--This verse (Lk. 16:31) indirectly answers a question asked by many, and that is, "Do the departed saints in glory know what is happening back on earth?" Apparently, up to a point, they do, for here Abraham speaks of a man (Moses) who would not even be born until some six centuries after the "father of the faithful" had departed this earth.

## THIRTY-FOUR: When Our Best is but the Least (Lk. 17:7-10)

### SURVEY

Here Jesus points out that no servant should expect or demand either praise or reward for performing his duty with the utmost efficiency, for a servant is expected to do just that namely, to serve!

### SIGNIFICANCE

This parable, as no other, summarizes just what is required from a servant of God.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- John the Baptist had once rebuked some proud Pharisees as follows: *"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham"* (Mt. 3:8-9). The unvarnished (and unsettling) truth as gleaned from this parable and John's statement is sobering indeed - God simply does not need us.
- However, while Jesus indeed rightfully expects us to serve him, he condescends to serve us also. Note the following Scripture verses: *"After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded"* (Jn. 13:5). *"Henceforth, I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father. I have made known unto you"* (Jn. 15:15). *"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them"* (Lk. 12:37).

## THIRTY-FIVE: A Widow and a Weary Judge (Lk. 18:1-8)

### SURVEY

A widow appealed to a callous and godless judge for justice against someone who had harmed her. He ignored her for awhile but eventually the widow's persistence and continuous pleas wore him out, causing him to rule in her favor.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This is the final of two parables emphasizing the importance of persistence in prayer. For the first, see parable 24.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- In this parable Jesus both contrasts and compares two judges--an earthly, uncaring, finite judge with the heavenly, all-caring, infinite Judge.
  1. The contrast
    - a. The earthly judge responded to a request that he might rid himself of a bothersome woman.
    - b. The heavenly Judge responds to our requests so that he might receive us and bless us.
  2. The comparison  
Both judges respond to persistence.
- Note what this parable does not teach, and what it does teach!
  1. It does not teach we must badger God, as it were, with our prayers until He finally answers them to get rid of us! To the contrary, note the following words:

*"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb. 4:15-16)

2. It does teach that persistence in prayer pays off!

*"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* (Jam. 1:5; 5:16)

### **THIRTY-SIX: A Haughty Pharisee and a Humble Publican (Lk. 18:10-14)**

#### **SURVEY**

Jesus describes two men who entered the temple to pray.

- Their spiritual condition upon arriving at the temple

1. The Pharisee

He was arrogant and totally self-centered, as illustrated by his prayer:

*"I thank you God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else."*

2. The Publican

He was humble and sorrowful, as illustrated by his prayer:

*"O God, be merciful to me, a sinner"*

- Their spiritual condition upon departing from the temple

1. The Pharisee-He left unchanged and unforgiven.

2. The Publican-He left changed and forgiven.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This parable marks the final of three concerning the subject of prayer. For the first two, see parables 24 and 25.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- The temple in Jerusalem served as a place where one could offer up both animal sacrifices and personal prayer to God. Both were of equal importance. Jesus Himself had emphasized the prayer aspect: *"And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves"* (Mt. 21:13). Here our Lord quotes from both the Old Testament prophets Isaiah (56:7) and Jeremiah (7:11).

There are various instances of temple prayers in the New Testament:

1. As offered up by Simeon (Lk. 2:25-32)
2. As offered up by Anna (Lk. 2:36-38)
3. As offered up by Peter and John (Acts 3:1)

- The Mosaic Law ordered a fast on one day out of the year--the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:26-32). Later, to commemorate various national calamities, other fasts were observed (Zech. 8:19). The Pharisees, however, had gone beyond the Law by fasting twice a week on Monday and Thursday. These days were established by tradition because Moses was supposed to have ascended Mount Sinai on a Thursday and descended on a Monday.

Note that the Pharisee compared himself with the worst kind of people, the extortioners, the unjust, the sexually impure, and the hated tax collectors, "this publican." Paul later warned about this: *"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise"* (2 Cor. 10:12). In a real sense, the Pharisee was not even praying. He was rather talking to himself about himself. The true and only standard for the believer is not another saint, or a sinner, but the Savior. (See Heb., 12:2-3; 1 Pet. 2:21.)

- The publicans (greedy tax collectors) usually come across badly in the New Testament (see Mt. 5:46; 11:19; 18:17; 21:31). But there were at least two notable exceptions: Matthew (Mt. 10:3), and Zacchaeus (Lk. 19:2). In fact, on occasion, publicans responded favorably to Jesus: *"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John"* (Lk. 7:29). (See also Luke 15:1-2.)

The publican correctly responded concerning his own unworthiness before God, as once did Isaiah and Simon Peter. *"Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts"* (Isa. 6:5). "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me: for I am a sinful man, O Lord," This is surely a prayer that God hears and responds to in love.

- Thus, the Pharisee's prayer was rejected and the publican's prayer received based on the following verses:
  1. The rejected prayer  
*"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts;"* (Jam. 4:3)
  2. The received prayer  
*"I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah."* (Psa. 32:5)

### **THIRTY-SEVEN: Hourly Workers and Daily Wages (Mt. 20:1-16)**

#### **SURVEY**

A landowner hired certain men to work in his vineyard, securing their services at different times of the day, but agreeing to pay the wages for each man. As it turned out, some would labor 12 hours, and the final group but one hour. However, at the end of the day those who had toiled 12 hours complained bitterly upon receiving the exact wages of those who had worked but one hour.

However, the owner's defense was he had paid all exactly what they had been promised and that as owner, he could do exactly as he wanted!

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

In this parable Jesus makes one statement He has previously said and will later repeat.

*"And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?"* (Mt. 20:16)

For the other two occasions, (see Mt. 19:30; 22:14).

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- The interpretation of this parable
  1. Negative considerations
    - a. It has nothing to do with the subjects of salvation or rewards.
    - b. It was not related to describe the ideal working arrangements between management and labor.
  2. Positive considerations
 

It may have served as an object lesson to illustrate both the sovereignty and the fairness of God. If so, Jesus was referring to that divine plan for Jews and Gentiles.

    - a. The first workers hired would represent Israel. They began "working" in God's vineyard as early as 2000 B.C. in the time of Abraham.
    - b. The last workers to be hired would represent the Gentiles. As a group, they did not "clock in" until the advent of the Apostle Paul, some twenty centuries later. And yet, in the fullest sense, both groups will share equally in the glorious millennium, God's ultimate payday.
- The applications of this parable

1. We are not to question or criticize God's dealings, either with us or with other believers. To do so leads to either pride or envy.
  - a. Jesus rebuked the Apostle Peter. Our Lord had just predicted the eventual martyrdom of Peter. We read: *"Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me"* (Jn. 21:20-22).
  - b. Paul rebukes the Roman church. *"Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand... But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ"* (Rom. 14:4, 10).

### **THIRTY-EIGHT: Two Invested Wisely, One wickedly (Lk. 19:11-29)**

#### **SURVEY**

Prior to his departure to be crowned as king of a foreign land, a nobleman called together ten of his servants and entrusted to each a pound of silver. Upon his return to king discovered:

- One servant reported a ten-fold gain of the original account. He was rewarded by being appointed as governor over ten cities.
- Another servant showed a five-fold gain and became governor over five cities.
- A third servant, however, acting out of fear simply hid his pound, thus showing no increase whatsoever. An angry king thereupon took his pound and gave it to the one with the ten-fold increase.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This parable is the first of two that promises rewards for faithful usage of our gifts and opportunities but warns of punishment for not doing so. For the other parable, see #45.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Jesus related this parable to explain both the what and the when of the kingdom of heaven. *"And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear"* (Lk. 19:11).
- In fact the final question His disciples asked Him referred to this very thing. *"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 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 1:6-9)
- Note again the introductory verse to this parable: *"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return."* (Lk. 19:12)
  1. Dwight Pentecost suggests:
 

*"In the story Christ may well have had a historical incident in mind, for Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great, had gone to Rome after his fathers death to be confirmed as ruler in Judea and Samaria. His brother Antloas had also gone to Rome seeking the same appointment. Since the Jews hated Archelaus, they lodged a protest with the emperor against his appointment; but in spite of it, Archelaus was appointed ruler of Judea and Samaria by the*

emperor. This well-known historical incident must have created great interest on the part of Jesus' hearers as to what He was teaching." (The Parables of Christ. Zondervan. P. 130.)

- Warren Wiersbe writes:  
"Please note that not all the servants had the same success. One man multiplied his pound ten times, while another multiplied his five times. We must not expect everyone to produce the same results. In the parable of the sower (Mt. 13:23), some people produced fruit thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, and some a hundred-fold. God gives each of us different abilities and opportunities He does not ask us to produce the same results, but He does ask all of us to be faithful and do our best. How do these 'cities' apply to Christians today? First, here in this life we have a greater capacity for ministry and greater opportunities for service. The pound was taken from the unfaithful servant and given to the man with ten pounds (w.24-26). What we do not use, we may lose, and what we use faithfully proves that we can be trusted with more. David was faithful to take care of his father's sheep, so God was able to entrust the nation to his care. Joshua was faithful as Moses' servant and God made him Moses' successor. Young Timothy assisted Paul in his ministry and in a few years was called to take Paul's place in the churches Faithfulness in service indicates we are trustworthy to become rulers with God."  
(Meet Yourself in the Parables, Victor Books, Wheaton, Ill., 1979, pp. 154-55)
- What is the difference between the pound parable here in Luke 19 and the talent parable related shortly after this in Matthew 25? It has been suggested that the difference is as follows:
  1. The pounds represent the opportunities of life.
  2. The talents speak of the different gifts God imparts to us.
- Whatever the case, both the pound and the talent parables stress three all-important themes:
  1. My abilities and opportunities from God in the past
  2. My dependability for God at the present
  3. My accountability to God in the future

### **THIRTY-NINE: Two Sons: One Said "No," But Did, The Other "Yes," But Didn't (Mt. 2:28-32)**

#### **SURVEY**

A father instructed his two sons to go out and work in the vineyard.

- The first son initially refused but later changed his mind and obeyed.
- The second son initially agreed, but later changed his mind and disobeyed.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This is the final of two parables involving a father and son relationship. For the first, see parable 31.

#### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- Who are the true believers? Will the real sons of God please stand? The ultimate test of ownership is obedience. One's sonship is demonstrated by one's submission. Both Old Testament and New Testament Israel failed this test. Their words were correct, but their works were corrupt. They said, "I go, sir;" and went not.
  1. Old Testament Israel
    - a. Their words-- *"And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord"* (Ex. 19:8).
    - b. Their works-- *"Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men"* (Isa. 29:13).
  2. New Testament Israel
    - a. Their words-- *"We are Abrahams seed"* (John 8:33). *"Abraham is our father"* (John 8:39a).
    - b. Their works-- *"Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham"* (John 8:39b). Later, when advising the disciples concerning the

Pharisees, our Lord concluded sadly: *"All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not"* (Mt. 23:3).

- Who then are the true believers? Upon being told that his mother and brothers were waiting to speak to him, Jesus once replied: *"But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother"* (Mt. 12:48-50).
- There is no single concept in the Christian life most important than that of obedience.
  1. The earthly ministry of Jesus served as a perfect role model in matters of obedience. *"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"* (Phil. 2:8). *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered"* (Heb. 5:8).
  2. The apostle Paul's amazing accomplishments and Christian testimony can be aptly summarized by that one word-obedience.  
*"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision"* (Acts 26:19).

#### **FORTY: Some Vicious Vine Keepers (Mt. 21:33-45; Mk. 12:1-12; Lk. 20:9-16)**

##### **SURVEY**

A landlord rented his fertile vineyard to some tenants and went away on a journey. When harvest time approached, he sent his servants to collect his fruit. However, the wicked tenants refused his rightful request, beating some of the servants, stoning others, and actually killing a few. In a final attempt, the owner sent his own son, assuming they would surely respect him. But to the contrary, the godless tenants murdered the son and took control of the vineyard. Responding in righteous indignation the furious owner descended upon the vineyard, killed those murderers and entrusted his vineyard to others.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This is the only parable which seems to predict the following three events:

1. The rejection of both the Father and Son by Israel
2. The killing of the Son by Israel
3. The wrath of God (destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D.?) upon Israel

##### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

As the context indicates, Jesus deals with the nation Israel in this parable. It contains a historical, prophetic, and spiritual element.

- The historical element
  1. The divine Householder did plant a special vineyard--Israel (Isa. 5:1-7).
  2. In the fullness of time he did send forth his servants to obtain fruit, but they were badly treated (see Acts 7:51-52).
    - a. Zechariah the high priest was stoned to death (2 Chron. 24:20-21).
    - b. Isaiah the prophet was (probably) sawn asunder (Heb. 11:37).
    - c. Elijah and Elisha were mocked.
    - d. Jeremiah was beaten and imprisoned.
    - e. Amos was rejected by the religious leaders (Amos 7).
  3. Finally, the divine Householder did send his beloved Son (Gal. 4:4).
- The prophetic element
  1. The Son would be killed by crucifixion.
  2. The city of the wicked workers would be destroyed (Titus the Roman general burned Jerusalem in A.D. 70).
- The spiritual element  
The Father did not do what the crowd suggested in the parable, namely, to *"miserably destroy*

*those wicked men.*" To the contrary, the divine plan called not for destruction resulting from wrath, but rather for redemption resulting from grace.

*"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof and I will set it up; That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."* (Acts 15:14-18)

*"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: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."* (Rom. 11:26-27)

#### **FORTY-ONE: The Wedding Guest With No Wedding Garment (Mt. 22:1-14)**

##### **SURVEY**

A king prepared a wedding banquet for his son and set forth his servants, carrying special invitations to certain selected guests. But they all refused, ignoring the royal messengers, mistreating them, and actually killing some. The enraged king thereupon destroyed them and invited any and all, rich or poor, bond or free to attend, thus filling up the banquet hall.

However, during the celebration the king was insulted by a rebellious guest who had refused to wear the proper wedding garment which had been freely issued to all guests. This disrespectful person was quickly seized and imprisoned.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This parable records the first of two occasions where God refers to a disloyal person as "friend". Compare Mt. 22:12 with Jesus' reference to Judas Iscariot in Gethsemane (Mt. 26:50).

##### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- In this parable, the millennial kingdom of heaven is likened to a royal wedding prepared by the king for his son. The entire kingdom is invited to attend. As we have already seen, many refused to come.
- There were three separate stages in a mideastern wedding:
  1. The betrothal stage  
This consisted of the selection of the bride and the payment of the dowry. This step often occurred when both bride and groom were still children. They were then considered engaged.
  2. The presentation stage  
When the couple was old enough, the bride was brought to the house of the groom's father, where the wedding service took place.
  3. The celebration stage  
Following the private marriage ceremony, the public marriage supper would begin.
- It was during this joyous stage when the king saw an invited wedding guest not wearing a wedding garment.
  1. The anger of the king  
Often at royal weddings each guest would be provided with his or her own wedding garment which bore the imprint of both the king and his son. To refuse to wear this garment was looked upon as a terrible insult directed toward the groom himself.
  2. The silence of the guest

We are told "And he was speechless". In reality, what could he have said?

- a. He could not have pled ignorance, for he knew exactly what was expected of him.
  - b. He could not have pled poverty, for the garments were given out at no charge.
- This necessary but free royal robe pictured here may serve to illustrate the divine robe of righteousness, freely given to all repenting sinners. Paul testifies of this: *"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."* (Phil. 3:7-9)

#### **FORTY-TWO: The Fruitless Fig Tree (Lk. 13:6-8)**

##### **SURVEY**

A fig tree bore no fruit for three years, resulting in the owner's decision to cut it down. However, the gardener requested it be given another year.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

This is the first of two parables where Israel seems to be symbolized as a fig tree. For the other, see parable 43.

##### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- This 42nd parable may be directly associated with the 33rd miracle, namely, the super natural withering of a fig tree.  
*"Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. 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. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them"* (Mt. 21:18-19, 42-45).
- At any rate, the parable marks the tragic fulfillment of both Isaiah's and Hosea's sad predictions regarding Israel.  
*"Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes"* (Isa. 5:1-2).  
*"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images"* (Hos. 10:1).

#### **FORTY-THREE: The Fig Tree and the Future (Mt. 24:32-35; Mk. 13:28-31; Lk. 21:29-33)**

##### **SURVEY**

This parable records a question and an answer:

1. The disciples' question:  
*"Tell us, what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?"* (Mt. 24:3)
2. The Savior's answer:  
*"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."* (Mt. 24:32-34)

#### SIGNIFICANCE

Many hold this parable offers Scripture's most significant and clearest sign regarding Jesus' second coming, namely, the rebirth of the nation Israel.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus related this parable during His Mt. Olivet Discourse which He began with a startling prediction: *"And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."* (Mt. 24:1-2)
- This probably no doubt referred to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman soldiers led by Titus in 70 A.D. From that point on for centuries Israel as a nation would cease to exist.
- The suggested interpretation of the parable
  1. The fig tree is Israel.
  2. The other trees represent those Gentile nations, such as Russia, which play a vital role in the final days.
  3. The leaf-bearing event may refer to Israel's modern return to the land.
  4. The generation that would not pass away may speak of that generation born in 1948.
  5. The "things to be accomplished" phrase could speak of Christ's second coming.

#### **FORTY-FOUR: Watch and Work, for We Know Not When (Mt. 24:42-44; Mk. 13:32-37)**

#### SURVEY

*"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."* (Mt. 24:42-44)

#### SIGNIFICANCE

The phrases be on guard, be alert, and watch are found four times in this short parable, more often than in any other one.

#### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Both Paul and Peter may have had this parable in mind when they wrote the following: *"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape"* (1 Thess. 5:2-3). *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up"* (1 Pet. 3:10).

## FORTY-FIVE: Virgins, Vessels, and Vigilance (Mt. 25:1-13)

### SURVEY

Ten virgins took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five were foolish because they carried no oil with them while five were wise because they did. Upon learning of the bridegroom's impending arrival, the ten virgins reacted as follows:

1. The five foolish ones hurried out to buy more oil, but upon their return found the door of the banquet hall shut.
2. The five wise ones quickly trimmed their lamps and entered into the joy of the wedding celebration.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This parable is unique in that it seems to suggest the unsaved will unsuccessfully attempt to seek the aid of the saved at the second coming of Christ, as seen by their request:

*"And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." (Mt. 25:8)*

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- The following interpretation is suggested for this parable:
  1. The chronology of the parable  
When does the action in the parable take place? It occurs during the coming great tribulation, perhaps at the very end.
  2. The characters in the parable
    - a. The bridegroom is Christ.
    - b. The bride is the Church.
    - c. The ten virgins represent Israel, awaiting the coming of their Messiah.
      - (1) The five foolish ones had not experienced the new birth.
      - (2) The five wise ones had experienced the new birth.
- As has been noted, the wise virgins possessed oil. Oil is a recognized symbol for the Holy Spirit. Oil indicates light, healing and anointing for service as the following passages testify to:  
*"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" (Lk. 4:18). "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:38).*
- The Holy Spirit will thus play an important role in the coming Great Tribulation. He is spoken of on at least three occasions:  
*"And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them; And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." (Rev. 11:11; 14:13; 17:3)*
- It will be no doubt the Holy Spirit who will seal and anoint for service the 144,000 Jewish evangelists in Rev. 7 *"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." (Rev. 7:2-4)*

## FORTY-SIX: A Traveler, Three Stewards and Eight Talents (Mt. 25:14-30)

### SURVEY

Prior to his departure on an important mission a nobleman entrusted to his three chief servants eight talents, giving five to the first servant, two to the second, and one to the third. Upon his return, he discovered:

1. The servant who had received five talents had doubled this and was generously rewarded:  
*"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord"* (Mt. 25:21).
2. The servant who had received two talents had also doubled his money and likewise rewarded as had been the first servant.
3. The servant who had received one talent had done absolutely nothing and was severely punished.  
*"His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."* (Mt. 25:26-30)

### SIGNIFICANCE

This parable is the final of five describing the relationships and responsibilities between a master and his servants. For the previous four, see parables 26, 34, 38, 43.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Note both the similarities and contrasts between the talent parable (number 45) and the pound parable (number 38).
- A. Similarities between the talent parable and the pound parable
    1. Both parables describe the stewardship arrangements between a departing master and his servants.
    2. Both relate the accounting episode upon the master's return.
    3. Both record faithfulness on the part of at least two servants who are subsequently rewarded.
    4. Both record the unfaithfulness on the part of one servant who is subsequently punished.
  - B. Contrast between the talent and pound parable
    1. The master of the servants--He is a nobleman in Luke 19 and a traveler in Matthew 25.
    2. The number of servants--There are ten in the pound parable and three in the talent parable.
    3. The responsibility of the servants--In Luke 19 each servant receives the same, approximately \$5000, the value of a pound. In Matthew 25 the first servant is entrusted with five talents (\$1.5 million), the second servant two talents (\$600,000), and the third servant one talent (\$300,000).
    4. The accomplishments of the faithful servants--In Luke 19 the first servant increased his pound 1,000 percent. In Matthew 25 the first two servants doubled their original sum.
    5. The punishment of the unfaithful servants--In Luke 19 the man lost the original pound, but in Matthew 25 the man not only had the talent taken from him, but was then cast into outer darkness.
- Here it may prove helpful to repeat the following differences between these two parables as were previously observed under parable 38:
    - A. What is the difference between the pound parable here in Luke 19 and the talent parable related shortly after this in Matthew 25? It has been suggested that the difference is as follows:
      1. The pounds represent the opportunities of life.

2. The talents speak of the different gifts God imparts to us.
- B. Whatever the case, both the pound and the talent parables stress three all-important themes:
1. My abilities and opportunities from God in the past
  2. My dependability for God at the present
  3. My accountability to God in the future

## **FORTY-SEVEN: Separating the Sheep from the Goats (Mt. 25:1-46)**

### **SURVEY**

Jesus compares the final judgment to a shepherd's separating sheep from goats.

- The separator (25:31). The Savior himself will occupy this role.
- The separation (25:32-33). The goats (lost people) will be placed on his left hand, and the sheep (saved people) on his right hand.
- The separated (25:34-46)
  1. The sheep (25:34-40)
 

They will be rewarded!

    - a. The contents (25:34)
 

They will receive the Father's Kingdom, prepared for them from the foundation of the world.
    - b. The cause (25:35-36)
 

It is due to their loving ministry in feeding, clothing, caring for, and even assisting Jesus in prison!
    - c. The confusion (25:37-39)
 

The saved ask when all this takes place.
    - d. The clarification (25:40)
 

Jesus says that when they ministered to others, they ministered to Him!
  2. The goats (25:41-46)
 

They will be punished!

    - a. The contents (25:41)
 

Eternal hell
    - b. The cause (25:42-43)
 

They did not minister to Jesus!
    - c. The confusion (25:44)
 

The unsaved ask when it was that they did not minister to Jesus.
    - d. The clarification (25:45-46)
 

Jesus says because they did not minister to others, they did not minister to him!

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

- This parable is the most well-known in regards to the Second Coming.
- It is the final of four parables contrasting the saved with the unsaved in regards to the Second Coming of Christ.
  1. The wheat and the tares (Parable 14)
  2. The good fish and the bad fish (Parable 19)
  3. The wise virgins and the foolish virgins (Parable 45)
  4. The sheep and the goats (Parable 47)

### **SPIRITUAL TRUTHS**

- At first reading this parable seems to teach that salvation can be earned by good works, which of course, is totally refuted by a host of Scripture verses (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5, etc.). At least five questions need to be answered in rightly interpreting this parable.
  1. When does this judgment take place? The context clearly indicates that it occurs at the end of

the tribulation.

2. Who is being judged here? According to 25:32 it will be the Gentiles.
  3. What is the basis of this judgment? It is based on how they have treated or mistreated a certain group during the tribulation.
  4. Who is this group? Christ calls them *"my brethren"* (25:40); thus they are Jewish people.
  5. Why would some Gentiles risk their lives during the reign of the antichrist to help persecuted and suffering Jews? The new birth experience would offer the only logical explanation for such behavior. Thus, the good works spoken of here are not the basis for salvation, but rather the proof of salvation.
- This parable tells us one of the six activities of God the Father before He created man.
    1. He was fellowshiping with His Son (Prov. 8:22-30; Jn. 17:5, 24)
    2. He was preparing for Calvary (1 Pet. 1:18-20; Rev. 13:8)
    3. He was creating the stars and angels (Job 38:4, 7)
    4. He was choosing the elect (Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9)
    5. He was planning for the Church (Eph. 3:8, 9)
    6. He was preparing a kingdom

*"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* (Mt. 25:34).
  - Jesus prophesied condemnation of the wicked unsaved here is sobering indeed: *"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).

Especially observe three frightening phrases:

1. *"Depart from me"*

This is in stark contrast to His previous gracious invitation, also recorded by Matthew: *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* (Mt. 11:28-30)

2. *"into everlasting fire "*

There are some today who would deny the concept of unending punishment, but here Jesus warns of it on two occasions! *"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."* (Mt. 25:46)

3. *"prepared for the devil and his angels"*

One of the saddest aspects about hell is that it was originally prepared for Satan, not for man! In fact, heaven is said to be the prepared place!

*"In my fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."* (Jn. 14:2)

*"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."* (Heb. 11:16)

Tragically, though, when men refuse the prepared place, they are forever banished to the unprepared place!

# THE SERMONS OF JESUS

## TITLE

### **The Sermon from Isaiah 61**

*"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. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaia. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written." (Lk. 4:16-17)*

## PLACE

A synagogue in Nazareth

## SCRIPTURE

Lk. 4:16-30

## CONTENTS

### **I. What Jesus read (4:16-19)**

He read from Isa. 61:1-3 where the prophet described both the message and ministry to be performed by the coming Messiah.

### **II. What Jesus revealed (4:20-27)**

- A. The identification involved: Jesus said He was the Messiah Isaiah wrote about.
- B. The illustrations involved: Jesus gave two O.T. examples to illustrate why He could not perform the miracles in Nazareth that He had done elsewhere, namely, because of gross unbelief.
  - 1. First example to illustrate this: Elijah and the Zarephath widow (4:24-26)
  - 2. Second example to illustrate this: Elisha and the leper Naaman (4:27)
- C. The indignation involved (4:28-30): Jesus' remarks so infuriated the audience that they actually attempted to kill Him!

## TITLE

### **Jesus Christ, the Source of Life Sermon**

*"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (Jn. 5:24)*

## PLACE

Beside the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem

## SCRIPTURE

John 5:17-47

## CONTENTS

### **I. The tirade against Jesus (5:16-18)**

The godless Pharisees condemn Jesus on two counts:

- A. He heals on the Sabbath (5:16).
- B. He makes himself equal with God (5:17-18).

### **II. The Trinity and Jesus (5:19-20, 23)**

- A. The Father loves the Son (5:19-20).
- B. The Father honors the Son (5:23).

### **III. The tasks assigned to Jesus (5:21-22, 24-29)**

- A. He imparts eternal life (5:21, 24, 26).
- B. He will raise the dead (5:25, 28-29).
  - 1. Some to everlasting joy (5:25, 28-29a)
  - 2. Some to everlasting punishment (5:29b)
- C. He judges all men (5:22, 27).

### **IV. The testimonies concerning Jesus (5:30-47)**

Witness to the supernatural claims of Jesus comes from four sources:

- A. From John the Baptist (5:31-35): He preached the truth.
- B. From his own works (5:36): His teachings and miracles come from the Father.
- C. From the Father (5:30, 37-38): The Father has testified about him.
- D. From the Scriptures (5:39-47): The Scriptures point to him, but though the people say they believe the Scriptures, they don't believe in him.

## **TITLE**

### **Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life Sermon**

*"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (Jn. 6:51)*

## **PLACE**

At Capernaum, overlooking the Sea of Galilee

## **SCRIPTURE**

John 6:25-66

## **CONTENTS**

### **I. Public comments (6:25-66)**

- A. Christ and the curious (6:25-40)
  - 1. He speaks concerning God's salvation (6:25-36)
    - a. Their confusion (6:25-26, 28, 30-31, 36)
      - (1) They want to know how he got there (6:25).
      - (2) They seek him only for physical bread (6:26).
      - (3) They don't know how to please God (6:28).
      - (4) They assume the Old Testament manna came from Moses (6:30-31).
      - (5) They don't believe in him even though they have seen him (6:36).
    - b. His correction (6:27, 29, 32-35)
      - (1) They are to seek him for spiritual bread (6:27, 33-35).
      - (2) They will please God by believing in him (6:29).
      - (3) He says the Old Testament manna came from God (6:32).

2. He speaks concerning God's sovereignty (6:37-40)
  - a. Guaranteeing that all the elect will come to Christ (6:37):  
They will never be rejected.
  - b. Guaranteeing that all the elect will continue in Christ (6:38-40):  
All who believe in him will be raised at the last day.
- B. Christ and the critical (6:41-59)
  1. Their criticism (6:41-42, 52)
    - a. He is simply the son of Joseph (6:41-42).
    - b. No one can (physically) eat his flesh and drink his blood (6:52).
  2. His correction (6:43-51, 53-59)
    - a. Jesus says he is the bread of life (6:43-51).
    - b. Jesus says that anyone who wants eternal life must (spiritually) eat his flesh and drink his blood (6:53-59).
- C. Christ and the carnal (6:60-66)
  1. Many of his followers now decide against him (6:60-65).
  2. Many of his followers now depart from him (6:66).

## II. Private comments (6:67-71):

Jesus now addresses his chosen ones

- A. The Savior and all the apostles (6:67-69)
  1. Jesus asks, "Are you going to leave, too?" (6:67)
  2. Peter answers, "Lord, to whom would we go? You alone have the words that give eternal life. We believe them, and we know you are the Holy One of God." (6:68-69)
- B. The Savior and the evil apostle (6:70-71)
  1. The nature of this apostle (6:70):  
He gave himself over to Satan.
  2. The name of this apostle (6:71):  
He is Judas Iscariot!

### TITLE

#### Jesus Christ, the Water of Life Sermon

*"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (Jn. 7:37-39)*

### PLACE

In Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles

### SCRIPTURE

John 7:1-53

### CONTENTS

#### I. The disbelief Jesus encounters in Nazareth (7:1-10)

- A. The ridicule (7:1-5):  
Jesus' half brothers and sisters laugh at the claims of their older half brother!
- B. The response (7:6-10):  
Jesus says that the world hates him for exposing its sin.

## II. The division Jesus encounters in Jerusalem (7:11-53):

Jesus receives a mixed reception while attending the Festival of Shelters.

- A. The reaction to the Savior (7:11-13, 20, 25-27, 30-32, 40-42)
  1. From the people (7:11-13, 20, 25-27, 30-32, 40-53)
    - a. Some feel he is a good man (7:11-12).
    - b. Some feel he is a deceiver (7:13).
    - c. Some feel he is demon-possessed (7:20).
    - d. Some feel he is an ordinary man (7:25-27, 41b-42).
    - e. Some feel he is a prophet (7:40).
    - f. Some feel he is the Messiah (7:31, 41a).
  2. From the Pharisees (7:30, 32, 44-53)
    - a. Their intentions to arrest him (7:30, 32, 44): It is not his time.
    - b. Their inability to arrest him (7:45-53)
      - (1) They are frustrated by the military (7:45-49): The guards sent out to seize him come back empty handed, saying, "*We have never heard anyone talk like this!*"
      - (2) They are frustrated by a member (7:50-53): One of their own members, Nicodemus, now stands up for Jesus.
- B. The response from the Savior (7:14-19, 21-24, 28-29, 33-39)
  1. The overview (7:16-19, 21-24, 28-29, 33-34)
    - a. Jesus says that his mission and message originate from God (7:14-18, 28-29).
    - b. Jesus says that the people in his audience do not keep the law of Moses and in fact want to kill him right now (7:19).
    - c. Jesus asserts that both healing and circumcising are permitted by the law to be done on the Sabbath (7:21-24).
    - d. Jesus tells them that he will soon leave but that they will be unable to find him (7:33-36).
  2. The offer (7:37-39)
    - a. What (7:38):  
Jesus offers streams of living water to all those who are thirsty!
    - b. When (7:37):  
Jesus makes the offer on the final day of the Festival of Shelters.
    - c. Who (7:39):  
Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit, who will soon indwell all believers!

### TITLE

#### Jesus Christ, the Light of Life Sermon

*"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (Jn. 8:12)*

### PLACE

In the Temple at Jerusalem (see Jn. 8:2)

### SCRIPTURE

John 8:12-59

### CONTENTS

The Savior and the Pharisees dialogue back and forth in four rounds of debate.

#### I. Round one (8:12-21)

- A. The Pharisees' criticism (8:13, 19a)
  1. That Jesus serves as his own witness, thus making his testimony invalid (8:13)

- 2. That he cannot show them his Father (8:19a)
  - B. Jesus' correction (8:12, 14-18, 19b):
- He begins by saying that he is the light of the world, then answers their charges.
- 1. Jesus says his claims are validated by two witnesses (8:14-17).
    - a. The testimony of the Son on earth (8:18a)
    - b. The testimony of the Father in heaven (8:18b)
  - 2. Jesus says his accusers cannot know the Father, because they refuse to know the Son (8:19b).

## II. Round two (8:21-30)

- A. Jesus' claims (8:21, 23-24, 25b-26, 28-29)
  - 1. That he will go away but that they will die in their sins, unable to follow where he goes (8:21)
  - 2. That he is from above while they are from below (8:23-24)
  - 3. That he is the Messiah sent from God (8:25b-26)
  - 4. That he will be crucified (8:28-29)
- B. The confusion (8:22, 25a, 27)
  - 1. The Pharisees wonder what Jesus means when he says they cannot follow where he is going (8:22).
  - 2. "Tell us who you are" (8:25a, 27).
- C. The conversions (8:30): Many now put their faith in him!

## III. Round three (8:31-47)

- A. The confusion (8:33):
 

The Jews feel they are free men because Abraham was their father.
- B. The clarification (8:32, 34-44)
  - 1. Jesus says all unsaved men are not free but are enslaved by sin (8:31-32, 34-36).
  - 2. Jesus says that Satan is their true father, not Abraham (8:37-44).
    - a. The Devil is a liar, and they are liars (8:44b)
    - b. Abraham is not their real father, so they don't follow Jesus (8:37-41)
    - c. The Devil is a murderer, and they are attempting to kill him (8:42-44a)
- C. The claim (8:45-47): Jesus claims to be sinless!

## IV. Round four (8:48-59)

- A. The Jewish leaders try to slander Jesus (8:48-58)
  - 1. Their accusation (8:48, 52):
 

They accuse Jesus of being a demon-possessed Samaritan!
  - 2. His answer (8:49-51, 54-55):
    - a. "I honor my Father" (8:49-50).
    - b. "It is my Father who says these glorious things about me" (8:54-55).
    - c. "Anyone who obeys my teaching will never die!" (8:51).
  - 3. Their accusation (8:53):
 

"Are you greater than our father Abraham?"
  - 4. His answer (8:56):
 

"Abraham rejoiced as he looked forward to my coming!"
  - 5. Their accusation (8:57):
 

"You aren't even fifty years old. How can you say you have seen Abraham?"
  - 6. His answer (8:58):
 

"I existed before Abraham was even born!"
- B. The Jewish leaders try to stone Jesus (8:59): He hides himself and slips away from them.

TITLE

### Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of Life Sermon

"I'm the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." (Jn. 10:11)

## PLACE

By Solomon's porch in the Temple of Jerusalem during the Feast of Dedication

## SCRIPTURE

John 10:1-39

## CONTENTS

### I. The Message by Jesus (10:1-21)

#### A. The metaphor (10:1-6):

Jesus illustrates his mission on earth by describing two different ways to enter a sheepfold.

1. The wrong way, climbing over a wall (10:1):  
This is the method of thieves and robbers.
2. The right way, entering through the gate (10:2-6):  
This is the method of a true shepherd.

#### B. The meaning (10:7-18):

He explains his illustration by giving the characteristics of three kinds of individuals.

1. Characteristics of the Good Shepherd (10:7, 9, 10b-11, 14-18):  
Here he describes himself.
    - a. His relationship with the sheep (10:7, 9, 10b-11, 14-18)
      - (1) He is the entrance to their salvation (10:7).
      - (2) He allows them to go in and out, and find green pasture (10:9).
      - (3) He gives them life in all its fullness (10:10b).
      - (4) He lays down his own life for them (10:11).
      - (5) He knows his sheep and they know him (10:14).
    - b. His relationship with the Father (10:15-18)
      - (1) He knows his Father, and the Father knows him (10:15-16).
      - (2) He is loved by his Father (10:17).
      - (3) He is given power by the Father to lay down his life and take it up again (10:18).
  2. Characteristics of thieves and robbers (10:8, 10a):  
Their purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy!
  3. Characteristics of a hired hand (10:12-13)
    - a. He forsakes the sheep in time of danger (10:12).
    - b. He cares nothing for the sheep (10:13).
- #### C. The mixed views (10:19-21):
- There is much confusion concerning Jesus after he speaks these words.
1. Some say he is insane (10:19, 20b).
  2. Some say he is demon-possessed (10:20a).
  3. Some question whether he would be able to heal if he were in fact demon-possessed (10:21).

### II. The Malice against Jesus (10:22-39):

The Jews now attempt to kill the Savior on two specific occasions because of his claims to be the Son of God.

#### A. First attempt (10:22-31)

1. His words (10:25-30)
  - a. He says they are not his sheep (10:25-26).
  - b. He says his sheep listen to him (10:27).
  - c. He says his sheep will never perish and are eternally secure (10:28-29).
  - d. He says he and the Father are one (10:30).
2. Their wickedness (10:22-24, 31):  
They ask Jesus if he is the Messiah. When he says he is, they become angry and pick up

- stones to hurl at him.
- B. Second attempt (10:32-39)
1. His words (10:32-38)
    - a. He says they refuse to believe in the Scriptures (10:32-36).
    - b. He says they should believe in his miracles (10:37-38).
  2. Their wickedness (10:39): Again they unsuccessfully attempt to seize him.

**TITLE**

**Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life Sermon**

*"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*  
(Jn. 14:6)

**PLACE**

In the Upper Room in Jerusalem

**SCRIPTURE**

John 14:1-31

**CONTENTS**

**I. The consolation He gives to His Disciples (14:1-4)**

- A. *"I am going to prepare a place for you"* (14:1-2).
- B. *"When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am"* (14:3-4).

**II. The conversation He has with His disciples (14:5-31):**

Jesus answers three questions asked him by three disciples.

- A. Thomas and Jesus (14:5-7)
  1. Thomas's question:  
*"We haven't any idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"* (14:5).
  2. Jesus' answer (14:6-7)
    - a. *"I am the way, the truth and the life"* (14:6a).
    - b. *"No one can come to the Father except through me"* (14:6b-7).
- B. Philip and Jesus (14:8-21)
  1. Philip's question (14:8):  
*"Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied."*
  2. Jesus' answer (14:9-21)
    - a. He says anyone who has seen him has seen the Father (14:9).
    - b. He says that he is in the Father and that the Father is in him (14:10).
    - c. He says they will do greater things than he has done because he is going to the Father (14:11-14).
    - d. He says he will ask the Father to send them the Holy Spirit (14:15-21).
- C. Judas (not Judas Iscariot) and Jesus (14:22-31)
  1. Judas' question (14:22):  
*"Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?"*
  2. Jesus' answer (14:23-31)
    - a. He says that he only reveals himself to those who love and obey him (14:23-24).
    - b. He promises that the Holy Spirit will explain all this to them (14:25-26).
    - c. He reminds them again of his departure and return (14:27-31).

## TITLE

### Jesus Christ, the Abundance of Life Sermon

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman...I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing... Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."*  
(Jn. 15:1, 5, 16)

## PLACE

En route to Gethsemane in Jerusalem

## SCRIPTURE

John 15:1-27

## CONTENTS

Jesus speaks to His disciples about fruit bearing, loving, suffering, and witnessing.

### I. Fruit bearing (15:1-8)

- A. The symbols (15:1, 5a-5b)
  - 1. The Son is the true vine (15:1a, 5a).
  - 2. The Father is the gardener (15:1b).
  - 3. The believer is the branch (15:5b).
- B. The steps (15:2-4, 5c-6)
  - 1. We must submit to pruning by the Father (15:2-3).
  - 2. We must abide in the Son (15:4, 5c-6).
- C. The success (15:7-8)
  - 1. It results in bountiful fruit (15:7-8a).
  - 2. It results in glorifying the Father (15:8b).

### II. Loving (15:9-17)

- A. The priority (15:9-12)
  - 1. The Father loves the Son (15:9b, 10b).
  - 2. The Son loves the believer (15:9a, 10a, 11).
  - 3. The believer is to love other believers (15:12).
- B. The proof (15:13-15)
  - 1. What Jesus will do for his disciples (15:13): He will lay down his life.
  - 2. What Jesus now does for his disciples (15:14-15): He calls them friends, not servants.
- C. The promises (15:16-17)
  - 1. Our branches will bear permanent fruit (15:16a).
  - 2. Our prayers will be answered (15:16b-17).

### III. Suffering (15:18-25)

- A. The facts (15:18-24)
  - 1. All Christians will be hated because Christ was hated (15:18-19).
  - 2. No servant is greater than his master (15:20-21).
  - 3. The reason for this hatred is Jesus' fearless preaching against sin (15:22-24).
- B. The foretelling (15:25):  
All this is predicted in Psalms 35:19 and 69:4.

#### **IV. Witnessing (15:26-27):**

Jesus speaks of a twofold witness.

- A. The Holy Spirit will soon witness to the disciples concerning the Savior (15:26).
- B. The disciples should then witness to the world concerning the Savior (15:27).

#### **TITLE**

#### **Jesus Christ, Sender of the Spirit of Life Sermon**

*"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." (Jn. 16:7-11)*

#### **PLACE**

En route to Gethsemane in Jerusalem

#### **SCRIPTURE**

John 16:1-33

#### **CONTENTS**

This discourse records three rounds of conversation between Jesus and his disciples.

##### **I. Round One (16:1-15)**

- A. Jesus speaks of the conflict that will come to them from the world (16:1-4).
  - 1. The review of this persecution (16:1-2):
    - a. They will be put out of the synagogue (16:1-2a).
    - b. They will be killed (16:2b).
    - c. They will be looked upon as enemies of God (16:2c).
  - 2. The reason for this persecution (16:3-4):  
Their persecutors do not love the Father or the Son.
- B. Jesus speaks of the Counselor (the Holy Spirit) that will come to them from the Father (16:5-15).
  - 1. The prerequisite (16:5-7):  
Jesus says unless he goes away, the Holy Spirit will not come.
  - 2. The purpose (16:8-15):  
He will come to accomplish a fourfold purpose:
    - a. To convict sinners (16:8-10)
    - b. To condemn Satan (16:11)
    - c. To counsel saints (16:12-13)
    - d. To champion the Savior (16:14-15)

##### **II. Round Two (16:16-28)**

- A. The confusion (16:16-18): The disciples do not understand when Jesus says, "In just a little while I will be gone, and you won't see me anymore. Then, just a little while after that, you will see me again" (16:16).
- B. The clarification (16:19-22)
  - 1. His explanation (16:19)
    - a. "You won't see me anymore" (16:19a):  
A reference to his death, which will bring about great grief.
    - b. "You will see me again" (16:19b):  
A reference to his resurrection, which will bring about great joy!

- 2. His example (16:20-22):  
To illustrate the way their sorrow will turn to joy, Jesus refers to a woman giving birth.
- C. The comfort (16:23-28)
  - 1. Jesus says that the Father will give them all they need because of the Son (16:23).
  - 2. Jesus says the Father loves them dearly (16:24-28).

### III. Round Three (16:29-33)

- A. The disciples speak (16:29-30).
  - 1. *"At last you are speaking plainly"* (16:29).
  - 2. *"We believe that you came from God"* (16:30).
- B. The Savior speaks (16:31-33)
  - 1. The bad news (16:31-33a):  
*"You will have many trials and sorrows."*
  - 2. The glad news (16:33b):  
*"Take heart, because I have overcome the world."*

## TITLE

### The Sermon on the Mount

*"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them..."* (Mt. 5:1-2)

## PLACE

An unnamed mountain in Galilee, probably near the city of Capernaum

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5-7

## CONTENTS

The following suggested outline offers a three-fold division of this all-important sermon. Matthew chapter 5 contains the first division, chapter 6 the second, and chapter 7 the final. Thus:

### The Sermon on the Mount, part 1: Jesus lays down the principles and rules of the Kingdom. (Mt. 5)

#### I. The Kingdom and Believers (5:1-16)

- A. Kingdom attributes (5:1-12)
  - 1. The poor in spirit (5:3)
    - a. The role (5:3a):  
God blesses those who realize their need for him.
    - b. The reward (5:3b):  
The Kingdom of Heaven is given to them.
  - 2. Those who mourn (5:4)
    - a. The role (5:4a):  
God blesses those who mourn.
    - b. The reward (5:4b):  
They will be comforted.
  - 3. The meek (5:5)
    - a. The role (5:5a):  
God blesses the gentle and lowly.
    - b. The reward (5:5b):

- The whole earth will belong to them.
4. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6)
    - a. The role (5:6a):  
God blesses those who seek after justice.
    - b. The reward (5:6b):  
They will receive it in full.
  5. The merciful (5:7)
    - a. The role (5:7a):  
God blesses those who are merciful.
    - b. The reward (5:7b):  
They will be shown mercy.
  6. The pure in heart (5:8)
    - a. The role (5:8a):  
God blesses those whose hearts are pure.
    - b. The reward (5:8b):  
They will see God.
  7. The peacemakers (5:9)
    - a. The role (5:9a):  
God blesses those who work for peace.
    - b. The reward (5:9b):  
They will be called the children of God.
  8. Those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness (5:10-12)
    - a. The role (5:10a, 11):  
God blesses those who are persecuted because they live for God.
    - b. The reward (5:10b, 12):  
The Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- B. Kingdom actions (5:13-16)
1. To function as the salt of the earth (5:13)
  2. To function as the light of the world (5:14-16):  
Their light and good deeds shine for all.

## **II. The Kingdom and the Law (5:17-20)**

- A. The Redeemer and the law (5:17-18):  
Christ did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it.
- B. The redeemed and the law (5:19):  
Those who obey and teach God's laws will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven.
- C. The religious leaders and the law (5:20):  
People like the godless Pharisees, who do not obey the law, will not enter into the Kingdom.

## **III. The Kingdom and the Old Testament (5:21-48)**

- A. In regard to murder (5:21-26)
1. The basic concept (5:21):  
The law says, "Do not murder."
  2. The broadened concept (5:22-26):  
Jesus says that hating someone is the same as murder. Our relationship with God is dependent on our relationship with others.
- B. In regard to adultery (5:27-30)
1. The basic concept (5:27):  
The law says, "Do not commit adultery."
  2. The broadened concept (5:28-30):  
Jesus says that looking lustfully at someone is the same as adultery.
- C. In regard to divorce (5:31-32)
1. The basic concept (5:31):  
The law says, "A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a letter of divorce."
  2. The broadened concept (5:32):  
Jesus says that unlawful divorce and remarriage is the same as adultery.

- D. In regard to oaths (5:33-37)
  - 1. The basic concept (5:33):  
The law says, "You must carry out the vows you have made to the Lord."
  - 2. The broadened concept (5:34-37):  
Jesus says, "Don't make any vows!" A simple yes or no should suffice.
- E. In regard to retaliation (5:38-42)
  - 1. The basic concept (5:38):  
The law says, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."
  - 2. The broadened concept (5:39-42):  
Jesus says to turn the other cheek and to do more than is demanded.
- F. In regard to love (5:43-48)
  - 1. The basic concept (5:43):  
The law says, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy."
  - 2. The broadened concept (5:44-48):  
Jesus says, "Love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!"

**The Sermon on the Mount, part 2: Jesus presents models for giving, prayer, fasting, money, and trust. (Mt. 6)**

**I. Jesus talks about Giving (6:1-4)**

- A. The rules (6:1-3)
  - 1. Give sincerely (6:1):  
You will receive reward from your Father in heaven.
  - 2. Give secretly (6:2-3):  
Calling attention to your giving will cause that to be your only reward.
- B. The reward (6:4):  
Give your gifts in secret, and God will reward you openly.

**II. Jesus talks about Praying (6:5-15)**

- A. Essentials in prayer (6:5-8)
  - 1. Prayers God rejects (6:5, 7-8)
    - a. Boasting prayers (6:5):  
Praying publicly brings reward from men only.
    - b. Babbling prayers (6:7-8):  
God knows what you need before you ask.
  - 2. Prayers God receives (6:6):  
We should pray from the heart, in private.
- B. Elements in prayer (6:9-15):  
Jesus lists nine aspects of prayer.
  - 1. Faith (6:9a):  
*"Our father in heaven."*
  - 2. Worship (6:9b):  
*"May your name be honored."*
  - 3. Expectation (6:10a):  
*"May your kingdom come soon."*
  - 4. Submission (6:10b):  
*"May your will be done here on earth, just as it is in heaven..."*
  - 5. Petition (6:11):  
*"Give us our food for today."*
  - 6. Confession (6:12a):  
*"And forgive us our sins."*
  - 7. Compassion (6:12b, see also 14-15):  
*"Just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us..."*
  - 8. Dependence (6:13a):  
*"And don't let us yield to temptation."*
  - 9. Acknowledgment (6:13b):

*"For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."*

**III. Jesus talks about Fasting (6:16-18)**

- A. By hypocrites (6:16):  
They disfigure their faces to show people they are fasting.
- B. By the humble (6:17-18):  
They comb their hair and wash their faces so only God knows what they are doing. Then the Father rewards them.

**IV. Jesus talks about Treasures (6:19-24)**

- A. Earthly treasures are insecure and corruptible (6:19, 22-24):  
No one can serve two masters, but all must choose between God and gold!
- B. Heavenly treasures are secure and incorruptible (6:20-21):  
Where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

**V. Jesus talks about Trusting (6:25-34)**

- A. The information (6:25):  
We are told not to worry about food or clothes, for life consists of more than these things.
- B. The illustrations (6:26-30)
  - 1. Consider the birds (6:26-27):  
They do not sow, reap, or store up food, yet God feeds them!
  - 2. Consider the lilies (6:28-30):  
They don't worry about clothes, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are!
- C. The invitation (6:31-34):  
Put God in first place, and he will meet all your needs!

The Sermon on the Mount, part 3: Jesus teaches us to ask God for what we need, how to treat others, and how to live as a true child of the heavenly Father. (Mt. 7)

**I. Jesus' Exhortations (7:1-12)**

- A. Our responsibilities to the saved (7:1-2):  
We are not to harshly judge other believers.
- B. Our responsibilities to ourselves (7:3-5):  
We are to harshly judge ourselves!
- C. Our responsibilities to the ungodly (7:6):  
We are not to give holy things to depraved men.
- D. Our responsibilities to the Lord (7:7-11):
  - 1. The command (7:7):  
We are to diligently seek God's will.
  - 2. The confidence (7:8):  
He promises to reveal his will if we ask!
  - 3. The comparison (7:9-11):  
If we, being sinful, can give good gifts to our children, how much more will the sinless Father impart to his children!
- E. Our responsibilities to the world (7:12):  
We are to treat others as we would want them to treat us.

**II. Jesus' Illustration (7:13-27)**

- A. The two roads (7:13-14)
  - 1. The broad highway to hell (7:13):  
The gate is wide, and many choose this way to destruction.
  - 2. The narrow road to heaven (7:14):  
The gate is narrow, and only a few ever find it.
- B. The two animals (a condemnation of false prophets) (7:15)
  - 1. They pretend to be sheep (7:15a):

- They seem harmless.
- 2. They prove to be wolves (7:15b):  
They tear you apart.
- C. The two kinds of disciples (7:21-23)
  - 1. True disciples (7:21a):  
On judgment day, the true disciples will be separated from the false ones.
  - 2. False disciples (7:21b-23):  
On judgment day, the false disciples will be condemned.
    - a. The wondrous deeds they will say they did (7:22):  
They will say they prophesied, cast out demons, and performed miracles in his name.
    - b. The wicked deeds Christ will say they did (7:21b, 23):  
They disobeyed the Father, and God will say he never knew them.
- D. The two trees (7:16-20)
  - 1. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit (7:16, 18).
  - 2. A bad tree cannot produce good fruit (7:17, 19-20).
- E. The two builders (7:24-27)
  - 1. The structures (7:24, 26)
    - a. One man built his house on solid rock (7:24).
    - b. One man built his house on shifting sand (7:26).
  - 2. The storm (7:25, 27)
    - a. The house on the rock stood firm (7:25).
    - b. The house on the sand fell flat (7:27).

## TITLE

### The Mount Olivet Discourse Sermon

*"And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." (Mt. 24:1-2)*

## PLACE

On the Mount of Olives, overlooking the City of Jerusalem

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 24-25

## CONTENTS

- I. The Content of Christ's Sermon (24:1-26, 29)**
  - A. His remarks concerning the Temple destruction (24:1-3)
    - 1. The pride (24:1):  
Israel takes great pride in the Temple.
    - 2. The prophecy (24:2-3)
      - a. Jesus' revelation (24:2):  
The Temple will someday be completely demolished!
      - b. The disciples' request (24:3):  
The disciples want to know when!
  - B. His remarks concerning the first part of the Tribulation destruction (24:1-4):  
Events of the first three and a half years
    - 1. A time of apostasy (24:4-5, 11)
      - a. The rise of false prophets (24:11):

- False prophets will lead the people astray.
- b. The rise of false christ's (24:4-5):
  - False messiahs will lead the people astray.
- 2. A time of anarchy (24:6-8):
  - Wars will break out!
- 3. A time of apathy (24:12-13):
  - The love of many will grow cold.
- 4. A time of affliction (24:9-10):
  - Believers will be hated, betrayed, and martyred.
- 5. A time of accomplishment (24:14): The gospel will be preached to all nations.
- C. His remarks concerning the final part of the Tribulation destruction (24:15-26, 29):
  - Events of the final three and a half years--the most severe part of the Great Tribulation.
  - 1. The wickedness against God (24:15-26)
    - a. What the enemy will do (24:15, 23-26):
      - Construct the sacrilegious object that causes desecration
      - (1) The statue (24:15):
        - Assumed from Rev. 13:14-18
      - (2) The subtlety (24:23-26):
        - Many claim to be Christ
    - b. What the elect are to do (24:16-22):
      - Run for the mountains!
  - 2. The wrath from God (24:29)
    - a. The sun will be darkened (24:29a).
    - b. The moon will not give light 24:29b).
    - c. The stars will fall from the sky (24:29c).
    - d. The powers of heaven will be shaken (24:29d).

## II. The Climax of Christ's Sermon (24:27-28, 30-31, 40-41):

- The Second Coming
- A. The signal (24:30):
  - The Son of Man will appear in the heavens.
- B. The swiftness (24:27):
  - As the lightning flashes across the sky.
- C. The summons (24:31):
  - Angels will be sent forth with a mighty trumpet blast to gather the people of Israel from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.
- D. The slaughter (24:28, 40-41):
  - Armageddon!
    - 1. The assembling of the victims (24:40-41):
      - One will be taken, another left.
    - 2. The appearing of the vultures (24:28):
      - To eat the bodies of the slain warriors!

## III. The Clarifications of Christ's Sermon

Jesus relates five parables to clarify, illustrate, and explain the subject of prophecy. These are:

- A. The fig tree (Mt. 24:32-35)
- B. The unfaithful servant (Mt. 24:45-51)
- C. The ten virgins (Mt. 25:1-13)
- D. The ten talents and three servants (Mt. 25:14-30)
- E. The sheep and goats (Mt. 25:31-46)

## A LISTING OF JESUS' PRAYERS

PRAYER	OCCASION	REQUEST
1 <sup>st</sup> Prayer	At his baptism (Lk. 3:21)	Probably for strength to endure Satan's temptations in the wilderness (Lk. 4:1-13)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prayer	Before his first preaching tour of Galilee (Mk. 1:35; Lk. 4:42)	He no doubt asked for the Father's anointing and power upon his mission to preach in all the towns throughout Galilee (Mk. 1:36-39; Lk. 4:43-44)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prayer	After healing a leper (Lk. 5:16)	For continued power to heal and forgive sins (Lk. 5:18-26)
4 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	Before choosing his twelve disciples (Lk. 6:12)	For wisdom in their selection (see also Jn. 6:70)
5 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	During the feeding of the 5000 (Mt. 14:19; Mk. 6:41; Lk. 9:16; Jn. 6:11)	That the Father would supernaturally feed the hungry multitude (Mt. 14:20-21; Mk. 6:42-44; Lk. 9:17; Jn. 6:12-13)
6 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	After the feeding of the 5000 (Mt. 14:23; Mk. 6:46; Jn. 6:15)	In regards to the deliverance of his disciples who were battling a storm on the Sea of Galilee (Mt. 14:24-25; Mk. 6:47-48; Jn. 6:16-18)
7 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	Before hearing Peter's great confession (Lk. 9:18)	That the Father would reveal to Peter concerning the Deity of the Son (Mt. 16:17)
8 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	During the Transfiguration (Lk. 9:28)	In regards to his soon death on the cross (Lk. 9:31)
9 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	Upon hearing the report of the returning seventy (Mt. 11:25)	On this occasion he thanks the Father for two things: (1) For revealing great spiritual truths to the disciples (Mt. 11:25) (2) For allowing him to reveal the Father to his disciples (Mt. 11:27)
10 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	After visiting Mary and Martha (Lk. 11:1)	That the Father would give his wisdom in instructing his disciples how to pray (Lk. 11:2-4). See also (Mt. 6:9-15)
11 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	Upon receiving some little children (Mt. 19:13; Mk. 10:13; Lk. 8:15)	That they might be converted and enter the kingdom of God (Mt. 18:1-3; 19:14-15; Mk. 10:14-16; Lk. 18:16-17)
12 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	Before raising Lazarus (Jn. 11:41-42)	That Lazarus be raised to prove the Father had indeed sent his Son (Jn. 11:4)
13 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	When some Greeks desired to see him (Jn. 12:20-26)	"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (Jn. 12:27-28)
14 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	In the upper room prior to his crucifixion (Mt. 26:26; Mk. 14:22; Lk. 22:17, 19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:24-26)	Probably that the disciples might understand the true significance of the bread and wine (Mt. 26:27-29; Mk. 14:23-25; Lk. 22:14-16, 18)

## A LISTING OF JESUS' PRAYERS

PRAYER	OCCASION	REQUEST
15 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	After leaving the upper room (Jn. 17:1)	Here he offers up a three-fold prayer: (1) Praying for himself (Jn. 17:1-5) (2) Praying for his disciples (Jn. 17:6-19) (3) Praying for all believers (Jn. 17:20-26)
16 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	En route to Gethsemane (Lk. 22:31-32)	"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Lk. 22:31-32)
17 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	In the Garden of Gethsemane-first prayer (Mt. 26:39; Mk. 14:35; Lk. 22:41-42)	That his Father's will be done
18 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	In the Garden of Gethsemane-second prayer (Mt. 26:42; Mk. 14:39; Lk. 22:44)	That his Father's will be done
19 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	In the Garden of Gethsemane-third prayer (Mt. 26:44; Mk. 14:41)	That his Father's will be done
20 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	Probably sometime either before or after his Gethsemane ordeal	"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)
21 <sup>st</sup> Prayer	While on the cross-first prayer (Lk. 23:34)	"Then said Jesus, Father forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots." (Lk. 23:34)
22 <sup>nd</sup> Prayer	While on the cross-second prayer (Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34)	"And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" (Mk. 15:34)
23 <sup>rd</sup> Prayer	While on the cross-third prayer (Lk. 23:46)	"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." (Lk. 23:46)
24 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	While eating a meal in an Emmaus home (Lk. 24:30)	Probably that the two disciples would recognize him as the resurrected Christ (Lk. 24:31-32)
25 <sup>th</sup> Prayer	On the Mount of Olives just prior to his ascension (Lk.24:50-51)	That the Father would encourage his disciples to remain in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Lk. 24:49)

# THE SUFFERINGS ENDURED BY JESUS CHRIST

Rejected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By his nation (Jn. 1:11)</li> <li>• By his hometown (Lk. 4:28-29)</li> <li>• By his friends (Mk. 3:21)</li> <li>• By his family (Jn. 7:5)</li> </ul>
Tempted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By Satan (Lk. 4:1-2, 13; 22:28)</li> </ul>
Ridiculed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because of his hometown (Jn. 1:46; 7:52)</li> <li>• Because of his background (Jn. 8:41; 9:24, 29)</li> </ul>
Threatened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By Herod (Mt. 2:16)</li> <li>• By his hometown (Lk. 4:29)</li> <li>• By the Jews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◊ Because he healed on the Sabbath (Jn. 5:16; Lk. 6:10-11)</li> <li>◊ Because of his claims (Jn. 8:58-59; 10:30-33)</li> <li>◊ Because of his sermons (Jn. 8:40; Lk. 11:53-54; Mk. 12:12; Mt. 26:1-4)</li> <li>◊ Because of his miracles (Jn. 11:53; see also Jn. 12:10)</li> <li>◊ Because of his miracles (Jn. 11:53; see also Jn. 12:10)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• By the devil (Mt. 26:37-38; Mk. 14:33-34; Lk. 22:44)</li> </ul>
Homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Mt. 8:20)</li> </ul>
Betrayed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By a follower (Jn. 13:21)</li> </ul>
Denied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By a friend (Mt. 26:58, 69-75; Mk. 14:54, 66-72; Lk. 22:54-62; Jn. 18:15-18, 25-27)</li> </ul>
Misunderstood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By his disciples (Mt. 15:16; 17:6-11; Mk. 6:52; Jn. 10:6; 12:16)</li> </ul>
Forsaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By all (Mt. 26:56)</li> </ul>
Misquoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Mt. 26:61)</li> </ul>
Tried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegally seven times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◊ First trial, before Annas (Jn. 18:12-14, 19-24)</li> <li>◊ Second trial, before Caiaphas (Mt. 26:57-68; Mk. 14:53-65)</li> <li>◊ Third trial, before the Sanhedrin (Mt. 27:1-2; Mk. 15:1; Lk. 22:66-23:1)</li> <li>◊ Fourth trial, before Pilate (Jn. 18:28-38; Mt. 27:2, 11-14; Mk. 15:1-5; Lk. 23:13-25)</li> <li>◊ Fifth trial, before Herod (Lk. 23:7-12)</li> <li>◊ Sixth trial, before Pilate (Jn. 18:39-19:16; Mt. 27:15-26; Mk. 15:6-15; Lk. 23:13-25)</li> <li>◊ Seventh trial, before the Roman soldiers (Mt. 27:27-31; Mk. 15:16-20)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Indicted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On false charges (Lk. 23:1-2)</li> </ul>
Mocked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By Roman soldiers (Lk. 23:36-37; Mk. 15:16-20)</li> <li>• By the watching crowd (Lk. 23:35)</li> <li>• By the chief priests (Mk. 15:31)</li> <li>• By the two thieves (Mk. 15:32; Mt. 27:44)</li> </ul>
Tortured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slapped (Jn. 18:22)</li> <li>• Blindfolded (Lk. 22:64)</li> <li>• Spit upon (Mt. 26:67)</li> <li>• Buffeted (Mt. 26:67)</li> <li>• Scourged (Mt. 27:26)</li> <li>• Pierced with thorns (Mt. 27:29)</li> <li>• Struck upon the head (Mt. 27:30)</li> </ul>
Crucified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Matt. 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19)</li> </ul>

# THE USAGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BY JESUS CHRIST

## The Events and Individuals He Referred To

- The creation of Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:27; 2:24; Mk. 10:6-8)
- The murder of Abel (Gen. 4:10; Lk. 11:51)
- The corruption of Noah's day and the flood (Gen. 6-7; Lk. 17:26-27)
- The corruption of Lot's day and the fire (Gen. 19; Lk. 17:28-29)
- The worldliness of Lot's wife (Gen. 19:26; Lk. 17:32)
- The faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mt. 22:32)
- Moses and the burning bush (Ex. 3; Mk. 12:26)
- Moses and the heavenly manna (Ex. 16:15; Jn. 6:31)
- Moses and the brazen serpent (Num. 21:18; Jn. 3:14)
- David and some shewbread (1 Sam. 21:6; Mt. 12:3-4)
- Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1; Mt. 12:42)
- Elijah, a widow, and the famine (1 Kings 17:1, 9; Lk. 4:25-26)
- Naaman and his leprosy (2 Kings 5; Lk. 4:27)
- The murder of Zechariah (2 Chron. 24:20-21; Lk. 11:51)
- Daniel and the abomination of desolation (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Mt. 24:15)
- Jonah and the fish (Jn. 1:17; Mt. 12:40; 16:4)
- Jonah and the repentance of the Ninevites (Jn. 3:4-10; Lk. 11:30; Mt. 12:41)

## The Passages He Quoted From

- During His temptations
  1. The first temptation (in Mt. 4:4 he quoted Deut. 8:3)
  2. The second temptation (in Mt. 4:7 he quoted Deut. 6:16)
  3. The third temptation (in Mt. 4:10 he quoted Deut. 6:13)
- During His Sermon on the Mount
  1. In Mt. 5:21 he quoted Ex. 20:13, the sixth commandment
  2. In Mt. 5:27 he quoted Ex. 20:14, the seventh commandment; (also compare Mt. 5:31 with Deut. 24:1). (Note: He later quoted some of the same commandments during his talk with a rich young ruler. See Mk. 10:19)
- During his hometown sermon (in Lk. 4:18-19 he quoted Isa. 61:1-2)
- During various confrontations with Jewish rulers
  1. As He defended his associating with sinners (in Mt. 9:13 he quoted Hos. 6:6)
  2. As He expounded on marriage (in Mk. 10:7-8 he quoted Gen. 2:24)
  3. As He was asked concerning the greatest of the commandments (in Mk. 12:29-30 he quoted Deut. 6:4-5)
  4. As He rebuked their vain traditions (in Mt. 15:7-9 he quoted Isa. 29:13)
  5. As the Pharisees questioned his authority (in Jn. 8:17 he quoted Deut. 17:6)
- During His tribute to John the Baptist (in Lk. 7:27 he quoted Malachi 3:1)
- During His Triumphal Entry Day (in Mt. 21:16 he quoted Psa. 8:2)
- During His cleansing of the temple (in Lk. 19:46 he quoted Isa. 56:7)
- During a parable about Israel (in Mt. 21:42, 44 he quoted Psa. 118:22-23; Isa. 8:14-15)
- During a question session in the temple (in Mk. 12:36 he quoted Psa. 110:1)
- During his last Passover night--predicting the world would hate the disciples as they hated him (in Jn. 15:25 he quoted Psa. 35:19; 69:4)
- On the cross
  1. His fourth utterance (in Mt. 27:46 he quoted Psa. 22:1)
  2. His seventh utterance (in Lk. 23:46 he quoted Psa. 31:5)

In summary, our Lord said the Law would be fulfilled (Mt. 5:18) and the Scriptures could not be broken (Jn. 10:35). It has been estimated that over one-tenth of Jesus' recorded New Testament words were taken from the Old Testament. In the four Gospels, 180 of the 1,800 verses that report his discourses are either Old Testament quotes or Old Testament allusions.

# THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES FULFILLED BY JESUS CHRIST

## In Regards to Jesus' Birth

- Messiah would come! (Gen. 3:15; Lk. 2:6)
- Messiah would be a male! (Gen. 3:15; Lk. 2:7)
- Messiah would be born! (Gen. 3:15; Lk. 2:11)
- Messiah would be born of a woman! (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4)
- Messiah would be born of a virgin woman! (Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:18; Lk. 1:34)
- Messiah would be born in Bethlehem! (Micah 5:2; Lk. 2:4; Jn. 7:42)
- Messiah would be born before the "69 weeks" of Daniel had ended! (Dan. 9:25-26; Gal. 4:4)
- Messiah would possess a dual nature! (Isa. 9:6; Mt. 1:23; Jn. 1:49; 11:27)
- Messiah would come from the line of Shem! (Gen. 9:26-27; Lk. 3:36)
- Messiah would come from the seed of Abraham! (Gen. 12:2-3; Mt. 1:1; Gal. 3:16)
- Messiah would come from the nation Israel! (Num. 24:17; Jn. 4:22)
- Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah! (Gen. 49:10; Heb. 7:14)
- Messiah would be from the House of David! (2 Sam. 7:16; Mt. 1:1; 22:42; Rom. 1:3)
- Messiah would be worshipped by wise men led by a star! (Isa. 60:3, 6, 9; Num. 24:17; Mt. 2:1-2; 9-11)
- Messiah would be carried into Egypt as an infant! (Hos. 11:1; Mt. 2:15)
- Messiah's birthplace would suffer a blood purge! (Jer. 31:15; Mt. 2:17-18)

## In Regards to Jesus' Earthly Ministry

- That He would be called a Nazarene (compare Isa. 11:1 with Mt. 2:23)
- That He would be zealous for the Father (compare Ps. 69:9; 119:139 with Jn. 2:13-17)
- That He would be filled with God's Spirit (compare Isa. 11:2; 61:1-2; Ps. 45:7 with Lk. 4:18-19)
- That He would heal many (compare Isa. 53:4 with Mt. 8:16-17)
- That He would minister as a prophet (Deut. 18:15; Jn. 6:14; 7:40)
- That He would deal gently with the Gentiles (compare Isa. 9:1-2; 42:1-3 with Mt. 12:17-21; 4:13-16)
- That He would speak in parables (compare Isa. 6:9-10; Ps. 78:2 with Mt. 13:10-15)
- That He would be rejected by His own (compare Isa. 53:3; Ps. 69:8 with Jn. 1:11; 7:5)
- That He would make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem (compare Zech. 9:9 with Mt. 21:4-5)
- That He would be praised by little children (compare Ps. 8:2 with Mt. 21:16)
- That He would be the rejected Cornerstone (compare Ps. 118:22-23 with Mt. 21:42)
- That His miracles would not be believed (compare Is. 53:1 with Jn. 12:37-38)

## In Regards to Jesus' Crucifixion

- That His friend would betray him for 30 pieces of silver (compare Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Zech. 11:12-13 with Mt. 26:14-16; 21-25)
- That He would be a man of sorrows (compare Isa. 53:3 with Mt. 26:37-38)
- That He would be forsaken by His disciples (compare Zech. 13:7 with Mt. 26:31, 56)
- That He would be accused by false witnesses (Ps. 35:11 with Mk. 14:57-58)
- That He would scourged and spat upon (compare Isa. 50:6 with Mt. 26:67; 27:26)
- That His price money would be used to buy a potter's field (compare Zech. 11:12-13; Jer. 18:1-4; 19:14 with Mt. 27:9-10)
- That He would be crucified between two thieves (compare Isa. 53:12 with Mt. 27:38; Mk. 15:27-28; Lk. 22:37)
- That He would pray for His enemies (Ps. 109:4 with Lk. 23:34)
- That He would be given vinegar to drink (compare Ps. 69:21 with Mt. 27:34, 48; Jn. 19:28-30)
- That He would suffer the piercing of His hands and feet (compare Ps. 22:16, Zech. 12:10 with Mk. 15:25; Jn. 19:34, 37; 20:25-27)
- That His garments would be parted and gambled for (compare Ps. 22:18 with Lk. 23:34; Jn.

19:23-24)

- That He would be surrounded and ridiculed by His enemies (compare Ps. 22:7-8 with Mt. 27:39-44; Mk. 15:29-32)
- That He would thirst (compare Ps. 22:15 with Jn. 19:28)
- That He would commend His spirit to the Father (compare Ps. 31:5 with Lk. 23:46)
- That His bones would not be broken (compare Ps. 34:20; Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12 with Jn. 19:33-36)
- That He would be stared at in death (compare Zech. 12:10 with Jn. 19:37; Mt. 27:36)
- That He be looked upon as a transgressor (compare Isa. 53:12 with Lk. 22:37)
- That He would be buried with the rich (compare Isa. 53:9 with Mt. 27:57-60)

#### In Regards to Jesus' Resurrection

- That He be raised from the dead (compare Ps. 16:10 with Mt. 28:2-7)

#### In Regards to Jesus' Ascension

- That He would ascend into heaven (compare Ps. 24:7-10; 68:18 with Mk. 16:19; Lk. 24:51)

# THE NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECIES FORETOLD BY JESUS CHRIST

## Concerning the Church

- Its symbol (Mt. 13:45)
- Its foundation-Christ himself (Mt. 16:13-19)
- Its ministry (Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)
- Its field of service (Mt. 28:19; Acts 1:8)
- Its authority (Mt. 16:19; 18:18; Jn. 20:23)
- Its persecution (Mt. 10:16-23, 34; Jn. 15:18-21; 16:1-3, 33)
- Its discipline (Mt. 18:15-17)
- Its removal (Jn. 14:2-3)

## Concerning Himself

- His transfiguration (Mt. 16:28)
- His betrayal by Judas
  1. Predicted in Galilee
    - a. First occasion (Jn. 6:70-71)
    - b. Second occasion (Mt. 17:22)
  2. Predicted in the Upper Room (Mt. 26:21, 25)
- His denial by Peter
  1. Predicted in the Upper Room (Jn. 13:37-38)
  2. Predicted en route to the Mount of Olives and Gethsemane (Mt. 26:30, 34)
- His abandonment by the Twelve (Mt. 26:31)
- His sufferings
  1. Predicted in Caesarea Philippi (Mt. 16:21a)
  2. Predicted on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:12b)
- His death
  1. The fact of His death (Jn. 10:11, 15; Mt. 17:23)
  2. The place of His death (Mt. 20:18)
  3. The method of His death (Jn. 3:14; 12:32; Mt. 20:18-19)
- His resurrection
  1. The fact of His resurrection (Jn. 10:17-18)
  2. The time element in His resurrection (Mt. 12:40; Jn. 2:19)
- His appearance in Galilee (Mt. 26:32)
- His ascension (Jn. 7:33; 16:32)
- His return
  1. In the air (Jn. 14:3)
  2. On the earth (Mt. 16:27; 24:30; 26:63-64)

## Concerning the Resurrection of Lazarus

(John 11:11)

## Concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple

- The destruction of Jerusalem (Lk. 19:43-44)
- The destruction of the temple (Mk. 13:1-2)

## Concerning the death of Peter

(Jn. 21:18-19)

### Concerning Pentecost and the Ministry of the Holy Spirit

- The fact of his ministry (Jn. 7:37-39; Lk. 24:49)
- The duration of his ministry (Jn. 14:16)
- The location of his ministry (Jn. 14:17)
- The nature of his ministry
  1. Regarding the Savior (Jn. 15:26; 16:14)
  2. Regarding the saved (Jn. 14:26; 16:13)
  3. Regarding the sinner (Jn. 16:8)

### Concerning the Last Days

(Lk. 17:26-30; Mt. 24:32-34)

### Concerning the Nation Israel

- Its blindness (Mt. 23:37-39)
- Its rejection (Mt. 21:43)
- Its regathering (Mt. 24:31)

### Concerning the Great Tribulation

(Mt. 24:21, 29; Lk. 21:22-26)

### Concerning the Coming of Elijah

(Mt. 17:11)

### Concerning the Coming Antichrist

(Jn. 5:43; Mt. 24:15)

### Concerning the Battle of Armageddon

(Lk. 17:34-37; Mt. 24:28)

### Concerning the Resurrection of the Dead

(Jn. 5:28-29)

### Concerning the Future Rewards

(Mt. 10:41-42; 19:29)

### Concerning the Millennium

(Mt. 8:11; 13:43; 19:28; 25:34)

### Concerning the Great White Throne Judgment

(Mt. 25:31-33)

Concerning Hell

(Mt. 5:28-29; 13:49-50; 18:8-9)

Concerning Heaven

(Jn. 14:2-3)