

A Conversation of Miracles (Lesson Four)

The works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. ~John 10:25; 37-38

The Lord Jesus presents Himself to Israel as the promised Messiah and authenticates Himself with **miracles** (*dunamis*: "deeds of the power of God in Him" ~Luke 5:17); **signs** (*semeion*); and **wonders** (*teras*).

Speaker Carol Helland, January 2024

Introduction Verse for 2024: Acts 20:24

But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Scripture Reading: Mark 4:35-Mark 5:20 (Tree of Life Version) "Yeshua" is the Hebrew name of Jesus; *El Elyon*: Hebrew for "God Most High"; "Adonai": one of God's names used in the Old Testament translated "Lord."

The Lord Jesus' Fame *And He went throughout Galilee teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people." ~Matthew 4:23*

By spending most of His time in the northern Galilee area, Christ's miracles traveled by word of mouth to the ends of the earth. He had become an international celebrity.

Miracles in the Bible Miracles happened quite infrequently and only at certain periods of history. They were given as a necessary sign to inaugurate each new era, to authenticate God's message and messengers. **What made Jesus' miracles stand out from the others?** It was no longer God enabling *others* to do miracles on His behalf, but **God Himself** in the Person of Messiah Jesus who was doing these miracles.

The First Miracle *"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana, of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him." ~John 2:11(KJV)*

The Last Pre-Resurrection Miracle (Malchus) *And He touched his ear and healed him. ~Luke 22:51*

More than 40 miracles between these bookends of miracles Examples: Coin in fish's mouth; raising Lazarus from dead; crippled man at pool of Bethesda; healing 10 lepers; restoring sight to the blind

On that day when even was come What day? It was **the day** of blasphemous accusation and Israel's rejection of Yeshua as the Messiah after He cast out a demon; **the day** of the visit of His mother and brothers to take Him home; **the day** of leaving Peter's crowded house for teaching parables in a boat on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

The Decapolis (Deca= 10; Polis= city) Jesus gave His disciples instructions to **"go over to the other side of the lake"** (the Decapolis) to escape the crowds. The Decapolis lies to the east and south of the Sea of Galilee, founded by Greek settlers from Alexander the Great's Empire. This was a spiritually dark place. **It represented everything the Jews on the other side avoided.**

Could the Decapolis have been the setting for the parable of the prodigal son? *Not long after, the younger son gathered everything he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his inheritance in wild living. ~Luke 15:13*

The Ancient City of Hippos This is where Jesus and the disciples were headed—barely eight miles from Capernaum—but a "perfect" storm loomed ahead—a fitting conclusion to a stormy day of a different kind.

Storms on the Sea of Galilee The Sea of Galilee is a perfect place for a sudden storm. It's a little bowl of water—**700 feet below sea level**. Periodically, winds come rushing down both sides of the mountains, causing a tempest to hit suddenly. There would be no way you could prepare for this storm—the sudden intrusion of trouble. I would have never thought **we** would witness how quickly, and violently, a storm could break out on the lake.

Power over Nature **Where was Jesus when all this was taking place?** He was in the stern, asleep on a leather cushion of the steersman. After an exhausting day of teaching, the rocking of the boat had lulled Him into a deep, sound sleep. **He was then awakened by an accusatory question: "Teacher, do you not care we are perishing?"** Fear can immobilize us because of what we **THINK** will happen. Jesus did not take away the storm immediately, or relieve the disciples from their fears. Why? To teach them dependence on the Messiah in every situation.

God understands our weaknesses. Sometimes the Lord calms the waves and sometimes He calms us—the peace He promises. The Lord Jesus got up and rebuked the wind and said to the Sea, *“Be quiet. Be still.”*

Fearless (Or, at Least, Less Fear) Jesus then spoke to the disciples. He was more concerned for their souls than the storm. *“What are you afraid? How is it that you have no faith?”* The Lord Jesus knew every thought in their mind—every fear they had, just as He does with us.

Fear (phobeo) Fear in the sense of awe and reverence Now they were more afraid than ever before because Jesus is more than a man—He is the Messianic God-Man. *“Who is this that even the wind and Sea obey Him?”*

Does God perform miracles today? *Greater works than these shall you do.* ~John 14:12
God is free to perform miracles at any time, according to His sovereign will and purposes. My salvation meets the greatest need and brings the greatest results—the forgiveness of sins. ~Ephesians 1:7; Romans 5:8. Faith releases the power of God in our lives.

So what are the problems that seem to be crashing down on you today? The Lord has the ability to stand beside you and to say in the midst of your storm, *“Hush! Be quiet!”* And then you wait patiently and see what only Jesus can do. **Sometimes He calms the storm in your life, and other times, He calms you.** The Lord Jesus is more powerful than any storm you are going through today. **God's greatest miracle might be wrapped in your greatest problem.** The Lord will get you, too, to the other side. Trust Him. In the darkest day, the darkest hour, you can still hope in the Lord and His unsearchable riches; His all-sufficient grace and His unconquerable power.

Power over Demons As soon as Jesus landed on the shore, He met a man possessed with demons in the most extreme degree of the demonized state described in Scripture. He often been handcuffed but every time broke them by supernatural strength; he wailed constantly; self-destructive; excessively aggressive; and approached Messiah Jesus.

The Power of His Name The man was a Gentile because they commonly identified the Jewish God as *“God Most High.”*

There was not just one demon in this man but many. His name was “Legion.” We don't know the number of demons, but we know that a Roman legion was made up of 6,000 men. So this was the most powerful, demon-possessed person whom Jesus had met thus far.

The demons knew very well that they were about to be cast out. They made a request: to enter a herd of swine that was feeding nearby. The herders rushed into town and countryside to bring the owners the devastating news. They cared more for the pigs than the healing of the demonic man.

The man became a missionary in the Decapolis. He "began to proclaim what great things the Messiah had done for him"—that Jesus is the Son of God who came to save people from the tyranny of Satan. When Jesus returned to the Decapolis, 4,000 welcomed the Messiah, and they were fed by a miracle of only 7 loaves of bread, an ethnic number for Gentiles (Deuteronomy 7:1). **The geography of forgiveness now extended to all shores of the Sea of Galilee.**

The Evangelical Triangle: Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum "Most of [Jesus] miracles were done" here. ~Matthew 11:20

The Warning "Woe to you, **Chorazin!** Woe to you **Bethsaida!** If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes . . . and you, **Capernaum,** you think you'll be carried up to heaven? No, you'll be brought down to Hades.

Selective miracles were left out due to space limitations. "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if there were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written." ~John 21:25

I AM Way the Truth and the Life Whether you admit it or not, Jesus **IS** the Messiah upon whom your eternal destiny rests. If you have not done so, why not today place your faith in the One who loves you and gave His life for you?

Sometimes, when you have doubts or fears, take out your Bible; read it; and remind yourself: ***With God, all things are possible. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*** That's the lesson you can take away from *A Conversation of Miracles.*

Ladies' Bible Retreat *A Conversation of Compassion & A Conversation of Comfort* (Carol); *A Conversation of Companionship* (Faye); **March 7-9, 2024, Chase on the Lake**

Next "Conversation" *A Conversation of Love* (Faye); **February 4,** (DBC)