

Miracles of Jesus 12-07-08a

This is Sunday, the 8th of July, 2012. We continue our study in the Gospels, looking at the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ, the defined episodes that give us details. We know of course He did many more than three dozen miracles, but these are the ones that are given to us as representative samples.

And this morning we will be looking first at the healing of two blind men in Matthew chapter 9, verses 27 through 31. Let's take a moment as we begin to dedicate our time of fellowship and study to God. Shall we pray? Father, it is such a comfort to remember that we are not sustained by our own efforts.

We are not asked to accomplish Your purpose and fulfill Your will and stand at the judgment based on our own strength, but we are given that strength. We are given resources. We are given the means by which to accomplish the commands and the exhortations and to fulfill the examples and the potentials that are provided for us through Your Word.

We thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ in whom we have possession of all of these things. We have standing. We have relationship.

We have forgiveness and cleansing. We have enablement. We have a mission.

We have a destiny. We have a purpose. And we have all of those necessary resources and enablements to accomplish Your will and Your purpose for us in this life, in this world, in the age that is and the ages that are to come.

We thank You for this passage of Scripture and the truth that is contained within it. And we ask that God the Holy Spirit will illuminate it for us, will teach it to us, will imprint it in our souls in such a way that it will be a fruitful source of meditation and of guidance, a lamp for our feet and a light for our path, that it will be meaningful not just as we look at it and as we listen to it, but in the days and weeks ahead as we seek to live a life that is pleasing in Your sight and that glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray these things in His name.

Amen. Matthew chapter 9, verses 27 through 31. In my New King James it is highlighted with a subtitle, Sight is Restored.

Sight is Restored. When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, Son of David, have mercy on us. And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him, and Jesus said to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this? They said to Him, Yes, Lord.

Then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith, let it be to you. And their eyes were opened, and Jesus sternly warned them, saying, See that no one knows it. But

when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.

Well, being the seasoned veterans that you are in picking up details and watching for clues, you have probably already seen some little flags waving. Over near where we live is the Haggard Farm, and it's been there. It's a wonderful quarter section of the Haggard Farm land with strange animals, and they grow and cut hay in the northern half of the field that sits to the west.

There's actually two pieces. Originally, that whole neighborhood was the Haggard Farm, but the original scions and patriarchs of that family have passed away, and the children, from time to time, have sold off portions of this huge acreage, and it has turned into neighborhoods, one of which we live in. Well, they've just sold off another section.

And so what has been, for these many years, a hay field, in fact, they cut hay on it this year. Big round bales sitting out there gleaming in the sun. It's always nice to go half a block from your house and see countryside and see agriculture.

It's been a great, great thing, and there are people who live on the north edge of that that houses face south, and they have had this ironic pastoral scene all these many years. Well, the land has been sold, half of that remaining patch on the west, the northern half, and they took the fences down and made a gravel driveway off of Custer, heading east into the property. And if you look over it now, instead of waving grasses and bales of hay and so on, there is a veritable sea of little flags, because it has been sold off.

It has been surveyed. It has been laid out, and they've been busy. Just like when you call dig tests and they come out to mark your plumbing or your electric underground, those little wire stems with flags, it looks like a field of poppies, but there are these little flags, and it's all laid out.

All of the lots have been marked off where the streets are going to be. Here's the entrance, here's the egress, and it'll be sort of a closed community, not a lot of open streets. I don't know exactly what they're planning to put up in there, but the rest of the neighborhood, of course, is in shock and dismay, just as the previous old neighbors were when our neighborhoods were built.

It's a passing scene. It'll never more be a hayfield ever in the history of mankind. They don't tear down neighborhoods and turn them back into agriculture, so it's the passing of an era.

What struck my mind as I drive past it, and continues to strike my mind, is all of these little flags, because to the uninitiated, to the rabbits that still crawl through there, they don't know what those flags are, but to people who understand the significance, those flags mean something. As workmen come in there and begin to install plumbing and

sewer lines and run electric and Internet and all of the other utilities that are going to go in there, those flags have meaning and will guide them and tell them where to put things and where not to put things, where to pave streets, where to pour foundations, where to start improvements to make a yard that has a different kind of grass. You don't want to be out there trying to mow hay when your weekly job comes around to keep the grass low, so they'll replant it, they'll sod it with something else.

All of these things are going to be done, but the beginning of it are these little markers, these little flags. As we approach any passage of Scripture, as you turn anywhere to do your daily meditation, I know some who use the Chronological Bible and read through a passage and look at the notes and the helps, and then try to remember what we've already learned in those passages and avail ourselves of other insights, of which there are many. Nobody can exhaust any verse, any passage in the Word of God, so I encourage you to not only remember the things that we have learned, but look around, get commentaries, notes, helps, kick-outs that they have in study Bibles with historical information and linguistic information and topical information about things that are covered in the Bible.

It's always helpful. But in the text itself, if you just start with an unadorned English Bible and read a passage, if we watch and if we're asking and seeking and knocking, and God the Holy Spirit is our teacher, as we read a passage like this, we will start to discern the little flags, the little helpful indicators that guide us and illuminate for us what the passage is about. So I'm going to read this again, and I think you were doing it the first time, but watch.

See how many things you would say, hmm, about as we read through. What's unique and what stands out as I read this passage? When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, Son of David, have mercy on us. And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him.

And Jesus said to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this? They said to Him, Yes, Lord. Then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith, let it be to you. And their eyes were opened.

And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, See that no one knows it. But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country. Okay, detectives, with your little Sherlock Holmes beanie hats and your magnifying glasses and your experience in following and developing clues, one of the first things we see in verse 27 is when Jesus departed from there.

Where is there? How do we find out? We look up above. Interestingly, it is the pair of miracles we have just studied. The gyarus daughter, woman with the issue of blood.

I don't mean to be disrespectful or sacrilegious when I say this, but it is a miracle

sandwich. It is like wonder bread. Because you have gyrus at the beginning, then the woman with the issue of blood, and then the conclusion of the gyrus episode.

And in all the Gospels, it is presented that way. It is designed that way. It is supposed to be a sandwich.

We have seen the outer bracket and the inner central truth in our recent study. So if you look up in verse 23, Jesus came into the ruler's house, saw the flute players, the noisy crowd, make room, the girl is not dead but sleeping, they ridiculed him. This is the population who have come to the synagogue ruler's house.

Now this is something I did not point out, but you may have observed. You all get ahead of me fairly regularly anymore. But think about this.

If the synagogue ruler's daughter is at the point of death and they have called people to come and mourn, who would these people be? Are they, let me put it this way, are they people that hate the synagogue and never go, or are they people that love the synagogue and know the synagogue ruler and appreciate him because he is the guy that presides? Who are these people? Are they pro-synagogue or anti-synagogue? Are they pro-presentation of the traditional word of God as it is taught and guides worship in Israel, or are they against it? Would these be religious people or non-religious people that are at the synagogue ruler's house pitching in with him, weeping with those who weep? What kind of people are they? Would they be some of the cream of the crop and the brightest and foremost in terms of interest in the word of God, or they would be the laggards and slackers and nerdy wells and harlots and tax collectors? Who are these people? They are the best, aren't they? Aren't these people attending the synagogue? Pastor's daughter is dying. Who would be the people there first with the most? People in the church, right? It's a similar situation. These are people who love this guy, appreciate him, come to synagogue regularly, and when Jesus comes and says, make room, the girl is not dead but sleeping, what is their reaction? They don't just disbelieve him.

They're not just uncertain. They're not doubtful. They are scornful.

They are dismissive. They are derisive. We have to be so careful that we don't have a mutual admiration society syndrome where we have lost the heart and soul of love for God, love for His truth, so that when good is before us and comes to us, we don't see it.

It is possible to be a shrub in the desert and not see good when it comes. How many of these people saw the good when it came? Jairus. Jairus saw it.

Jairus knew it. Even his servants. Don't trouble the master anymore.

The girl is dead. It's too late. He might have been able to do some kind of hocus pocus, but no.

They ridiculed him. Be prepared if you are a person of faith. Jesus has said over and over again, if they hate the master, they will hate the master's servants.

If they dislike the Lord Jesus, they are going to dislike Christians. The closer we come to the Lord Jesus, the more susceptible we will be to not just doubt, not just dismissive disinterest, but ridicule, scorn, personal abuse, personal treatment as the off-scourings. We are fortunate.

We tend to sort of weed out our acquaintances and we don't often run into this. We kind of insulate ourselves. We don't go places where they hate Christians.

I don't go up to the doorway and take my shoes off and walk into a mosque and wait to be mocked and ridiculed or looked at with scorn or a Buddhist temple. Although Buddhists are such pacifists, they don't get mad at anybody. You have to give the Buddhists credit.

They are just so ironic. If you want a religion of apathy, Buddhism is the way to go because you just don't have to do anything. You just be a Buddhist.

You get a little tubby guy with six arms or something and, no, that's Hindus. Just a little tubby guy. He's only got two arms.

Put the guy with the big ears, put the earrings. That's all you have to do. You don't have to learn anything.

You don't have to know anything. You don't have to get mad at anybody. You don't typically see the Buddhists taking up arms and trying to conquer the world.

If you want to talk about a religion of peace, Buddhists have got it all over anybody else. But these people are militant. Somebody comes in and threatens their way of looking at things, they get belligerent.

And you can expect to run into belligerent people. And just remember, this isn't necessarily personal. Of course, if you're a rascal, it might be personal.

But many times this is a reaction to the light of Christ that shines in and through us or should be shining there. So put them outside. And you notice the run-up to this.

You remember all of the beginning verses of Jairus back in the early part of chapter 9, beginning in verse 10, and then all the way through. How much space is devoted to the actual miracle? Look at verse 25. When the crowd was put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose.

If you blink, you missed the miracle. It's one line out of all of this preparation. What does this tell us in terms of these little flags we're watching for? Are we supposed to be impressed and dazzled and rocked back in our chairs by the magnitude and the

profundity and the power of the miracle? Or is it in the details? Is it the symbolic value of the situation and those who are involved? And we get our interpretation and application by looking at why the miracle is there, not that the miracle is there.

It's the whys. It's the wherefores. It's the recognition of factors and interplay of circumstances that we watch for.

The miracle itself, even in the biblical account, is almost incidental. And the report of this went out into all the land. The report of this went out into all the land.

Jesus Christ has power to heal, has power even to raise the dead. By the way, we associate this, and we think this is a profound miracle, and we can pretty much name. I think all of us have enough Bible knowledge.

We can name the times in Scripture where somebody's raised from the dead, right? Just in the New Testament, we have this girl, Talitha Kumi. We have the guy that was on the stretcher being carried out of town, the widow of Nain, right? We have Lazarus. And these are kind of the ones that stick out, right? Can you think of any others raised from the dead? The Old Testament, right.

Yeah, in the Old Testament, we've got those two, Elijah and Elisha, I think each raise one. The Apostle Paul, yeah. But in the career of the Lord Jesus, there's basically those three, right? Since you're here in Matthew chapter 9 and 10, look at chapter 10, verse 6, where Jesus sends out the twelve and commanded them saying, do not go into the way of the Gentiles, do not enter a city of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as you go, preach, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And here are his commands, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, what? Raise the dead. He told the disciples, he told the twelve, including Judas, by the way, go out, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead. My question is, how many of these disciples had the chutzpah, had the faith to walk up to corpses and say, you know what, Jesus said raise the dead, everybody stand back, give me some room, I say to you, get up.

I'm talking stiff, cold corpse dead. Who's got that kind of faith? Jesus told them to do it. I just wonder when they all came back, Lord, I healed the sick, cleansed a couple of lepers, how many dead did you raise? Lord, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, should have seen it, it was great.

Guy came up with dim vision and walked away seeing real clear, guy had kind of a crooked arm and I straightened it, so how many dead did you raise? Well, Lord, I didn't really run across too many dead people, I just wonder because we have no record of that trip. But raising the dead, this is no small thing, and it's not surprising that the report of this went out into all the land. So that's where Jesus is, house of Jairus, full of disbelieving, mocking people until the daughter sits up.

Then these people are just all a babble. If there had been Twitter in those days, it would have been tweeted immediately throughout the land. Well, so verse 27, when Jesus departed from there, where is there? Jairus' house.

Where is he? What town is he in? Where do these people live? Came back to his own city back in the first part of chapter 9, remember that? What is, quote, his own city? It's not Bethlehem, it's not even Nazareth, it's Capernaum, he's living in Capernaum, he's living with Simon Peter, that's his own city. It's just like my own city now is Plano. I wasn't born here, lived plenty of other places, but my city now is Plano.

It's a place where I reside, it's my headquarters, it's where I operate from. Same with Jesus. So he's in Capernaum.

When Jesus departed from there, he has just left the alive and well daughter of Jairus, great rejoicing and dumbfoundedness in that household, and all of the crowds that were there to mourn now, they don't know what to do. They're picking up all their black paper and saying, well, they're trying to decide, you know, did this really happen? Maybe he was right, maybe she was just asleep, and maybe it's not, they're just trying to digest it. When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed him, crying out and saying, Son of David, have mercy on us.

Now, this is an ongoing action. Jesus departed from there. He's heading back to his house of residence, which is actually Simon Peter's house.

That's where they stay. We've seen the excavations of that house in the biblical archaeology review, and they've dug up both the synagogue and Peter's house. But it says they were crying out.

And this is a form of krazo. It's easy to remember when you're learning Greek vocabulary, because krazo, K-R-A-Z-O, means to cry. And it starts with kra, krazo, to cry out.

But this is a present active participle. What is a participle? Ongoing action in present time. A present participle, this isn't Daenerys' participle, having cried out, something happened.

They are continually crying out. They are crying out ones. These are criers.

And saying, and this is Lego, and it's another present active participle. They kept on crying out and kept on saying. And notice, they are following him.

This is Akoloutheou. And not so much that you need to know that word, but it's not a participle. It's an heiress.

So when he came out of the house, they began to follow him. It's like an ingressive

heiress. And they made a decision.

They saw Jesus. Actually, they didn't see him. They're blind.

They knew that Jesus had come out of the house. And so they said, let's follow. And so that was their decision.

And so they followed him. And this constant crying out and saying, over and over and over again, Son of David, have mercy on us. Son of David, have mercy on us.

Now, what did they not say? Rabbi, Rabbi, have mercy on us. Jesus, Jesus, have mercy on us. Hey you, hey you, have mercy on us.

They say, Son of David. What does Son of David mean by way of a title? It's kind of like Lord of hosts. You hear it so much, you think, well, it's just a title.

It's just another way of referring to him. Not at all. What is the specific aspect of Jesus that this title refers to? Son of David means, I believe you are the Mashiach.

You are the anointed one. You are that son who will come and sit on David's throne. You are the coming one that I learned about in synagogue from my understanding of the scriptures that point to the coming one.

David's greater son who will prop up the tent and bring back the kingdom. These guys don't just believe Jesus has the power to heal. They believe he is the Son of David.

And by the way, chronologically, this is the first time anybody publicly calls Jesus Son of David. And these guys are blind. Blind men seem to be the first to see that Jesus is the Messiah.

So, have mercy on us. Now, why would they combine these two things? They didn't say, oh merciful one, have mercy on us. Oh good shepherd, have mercy on us.

Son of David, have mercy. Where would they get this idea? This is an application of Old Testament scripture. Turn with me to Isaiah chapter 64.

We were here not too terribly long ago. Isaiah chapter 64. 64.6 is a verse that we have memorized in the past.

You look at the preceding context. Oh that you would rend the heavens, that you would come down, that the mountains might shake at your presence as fire burns brushwood, as fire causes water to boil, to make your name known to your adversaries, that the nations might tremble at your presence. When you did awesome things which we weren't looking for, you came down, the mountains shook.

Since the beginning of the world, men have not heard or perceived by the ear, nor has

the eye seen any God besides you, who acts for the one who waits for him. You meet him who rejoices and does righteousness, who remembers you in your ways. You indeed were angry, for we have sinned in these ways we continue, and we need to be saved.

But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags. We fade as a leaf, our iniquities like the wind have taken us away, and there is no one who calls on your name, who stirs himself up to take hold of you, for you have hidden your face from us and have consumed us because of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, you are our Father, we are the clay, and you are our potter, and we are all the work of your hand.

Do not be furious, O Lord, nor remember iniquity forever. Indeed, please look, we all are your people. Your holy cities are wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem is a desolation, our holy and beautiful temple where our fathers praised you is burned up with fire, all our pleasant things are laid waste.

Will you restrain yourself because of these things, O Lord? Will you hold your peace and afflict us very severely?" And he goes on in chapter 5, I was sought by those who did not ask for me, I was found by those who did not seek me. I said, Here I am, here I am, to a nation that was not called by my name. I have stretched out my hands all day long to a rebellious people who walk in a way that is not good, according to their own thoughts, people who provoke me to anger continually.

And you go on from there. This is the status of the nation of Israel. They call upon God, God responds, O that you would shake the heavens and come down, but when He does, when He appears, they are not ready.

They are unclean, they follow their own ways. He comes and they are not looking for Him. They say they are calling out for God, but He says, I am actually coming to those who have not asked for me.

Now when He comes, in what manner does He come? Turn back to Isaiah chapter 42. 64 gives us the status of the people. It is kind of like John 1, 12.

He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. Those are the own described. They act like they want Him.

They are calling out. Everybody is looking for the Messiah, but when He comes, they do not see Him because they are not ready. Point of application.

We can be looking in the right direction, and we can be calling upon God for deliverance, and yet we are not prepared for the deliverance He brings. We are not prepared to see the good when it comes. We trust in God.

We believe in God. We are praying to God. We are calling out to God, but because we have not done housekeeping on our own soul, when His deliverance appears, we cannot

recognize it.

We do not see it. Look back at chapter 42. My servant whom I uphold, He says, Behold, take a look.

Idu, if it was in Greek. My elect one in whom my soul delights, I put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

This is the Son of David. This is the Messiah. This is the coming one.

He will not cry out or raise His voice, cause His voice to be heard in the street. By the way, not cry out, raise His voice, cause His voice to be heard in the street. We are going to see this in the second session this morning why that is.

Just remember it for now. Put a star by this. He does not cry out in the street.

This is the difference between individual appeal and public pronouncement. What is the difference between crying out in the street and standing at the door and knocking? We will talk more about it in the second session this morning, but that is your passage. He will not cry out in the street.

He is not going to be the truck. Remember in the old movies, the truck would go down the street with a big bullhorn on top and there would be an announcement coming out, you know, concert tonight, be there or be square, and the guy just drives up and down like the ice cream truck with his music, trying to get everybody's attention. He says, Jesus is not going to do that.

The coming one is not going to do that. His appeal will start out being individual. Until He has established justice in the earth, the coastline shall wait for His law.

Look down at verse 6. I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness. I am not just calling you. I am calling you in righteousness.

Only people in righteousness are going to hear and heed this call. It hears a noise. Some hear the voice of God.

Others think it has thundered. What is the difference? The call is in righteousness. You've got to be in righteousness to hear it.

One of my favorite things in the evenings after the sun goes down is to scan around and listen to shortwave. Well, you've got to be on the right frequency if you want to hear certain stations or certain kinds of activity. If you want to hear amateurs, you've got to go to the 75 meter band, among other places, and you've got to have a single sideband filter.

But if you're in the 75 meter band and you've got a single sideband filter, then when

they talk, you can hear. Otherwise, you just hear static. You just hear noise.

You hear something else. He will call in righteousness. I will hold your hand.

I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles to do what? Verse 7, to open blind eyes. These guys know their Old Testament Scriptures. They know Isaiah chapter 42, and they claim it.

You're the son of David. Open our blind eyes. This is what my Bible tells me.

You're the son of David, and because you're the son of David, you have the power to open blind eyes. Do you think they heard the news rippling through the crowd that the girl had just been healed? Bring out prisoners from prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house. Former things have come to pass.

New things I declare. They say, look, if you're the son of David, you can open blind eyes. Son of David, have mercy on us.

Son of David, have mercy on us. Now, from our study of Isaiah, from your frame of reference in the Word of God, what is God talking about here when He says that His Son, His Messiah, His coming servant and coming king is going to be a light? He's going to be a light to the nation, a light to the Gentiles. Those who sit in darkness have seen a great light, and He's going to open blind eyes.

What does this ultimately mean? Is it to cure physical blindness? Is that what this means? That's just a figure, isn't it? And Jesus will actually open blind eyes, but even that is a figure for something bigger and greater, right? You can get macular degeneration. You can get your eyes milked over when you get cataracts, and now they can go in and they can give sight to the blind. They can take your lenses out and put in fresh, clear ones, and you don't even need glasses anymore.

You can see so clearly. It isn't the curing of physical blindness that is the real issue. It is a metaphor.

It is a picture, a similitude for perception of realities that go beyond this world and beyond the mundane, beyond this life. And God is going to open the portals of heaven and show eternal things, eternal truths, eternal life, eternal relationship with Himself through Christ. That's what opening blind eyes really means.

It's important to recognize that because we're going to pause here and take our break. When we come back, we're going to see the nature of the faith of these two blind men, what it does and what it does not do, what it means and what it doesn't mean. So let's pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we'll continue in Matthew chapter 9.