

The Synoptic Gospels

Week 4

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Outline

Miracles in Galilee

- Mastery of Nature

- Exorcisms

- Healings

Lessons on Leadership

- Jesus on Leadership

- A Lesson on Rest

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Chronicle

Episode	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Fishers of Men †	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11
Calming of Storm	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25
Feeding of 5000	14:15-21	6:35-44	9:12-17
Walking on Water	14:22-23	6:45-52	–
Transfiguration	17:1-8	9:2-9	9:28-36
Feeding of 4000	15:32-38	8:1-9	–

†–Possibly multiple episodes

Response

Most of these episodes were only exclusively witnessed by the disciples and/or we only have their response.

1. *Fishers of Men*—Jesus showed that he is in greater control than than these professional fishermen. Humbled, Peter says, “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man.” Eventually, they leave everything.
2. *Calming Storm*—Fearful and amazed
3. *Feeding 5000*—The disciples’ hearts were hard (Mark; cf. John’s account)
4. *Walking on Water*—Worshipped him! (Mt) Utterly Astonished (Mk)
5. *Transfiguration*—They fell face down (Mt), terrified (Mt & Mk)
6. *Feeding 4000*—Disciples didn’t understand —What? (Cf. Deut 8:2,3)

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Episode	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Capernaum	–	1:21-28	4:31-37
Gerasene Demoniac [⊗*]	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39
Mute Man	9:32-34	–	–
Blind and Mute Man	12:22-27	–	–
Syrio-Phoenician Child [⊗]	15:21-28	7:1-23	–
Failed Exorcism Redeemed	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43

Key:

⊗* – Probable Gentile

⊗ – Explicitly Gentile

Response

1. Capernaum
 - Demons call him, “Holy One of God”
 - The crowds were “amazed,” and spread news about him
2. Gerasene Demoniac
 - Demons call him, “Son of God,” “Son of Most High God,” and adjure Jesus not to torment them
 - From fear, the immediate observers called upon him to leave; the healed man spread the news of his release from bondage and “everyone marveled.”
3. Mute Man
 - Crowds marveled, “nothing like this has happened in Israel”
 - The Pharisees claim Satan is behind Jesus, refusing to believe God empowers him
4. Blind & Mute Man
 - Crowds wonder if he’s the “Son of David”
 - Same response as above from Pharisees
5. Syrio-Phoenician—Nothing noted except *Jesus’* response to *her*
6. Failed Exorcism—The crowds were “amazed at the greatness of God,” and marveled at what Jesus was doing (Lk 9:43)

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Episode	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Peter's Mother-in-Law	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39
Others in Capernaum	8:16-17	1:32-34	4:40-41
Leper	8:2-4	1:40-45	5:12-16
Paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26
Withered Hand	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11
Centurion's Servant [Ø*]	8:5-13	–	6:43-49
Son at Nain Raised	–	–	7:11-17
Hemorrhaging Woman	9:20-22	5:24-34	8:43-48
Jairus' Daughter Raised	9:23-26	5:35-43	8:44-56
Blind Men	9:27-31	–	–
Gennesaret Healings	14:35-36	6:53-56	–
Decapolis Healings [Ø*]	15:29-31	7:31-37	–
Bethsaida Blind man	–	8:22-26	–
Man with Dropsy	–	–	14:1-6
Ten Lepers [Ø]	–	–	17:11-21
Blind Bartimaeus	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43

The Response of the Crowds

The response of the crowds is primarily positive:

- Mark 1:33–And the whole city had gathered at the door.
- The language of the responses indicates rising expectancy: Fear, filled with awe, amazed, utterly astonished, glorified God, we have never seen anything like this, God has visited

There is one exception to this, viz. his hometown:

Matt 13:57 And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

See also Luke 4:22-30, Matt 11:20-24 and relevant towns (Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida).

The Response of Israel's Leadership

We find a more explicitly negative response from Israel's leadership:

1. *Paralytic*—"He is blaspheming" (Mk 2:7)
2. *Withered Hand*—
 - Matt 12:14—But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.
 - Luke 6:11—But they themselves were filled with rage [folly] and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.
3. *Man with Dropsy*—Luke 14:4,6 "But they kept silent . . . 6 And they could make no reply to this."

We will see more direct confrontations with the Pharisees and religious leaders as we examine his sermons and parables.

The Response of Israel's Leadership

Between Jesus' hometown and the Pharisees, why do you think people reacted negatively to him?

- The Pharisees have a lot to lose if Christ comes to power. (Cf. John 11:48,9) But by not believing they have even more to lose! So, there must also be a deeper hardness of heart.
- Most likely Jesus does not represent the kind of leader they want (a conquering king who wants to cooperate with them)
- As for the Jesus' hometown, his ability to do miracles seemed largely dependent on one's humility to receive it. Typically, hometown heroes puff up local pride whereas Jesus' ministry requires open-handed humility.

The Message

What is Jesus communicating with his miracles?

- Demonstrating his compassion for His people
- Establish his authority to forgive sins, speak on behalf of God
- He's aligning himself with the following prophecy (cf. Matt 11:4-6):

Isaiah 35:4-6a—Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, But He will save you. Then the eyes of the blind will be opened And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.

- There is a deliberate identification with the Creator God. He's given numerous opportunities to correct people's questions about his identity. In those cases, he sharpens the barb rather than correct them (note esp. Paralytic).

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Subversive Statements

People are hoping for a reigning King and Jesus' miracles feed that expectancy. No wonder people might want to get cozy with Jesus.

Jesus pours cold water on these delusions of grandeur:

- But many who are first will be last; and the last, first. (Matt 19:40)
- For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospels will save it. (Mark 8:35)
- If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.(Luke 9:23)
- You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:42-45)
- Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted. (Matt 23:12)

Predictions of Death

Jesus does not predict his death until Peter's confession (Matt 16:16):

Matt 16:20,21—Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ. From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

Why do you think he timed this revelation this way?

- As with his other subversive remarks, he wants them to know what's coming now that he's openly acknowledged his identity
- Revealing this negative message prematurely could be too discouraging.
- Since these two aspects so clearly express his identity and mission, he wanted to ensure they were made explicit together.

Benefits of Discipleship

When facing the hardships of following Christ, let us not forget His benefits:

Matt 11:28-30—“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Mark 10:29-31—Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last, first.”

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An Attempt to Seek Rest

We read the following when Jesus hears about John's death:

Mt 14:12-13a—John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus. When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.

We also discover from Mark the following:

Mark 6:30-32—The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

Whether from grief or from hard work, Jesus urges them to rest.

Sheep without A Shepherd

... And yet we read

Mark 6:34—When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

Matt 14:14—When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

So, now they're extra tired, extra exhausted, and it's "late in the day!"

Mk 6:35,6—“This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

Probably thinking, “Weren’t we supposed to rest?” The crowds are tired—like us. Jesus, send them off to take care of themselves . . .

AND NOW! HE SAYS, “YOU FEED THEM!”

Feeding of the 5000

What do you think Jesus is trying to teach them?

1. The more overt lessons of the feeding the 5000 are these:
 - We have very little to offer when it comes to serving others (one lunch for roughly 15K people)
 - God often provides additional benefits on top of the power to serve (12 baskets full of bread!)
2. The broader context demonstrates that serving Christ involves truly *laying down your life* for others. (Cf. placement of Luke 9:18-27)
3. Following their work, they might have been tempted to glorify themselves. The disciples were probably more ready to learn the lessons above after nearing complete exhaustion and being posed with an obviously impossible task.
4. When you're completely wasted, God's work becomes even more glorious (Cf. II Cor 12:10b)

Rest At Last

After this whole episode, rest finally comes:

Mark 6:45,46—Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the crowd away. After bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.

Rest is a value in God's mind, but it might not always come when we expect it or want it.

References

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