

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

RLJ-1918

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PART 23: EAGLE OR TURKEY?

CAPERNAUM

The city of Capernaum was located on the north side of the Sea of Galilee, between Gennesaret to the south and Chorazin to the north. It was a Roman garrison town and that is why Jesus encountered the centurion. It was also an administration center for the outlying area with a custom station for the people that traveled on the road snaking along the Sea of Galilee.



The apostles Peter and Andrew were born and raised in Capernaum, as was the apostle Matthew or Levi as he was also known. He was the manager of the tax department in Capernaum.

The god-fearing centurion – introduced in the previous message – was responsible for financing the construction of a synagogue in Capernaum.

After Jesus healed the leper and the slave of the centurion, He lodged in the home of Peter. Once inside, he discovered Peter's mother-in-law was sick and lay in bed. No one asked for the healing, the God-man just walked over and touched her. She was healed instantly and worked to feed Jesus and the apostles. **Matthew 8:15**

A crowd began to assemble once it became known that Jesus was at the home of Peter. They brought every sick and demon possessed person in Capernaum and from the outlying areas. Jesus did not complain, but healed the sick and dealt with the demon possessed people. **verses 16-17; Isaiah 53:4-5**

LEAVING CAPERNAUM

Matthew does not tell us when Jesus left the home of Peter, but I would guess it was in the morning of the next day since traveling at night was difficult. Jesus could have easily stayed in Capernaum for a while to heal people and cast out demons, but He told the disciples He wanted to leave the city when He saw a huge crowd and walked to the shore of the Sea of Galilee with the intention of crossing over to the eastern side.

Matthew 8:18

Various people approached and asked questions while they were walking to the seashore. A scribe was so impressed by the God-man that he was willing to go wherever Jesus went. **verse 19**

Jesus bluntly told him that He was homeless and Matthew did not record the scribe's reaction. **verse 20**



Another admirer said that before he could commit himself to following Jesus, it was first necessary to return home and bury his father. The Jewish custom was that the oldest son could not leave the household until the father died. **verse 21**

Playing the waiting game could have taken years and this is why Jesus callously told him to let the dead bury the dead. **verse 22**

GETTING INTO THE SHIP

More than likely Jesus entered a fishing boat owned by either Peter or John since they commercially fished the Sea of Galilee. We don't know if Jesus had yet called all the apostles, so we have no way of knowing how many men were on the boat. **verse 23; Luke 8:22**

Jesus must have been very tired because he fell asleep once they set sail and then a storm came upon them. **Matthew 8:24; Luke 8:23**

THE SEA OF GALILEE

The Sea of Galilee is a unique body of water because it is situated 680 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. It is surrounded by hills, with some of them rising 2,000 feet above the Mediterranean on the eastern side.

The air on the hilltops is cool, whereas the air over the water is warm and moist. The difference in height between the surrounding land and the sea causes large temperature and pressure changes, resulting in strong winds that hug the hillsides and blow across the water.

The Sea of Galilee is small and these winds may descend directly to the center of the body of water with violent results. When the contrasting air masses meet, storms can form quickly without warning.

The Sea of Galilee is also relatively shallow at just 200 feet at its deepest spot. A shallow body of water can be whipped up by wind more rapidly than with deep water because energy is more readily absorbed.

THE STORM

The Bible does not reveal if this particular storm was natural or caused by Satan. The storms on the Sea of Galilee do not usually come with a cloud cover as in most parts of the world. The sun can be shining brightly, and when the sudden winds blow, the waves and white caps can seem like a boiling cauldron. Thus, it was impossible for even the most seasoned fisherman to know in advance when a storm would arrive. Everyone living around the Sea of Galilee was familiar with the sudden storms.

The apostles had seen Jesus heal all manner of sickness and cast out demons, but they weren't sure that the God-man also exercised power over the elements. **Matthew 8:25**

When Jesus awoke, the first thing He did was chide the disciples for lacking faith. Then He stood in the boat and rebuked (cursed) the winds and the waves. The result was instantaneous as the winds and waves immediately ceased. This power manifestation

was unlike anything that Jesus had done as the Messiah up to this point and the disciples were astonished. **verses 26-27; Luke 8:25**

This type of authority cannot be duplicated in the flesh; it can only be accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit and by holy angels. Jesus performed a similar miracle with Moses when He instructed the Israelites to cross the sea. **Exodus 14:21-31**

ARE MIRACLES ONLY IN THE PAST?

As Christians we need to start thinking like Jesus. The God-man operated in the flesh and the spirit world simultaneously. God the Father assigned 12 legions (72,000) of angels to protect Jesus. **Matthew 26:53**

This type of thinking brings us to a challenge. Jesus stated that anyone who is born again will be able to duplicate the same miracles He performed. **John 14:11-14**

Jesus qualified the statement by saying "If you love me, keep my commandments." **verse 15**

A believer in Christ can only perform miracles through the Holy Spirit. **verses 16-21**

The apostle Paul stated that angels are here on earth to assist Christians. **Hebrews 1:13-14**

Jesus had the disciples to perform miracles in His name before the crucifixion and subsequent resurrection. **Luke 10:17-21**

The Son of God stipulated that the disciples could not leave Jerusalem and begin ministering until they had received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. **Acts 1:4-8**

The church was born in fire on the day of Pentecost. **Acts 2:1-4**

SUMMARY

What is the expectation of miracles in the modern church? It is very low because the church as a whole is powerless. Hardly any evangelical pastors teach about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine being that miracles were only for the apostolic church and ceased to exist with the last apostle. With this mindset and teaching, is it any wonder that born-again believers in Christ have no faith that miracles are still possible?

*Most Christians can be likened to a fat farm turkey
waddling around on the ground instead of soaring
high in the sky like an eagle.*

The New Testament is full of miracles, signs, and wonders. But this supernatural inheritance has been stolen by Lucifer and most Christians are like homeless beggars, hoping for something, but not really having faith that it will happen.

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?