

The Miracles of Christ - Raising the Widow's Son

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[0 : 00] Let's pray, shall we? Once again, Father, we are privileged to gather together a group of men whose fellowship we enjoy immensely, and especially with you being at the center of it.

We ask that as we engage the text this morning that you will give the enlightenment that we know we are missing, and that you will instill within each and every one of us a new sense of appreciation for who you are and what you have done, particularly during that time you spent here on this earth. We are grateful for the revelation you've been pleased to give. Thank you for the meal we'll be enjoying shortly and for the day that lies ahead. We ask your blessing upon it in Christ's name. Amen.

We are going to be looking at the next healing event, the miracle in the life of our Lord, and it is found in Luke's Gospel, chapter 7.

In fact, Dr. Luke is the only one that actually records this particular incident. And just by way of a little bit of backup, I want you to take a look at your map if you have it with you, and you will see on the very last page that which is numbered item 5 down below.

[1 : 15] It is the place of Jesus' ministry then, 26 to 30 and now. If you look in the upper part of that, you will see the town of Capernaum.

It is located right on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum. And we are going to have our Lord journeying from Capernaum down south, a distance of what will be probably about 30 to 35 miles to the little town of Nain.

Nain, it's sometimes called. And that's where this miracle that we're going to consider this morning is going to take place. But before we get there, I want to just back up because I have a particular point that I want to make, beginning in Luke chapter 7 and verse 1, and I'll just read it and save comment for the new material.

Luke chapter 7 and verse 1. When he had completed all his discourse in the hearing of the people, he went to Capernaum. All right? That's where we just were on the map.

And a certain centurion slave who was highly regarded by him was sick and about to die. Now, you've got to keep in mind that a centurion is not a Jew.

[2 : 36] He is a Gentile. He's not only a Gentile, but he is an army officer in the Roman army. And the Roman army is there occupying the nation of Israel, like they occupied a whole lot of other places.

So militarily and politically, everything depends upon Rome and Rome's representatives there in Israel. So it is rather significant that a Roman who ordinarily would be considered a pagan, even as Cornelius in Acts chapter 10 was referred to as a God-fearer, they are still not Jews.

They are Gentiles, and their background, for the most part, is pagan. That is, they worship many gods, as did the people of Rome. So anytime you see a centurion, you know he's a Gentile.

And yet it is apparent that some of these Gentiles, some of these Romans, had come to an appreciation of their being but one God, and it was the God of Israel.

And they obviously had been favorably impressed by the Jewish people and the way they conducted themselves in many aspects that caused them to come onto that team, if you will. But they still remained Gentiles.

[3 : 57] So we're told that he was a centurion slave who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die. And when he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking him to come and save the life of his slave.

Now that automatically indicates that this man, this centurion, had to have heard reports about Jesus of Nazareth and some of his exploits and the people that he had healed.

And he knew that this slave that he highly favored was apparently not going to make it. And Jesus was perhaps his only hope.

So he sends for him. And when they came to Jesus, they earnestly entreated him, saying, He is worthy for you to grant this to him.

For he, the centurion, loves our nation. And it was he who built us our synagogue. And that again indicates the kind of relationship that this man had with the Jewish people.

[5 : 04] And we are told that when Jesus started on his way with them, and when he was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, Lord, do not trouble yourself further, for I am not fit for you to come under my roof.

For this reason, I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

For indeed, I am a man under authority with soldiers under me. And I say to this one, Go! And he goes.

And to another, Come! And he comes. And to my slave, Do this! And he does it. And when Jesus heard this, he marveled at him, and turned and said to the multitude that was following him, probably all Jews, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith.

That is quite a statement. And it also indicates the deficiency of the faith of so many of the people in Israel.

[6 : 26] Because he's going to say something similar to that on more occasions than one. And when the Syrophenician woman is healed and so on. So, we've got a situation here that we are dealing with that you need to understand.

And that is the incredible blindness that still existed in the minds of many of the Jewish people to whom Jesus came as to his identity.

They were all eager to pick up on the miracles and the things that he was doing among them, but the lingering question was, who is this one really? And what we are dealing with and what they were dealing with, even though they didn't realize it, is God in the flesh.

Emmanuel. Emmanuel. He is there visiting what is generally considered a relatively insignificant piece of geography on the whole planet.

This tiny little nation of Israel, no bigger today than about the size of New Jersey. And it is relatively obscure, but it is the one central focus of the planet that God has designated.

[7 : 40] In fact, it is the only place in all of Scripture where God refers to any piece of geography as my land. I mean, he is the one who made the planets and thrust them all out into the universe and created the earth, and yet he calls tiny little Israel my land.

And it is this place that he is visiting. Why Israel? Because that is where it all started, and that is where the promises were made to the prophets, through the prophets in the Old Testament.

Bethlehem, Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me as to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Wow. Micah 5.2. Now, here, 4,000 years after the promise was made that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, the seed of the woman makes his appearance, and he is here in this tiny little land.

Those to whom he came who had all the prophecies regarding him were the very ones who were going to, for the most part, overlook his personhood. That is quite remarkable.

[8 : 52] So, let's continue on. When Jesus said, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith, such confidence, the word faith literally means confidence, believing, or believability, and he is acknowledging that this man, who by the way, isn't even a Jew, knows nothing about the promises given to Israel or how they are to be fulfilled, yet this man has demonstrated extraordinary confidence and reliance in this Jewish carpenter, supposedly.

How can you account for that? Well, let's read on. And when we read that when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Well, of course. Now, our new material begins in verse 11. Now it came about soon afterwards that he went to a city called Nain, and if you look at your map, you'll see it's about 25, 30 miles down south of where he was in Capernaum, and his disciples were going along with him accompanied by a large multitude.

I've yet to find any place in scripture where a multitude is ever enumerated. It's used many, many times, multitude and large multitude, but we're never told how many people there were.

On occasion, there's 5,000 men we know that were feeding at the miracles that Jesus performed, and on another occasion, 4,000, besides women and children, but we still aren't told how many the multitude is.

[10:41] Suffice it to say, it's a huge number of people. And I guess, because when word got out as to what was going on and what this man was doing, everybody was flocking to him.

People were hearing things, and people were saying things like, I'm telling you, this is the honest truth, I was there, I saw it myself, I could not believe it, I knew this guy and so and so on, telling these tales, and everybody's ears were perking up, and as Jesus went on through his ministry, the crowds continued to build.

So we read that he's accompanied by a large multitude, and as he approached the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out.

And that's always significant in the Jewish economy, because in the Jewish mindset, bodies were never buried inside a city.

Always had to be taken outside the city gate, outside the city walls, just as it is in Jerusalem, even to this day. Matter of fact, if you take a good close look at a map that shows the walls of Jerusalem, if you're looking at it from the Mount of Olives, and you're looking toward Jerusalem, I've got a map, I've got a map in my office, it's a very wide map, it's about, it's about five feet long, a couple feet high, and it's all spread out on the wall, and it's a city, it's a map of the walls of Jerusalem, and if you look at it very carefully, you will see outside the walls gravestones, hundreds of them, peppered all along, and they are not, of course, inside the wall, they're all outside the wall, and Jewish burial provisions required that no one be buried inside the city because it would contaminate the city, spiritually speaking, so everybody was buried outside the city, and there are thousands and thousands of those, and they show up if you look at it very closely, you can see them, and if you're in a bus, tour bus, and you're traveling along that road outside the walls of Jerusalem, those graves and the mounds are everywhere, all over the place, thousands of them, and the idea, of course, was you couldn't be buried as a Jew, you couldn't be buried inside the city, but you wanted to be buried as close to the city as possible, and that's why all of those graves are dotted there and it's quite a remarkable scene, so we are told here that they are carrying this dead man out of the city, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a sizable crowd from the city was with her, these people had a unique way of mourning, and it was considered to be acceptable, even necessary, to make great lamentations over the death of someone, and this is a, this is a Mideastern thing, and it still prevails in a lot of places to this day, matter of fact,

[13:52] I can remember, I can remember, remember my mother-in-law back in the state of Washington, we were about 80 miles east of Seattle where we spent the summer one year, and her stepmother, I'm sorry, her mother-in-law, her father-in-law had passed away, this was many years ago, and his wife was mourning him, and to demonstrate her grief, she went outside the house, ran around the house several times, tearing at her hair, reaching down and picking up dirt off the ground, throwing it up in the air and let it come over her, and crying and moaning as she ran around the house, and people were thinking, what is, what is going on here, what is this crazy woman, what is she doing?

That was an expression of extreme grief, and she did that right after her husband died. Of course, that's, you know, that's an ancient thing today, I suspect that there may be still some places over there where this kind of thing goes on, but to give an expression of grief, many times, mourners were hired, paid mourners, to come to a funeral and weep and wail and groan over the deceased, and the idea was the more mourners there were and the more lamentation was an indication of how deeply the deceased was respected and loved, so it's a kind of a mid-eastern thing and it still goes on in some places today and that's exactly what was happening here, and it's the same thing when you look at the raising of Lazarus in John chapter 11, when Jesus is raising Lazarus, there are professional mourners there and they play an important part, so it's part of the culture, so we are told that that in verse 12, when the Lord saw her, he felt compassion for her and said to her, do not weep, stop your crying, well that's the kind of thing that would, that your typical response would be, well that's easy for you to say, but I'm the one with the loss, and yet, we know what Jesus was planning to do, and he had every reason to tell her, do not weep, even though I'm sure she didn't understand it at the time, and he came up and touched the coffin,

I think King James translates to the beer, B-I-E-R, some call it the beer, some call it the buyer, but it is the, it is the object usually upon which the coffin is placed, and if you ever go to a funeral home and you view the remains to pay your respects of the deceased, the coffin is there, the lid is open, and the coffin is situated on a kind of a tram that has wheels on it and can be moved about easily, and that's what they used to take it out to the hearse and so on, this was a beer, it was an item upon which the coffin was sustained, and we are told that he touched the coffin, and the bears came to a halt, probably six of them, and they are carrying this dead body along to the place of burial, and Jesus reached over and he touched the beer, and everybody just kind of stopped right where they were, almost probably as if to say, what's he doing, or what does he want, or what's this all about, and as he touched the beer, he leaned over and said, young man, I say to you, arise, now who is it that can possibly speak to a dead person and have them respond? This right here ought to be the end of the issue insofar as any question is concerned as to who this is. This is the same being who many years earlier said, let there be light, and there was light, and let the earth bring forth all manner of living things, and it was so.

[18:46] And as you read down the text, and it was so, and it was so. This is the same person. He is the one before whom everything exists.

He is the alpha and the omega. He's the beginning and the end. He is the son of God. He is God the son. He is the one who without him was nothing made that was made.

That's who we're talking about here. And you need to understand that it was with total lack of effort that he told this young man arise.

He expended no energy in needing to do so. This is an indication of absolute complete control of everything. This is just to us it is well it's impossible.

That's what makes it a miracle. It's impossible. And yet this is exactly what happened. I say to you arise and the dead man sat up.

[19:55] I can promise you one thing. Jesus never had the thought boy I sure hope this works because if it doesn't it's going to be really embarrassing.

I mean just when he said that it was just as good as done. And this this young man this corpse headed for the burial site opened his eyes and rose up.

And the people are going what is this? Ah what? Probably some said well actually he wasn't really dead. You know I'm sure there were always there's always some unbelievers some who have a more what they call a reasonable solution to this.

Did you have a comment Roger? So the spirit left his body. Yeah. So was he with the Lord? Hades? I don't know.

I don't know. All I know is all I know is that which constituted life and the life principle is not your body.

[21:11] That which animates your body is your human spirit. It is the part of our being that is so essential and the part about which we know so little.

Isn't that amazing? If there's anything that you ought to know everything about, it's you. You don't even know everything about your body.

You don't even know everything about one organ of your body. That's kind of humbling when you stop and think about it.

If there's anything and anyone that we ought to know everything about, it's ourselves and yet we don't. We don't. It is just it is absolutely stunning. Yes?

When I died in '89, all I remember consciously was the pain was gone and it was white. It was just peaceful.

[22:12] And then the next thing I heard was the nurse and the doctor hollered at me, Roger, Roger, wake up. They had shocked me and gave me strip of kinase or something.

But I remember oh no. Something like that. Yeah. There's pain again. Yeah. Yeah. Well. It was gone. I mean, it was peaceful.

And they heard the tunnel. And some people get to the end and the devil's there waiting for it. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So, but it was. It was just white.

It was peaceful. Well, Roger can speak from personal experience and many others can too. They call these NDE's, near-death experiences. And there's still a lot of information about them that we don't know, we don't understand.

But Roger had a history of heart problems and subsequent to that, he underwent a full heart replacement in Columbus years ago.

[23 : 11] And how many years ago was that now? Six and a half years ago, he's been operating with somebody else's heart that was donated. And it is serving him very well.

So, regarding this spirit that dwells within us, the real you, that, by the way, is the part of you that is regenerated when you receive Christ as your Savior.

It is in your body. Your body has never had the effects of your redemption applied to it.

That means we have received only the earnest, which means the down payment of the whole package. That is a regenerated spirit inside you that is made new in a way we don't understand, but that's the real you.

And when physical death occurs, that life principle that God breathed into Adam, the breath of life, and he became a living soul, that part of you exits the body.

[24 : 24] Nobody sees it leave, but it exits the body, and for believers, it is present with the Lord. There's so much about this, guys, that we just don't understand, but we do know some of those basic facts, and that's certainly one of them.

And it is an amazing thing. I remember reading years ago about a scientific experiment that was conducted in England where this person agreed to be an experiment, and he knew that he was very near death, and he was a scientist himself.

I don't recall any of the names, but they had this man on a very, very delicate scale that would measure grams of weight, not just ounces, and they were all waiting for this colleague of theirs to die because he was terminal and everybody knew he was going to die, and they wanted to see what his weight was right before his death, and then compare it with after he died and see what the change was, and whatever the change was would be what the spirit weighed apparently.

Well, of course, there was no change because the spirit is immaterial. It is not physical, and yet is a very real part of you, and that is what is regenerated and made new in Christ.

That's what's going to be reunited one day with the body. So, remember when Jesus was on the cross, one of the last words he uttered was, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.

[25 : 59] spirit, and he bowed his head and gave up the spirit. And likewise in Acts chapter 7, at the stoning of Stephen, as those stones rained down around him, crushing his body, crushing the life out of him, Stephen looked heavenward and said, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

So, when a believer dies, he is absent from the body and present with the Lord. It is a wonderful reality. Yes?

Barbara, it's interesting, since childhood, in answer to Roger's question, we say present with, and yet since childhood, I can remember it said that we are one with.

present with and one with being synonymous, meaning we are one with God when we die. Our spirit becomes one with God.

We are one and the same. We are all part of the same God. So, assuming that that's correct, that God was also Jesus.

[27 : 14] And that was Jesus at the time. That guy's spirit went no farther than the man that was standing there healing him. Yeah, well. It was a piece of his finger. And when Jesus touched the beer, he simply returned the spirit to the man.

That's right. That's right. The spirit was called back into the body, and the body, of course, was alive again. And if you look quickly at Romans chapter 8, I think it helps put some light on this.

when Paul the apostle says in verse 22, we know, well, verse 21, that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption.

Our bodies, our bodies are slaves to corruption. In other words, corruption dominates our being. And it is working on us right now.

And what it is doing, it is aging us and weakening us, and it will get to the point where it will conquer us.

[28 : 19] Because physical death is the victor in these present bodies. This is why Paul was going to say in 1 Corinthians, Oh, death, where is your sting now? That is, when we are glorified, our bodies are glorified, the sting of death will be gone.

But for now, it stings you, and you die physically. And Paul says in verse 22, for we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth, just like a woman in labor, together until now.

And not only this, but also we ourselves having the first fruits of the Spirit. What does that mean? the first fruits is that which comes first.

And in the harvesting, the first fruits was the indication that they would be followed with a full harvest. But the first fruits was just the very beginning.

It's the first ripened grain, indicating that all the rest of it is going to ripen also. But this is just a little bit earlier. So we have the first fruits of the Spirit.

[29 : 30] And the text goes on to say, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons. To wit, what I mean by that is the redemption of our body.

When Christ died on that cross, he paid the full, complete price for our redemption. But it has not been all applied.

It has only been applied to the immaterial part of your being that was regenerated. That's the first fruits of the Spirit. And when the time comes that that first fruits of the Spirit is reunited with a glorified body, then Paul says our body will be fashioned like unto the body of Jesus Christ.

But right now, we are a being, we are a soul, we are a soul that has a corruptible body and an incorruptible spirit.

And the time is coming when both will be incorruptible and our body will be fashioned like unto the body of Christ when he came forth from that tomb, which is a glorified body. So we are still, so far as our whole redemption package is concerned, we are still under construction.

[30 : 51] But the time is coming when we'll be a finished product and that which has been applied to our spirit will be applied to our body as well. All right, back to our text now in Luke 7.

Young man, I say to you, arise, a dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. Can you imagine the thoughts?

Can you imagine the joy that flooded the heart and soul of that mother? She was a widow to start with, and he was her only son, and the implication is he was all she had in this world, and to see him back again, this woman had to have had a joy inexpressible about her, and she is just stunned. She's probably pinching herself and asking herself, is this real? Did I just see? Did I just experience what I think I did? How can this be? And there was no question as to the guy's death.

Everybody had pretty much signed on to that. Jesus didn't just make him well again. Jesus gave him life. The man was dead. And fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God.

[32 : 09] That simply means, to glorify God means to give credit, to acknowledge, to respond in a positive way, to what has been done.

And they are saying, a great prophet has risen among us, and God has visited his people. Well, I guess. And this report, this report concerning him, went out over all Judea, and in all the surrounding districts.

So the news is traveling fast, the crowds are building everywhere he goes. Joe. It indicates in here that they didn't recognize him as the Messiah right here. They didn't recognize who Jesus really was at all.

He's just a prophet, a great prophet. That is very true. In fact, the text is going to go on. We can just mosey on through this a little bit in connection with what Joe just said in verse 18.

And the disciples of John, that's John the baptizer. The disciples of John reported to him about all these things, and summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord.

[33 : 26] And why doesn't he go himself? He's in jail. John the Baptist is in jail. He had been preaching and had called out Herod for his illicit marriage to his brother's wife.

And he was designed for, he was intended for execution. Remember the whole scene with Salome and etc. And the one at the head of John the Baptist on a charger and so on.

Well, John is in prison awaiting execution. And none of that computes with what he's been saying about Jesus being the Messiah. And he already said that he had come for the purpose of introducing Jesus as the Messiah to Israel.

Israel. And he is the forerunner. He has prophesied in Malachi that he would come 400 years earlier. And he did, and he did his thing, and he announced Jesus as the Messiah, pronounced him as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, saw the dove to send on him as the spirit. And John, as the forerunner of the Messiah, is supposed to be involved in this kingdom plan. And now, he's in prison awaiting execution.

[34 : 39] And with John, none of that computes with the way he thinks things are supposed to go. So he calls two of his disciples to him, and he says, would you please go and find Jesus and ask

him, what is going on?

I thought he was the Messiah. I introduced him as such. Was I wrong in doing that, and should we be looking for someone else? Because none of this was computing with John.

And the text goes on to say, when the men came to him, in verse 20, John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, are you the one who is coming?

Or do we look for someone else? Is this all a mistake? At that very time, he cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits, and he granted sight to many who were blind.

And Jesus answered and said to them, that is to the ones whom John sent, you go and report to John what you have seen and heard. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear.

[35 : 52] The dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he who keeps from stumbling over me.

Well, I'll tell you what, there weren't very many who were blessed because they were stumbling over him. There was no question that Jesus was a miracle worker. There was no question that he obviously had been sent from God.

As even Nicodemus said, we know that you are one come from God because no one can do these miracles that you do unless God is with him. So they knew that Jesus was working miracles.

Many had benefited from his power in his ministry. But I don't know that there were any who actually understood who he was. And I pointed out to you in the past, one of the great reasons for the confusion and for the lack of proper identification is in the fact that in the Old Testament, there are two separate comings of the Messiah promised and predicted.

The first is all the way back in Genesis 3 in verse 15 as the seed of the woman. But that's going to be 4,000 years before it will be fulfilled and Jesus is born in Bethlehem.

[37 : 13] So all through the Old Testament, the emphasis is on Messiah, Messiah, Messiah. Why? The word Messiah means the anointed one.

It means the specially designated chosen one. Chosen one by whom? Chosen by God himself. And as you read John's gospel, you will run into it numerous times.

In fact, I count over 20 times when Jesus refers to him who sent me. I came from him who sent me. Over and over again, that is mentioned.

But the Jews also knew that prophesied Messiah would come with great power, great glory. He would defeat all of the enemies of Israel and he would establish his glorious kingdom.

Both of those comings are soundly predicted throughout the Old Testament. However, the second coming is mentioned much more than his first coming.

[38 : 16] The second coming is described with power, pomp, splendor, great glory, great power, great manifestation. It's described in Revelation chapter 19.

It's also described in Matthew chapter 24. That's the second coming. Every eye shall see him and they shall mourn because of him. And there won't be any unbelievers then.

That's the second coming. And folks, that's the coming that so many of the Jews focused on exclusively. Because the first coming talks about a suffering Messiah, a suffering lamb, one who is esteemed and smitten of God and afflicted and hit as it were our faces from us.

And he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. That's the first coming. There's no power and great glory in that. Only shame, ignominy, and death.

And who wants to focus on that? So you focus on the power. So when Jesus came and was pronounced by many to be the Messiah, the unbelief arose in the hearts and minds of many.

[39 : 30] He can't be the Messiah because the Messiah is going to rule. The Messiah is going to reign. The Messiah is going to chase out all of Israel's enemies. Jesus isn't doing that. And this is precisely why he said to Peter, when Peter identified him, in Matthew 16, who do men say that I, the son of Peter, said, thou art the Christ, the Messiah, the son of the living God.

And Jesus made that statement that I never attached much significance to before, but I do now. He said, blessed are you, Simon, for flesh and blood has not revealed that to you.

What he meant was, Peter, you didn't figure that out on your own. My father in heaven, he revealed that to you because Peter understood Jesus to be the Messiah even though there wasn't the pomp and circumstance and glory and great power.

He knew he was still the Messiah. And he pronounced him as such. And then, as you go on and read the text, when Jesus starts talking to Peter and starts talking to the disciples and says, the son

of man must need to go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the hands of the chief priests and be crucified and the third day be raised again.

Now Peter's really thrown a curve because this is all right there in that same text. And Peter said, no, no, no, that's not going to happen to you. Far be it from you.

[41 : 07] And Jesus said, Peter, Satan, get thee behind me. You are thinking just as meant that. He's saying, you were not thinking the way you were thinking when you confessed me to be the Messiah.

Peter, Peter is the most ignominious flip-flopper in all the Bible. He really is. And here he goes from pronouncing Jesus to be the Messiah to denying that he's going to death and Jesus is simply saying, Peter, you're only getting part of the picture.

You are correct in saying that I am the Messiah, but Peter could not compute this business of the suffering that Jesus was talking about and he actually rebuked him for even saying it.

This is an amazing thing. And there are very, very few who actually understood what was taking place. For instance, when Jesus was on the cross suffering that incomparable pain that none of us will ever be able to identify with.

And I'm talking about physical pain, which was beyond the pale. physical pain. And yet, that is not to be compared with the emotional pain that he suffered in some kind of separation from his father.

[42 : 27] When he cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? He was talking about a cleavage, a rupture, that had occurred between him and his father that had never occurred before.

And it went on for three hours. Jesus was put on the cross at nine o'clock in the morning. And at noon, twelve noon, high noon, it got dark.

And it wasn't, it wasn't caused by some natural phenomena. It was a darkness that lasted for three hours.

The sun hid its face. Well, well might the sun. Its glories hide. Its brightness hide and shut its glories in when Christ, the mighty maker, died.

For man, the creature's sin. And the sun was just blotted out. And it's not enough to call it a, what do you call it? What's the word I'm looking for? Eclipse.

[43 : 32] Pardon? Eclipse. An eclipse. Yeah, yeah, an eclipse, they say an eclipse lasts between 18 and 22 minutes. This went on for three hours. And there was an earthquake.

The place shook. And something unspeakably horrible beyond our ability to grasp happened between the father and the son. There was some kind of a cleavage there, separation whereby God turned away from him.

Forsook him because he was laden with the sin of humanity. The whole, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

And in that three hour spate of time, Jesus, the son of God suffered something that you and I can never understand or experience, but it was horrendous.

And that was his paying the price for the world's redemption. And you know, we say things like, we rationalize and we say things like, well, it was only three hours and then three days later he's going to come back to life again.

[44 : 42] So what's the big deal about that? Well, the big deal about that is in our finiteness, in our humanity, we cannot understand, we cannot understand a rupture, a cleavage in the triune Godhead.

And that's what it took. That's what it took for the payment to be sufficient for the whole human race. And Jesus was able to do that only because of who he was.

Don't ever lose sight of that. Everything is vested in that, his identity. What, Joe? That all ties in with them not recognizing who he was. It does.

If they'd have recognized who he was, then God could not have carried out his plan to save all of humanity, all of man, and salvation, eternal life for all of man.

When they were going to Jerusalem, he said, you're not going to understand. You don't understand what I'm saying. And he blinded their eyes. He did that on purpose so that he would die on the cross.

[45 : 44] He had to shed his blood and die on that cross. That is so critical. And you remember the disciples on the Emmaus Road in Luke chapter 24 when Jesus came alongside shortly after he was resurrected.

And they didn't know it was Jesus. They didn't know it was Jesus. And he approached them and he said, you fellows really look down. What's going on? And they said, are you a stranger around here? Don't you know what happened here three days ago?

And he said, what are you talking about? And they said, well, Jesus of Nazareth, the man approved of God, did many signs and wonders. We trusted that it was he who would deliver Israel.

You see what their thinking was? Deliver Israel. But, they crucified him and it's been over three days and it's all over.

We were wrong. We were mistaken. And Jesus' response was, oh foolish ones and slow of heart. That means mental.

[46 : 45] The Bible uses the word heart as the core of your being and your thinking. Slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory.

they didn't want anything to do with the suffering. Just give us the glory. And you know what? That's typical human thinking. Nobody wants to volunteer for the bad stuff.

We just want to get to the good part. Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory. And then the most beautiful thing happens and the text says there in Luke 24 and then Jesus explained to them all things concerning himself in the scriptures.

Think of that. These people spent hours together and Jesus was going I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he started with Genesis 3:15 the seed of the woman and went all the way up through Malachi the last book in the Old Testament where though thou be little among the thousands of Judah yet out of thee shall they come forth unto me who's that's the Messiah and he put it all together and then Jesus vanished from the presence and these guys went up and turned to the other and said did not our hearts burn within us as he opened unto us the scriptures boy if there's any bible class I would have loved to have sat in on that would have been a bible class to end all that's just mind blowing and those two disciples on that Emmaus road they had a tale to tell of their children and grandchildren did they not wow it was amazing and that was only the beginning because the Lord is going to spend almost six weeks on earth with other disciples after his resurrection that was probably the first appearance well he appeared to the women you know at the tomb and so on but this was this too was brand new stuff amazing other thoughts or comments that you may have anybody yeah

John then Roger to yourselves from inch and v he did all these other miracles yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah Go tell him. Tell him where things are right.

[49 : 42] And I'm sure that that had to be a great comfort to John. And John's probably thinking as a result, well, yeah, actually, I was right.

And he is the Messiah. I don't understand what's happening to me now because it doesn't look like Jesus is taking charge of Israel and routing the Romans and all the rest of it.

And yet, John, I'm sure, died as a man at peace with God, even though he was going to be executed, probably an executioner's axe, and his head would be presented to Herod.

Go on, go on down that scripture, down to 28, he even says there's nobody greater than John. I mean, he was really, boy, this John, he's top nice. Yeah, and he's talking about John being so strategic, critical.

He is an essential player in this whole thing, and that's why he is assigning greatness to it. And that which made him an essential player is his relationship to Jesus.

[50 : 49] And by the way, speaking of relationships, you've got to remember that John the Baptist and Jesus were second cousins. So it's all in the family, huh? All in the family.

Any other thoughts or comments? Anybody? Yeah. Dan. Mark, we've got remit to 80, early to hell, you know.

And so prior to Jesus, I'm on the cross. In Old Testament, I assume that the way to eternity was there in eternity.

That's true. Number two, the means to that eternity, eternity is actually true good works. Yeah, well, Old Testament salvation is really fuzzy compared to...

We read in Galatians 2, when Paul describes the situation regarding Gentiles, these are non-Jews, which is, by the way, 99.8% of humanity is Gentile.

[51 : 58] Two-tenths of 1% is Jewish. Two-tenths of 1% is Jewish. 99.8% is Gentile.

And Paul describes the plight of Gentiles in Ephesians 2, when he says, you, prior to... He's writing to Gentile Christians at Ephesus, and he's reminding them of who and what they were before they came to faith in Christ.

And he says, you were alienated apart from God. You were without hope and without God in this present world. That was your status.

And what actually befell all of Gentiles eternally, before that time, I don't know. And there was no concept...

When we... Let me put it this way. The contrast is enormous. When one here passes away, a believer passes away, we take great comfort in absent from the body and present with the Lord and so on.

[53 : 07] That was a completely foreign concept in the Old Testament. All they knew and all they thought of was Sheol, the place of the departed dead. And if we can take...

Put stock in Luke 16 and the rich man in Lazarus and Hades and so on, and that suspect, I don't think we ought to build too much on that because it is grouped right in the midst of a bunch of parables.

And there is a possibility that it is a parable that is a story made up of Jesus. But at the same time, it could be a story that reflects the truth of the situation. And that was the concept in the Old Testament because there is no possibility of resurrection, departing from this life and being with the Lord, until first of all, Christ himself had done that.

Because he is the first fruits of them that slept. That means Jesus, in his resurrected body, was the first one ever to have ascended to heaven in a resurrected body.

And no one else could do that or was available or eligible to do that until the way maker had made a way. And that's exactly what he did.

[54 : 28] So in his ascension to heaven, that provides the open portal and the doorway for all others after him, the first fruits.

We are the rest of the harvest. Larry? Well, I was just wondering if that's where the theory of purgatory came from. Yeah, well, purgatory is a human invention.

It has no basis in fact at all. But I'll tell you this, and I don't want to be mean-spirited about this, but I will tell you that purgatory is an absolutely essential component of Roman Catholicism.

It is not going to work without it. They need it and they know that. And I am confident that it was instilled centuries ago for that very purpose. And it may have even been done in good faith.

But doing something in good faith doesn't make it true or right. What, Joe? Weren't all these Old Testament saints waiting in paradise until Christ went?

[55 : 38] Yeah. They were waiting in the paradise in hell. I don't know what Jesus told the rich young, or not the rich young ruler, but Jesus told the thief on the cross, today you will be with me in paradise.

And that paradise, I think we can equate with heaven. But that's an interesting thought. Jesus, apparently Jesus was the first one in paradise, and the thief on the cross might have been the second.

I don't know. Mark, I understand that paradise is in the center of the earth where it helps. It's not hell, it's in the center of the earth. There's two places to wait. You could wait in paradise and see what happens.

Well, what you're talking about, Joe, has merit, but it is still fuzzy and undefined. I don't have the handle on it that I'd like to have. Thank you.