

Christ in Prophecy

Galilee 3: The Miracles of Jesus in Galilee

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: You have just seen the site of the town of Capernaum, which in the time of Jesus was a small fishing village located on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. This village was the scene of many miracles performed by Jesus. What was the nature of those miracles? What was their purpose? And how do they relate to you and me today? Stay tuned.

Program

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our Blessed Hope. I'm Dave Reagan, Senior Evangelist for Lamb & Lion Ministries, and this is my colleague Dennis Pollock. This is the third in our series of programs about the Galilee of Jesus. In the first program we introduced you to the Galilee, taking you to a variety of sites located all around the Sea.

Dennis Pollock: In last week's program we focused on the boyhood home of Jesus, the village of Nazareth, which is located in what is called Lower Galilee. That's to the west of here, half way between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean. We emphasized to you that Nazareth was a very small and insignificant village of only 200 people at the time of Jesus. It was so obscure that when Jesus began His public ministry people asked, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Dr. Reagan: In this program, we're going to focus on the miracles that Jesus performed in the Galilee. We're going to look at their nature, and their significance. And, we are going to consider their relevance to our lives today. The four Gospels record 35 separate miracles of Jesus, but these were not the only ones He performed.

Dennis Pollock: In the gospel of Matthew, it says that Jesus went throughout all of Galilee teaching in synagogues and "healing every kind of disease." Matthew then gets specific, stating that Jesus healed "diseases, pains, demoniacs, epileptics and paralytics."

Dr. Reagan: The Gospel of John concludes with the intriguing statement that Jesus did so many things that if they were recorded in detail, "the world itself could not contain all the books that would be written."

Dennis Pollock: The fundamental purpose of Jesus' miracles was to demonstrate that He was God in the flesh, the promised Messiah. In John chapter 10 Jesus said, "The miracles I do in My Father's name bear witness of Me." Later, in the same speech, He said, "Believe My miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

Dr. Reagan: The apostles pointed to the miracles of Jesus in their sermons to affirm His divinity. For example, in the very first gospel sermon, the one Peter preached on Pentecost in Jerusalem, Peter proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, stating He was “attested to by God with miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God performed through Him.”

Dennis Pollock: And later, in His sermon to Cornelius and his household in Caesarea, Peter said, “You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who are oppressed by the Devil; for God was with Him.”

Dr. Reagan: There were several types of miracles that Jesus performed, all of which were designed to illustrate different facets of His divinity. For example, He proved that He was Lord of nature by turning water into wine, multiplying loaves and fishes, quieting a storm, and walking on water.

Dennis Pollock: He showed that He was Lord of health when He healed lepers, restored sight and hearing, and delivered people from epilepsy and paralysis.

Dr. Reagan: In like manner, He demonstrated that He was Lord of life and death when He resurrected people from the dead, like his dear friend Lazarus, who had been in the tomb for four days.

Dennis Pollock: With this background, we’re going to visit some of the sites where Jesus performed His miracles, and we’re going to begin at the village of Cana. But first, let’s have a map orientation.

Dr. Reagan: Here is the Sea of Galilee, and above it is the Hill of the Beatitudes where Jesus delivered His Sermon on the Mount. Directly below that is Capernaum, the hometown of His ministry. Over here to the west is Nazareth, where Jesus grew up. And just five miles northeast of Nazareth is the village of Cana.

This is the village of Cana, nestled in a valley just a few miles northeast of Nazareth. Two churches mark the site in the village where Jesus performed His very first miracle at a wedding feast. This is where He turned six pots of water into wine. One of the churches is a Catholic church that was built in 1879. It supposedly sits on the site where the wedding feast took place. In its crypt there is displayed what is believed to be one of the six original water pots that Jesus used in the miracle. Next to the Catholic Church is the Cana Greek Orthodox Church. It claims to have two more of the water pots used in the miracle. However, they appear to be old baptismal fonts.

Dennis Pollock: Jesus transformed this obscure village into a world famous place. And that’s because He performed His very first miracle here at a wedding feast. And for 2,000 years in the Christian world there has hardly been a wedding performed where this village has not been mentioned. Jesus came here to celebrate a wedding. During the wedding feast, the host ran out of wine. When this happened, Jesus proceeded to convert the six pots of water into wine of the highest quality, demonstrating that He was Lord of nature. The Gospel of John ends the story with this observation, “This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.”

Dr. Reagan: One interesting tidbit about the wedding is that the Gospel of John says it occurred on “the third day,” which means Tuesday. Now, the tradition of conducting Jewish weddings on Tuesday continues to this day. The practice is rooted in the Creation account in the book of Genesis where we are told that on the third day of creation, Tuesday, God twice pronounced the words, “It is good.” So, Tuesday came to be a day associated with double blessings.

Dennis Pollock: Incidentally, Jesus performed another miracle here in Cana that you rarely hear about. It occurred later in His ministry. As He was passing through this village one day, He was confronted by a royal official, a member of the court of King Herod Antipas. The man was from Capernaum, about 20 miles away. He had heard of Jesus’ healing powers, and he came searching for Him to ask Him to heal his son. The man begged Jesus to come with him to Capernaum to heal his son before he died. Jesus responded by saying, “Go your way, sir; your son lives.” The man believed Jesus and immediately headed home. But before he could reach Capernaum, he was met by his household servants who informed him that his son had been healed.

Dr. Reagan: When Jesus transformed the water into wine, He proved that He was Lord of both time and matter. He did not need grape juice, nor did He need to wait on the fermentation process. And when He healed the royal servant’s son, Jesus demonstrated that He was Lord of space. He did not need to be physically present, nor did He need to touch the boy.

There is a third church here in Cana called the Chapel of St. Bartholomew. It honors an apostle of Jesus who came from this town. His name was Nathaniel, but he is often referred to in Scripture as Bartholomew, meaning Son of Talmai.

Dennis Pollock: Nathaniel is the man who, when he first heard about Jesus, said, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” But when he met Jesus, he was so profoundly impressed that he exclaimed, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

Dr. Reagan: And that confession of Jesus as God in the flesh is the second one recorded in the Scriptures. The first came from the mouth of John the Baptist when Jesus appeared at the Jordan River to be baptized. John proclaimed, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” Let’s pause for a moment to refresh our memory as to where we are here in the Holy Land. We are currently here in the village of Cana, located between the Sea of Galilee and Nazareth. The Bible says that Jesus could not perform any mighty miracles in His hometown of Nazareth “because of their unbelief.” When the town rejected Him early in His ministry, He moved His base of operations here to Capernaum on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, just below the hill of the Beatitudes. Jesus’ ministry, most of His miracles in Galilee, were performed in Capernaum, Korazin, and Bethsaida. Let’s proceed now to the town of Capernaum.

Dennis Pollock: The sign that you see on this gate is an accurate one. Matthew 9:1 refers to Capernaum as “Jesus’ city.” And in Mark 2:1 we are told that when Jesus was in this town, He was “at home.”

Dr. Reagan: Let’s go inside and take a look. This magnificent white structure is what is left of a synagogue that was built here around 300 AD. The floor of the synagogue that existed at the time of Jesus is located directly beneath the floor of the later synagogue.

To the right of the synagogue you can see the red domes of a lovely Greek Orthodox Church constructed in 1931 on the site of a Byzantine chapel dedicated to the Apostle John. Directly in front of the synagogue, and nearer to the shoreline, is a modern Catholic chapel that resembles a UFO. It is built over the traditional site of the house where the Apostle Peter lived.

Dennis Pollock: The first miracle that Jesus performed here in Capernaum was the healing of the Roman Centurion's servant. This soldier of an occupying army came to Jesus in humility and he asked Him to heal a servant who was on the verge of death. Jesus agreed to do so and He asked the soldier to take Him to his house. But the Centurion, in a great declaration of faith, replied, "Lord, I am not worthy for you to even come under my roof. Just speak a word, and my servant will be healed." The Bible tell us that when Jesus heard these words, "He marveled and He said to those who were following, 'Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.'" And He went on to tell the Centurion, "Go and it will be done for you as you have believed." The Centurion was what the Jews call "a righteous Gentile." He was a man of faith. And he was also a very generous man, for the Bible says that he was the one who supplied the funds to build the synagogue that existed here at the time of Jesus. Now, that interesting bit of information indicates that at the time of Jesus this town was too small, and too poor to build a synagogue on its own. Keep in mind that the very elaborate structure that you see behind me was built 250 years later when the town had grown considerably by absorbing Jews dispersed from Jerusalem.

Dr. Reagan: The second miracle that Jesus performed in this town occurred here at the home of Peter. And incidentally, Peter's house is probably the place where Jesus Himself lived.

Dennis Pollock: The story of the miracle that happened here is recorded in three of the gospels. Here's how it is described in the Gospel of Mark: Mark tell us that, "immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came to the house of Peter and Andrew, with James and John. Now Peter's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them." Think about that, she was not only healed instantly, but she got up, and in her joy, she began to serve the men a meal. This healing must have caused quite a stir because Mark adds this observation: He tells us, "When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons."

Dr. Reagan: The third specific miracle the Bible mentions that Jesus performed here in Capernaum occurred in this area where the town's houses were located.

Dennis Pollock: The Bible says that Jesus was teaching here one day in one of these houses, and the place was packed out with eager listeners. And while He was speaking, some men brought a paralytic to be healed. Since they couldn't get in the door, due to the size of the crowd, they climbed up on the roof and let the man down on a pallet.

Dr. Reagan: And when Jesus witnessed their faith and persistence, He said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven."

Dennis Pollock: Now folks, that was a revolutionary statement since God alone is the only one who can forgive sins. The point, of course, is that by making such a statement, Jesus was asserting His divinity.

Dr. Reagan: The Pharisees who were present recognized this fact immediately, and here is what they said to Jesus in response. They said, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming, who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Dennis Pollock: Jesus, knowing what the Pharisees were thinking, said to the crowd, "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," and then He addressed the paralytic, "I say to you, go, pick up your pallet and go home."

Dr. Reagan: And in response to this miracle the Bible says that all the people were amazed and began glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Dennis Pollock: The Gospel of Matthew records four miracles that Jesus performed here in Capernaum all in one day's time.

Dr. Reagan: And the first concerned the daughter of the ruler of this synagogue, a man by the name of Jairus. He came to Jesus, bowed down, and announced that his daughter had just died. And in great faith, he asserted, "If You will lay hands on her, she will live."

Dennis Pollock: Jesus started following Jairus to his home, but it wasn't easy going because there was a multitude of people following Jesus wherever He went. In the midst of that crowd there was a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for 12 years. She came up behind Jesus and touched the hem of His robe. Her thought was, "If only I can touch His garment, I'll get well." And when she touched His robe, Jesus felt power flowing out of Him. He turned and He said to her, "Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well."

Dr. Reagan: Jesus proceeded on to the home of Jairus, and when He arrived, He found many people there loudly weeping and wailing. He said to them, "Why make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead; she is asleep." This statement prompted the people to ridicule Him and laugh at Him. But their laughing did not last long folks because, to their absolute astonishment, He immediately raised the girl from the dead.

Dennis Pollock: When Jesus left the home of Jairus, two blind men started following him crying out, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

Dr. Reagan: And that very cry, "Son of David!" was a recognition of Jesus as the promised Messiah.

Dennis Pollock: Jesus asked them, "Do you believe I can heal you?" They said, "Yes!" And Jesus replied, "Be it done to you according to your faith." And their sight was instantly restored.

Dr. Reagan: The fourth miracle on that remarkable day occurred immediately after the healing of the two blind men. A speechless, demon-possessed man was brought to Jesus for healing. Jesus immediately cast out the demon, and the man began to speak.

The Bible says the multitude began to marvel, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

Dennis Pollock: Jesus performed many other miracles in this town, but these are all we have time to recount. Let's go next to the village of Korazin where Jesus also ministered and performed miracles.

Dr. Reagan: OK buddy, let's go. This is the village of Korazin, one of the three towns where Jesus focused His ministry. It occupies 25 acres of land situated three miles from the Sea of Galilee and 900 feet above it. As you can see, it was constructed entirely of black volcanic rock.

Dennis Pollock: Unlike the other two towns where Jesus focused His ministry, Capernaum and Bethsaida, Korazin was not a fishing village. The people who lived here made their living growing wheat. Let's go inside and take a look at the synagogue.

Dr. Reagan: This is the interior of the synagogue. It faces south toward Jerusalem. It measures 50 by 70 feet in size. The men would sit on one side, the women on the other. Well, here we are inside the synagogue where Jesus taught and performed miracles.

Dennis Pollock: The Bible does not record any specific miracle that Jesus performed here, but we know He performed many because Korazin is listed in Matthew 11:20 as one of the towns where "most of His miracles were done."

Dr. Reagan: Over here is the seat of honor in the synagogue. Dennis, why don't you take a seat and explain what it's all about.

Dennis Pollock: All right Dave. Well, this is not exactly as comfortable as your typical church pew, but it was a seat of honor reserved for special guests and religious leaders. It was called "the chair of Moses." And in fact we have a reference to it in the 23rd chapter of Matthew. Jesus said this, He said, "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses, therefore, whatever they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds."

Dr. Reagan: Well thank you Dennis, I appreciate that. You look very dignified in the seat of honor.

Dennis Pollock: Well thank you sir.

Dr. Reagan: Well folks, I'd like to take you now to a beautiful grove of trees near here and give you an opportunity to hear a testimony about the healing power of Jesus.

Every time I bring a pilgrimage group to this land, I always stop here at Korazin for a healing service. I begin that service by pointing out that "Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Just as He healed in the First Century folks, He still heals today. I then call for people to come forward for prayer. And over the years, God has blessed us with several healings. I'd like to ask our media director, Don Gordoni, to step out from behind the cameras, come on Don, and tell them about the experience you had here. It's all yours buddy.

Don Gordon: All right. Well, in 2000, I came here to shoot video on a Pilgrimage that Dr. Reagan was leading to the Holy Land. And we came to Korazin, and as we were here, we had a service where some people who had been healed in the past stood up and gave their testimony about that, and others came forward for prayer. Well, the whole time I was busy videotaping. But when I got back on the bus I began to think of the ailment that I had suffered with all of my life. I pretty much thought that living meant that you had a stomachache, because of a digestive disorder that I had. When I was a sophomore in college I prayed that God would show me what was wrong with me. And He helped me discover that by eliminating certain things from my diet that I could eliminate the pain that I had suffered with for so many years. But I had never asked God to heal me. And in 2000, when we were here at Korazin, and I was on that bus, and we were going to a little place where we were going to eat some St. Peter's fish, I said, "God, I asked You to show me what was wrong with me, but I never asked You to heal me. And I believe that You can, and if You will, I'll give You the praise. One of the things that I wanted to say is that God is not obliged to heal us, and sometimes He does not choose to heal us physically, but He chose to heal me physically, simply because I asked, and I believed.

Dr. Reagan: This is the third town in Jesus' triangle of ministry, the town of Bethsaida. The name means "town of the fisherman." This was the hometown of Peter, Andrew, and Philip. Peter moved to Capernaum after his marriage. Dennis, you know most archaeologists now are convinced that the feeding of the 5,000 took place on that plain right behind those trees there, down near the Sea.

Dennis Pollock: Folks, Jesus was confronted here with a great multitude of people who had come to hear His teachings and to experience His healing power. They were hungry, and He felt compassion for them. His disciples began to search for food, but all they could find was a boy who had five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus ordered the multitudes to sit down on the grass. He then took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food. It was then distributed, and when everyone had finished eating, twelve baskets of food were left over.

Dr. Reagan: The Bible says 5,000 men were fed that day, "aside from women and children." So, what is commonly referred to folks as the feeding of the 5,000 really amounted to the feeding of at least 15,000 people.

Dennis Pollock: That was a pretty spectacular miracle, but there were two others that Jesus performed that were equally spectacular both of which occurred on the Sea of Galilee in front of us.

Dr. Reagan: So let's find a boat and go for a cruise. This is the port of Tiberias, located on the Western shore of the Sea of Galilee. This particular boat is designed to look like the type of craft that sailed on the sea at the time of Jesus. We have just disembarked from Tiberias, and we are heading north toward Capernaum. When we get out to the middle of the sea, we will kill the motors and talk about the two miracles that Jesus performed on the surface of this lake.

Dennis Pollock: Early in His ministry, Jesus and His disciples decided to cross this lake in a boat. Jesus was tired, so He went down inside the boat and fell asleep. While He was sleeping, one of the sudden and violent storms that this lake is famous for suddenly swept down from the surrounding mountains and the boat began to be

swamped with water. The Lord's disciples woke Him up and they cried out, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Jesus responded by scolding them, and asking them, "Where is your faith?" Jesus then rebuked the winds, and the sea became perfectly calm. And the men marveled over this and they asked, "What kind of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Dr. Reagan: Late in His ministry, Jesus again rendered His disciples awe-struck when He came walking to them on this lake. Once again they were caught up in a storm, when they suddenly saw the Lord walking toward them on the surface of the sea. At first they thought He was a ghost. But then he spoke to them and they recognized His voice.

Dennis Pollock: That's when Peter got excited and he jumped out of the boat. He started walking toward Jesus, when he suddenly became scared. And at that point, he started sinking. He cried out, "Lord save me!" Jesus pulled him from the water, and He asked him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Dr. Reagan: When Jesus got into the boat, the wind stopped and the disciples began worshipping Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

Well, here we are once again on the shore of the beautiful Sea of Galilee. And as we bring this program to a close, I'd like to ask you, Dennis, do you have any final observations about the miracles of Jesus?

Dennis Pollock: Yes, Dave I do. You know folks, the miracles of Jesus were very convincing to His disciples and to some of the people of the Galilee. But the Scriptures indicate that the vast majority remained unconvinced. They proved to be thrill seekers, very much like many people today who zealously seek after miracles rather than the miracle worker, Jesus. To give you an example of what I'm talking about, the day after Jesus fed the 5,000, the multitudes asked Him, "Perform a miracle that we might believe in You."

Dr. Reagan: Yes, Dennis, it is a sad commentary on the fallen nature of Mankind. And you know folks; the same was true during the time of Moses. God performed miracle, after miracle, after miracle, through Moses, and yet we are told in Psalm 78 that the Children of Israel continually put God to the test, and spoke against God, and "refused to believe in His wonderful works."

Dennis Pollock: That's right, Dave, and you know, the same sorry story was repeated in the life of Jesus. The leaders of Israel said to Him, "If you will raise someone from the dead, we will believe." So, He resurrected Lazarus after he had been dead for four days. And the religious leaders reacted by nailing Jesus to a cross.

Dr. Reagan: Yes, and folks that's why the story of Jesus here in the Galilee ends so sadly. When He departed this area for the last time, He pronounced a curse on the three towns where He had poured out His heart and compassion in miracle, after miracle. Here's what He said: "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades, for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you, that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment than for you."

Dennis Pollock: Folks, you can believe or not believe, but I believe that the miracles of Jesus affirm that He was God in the flesh. And I want to assure you that Jesus is still performing miracles today, the greatest of which are the transformations of lives. When you put your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in you and He starts shaping you into the image of Jesus. Drunkards become sober, drug addicts become liberated, adulterers become faithful, criminals go straight, homosexuals are transformed. It's what the Bible calls sanctification, and it is a miracle. I urge you to believe in Jesus and open up your life to the miracle-working power of God.

Dr. Reagan: Well, that's our program for this week. We hope it's been a blessing to you. Next week, the Lord willing, we are going to focus on the nature and the meaning of the Transfiguration, one of the most mysterious events in the life of Jesus. It's an event that took place somewhere here in the Galilee. Until then, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb and Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program