



**COLLEGE HEIGHTS  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

**“The Miracle(s) of Jesus”**

**Part II**

**Daily Scripture Readings for  
March 18-April 21**

## WEEK 1

### **3/18 - Matthew 9:18-26 - The Faith of the Leader and the Healing of his Girl**

Can you imagine the scene? The funeral is going on. The mourners have gathered to remember the life of a girl gone way too soon. The father in his grief can't bear to just sit there anymore. He is a dad. He's the one who is supposed to fix everything for his daughter. He feels as if he has failed her. But then he knows what he needs to do. He finds Jesus. Jesus can fix it. Jesus can heal his girl. When Jesus told the mourners that the girl wasn't dead, they certainly didn't believe. But they were quickly quieted and shocked at the result. Jesus truly does give death-defeating life. But the girl is not revived if not for the actions of her father to go. Who do you need to bring Jesus to, so they can be made alive again? Who around you needs Jesus' death-defeating life? We will talk about the other healing in the story tomorrow.

### **3/19 - Mark 5:25-34 - The Faith of the Woman**

This woman is the picture of the type of person Jesus came to save. Let's remind ourselves of the repercussions of her disease. The hemorrhages would have prevented her from worshipping in the Temple because she was considered unclean. For her, this meant being ostracized from society. But she hears that Jesus is in town and she knows he can heal. Jesus is a busy man, but she knows she just has to touch him, and he will heal her. And that is just what happens. She's healed! She can feel it!

But then comes worry. Jesus sound angry. "Who touched me?" he exclaims. She sheepishly comes forward, admitting to her actions. She is ready to be punished. What is going to happen? Will the disease return just like it went away? Will Jesus rebuke her? Will she be thrown into prison for touching a man? The thoughts race through her mind until Jesus speaks again. Jesus does none of those things. Jesus proclaims her healed and to go in peace.

Jesus came for the hurting, the sick, the marginalized, those the world has forgotten about. And when that group comes to the church (and we go to them), they need to be received as Jesus received the woman. "You have been made well. Go in peace."

### **3/20 - Revelation 10-11 - Last Word on Witness**

NOTE: Because we took a week off from Revelation, the Scripture Readings got off. We are repeating last week's daily reading in order to get back on track for Wednesday Night Bible Study.

Look closely at Revelation 10:9-10. Let this be a warning to all of us. Being a witness for the cause of Christ can cause consternation sometimes. We see these witnesses being martyred. We see the prophets of the Old Testament being ridiculed. Those who are outside of the will of God do not like to hear the fact that they are outside the will of God. Despite the consequences, we stand strong to proclaim the love and sacrifice of Christ to the world.

### **3/21 - Luke 8:26-33 - The Understanding of the Demons**

The demons know who Jesus is. They know the power that Jesus has. The same power that raises a girl to life and heals a woman ill for twelve years can cast the demons into the abyss, so the demons cry for mercy. Jesus allows them to go into the pigs on the hillside instead. A little odd for sure, but do not let that distract us from the main point of this story. Even the demons know who Jesus is. They just choose to not follow Him. Let us not make the same mistake. Not only should we believe who Jesus is, but we should trust our life to Him. Pray for Jesus to control your thoughts and actions today. And then pray that prayer tomorrow too!

### **3/22 - Genesis 22:1-19 - The Faith of Abraham**

We've been talking about faith this week. The faith of Abraham is one that we all see in this story. He would not withhold his son Isaac from God. God honored his faith and spared the child. However, this story also shows the faith of Isaac. While the English account of this passage reads as if Isaac is a child, the Hebrew (the original language of the Old Testament) uses a word for boy that might be better translated youth. In addition, youth extended longer in this time period with children staying with their parents for generations and being in their 20s before being considered adults. The next chapter talks about Sarah dying at 127 years old. Isaac could have very well been 25 years old when this happens! It is my opinion that Isaac could have fought off the 125 year old Abraham at any point, but willingly laid on the altar because he had faith in God

as well. He feared God just as much as Abraham does in the story. The faith of Abraham and Isaac is a faith all of us would serve well to emulate in our lives.

### **3/23 - Daniel 1**

Sunday night's lesson will be on Daniel. Daniel is a tough book to study because of its mixture of history and apocalypse writings. In order to read it to find meaning, you need to remember and know what type of writing that particular chapter is. We will go over that tomorrow night!

Daniel 1 is an introduction to Daniel and his friends exiled in Babylon. While the earthly facts of Daniel 1 have been co-opted into a diet fad, the heavenly/spiritual/meaningful understanding should not be missed. Daniel and his friends were brought to a foreign land and made a stand for God's Law. God was still their God even outside of Jerusalem. We will learn more about why they couldn't eat the meat tomorrow night.

I think one last thing to notice is the obedience of Daniel to God. There were still good Godly people in Jerusalem when it was conquered by Babylon. Not everyone was bad, yet everyone was punished. Even when Daniel was punished for the sin of the people, he still stayed obedient to God. Could you say you would do the same?

### **3/24 - Luke 15:31-32 - Come to the party today!**

If you are reading this, I think as in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, you might see yourself as an Eldest Son. So, are you coming to the party (church) today to hopefully welcome new brothers and sisters home? See you soon!

## **WEEK 2**

### **3/25 - Mark 4:35-41 - Jesus stills the storm**

This week, we will see a God who is in control of the weather. The power of storms is absolutely terrifying. While I was not in Cleburne during the tornado in 2013, I have heard the tales and seen devastation from storms like that. I have experienced lightning striking the middle of a tree and splitting it in two as if it was a twig. I have heard softball size hail hitting my roof and sounding like bowling balls dropping. I've seen the power of straight line winds.

And just think, the God we worship is bigger than all of that. In this Mark passage, he just tells the wind and storm to stop as if it were a child, and the wind and storm listen! The God who can do that listens to your needs and loves

you. Pray to him right now. What is causing you concern today? Give it to God. If Jesus can calm the weather, He can take care of you as well.

### **3/26 - Jonah 1:4-16 - God causes and stops storms**

In many ancient cultures and religions, the sea was the source of all evil in the world. This idea actually finds its way into descriptions of evil in the Old and New Testaments. The “primeval waters” is where evil roams. At the end of Revelation, it is clear that in the new heaven and new earth there is no sea, and the understanding is that no evil can come because there is no place for it to come from.

Today’s reading in Jonah shows the power of God to mariners from different cultures because of the wayward Jonah. In verse 16, when the storm stopped, it says “the men feared God even more...” They were scared of the possibility of dying in the storm. They feared God because of the storm. They feared God even more when he could also stop the storm. He could control the seas. God can control the evil that is faced in the world. What do you need God to control for you today? He will do it. Just ask!

### **3/27 - Revelation 12-14 - Last Word on Politics**

The chaos is mounting as we come to the second half of Revelation. Read this passage with the reminder that Revelation is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The child who is born in chapter 12 and snatched away represents the resurrection of Jesus. The dragon (part of the “trinity” of Satan’s forces, along with the two beasts) cannot devour the child. The dragon then summons the evil forces from hell with the two beasts and all out spiritual warfare takes place. When we see the representations of the beasts, it would have been clear to the 1st century audience that these beasts represented the Roman Empire and the combination of politics and religion. The beast of the seas were the emperors and the beast of the earth were the false prophets telling the people to worship the emperors. But the “last word on politics” doesn’t just end with this. The beasts and dragon do not have ultimate control. The beasts are vanquished, and the heavenly forces win the battle. They could not devour the child, and Jesus has saved those who follow Him instead of worshipping the beast.

### **3/28 - Jeremiah 29:10-14 - The storms of life and hope**

Jeremiah 29:11 is one of the most misused Bible verses. It is a verse used to tell people that God is going to take care of them in ways that will make their life perfect. Please, please, please stop using this verse in this way. Read the other verses around it. YES! God will take care of you. Yes, a life with God can give you hope in the midst of despair. But know the context. Jeremiah is telling the people of Jerusalem these words of hope after saying in verse 10 that they will spend seventy years in Babylon!

Look, a life with God is infinitely better than a life without God. But a life with God is not going to make your earthly life all unicorns and rainbows. You will still face trials. You will still face storms. You will still get sick, have conflicts, and anguish. But you will also have God with you. And God has a plan for you. Plans to give you future and hope.

### **3/29 - Psalm 104:1-13 - The God of the weather**

If you want to be an overachiever today, I encourage you to read all of Psalm 104. It is a beautiful description of the majesty of the Creator. We all took earth science in school and learned how weather works, but ultimately it all comes from God. That is the message of this wonderful psalm. God is the one who brings the rain and the sun. The warmth and the cool breeze. I am writing this devotion way too early to know what the weather is today, but I can tell you that it is from God. Go outside today and enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

### **3/30 - Ezekiel 37:1-14 - Dry Bones living again**

Israel is no more in Ezekiel's vision. They have been conquered by Babylon. But God gives the people hope in this vision. God is bringing the dry bones to life! What impact does this story have on Christians today? Let's talk about it tomorrow night!

### **3/31 - Psalm 89:8-9**

## **WEEK 3:**

### **4/1 - Exodus 20:8-11 - Honor the Sabbath**

We start our readings this week by reading one of the Ten Commandments. Laws are good. They keep order, and they give you a description of what is expected and what is not allowed. The commandment to “Honor the Sabbath, and keep it holy” does just that. It even explains what exactly that means and why we should do this. We shouldn’t work, and we rest because God rested on the 7th day. Pretty simple. Except people made it complicated.

At some point, a question was raised. The people wanted to know exactly what they couldn’t do. So the Pharisees got to work (no pun intended). They defined what work was in every sense of the word. How far you could walk? Could you cook? Clean? What if it was in your house? What if an animal is sick or hurt? Can I help them? What about people? And on, and on, and on...

The commandment got complicated to the point the reason for the commandment was completely forgotten, and the people were completely lost. Jesus came to change that. But Jesus coming and reinterpreting the Law caused some problems. We will start reading about those tomorrow.

### **4/2 - Luke 13:10-17 - Jesus heals on the Sabbath**

What a wonderful moment of renewal! A woman who has been crippled for eighteen years is healed by the power of God through Jesus Christ. As witness to the power of God, the Jewish leaders must have been filled with awe and wonder at what they saw right in front of them. The power of God on display! Wait. Hold on. They what? The leader rebuked Jesus and the woman for a healing because it was on the Sabbath?

It had been determined that healings were considered work, and because of that interpretation, the leaders of the Synagogues, the upholders of the Law, criticized this miraculous event. Jesus called them hypocrites because they would help their animals or lead their animals to food and water (also “work”), but they didn’t care about this woman who is made in the image of God.

I’ve seen this type of hypocrisy in churches over my lifetime when it comes to “Honoring the Sabbath and keeping it holy.” Of course, we worship on the first day of the week, the day Jesus rose from the dead, instead of the Sabbath day (Friday sundown-Saturday sundown), but it’s an important day for people to come together and worship God. Too often, people are critical of

those who have a job that is open on Sundays. People say things like “everything should be closed, so people can go to church” or “you shouldn’t have a job that forces you to work on Sunday.” These same people leave church after worship and go out to lunch every week. We are no better than the Pharisees. We want to enforce the law on others, and then our actions force others to disobey the “laws” we think they shouldn’t be breaking.

If you saw this healing in our reading today, would you rejoice with the woman for her healing or grumble that Jesus should’ve waited? Are you more focused on people or rules?

### **4/3 - Revelation 15-18 - Last Words on Judgment**

The last of the judgment is poured out of the seven bowls in chapter 16. Babylon (Rome, earthly nations/kingdoms) fall in chapters 17-18. But once again, we see the judgment framed by worship. In Revelation 15, the angels worship before the bowls of unlimited judgment are unleashed on the world. Worship is the central priority of every Christian. They sing a shorter version of the song found in Deuteronomy 32. After you read all four chapters today, go back and read 15:3-4. Make up a song to it! Say it over and over again. “Great and amazing are your deeds! True and just are your ways!”

### **4/4 - Luke 14:1-6 - People over rules #1**

Another story similar to the one from Tuesday. Jesus came to heal and forgive, no matter the who, what, and when questions of life. Let’s treat people the same as Jesus did.

### **4/5 - John 4:1-26 - People over rules #2**

Jesus should not have spoken to the Samaritan Woman. You did not speak to women who were not your wife and even then, you only spoke to them at home. Jesus should’ve known that a woman coming to the well in the heat of the day alone was ostracized from her community. She wasn’t a good person. Yet, Jesus ignored social protocol and spoke to the woman. He had a conversation. He listened to her questions. He didn’t care about the rules. He cared about the person.

Who is God leading you to talk to, but socially speaking, maybe it is frowned upon? Are there people who it we are supposed to ignore like Jesus was supposed to ignore the Samaritan Woman? His conversation led to her



salvation, along with the salvation of others in the community. What could God do through us if we let him?

#### **4/6 - Obadiah**

Obadiah is the shortest book of the Old Testament. It is a message of judgment for what Edom did to the people of Judah as Babylon was destroying Jerusalem. Edom is associated with Esau (see Genesis 36). Judah (Israel) is descended from Jacob. As you read Obadiah, read it through the lens of brothers fighting each other. Read it as the result of hatred that's been brewing for at least 1000 years. And then let's talk about how Obadiah can affect our lives tomorrow night.

#### **4/7 - Psalm 34:1-10**

### **WEEK 4:**

#### **4/8 - John 11:1-6 - What is Jesus doing?**

Throughout this week, we will be reading the story of Lazarus. In today's reading, Jesus gets word that his friend, one he loves, is sick. What would you do if you heard this? I imagine it is what most of us do when we discover one of our loved ones is sick to the point of death. We drop everything and go. It doesn't matter what else is going on, it doesn't matter what cancellations have to take place, you go.

And yet, Jesus doesn't do that. John is very clear. Jesus stays where he is two more days. Jesus has a plan. This illness is going to bring glory to God. This illness is not permanent. We start to see that this story is not going to just be a story about a friend of Jesus. It is going to take on a heavenly, spiritual meaning. The glory of God is going to be shown. We just have to wait to see it.

#### **4/9 - John 11:7-22 - Thomas and Martha**

Two things are happening as the story of Lazarus unfolds. One, Jesus is returning to Judea. Two, Lazarus dies before Jesus gets to the town of Bethany. Thomas and Martha have similar responses to Jesus to these events. They follow Jesus, not because they know everything that is happening, but because they trust Jesus. Thomas is concerned Jesus and the disciples are going to be killed if they go back to Judea, but he goes. Martha is angry at Jesus because

she knows Lazarus, her brother, would still be alive if Jesus didn't wait to come see him, but she trusts that Jesus knows what he is doing.

The faith exhibited by Thomas and Martha is the faith in Jesus we should have. It's not a faith where we have all the answers and know exactly what to expect. It is a faith where we trust God knows what he is doing and we follow. What areas of your life do you need to give to God and show faith like Thomas and Martha? Areas where you need to admit that you do not know what is best, but it is God who does. Pray for forgiveness of thinking you know better than God and follow him wherever he goes.

#### **4/10 - Revelation 19-20 - Last Words on Salvation**

We will be able to unpack the order of the events in these two chapters tonight. For our devotion today, look at 19:9. Who is invited to the marriage supper? We have to go back to the gospels and remember the parable Jesus tells in Matthew 22:1-14. All people end up being invited to the marriage supper. You are invited! Change into your best wedding attire and get to the banquet. The time is here!

Pray for your friends and family who do not know Jesus. They have refused the invitation to the feast. Their end is destruction right now. Judgment is coming, and God is just. Pray that you can show them the importance of having Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

#### **4/11 - John 11:23-37 - What does it mean that Jesus wept?**

Jesus wept. It's the verse we all jokingly learn when we are children, in order to learn as many Bible verses as possible. It's a short, two word, simple sentence that has deep theological meaning. Jesus was human (and God). Jesus had emotions. Jesus was heartbroken for his friend who died. Jesus was heartbroken for his friends who were grieving. But I think there is more.

It cannot be ignored that this moment in the ministry of Jesus is on the precipice of his entry to Jerusalem at the beginning of his last week of life. Jesus is weeping at the finality of death. He thinks about the necessity of the sacrifice, so all people can have eternal life in heaven. Death seems like a permanent place to our finite human minds. However, it is not if we have asked Jesus to save us. If we have heard the call of our savior, to say "Come forth," then death on this earth is just a transition. Lazarus heard his name called, and tomorrow we find out what happens.

#### **4/12 - John 11:38-46 - Jesus heals, but a foreshadowing of what is about to transpire.**

In a moment that probably surprised most people who saw the event unfold, Lazarus comes out of the tomb after being dead for four days. This is probably something that does not surprise any of us reading today. We know that Jesus has the power to raise the dead to life. And as we've been reading this week, we most likely knew the end of the story. What a wonderful miracle of God!

It is this miracle that leads to the beginning of the end for Jesus. Once the Pharisees get word of Lazarus being alive, they begin to plot to kill Jesus. From an earthly perspective, trouble is coming. From a heavenly perspective, God's plan is at work.

#### **4/13 - Haggai**

Haggai is peculiar as a prophet because when he speaks the message of God to the people, they actually listen! When you read this short two chapter book, remember the name Zerubbabel. He is being made the key, the promise, the seal of the restoration of David's line to lead Israel. How is Zerubbabel going to do this? Well, come tomorrow night to find out! (Hint: go read Matthew 1:12-13)

#### **4/14 - Matthew 21:1-11**

Palm Sunday! Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

A quick note about the next week's worth of readings. There will be few words written in way of devotion. Let the Word of God speak to you. Let the story of Jesus' sacrifice wash over you. Feel the emotion of the moments. Be part of the most important series of events in history.

### **WEEK 5:**

#### **4/15 - Matthew 21:12-17 - Throwing the money changers out of the Temple**

In a way, Jesus prepares the Temple for the ultimate sacrifice (himself) that is coming later in the week. Much like a Jewish house must be cleaned before Passover, God's house had to be cleansed before the Passover Lamb was slain. Are you preparing yourself to remember the true reason of Easter?

#### **4/16 - John 13:1-11, Matthew 26:14-16 - Washing Judas' Feet**

We know washing feet was an act of servanthood, but Jesus even washed Judas' feet. What humility, what love does Jesus have for ALL people.

#### **4/17 - Revelation 21:1-22:5 - Last Words on Heaven**

It is fitting that we read this description of Heaven during the week before Easter. This is why Jesus died! So all people can be part of this new creation if they accept Jesus' love and sacrifice.

#### **4/18 - Luke 22:14-20**

We will take the Lord's Supper tonight. Prepare yourself throughout the day to remember the suffering Christ endured for you.

#### **4/19 - Mark 15:20-39**

The End...

#### **4/20 - Luke 23:56b**

What do you think was going through the minds of Jesus' followers on this Sabbath day?

#### **4/21 - John 20:1-18**

...HE IS RISEN!!!!!!!