

NT History for Juniors: Lesson 7, "The Galilean Ministry"

I. REVIEW & INTRODUCTION

A. We should understand that Jesus' earthly ministry was spent mostly in Galilee.

1. In fact, Jesus made three tours of Galilee.

- a. The books of the Bible which describe the earthly life and ministry of Jesus are the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- b. Between His three tours of Galilee, Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate different feasts.
- c. His earthly ministry from His baptism to His death on the cross is about 3 ½ years.

2. We saw last time that Jesus was not well received in His own home town of Nazareth

- a. But Jesus had much more work to do: He had to preach the Gospel in other cities also. Some of the cities in Galilee are Nazareth, Cana, Capernaum and Bethsaida.
- b. In Cana He changed water into wine; and at the Sea of Galilee He performed the miracle of the great catch of fish.

B. Jesus came to preach the Kingdom of God and to do miracles to prove that He was the Son of God.

1. But His preaching and miracle-working would not lead Him to be an earthly King.
2. In fact, as we shall see later, when the people wanted Him to be an earthly King He refused.
3. Jesus came to save His people *from their sins*, and that meant suffering and dying on the cross.

II. THE MIRACLE AT THE POOL

A. Jesus returned to Jerusalem to keep the Feast. There was in Jerusalem a pool called Bethesda.

1. This pool had five porches and around it was gathered a large crowd of sick people.

- a. Imagine the scene. Around this pool were blind lame people, people with all kinds of diseases and weaknesses.
- b. The reason they gathered there at that pool was because the pool was known for its miracles. At different times an angel would come down, stir up the water. The first person who got into the pool would be healed from his disease. *So, you can imagine the excitement if there was a ripple in the pool.*

2. At the pool was a certain man who had been lying there unable to walk for thirty-eight years.

- a. Jesus knew that this man had been there for that length of time. And He walked up to Him and said, "Wilt thou be made whole?" (John 5:6). *Would you like to be made well?*
- b. The man's answer was one of hopelessness: Sir, how can I? I have nobody to help me get into the water, and when the water is stirred someone gets in there before me! He thought that maybe Jesus would help him into the pool.
- c. But Jesus did not have any intention of helping the man into the pool! Instead He said to the man: "*Rise, take up thy bed and walk*" (John 5:8). Immediately, the man was made well and was able to walk! Jesus then disappeared into the crowd. Notice that He only healed this one man.

B. The man who had been healed took up his bed [thin mattress] and walked down the streets of Jerusalem.

1. He did not get very far before he was stopped by the religious leaders, the Pharisees.

- a. They reminded him that it was the Sabbath Day and that he was not allowed to work on that day.
- b. Was he working? They said he was, because he was carrying his bed. The Pharisees said that a person may not carry anything on the Sabbath. This was an example of the strict laws of the Pharisees.
- c. The man said, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, take up thy bed, and walk" (John 5:11).

2. But the Pharisees were wrong in their teaching on the Sabbath Day or the 4th Commandment.

- a. The Pharisees thought that as long as you did no work you were keeping the Sabbath Day. And by "work" they meant many different things: walking a certain distance, carrying things, etc.
- b. But Jesus showed that certain kinds of "works" are allowed on the Sabbath Day: there are three kinds of works which we may do on the Lord's Day without sinning: 1/ Works of worship, 2/ Works of necessity, 3/ Works of mercy. *Can you think of any examples?*
- c. When Jesus explained to the Pharisees that He was only doing the work of His Father on the Sabbath Day they were angry with Him and wanted to kill Him. *But Jesus escaped from them and returned to Galilee.*

III. PREACHING AND MIRACLES IN GALILEE

A. On a certain mountain in Galilee Jesus preached a famous sermon (Matt. 5-7) called the Sermon on the Mt.

1. In the sermon Jesus described the happiness or blessedness of those who are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. Remember that John the B. and now Jesus described the Kingdom as spiritual.

- a. The blessings of the Kingdom of heaven are like the blessings of no other Kingdom.
- b. What kind of happiness do the people of this world seek for? Money, power, popularity.
- c. But Jesus describes citizens who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who are meek, etc.

2. All believers who are in God's Kingdom are as they are described in Matt. 5:3-10 (You had to learn those verses. They are called the "Beatitudes").
- a. No earthly king would want a kingdom of poor, mourning, meek, hungry and thirsty, merciful, pure in heart, persecuted people! but those are the kind of people who are Christians, believers in Jesus, members of the church and citizens of the Kingdom.
 - b. We are this way. We are sorry for our sins, and we desire to be holy like Jesus. Jesus says that these kinds of people are "blessed," or happy!
 - c. When the people heard the Sermon on the Mount they were amazed. Here is a teacher with authority, they said. He does not teach like the scribes, but He teaches from God Himself.
- B. Jesus did many miracles in Galilee. Let us look at some of the miracles He did for those who were very miserable. He showed mercy to them.**
1. When He came down from the mountain a man met him who was "full of leprosy" (Luke 5:12).
- a. A leper, a man sick with leprosy was in a very miserable condition: he had a skin disease which meant that he had to live away from other people. If he came near others he had to cry out, "Unclean, unclean!" and other people would avoid him.
 - b. The leper came to Jesus and fell on his face. He begged Jesus for help, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Luke 5:12).
 - c. Jesus was willing. He stretched forth His hand and touched the leper (probably no one had touched him for years!) and immediately the man's leprosy disappeared. How glad that man must have been, and how wonderful are the power and mercy of Jesus!
2. Later, Jesus was passing through the town of Capernaum (remember the nobleman lived there).
- a. In Capernaum was a centurion, a soldier of the Roman army in charge of 100 soldiers. This man had heard about Jesus and he begged Jesus to help him.
 - b. The centurion had a very dear servant, but the servant was sick of the palsy (paralysis, it means he could not move) and in terrible pain. Jesus said, "I will come and heal him" (Matt. 8:7).
 - c. But the centurion said "Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof. But speak the word only and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority ..." (8:8-9). *Jesus declared that He had never seen such faith, no, not in Israel. This man was not a Jew; He was a Gentile.*
 - d. And the man went home and discovered that his servant had been healed.
3. The third miracle was in a little village called Nain.
- a. When Christ came into Nain he saw a terribly sad sight: a funeral. A young man had just died and the men of the village were carrying him out to bury him. In those days, people were buried on the same day they died. It was hot and the bodies would rot quickly.
 - b. Behind the coffin (just a stretcher really) followed a very miserable woman. The dead man was her son; and she was a widow. That meant that her husband was already dead. Now her only son was dead. She had nobody left in the world to look after her. And she was weeping.
 - c. Jesus saw the widow woman and he said to her, "Weep not" (Luke 7:13). He touched the coffin and the said, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise" (7:14). Immediately, the dead man came back to life. *What joy there must have been in the heart of the widow as she received her son again!* (this was the first resurrection miracle of Jesus: later He will raise two more people from the dead).
 - d. The people of Nain were filled with wonder: "A great prophet is risen up among us! God hath visited His people!" *But were they impressed by the miracles without believing in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins?*