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Raising the dead at Nain (7:11-17)

11 Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. 12 And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. 13 When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." 14 Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." 15 So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. 16 Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." 17 And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

- This was a typical funeral procession. The dead were usually buried outside the walls of a city, and on the day of their decease.
- In this society a childless widow would face difficulty, perhaps even poverty.
- As He often was in the Gospels. Jesus was moved by compassion for her.
- Being made unclean from a corpse was among the most serious kinds of defilement. The body would have been carried on a bier that was an open, exposed board. Touching the bier would render you unclean for a day, but Jesus was stronger than contagion!

- The raising of the dead in this fashion had never been witnessed in Israel.
- The crowd now recognizes Jesus to be a great prophet. Only Elijah and Elisha had raised people from the dead. The crowd said God had visited His people – He was moving in power in Israel for the first time in centuries.

John the Baptist’s faith is tried (7:18-34)

18 Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. 19 And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?” 20 When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’” 21 And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

22 Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. 23 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”

- John is wavering, looking for more confirmation of the identity of Jesus.
- Jesus recites how He was doing all the wonderful things the Messiah was predicted to do, especially in Isaiah 61 which Jesus had read at Nazareth.
- We are all offended by the Jesus who does not do things how and when we want Him to. We wrestle with His sovereignty.

- What was shaking John? We can only speculate, but some possibilities are:
 - Depression from his isolation in prison.
 - Not seeing the outpouring of the Spirit.
 - Not seeing God's vengeance upon the wicked.
- How have you been offended by Jesus? His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts.
- Messiah must first be crucified and then be raised to life again before God's plan could unfold more fully!

24 When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 25 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. 26 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 27 This is he of whom it is written:

*'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.'*

28 For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." 29 And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected [cont'd]

the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. 31 And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? 32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:

*'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
We mourned to you, and you did not weep.'*

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' 34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' 35 But wisdom is justified by all her children."

- In addition to complimenting John, Jesus also stated that He was the Lord by quoting Malachi 3:1, and evidently applying it to Himself.
- Everything is great or not great depending on how it relates to Christ!
- The least one in the Kingdom has greater privileges, greater knowledge and a greater experience of God and Christ than John did.
- The Lord warns people not to be offended by John's style either.
- Jesus and John would be criticized no matter what they did and said: ***there is no satisfying a religious spirit.***
- Wisdom is justified by her children: this means that the end or the outcome of the matter will prove who was truly wise.

Who will love more? (7:36-50)

36 Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. 37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, 38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." 40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it."

41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."

44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. 47 Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

- Jews and other ancient peoples reclined at the table.
- One could attend such a banquet even without an invitation; you stayed back and listened to the conversation. Jesus' feet would have been facing outward away from the table.
- Simon did not show the usual courtesies to Christ. By way of contrast, notice Jesus taking off His garments at the Last Supper, and serving!
- There is no evidence to suggest that this woman was Mary Magdalene.
- We do not see Simon protesting at all when Jesus declares her forgiven.

Women provide for the ministry (8:1-3)

1 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, 2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities— Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, 3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

- The Lord's custom was first to announce and then to demonstrate that the Kingdom of God had come to people. Jesus proclaimed that God's Kingdom was being offered to people. The time for neutrality was now over.
- Luke shows us the ministry of the women, even if others do not. To be seen as having female followers was scandalous.
- Mary of Magdala was held in high esteem as a devoted follower of Christ.

The Parable of the Sower (8:4-10)

4 And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: 5 “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. 6 Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. 8 But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

9 Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”

10 And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’

- Jesus favored parables: stories designed to help people seek the truth and grasp it for themselves. Parables were designed so that those who wanted the truth could get at the truth.
- It’s not that God didn’t want people to understand, but if a person can’t be bothered to seek the truth, then his heart becomes hardened.

Jesus explains the parable (8:11-18)

11 “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their [cont’d]

hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. 14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. 15 But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

16 No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. 17 For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. 18 Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.”

- Parable of the sower... or the soil? The soil is our heart's **response** to the Word.
- Our enemies (or the enemies of the Word in our hearts) are; demonic pressures; external pressures; and the cares of this life.
- His words will be revealed to us if we seek truth, just as people don't hide candlelight. Careless listening will actually cause us to go backward!

Mothers and Brothers (8:19-21)

19 Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. 20 And it was told Him by some, who said, “Your mother and [cont'd]

Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.” 21 But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”

- Here is another story in this section in which Jesus goes contrary to expectations.
- The claims that we may think we have to Jesus in the natural are not as meaningful as the ties that we have in the Kingdom.
- Religion will overlay the truth with traditions and claim to be giving honor to people, even when those traditions and that honor actually obscure Jesus and His Word!

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