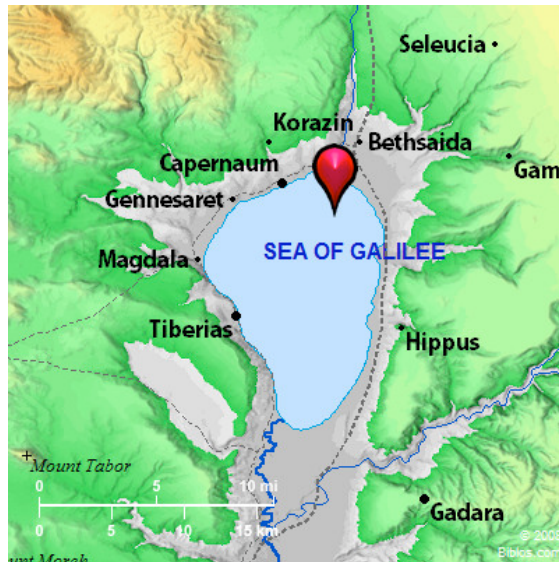


The Miraculous Catches Of Fish

Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 17:24-27; John 21:1-13

These passages record three separate **miracles** of **Christ**, each involving the miraculous catching of fish. Each one is recorded by only one of the **Gospel** writers. **Luke** records the **“Miraculous Draught Of Fishes.”** **Matthew** records the **“Miraculous Tribute Money.”** **John** records a post-resurrection appearance of **Christ**, that involved a **“Miraculous Draught Of Fish.”** Each of these **miracles** took place in various parts of the **“Sea of Galilee.”** It is referred to in **Luke 5:1** as **“lake Gennesaret”** was a town on the northwestern shore.



In **Matthew 17:24** the place of the miracle is said to be **“Capernaum”** a fishing village on the northwestern shore, just north of **“Gennesaret”** In **John 21:1** the place of the miracle is referred to as the **“sea of Tiberias”** **Tiberias** was a city on the western shore. These three separate miracles are filled with much encouragement for the child of God.

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I. EACH MIRACLE IS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE LORD’S MIRACULOUS PROVISION

① In Each Miracle Christ Is Seen As The Great Provider:

God is the **owner** of all (**Exodus 19:5; I Chronicles 29:11-12; Psalm 24:1; 50:10; 89:11; Haggai 2:8**). Everything is in His hands, and **time, place, or circumstance** is no deterrent to the ability of the **Lord** to provide. All through the Word of God, it is vividly illustrated that **God is a God of provision and bestowment**, that **He has the ability to provide for and to distribute to the needs of man, in a way that is beyond man’s comprehension.**

② In Each Miracle There Was The Use Of Means:

In each of these three miracles, there was the human **ability** to fish, and there were the material **means** to fish. In **Luke 5:4** there were **“nets”** (plural), and in **John 21:6** there

was a “net” (singular), and in **Matthew 17:27** there was a “hook” (singular), but these in and of themselves were to no avail without the blessing of the Lord. **Peter** declared “we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing” (**Luke 5:5**), and it is recorded in **John 21:3** “and that night they caught nothing” **ABILITY AND MEANS OF THEMSELVES DO NOT ASSURE SUCCESS!** In each miracle **Christ** issued a command to use the means that they had. He said to **Peter** “go thou to the sea, and cast an hook” (**Matthew 17:27**), and to the **apostles** “Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets” [**Luke 5:4**], and “Cast the net on the right side of the ship” (**John 21:6**). In these miracles **Christ** used what would be considered to be likely means for the catching of fish, but God does not always use the likely to provide the needs of His people. He used the **Egyptians** to provide the needs for building the tabernacle (**Exodus 3:21; 11:3; 12:36**). He provided water from a **rock** for the **Israelites** (**Exodus 17:6**). He provided for **Elijah** in the time of famine, by using the **ravens** (**I Kings 17:6**), and a poor widow **woman** (**I Kings 17:16**). God does use the abilities and the means of individuals, **BUT HIS PROVISIONS ARE NOT LIMITED TO OUR ABILITIES AND MEANS** (**Philippians 4:19**).

II. EACH MIRACLE IS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE LORD’S GREATNESS

① **There Is An Illustration Of Christ’s Omniscience:**

In each miracle it is illustrated that **Christ knew where the fish were, and what they would do, and what the end result would be**. Because He knew, He could speak with absolute certainty. In **Luke 5:4** “Launch out into the deep, (He knew where the fish would be) and let down your nets for a draught” (He knew what the fish would do, and what the final result would be). In **John 21:6** “Cast the net on the right side of the ship (He knew where the fish would be), and ye shall find” (He knew what the fish would do, and what the result would be). In **Matthew 17:27** He said to **Peter** “go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money” Here it is one particular fish, and **He knew where it would be, what it would do, and what the final result would be**. He knew that there would be a piece of money (sufficient to pay the tribute) in one particular fish. **HE HAS PERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF ANIMATE AND INANIMATE MATTER!**

② **There Is An Illustration Of Christ’s Dominion:**

These three miracles are an illustration of **Psalms 8:6-9**. They are an illustration of His absolute **sovereignty, superiority, mastery, control, and preeminence** over all things (**Colossians 1:16-18**). In **Luke 5** **Christ** directed the **apostles** to the deep waters, and sent “a great multitude of fishes” into the **apostles** nets. In **John 21** **Christ** instructed the **apostles** to cast their nets “on the right side of the ship” and He led **153** fish into their net (**verse 11**). In **Matthew 17** **Christ** not only put the **tribute money** in one particular fishes mouth, **but led that same fish to Peter’s bait! Christ** told **Peter**

“take up the fish that first cometh up” (verse 27). He not only led that particular fish to **Peter’s** bait, but also prevented any other fish from getting there first!

III. EACH MIRACLE ILLUSTRATES THE VALUE OF OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD

① **Prior To Each Miracle There Was Specific Instruction For The Particular Time And Circumstance:**

Three separate **times**, three separate **places**, three separate **circumstances**, and in each, **Christ** issues a command, followed by a promise: *“go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money” (Matthew 17:27).* *“Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught” (Luke 5:4).* *“Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find” (John 21:6).* CHRIST’S COMMANDS ARE ALWAYS TIMELY AND RELEVANT TO OUR NEEDS!

② **Prior To Each Miracle There Was Obedience To Christ’s Command:**

In **Luke 5:6** it is recorded *“And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake”* and in **John 21:6** *“They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes”* They believed that it was **Christ’s** right to command, and they believed that it was their personal obligation to obey. Their obedience was **unquestioning**, it was **immediate**, and it was **exact**. **Peter** said to **Christ** *“we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net” (Luke 5:5).* THE WORD OF THE LORD WAS ALL THEY NEEDED! All through the Word of God, there is a close connection between **obedience**, and the **miraculous**!

Though we may possess **ability** and material **means**, that is not always enough. Sometimes the **Lord** will bring us to a position of **nothing**, a place of **emptiness** to cause us to realize, that **it is He that has everything that we need, and knows everything, and is in absolute control of everything, and that we are absolutely dependent upon Him for everything.** He gives **instruction**, **guidance**, and **commands**, and we need to trust Him enough to **obey**, and expect the miraculous!
