

- (i.e., recline in preparation for eating).
- 3) Jesus took the seven loaves (i.e., flatbread, perhaps as thick as your thumb). *The wheat was ground daily, in small stone mills; the flour was made into dough in a wooden trough, and subsequently leavened. It was then made into cakes and baked either under the ashes of a fire, on a copper or iron plate, in pans or in ovens.* <sup>American Tract Society Bible Dictionary</sup>
    - a) He gave thanks. *We ought to always give thanks before we eat, but it is difficult to make this prayer a sincere and heartfelt prayer of thanks. I struggle with this and I am sure you do too. One thing that will help is if we vary our wording and not fall into a habit of saying the same thing each time.*
    - b) He broke the bread. It was a Jewish custom to always break the flatbread rather than cutting it.
    - c) He gave it to the disciples to set before the crowd.
  - 4) Jesus took a few small fish
    - a) He asked God's blessing on them.
    - b) He commanded to set them before the crowd.
  - 5) The crowd of about four thousand people ate and were filled.
  - 6) Jesus then had the disciples collect the leftovers and they gathered seven large wicker baskets full. *Jesus' habit of not wasting the leftovers is a good lesson to us. We ought not to be too proud to eat leftovers. Let's be grateful for them!*

📖 *Here again, we find another amazing miracle. Jesus defied the laws of nature and multiplied those seven loaves and few fish to feed four thousand. Nothing is too hard for God!*

**Conclusion:** Jesus compassionately healed the deaf-mute and fed the multitude. Will Jesus have compassion on us when we are in need? Yes! He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Heb 13:8). *"The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."* 2Ch 16:9. Let's ask God to increase our faith!

**Song:** How Great Thou Art! **37**

# Miracles at Decapolis

15 October 2017 AM - Mark 7:31-8:9 - Mr17 - Scott Childs

**Introduction:** One of the choruses what we often sing on Wednesday nights is "God can do anything but fail". If you know the chorus, sing it with me. \_\_

Do you really believe what you sang? Not only can God save, keep and cleanse, He can do anything! He can help you through your trial. He can heal you physically. He can answer your prayers. He can give comfort to your aching heart. He can heal your strained relationships.

**(Read Mark 7:31)**

Jesus and His disciples departed from Tyre and Sidon and went to Decapolis. Decapolis was on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. It was in the area near where he had sent the demons into the herd of pigs.

**Transition:** While in Decapolis, Jesus did two mighty miracles that ought to strengthen our faith that God can do anything but fail.

*The 1<sup>st</sup> miracle in Decapolis that ought to strengthen our faith was the ...*

## 1. Healing of a Deaf Mute

### a. The request of the deaf man's friends (7:32)

- 1) They brought to Jesus their friend who was both deaf and partly dumb. He spoke with difficulty. Evidently, this man was deaf before he learned to talk. Perhaps he was born deaf. No one was able to cure his problem.
  - ❖ *Speaking is difficult for the deaf who have never heard because they have no idea what words sound like. We had a deaf teen in our youth group when we were first married and he struggled to talk.*
- 2) The friends asked Jesus to put His hand upon their troubled friend. They believed that by the simple act of placing His hand on him their friend would be made well.
- 3) Very likely, Jesus would never have healed their friend if they had not stepped out in faith and asked. God wants to help you witness for Him, but you must step out in faith and try. God may want to use you as a missionary or pastor and is waiting for you to step out and volunteer. Faith begins with action.

## b. The **response** of Jesus (7:33-35)

- 1) Jesus first took the man aside away from the crowd. This may have been to help the man grasp what He was about to do.
- 2) I believe that Jesus used three forms of sign language to help this man's faith.
  - a) Jesus put His fingers in the man's ears (7:33). This would let the man know that He was about to heal his ears.
  - b) Jesus spit and touched the man's tongue (7:33). This would let the man know that He was about to heal his speech problem.
  - c) Jesus then looked up into heaven when he prayed (7:34). This would let the man know that He was talking to the Father in heaven.
- 3) Jesus then said just one Aramaic word "*Ephphatha*" which meant "*be opened*" (7:36).
- 4) Immediately, the man's ears were opened and his tongue spoke clearly (7:35). This double miracle was truly beyond medical possibilities. Nothing is too hard for God. Though God does not always give us what we ask for, it is never EVER because He is not able to. Nothing is too hard for God. (Jer 32:27) "*Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?*" (Eph 3:20) "*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,*"

## c. The **reaction** of the crowd (7:36-37)

- 1) Jesus charged them not to tell anyone what He had done (7:36). Why? Because every time He became too popular the crowds over-reacted and tried to distract Him from His mission to die to provide us eternal life.
- 2) The more Jesus charged them to keep quiet, the more they published it.
- 3) They were beyond measure astonished (7:37). In other words, they exceedingly struck with amazement. They had never before known anyone to be able to heal the

deaf and the dumb.

✞ *This was no minor miracle. It was totally amazing. We worship and serve the same mighty God today. May this increase our faith when we face humanly impossible situations!*

*The 2<sup>nd</sup> miracle in Decapolis that ought to strengthen our faith was the ...*

## 2. **Feeding of Four Thousand**

### a. The miracle was motivated by Jesus' **compassion**, (8:1-3).

- 1) While Jesus was still in Decapolis, the crowd grew to a great size and for three days He preached and ministered to their needs. They were willing to go without food to stay and hear Jesus (8:1).
- 2) After three days Jesus knew they were hungry (8:2). Many of them had come from a far distance to hear Him and He did not want them to be overcome by weakness as they returned home (8:3). Jesus had *compassion* on them. *Compassion* is tenderness in the heart caused by love and pity. It is a feeling of sympathy and sorrow for the misfortunes of others.
- 3) Peter certainly knew this when he wrote, (1Pet 5:7) "*Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*"

### b. The miracle was heightened by the disciples' **concern** (8:4).

- 1) Jesus knew what He would do, but the disciples acted like they forgot all about the feeding of the 5,000.
- 2) Alarmed, they asked, "How can we satisfy the hunger of all these here in the wilderness (i.e., uninhabited area)?"

✞ *Aren't we so often just like the disciples? When a need or burden arises, we forget all about how He provided for us during the last crises. We ought to have a blessings book or someplace to record such blessings.*

### c. The miracle was accompanied by Jesus' **commands** (8:5-9).

- 1) Jesus asked the disciples how many loaves of bread they had. They said seven (8:5).
- 2) Jesus commanded the people to sit down on the ground