

THE MIGHTY WORKS OF JESUS



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I WONDER if you have ever seen a blind man? If you see a blind man trying to walk across the street it would be a great kindness to take hold of his arm and guide him across. But wouldn't it be grand if you could fix that blind man's eyes so he himself could see where to go! That certainly would be much better, wouldn't it?

Well, that is what Jesus was able to do, because the power of God came upon him, and God's power can do wonderful things. Yes, Jesus opened eyes which were blind; he made people hear who were deaf; he healed the lame so they could walk.

God had promised that Jesus would do all these wonderful things, and God's promises always come true.

Of course Jesus didn't open all the blind eyes, and he didn't make all the sick people well, but that is what he will do by and by when he is King over the whole world. Then all of God's promises will come true. And we know that Jesus will be able to make them come true.

But Jesus did something which was even more wonderful than healing the sick. There was a town in the land of Israel called Bethany. In this town there lived a very lovely family of three people. There were two sisters whose names were Martha and Mary, and these two sisters had a brother whose name was Lazarus. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were all friends of Jesus, and he sometimes visited their home. It is nice to have our friends visit us, isn't it? Once when Jesus was far away from Bethany and from this home where he liked to visit, Lazarus became ill. Yes, he was really quite sick indeed. His sisters, Martha and Mary, knew that Jesus was able to heal the sick, so they sent a message to him that Lazarus was ill. Jesus received the message, but the strange thing is that he didn't go to Bethany to see his friends. If we could make sick people well, and we heard that one of our dear friends was sick, we would hurry there as soon as we could to make him well, wouldn't we? Indeed we would!

But Jesus didn't do that.

After three days, Jesus said that Lazarus was sleeping, and that he was now going to awaken him out of his sleep. That, too, was very strange. We wouldn't want to wake up a sick man, would we? Well, this was different. Jesus meant that Lazarus had died. When people die it is something like being asleep. When you sleep soundly all night long you don't really know anything, do you? That's the way it is when people die—they don't know anything.

But no one would want to sleep and sleep and sleep all the time! Isn't it grand when we go to bed at night to know that we will wake up in the morning rested and ready to enjoy another day? When Jesus said that Lazarus was sleeping, and that he would awaken him, he meant that he was going to awaken him from the sleep of death, and that he would feel well and rested.

It is very important to remember that the Bible calls dead people sleeping people, and the reason for this is that all the dead people will be awakened from the sleep of death when Jesus is King. Jesus went to Bethany, and when he approached the home of Martha and Mary, Martha ran out to meet him. She was very sad,

and felt almost like scolding Jesus for not coming right away. She was sure, you see, that if Jesus had been there he could have made her brother well. But now he was dead.

But Jesus assured her that Lazarus would live again. Then Martha began to wonder, what can he mean? She knew of God's wonderful promises that some day all who had died would be made alive again, and she thought perhaps this was what Jesus meant.

Jesus also knew that by and by, when he is King over the whole earth, he will make all the dead people alive, but this was not what he meant when he said to Martha that her brother would live again. No, he meant that he would make Lazarus alive right then, through the power of God. They took Jesus to the grave of Lazarus, and after he had prayed to God, his Heavenly Father, he called to Lazarus, "Come forth!" And Lazarus came forth from the grave because the power of God had made him alive again. Isn't that a wonderful story?

And the best part of it is that it's a true story. Besides, it illustrates how by and by all people who have died will be made alive. Jesus will make all the dead people live again because that is what God wants him to do.

When Jesus first began to do the work God wanted him to do, he chose twelve Jewish men to work with him. These were called his apostles, and sometimes his disciples. One day they were all in a boat together sailing across the Sea of Galilee when suddenly a very terrible storm came up. When this storm began Jesus was asleep in the boat, and his disciples became very much frightened. They awakened Jesus and found that he wasn't a bit afraid. He spoke to the storm saying, "Peace, be still," and in a few moments the storm was over, the sea became calm.

When we read a story like this in the Bible we just know that there is nothing too hard for Jesus to do. Well, that's why God wanted these stories put in the Bible. He wants us to know and believe that he will make all his promises come true. He wants us to believe that his Son Jesus is able to do all things.

QUESTIONS

- How was it possible for Jesus to do things which other people could not do?
- Will the time ever come when all the blind people will be able to see?
- Who was Lazarus, and what were the names of his sisters?
- When Lazarus died, why did Jesus say that he was asleep?
- How was it possible for Jesus to make Lazarus alive again?

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