

“Unbelievable” Events in the Bible

07/31/2019 Wednesday PM

Introduction

- The Bible has classics that most Christians have heard since they were young—David and Goliath, Noah and the ark, Jesus healing the blind man...
- However, within the pages of Scripture there are many stories that are obscure, dramatic, and just plain bizarre.
- I am calling them “Unbelievable” because they are really crazy events however; we still accept them as truth.
- Unbelievable has two definitions: 1.) not able to be believed; unlikely to be true. 2.) So great or extreme as to be difficult to believe; extraordinary.

1. Long Sermon Turns Deadly

Acts 20:7-12

⁷On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. ⁸There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. ⁹Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. ¹⁰Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" ¹¹Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. ¹²The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.

- I think this is a cautionary tale about staying awake in church?!
- Teen boys in the first century apparently had just as little common sense as modern teens, and attention spans of similar length too.
- On a serious note though, what we have is Paul raising this boy from the dead! Believable or unbelievable?

2. Construction Site Miracle

2 Kings 6:1-7

¹The company of the prophets said to Elisha, "Look, the place where we meet with you is too small for us. ²Let us go to the Jordan, where each of us can get a pole; and let us build a place there for us to live." And he said, "Go." ³Then one of them said, "Won't you please come with your servants?" "I will," Elisha replied. ⁴And he went with them. They went to the Jordan and began to cut down trees. ⁵As one of them was cutting down a tree, the iron axhead fell into the water. "Oh, my lord," he cried out, "it was borrowed!" ⁶The man of God asked, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, Elisha cut a stick and threw it there, and made the iron float. ⁷"Lift it out," he said. Then the man reached out his hand and took it."

- What is the point of this?
- God even cares about the little things in our lives and can use them to show His power.

3. The Plot to Kill a Guy Who Already Died

John 12:9-11

⁹Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, ¹¹for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

- **John 11** records the death of Lazarus and how Jesus raised him from the dead 4 days later.
- Now the religious leaders wanted to kill Lazarus, or re-kill him!
- The reason Lazarus was a threat was because his testimony of what God had done in his life changed the people around him. What a great example for us!
- Is it harder to believe that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, or that the people still didn't believe Jesus and wanted to murder him and Lazarus because “Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him?”

4. Man Talks to Donkey; Donkey Talks Back

Numbers 22:21-34

²¹Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab. ²²But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. ²³When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, she turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat her to get her back on the road. ²⁴Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between two vineyards, with walls on both sides. ²⁵When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat her again. ²⁶Then the angel of the LORD moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. ²⁷When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat her with his staff. ²⁸Then the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?" ²⁹Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now." ³⁰The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?" "No," he said. ³¹Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown. ³²The angel of the LORD asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. ³³The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If she had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared her." ³⁴Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned. I did not realize you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now if you are displeased, I will go back."

- What was going on here?
- The Israelites were marching into the Promised Land, conquering cities and winning battles, and the Moabite king got nervous. So he summoned Balaam to come and put a curse on the Israelites.
- That is what Balaam was going to do and that is why the angel of the LORD was “opposing” him.
- God is good at getting people’s attention in ways that make sense to their culture.
- Prophecies, plagues, stars, burning bushes, fingers writing words on a wall, talking animals—he can use anything to convey his message.

5. The Virgin Birth and the Resurrection

Matthew 1:18-21

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Mark 16:9

When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons

- Really, there are no greater “unbelievable” events in the Bible than the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ.
- However, most people do not have a problem accepting these as the truth, but they do have issues with other events such as we talked about earlier.
- The point of all of this is that the entire Bible is “unbelievable” - so great or extreme as to be difficult to believe; **extraordinary**.
- This is because we serve a God that is so great and extraordinary!
- As I said in my message two weeks ago, the secret to believing is to choose to do so.
- We must put our faith and trust in God’s Word and allow it to shape our thoughts and actions on a daily basis, even when it seems “unbelievable.”