Exegeting a Miracle Account

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The Genre "Miracle Story"

- **Definition:**
  - A narrative focusing on a miracle as its main feature

- **So the genre is a subgenre of narrative:**
  - So use features of narrative analysis.
  - Recall Ryken's categories of narrative in the Gospels include miracle story (p 40).
Usual Features of This Genre

Besides the usual narrative features:

- A **problem** is narrated.
- A **request** for help is made.
- The **actions** of the miracle worker are described.
- The **results** are noted:
  - Healing, deliverance, etc.
  - Response of demon
  - Response of spectators, etc.
Function of Miracles in the Gospels

- They display the person of Jesus thru his actions & power (Jn 20:30-31; Jn 5:36).
- They picture God's activity in redemption.
- Sometimes they point:
  - Forward to the end of the age
    - Resurrections
  - Backward to creation
    - Water into wine?
Healings in the Gospels

- Man w/ leprosy
- Centurion’s servant
- Peter's m-in-law
- Gadarene demoniacs
- Paralyzed man
- Woman w/ bleeding
- 2 blind men

- Mute possessed
- Shriveled hand
- Blind mute poss
- Canaanite's dau
- Boy w/ demon
Healings in the Gospels

- Deaf mute
- Man possessed in synagogue
- Blind at Bethsaida
- Crippled woman
- Man w/ dropsy
- Ten lepers
- High priest's servant
- Official's son
- Sick man at Bethesda
- ~22 narrated
A Healing: Gadarene Demoniac

Mark 5:1-20 and parallels

- **Problem** (vv 2-5): man possessed by spirit; no one could subdue him; lived in tombs, shouting, hurting self
- **Request?** (6-7): runs to Jesus
- **Action** (8-13): resist Jesus' commands, reveals size of problem, seeks to negotiate
A Healing: Gadarene Demoniac

Results (13-20):
- Pigs drown in lake
- Keepers run to report
- People astonished, fearful, ask Jesus to leave
- Fellow sent to tell others
A Healing: Gadarene Demoniac

- Person of Jesus:
  - Able to subdue demons by thousands
  - Has compassion for demoniac
  - Lets people turn him down

- Redemption:
  - Saves demoniac
  - Drives out Satan's forces
Nature Miracles in the Gospels

- Calming storm
- 5000 fed
- Walking on water
- 4000 fed
- Coin in fish's mouth
- Fig tree withered
- Transfiguration
- Catch of fish
- Water to wine
- Another catch
- ~10 narrated
Nature Miracle: Calming Storm

Mark 4:35-41 and parallels:

- **Problem:** boat about to go under in storm
- **Request:** Disciples: "Don’t you care?"
- **Action:** Jesus shouts at wind & waves
- **Results:**
  - Immediate calm, both wind & waves
  - Reaction of disciples: "Who is this?"
Nature Miracle: Calming Storm

- Person of Jesus: cp Psalm 107
- Redemption:
  - Rescue from danger
- Pointing forward or backward?
  - Looking back at creation?
  - Looking forward to new heavens & earth?
Resurrections in the Gospels

- Jairus' daughter
- Widow's son
- Lazarus
- (Jesus)
- 4 narrated
Resurrection: Widow's Son

- Luke 7:11-17:
  - Problem: only son of widow has died
  - Request: no explicit request
  - Actions: Jesus speaks to dead man
  - Results:
    - Comes back to life
    - People filled with awe, praise God
Resurrection: Widow’s Son

- Person of Jesus: able to raise dead
  - Contrast with OT prophets re/ method
- Redemption: saved from death
- Looking forward:
  - Resurrection at the last day
Try to see what the Gospel writer is teaching as he narrates each miracle.