

CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE? Part 7

“The Witness of Miracles” (Lesson 1)

INTRO: Already called several credible witnesses to defend the Bible: God Himself, the OT writers, what Jesus believed about the Scripture, the Gospel writers, God’s preservation of inspired writings. Our next reliable witness to the trustworthiness of the Bible is RECORDED MIRACLES (Ps. 77:14). Ever hoped for a miracle?

I. DEFINITION of a MIRACLE

- A. Human Explanation - Webster’s: “A miracle is an event in the physical world deviating from the *known* laws of nature or transcending our knowledge of these laws.” A poor definition but fits secular mentality. Notice it doesn’t say a miracle deviates from the laws of nature, just the *known* laws of nature. Mr. Webster explains miracles as unexplainable natural phenomenon, not supernatural, thus leaving God out.
- B. Biblical Explanation
 1. Miracles are *supernatural*. They are God’s supernatural intervention in the natural world. The supernatural is outside the natural world (ILL: Box ...). *A miracle happens when God steps in the universe and sets aside the natural laws of nature to do a supernatural act.* Serve as God’s fingerprints (Exo. 8:19). Every miracle is a revelation God exists.
 2. Miracles are *allowable*. If God exists, there must be miracles. Some say, “If remove miracles, I’ll accept the Bible.” That’s crazy! It’s like saying, “God, You can exist, you just can’t do anything!” If there is a supernatural God I can know, then where do I go to learn more about Him – that would be the Bible, the inspired written revelations of God to mankind, which in itself is a miracle. The miracles of God recorded in the Bible (about 140 in all; OT (80); NT (60) are always with purpose (not a God of tricks or magic to entertain us). God does miracles recorded in the Bible to reveal that He is and what He is like (Powerful, Great, Mighty, (compassionate) not to satisfy human curiosity. “Do I have to believe in miracles to be a Christian?” Only two . . .

II. CATEGORIES OF RECORDED BIBLICAL MIRACLES (OT)

Miracles came in 3 periods – Moses, Elijah/Elisha, Jesus and Apostles – Each time (40-70 yrs.) to introduce new eras of revelation (Law, Prophets, NT).

- A. Some Affected ALL MANKIND (Universal) – Each send a message about God.
 1. *Creation* was the first (Gen. 1-2; Rom. 1:19-20). “Created” is bara meaning out of nothing – by His Word alone in six actual days! That’s a miracle. Creation miracle reveals *God is Creator*. Jesus (Matt. 19:5). If accept Gen. 1:1 then should have no problems with other miracles.
 2. The *Flood* that covered the whole world (Gen. 7:1ff). Jesus confirmed (Lk. 17:27). Peter confirmed (2 Pet. 3:5-6). God spared 8 people. Flood reveals *God is Savior*.
 3. *Tower of Babel* (Gen. 11:1-9). They attempted to build a pagan tower to worship a false God. God confused their languages and scattered them over all the earth. That’s a miracle! Babel tells us *God is Judge*.

B. Some Affected Cities or Nations

1. Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed (Gen. 18-19) – *God is holy*
2. Ten plagues of Egypt (Exo. 7-11) – *God is mighty*.
3. Crossing of the Red Sea (Exo. 14:13-31) – *God is Deliverer* (Savior) – attested to by more than any other (Joshua, Nehemiah, David, Isaiah, Hebrews 11:29) – Deut. 10:20-21
4. Provision in Wilderness for 40 years (Exo. 13-17) - food (manna, quail), water, cloud by day, fire by night. *God is Provider and Guider*.
5. Walls of Jericho (Joshua 6) – *God is Mighty*

C. Some Affected Individuals

1. Moses and the burning bush (Exo. 3) – 10 total
2. Balaam’s talking donkey (Num. 22:15-20)
3. Elijah – on Mt. Carmel, widow’s dead son, transported to heaven (16)
4. Elisha – healed waters, multiplied oil, promised son, raised dead son (32)
5. Gideon’s fleece (Judges 6:36-40)
6. Jonah and the Whale (Jonah 1-2)
7. Samson’s strength (Judges 13-16)
8. Sun stands still (Joshua) – Joshua 10:12-14

III. NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES

1. Number? Around 60 in all, at least 35 by Jesus, though He did more (Jn. 2:11; 5:36; 20:30; 21:25; Acts 2:22) – Confirmed He is God
2. Apostles? Signs of authentication (Acts 2:22; 5:12-14; Eph. 2:20, 2 Cor. 12:12; Rom. 15:18-19; Heb. 2:4) Acts records about 30 miracles: Peter and John heal a lame man (3:2-11). Peter and others were delivered from prison (5:19-23). Phillip was carried through the air by the Holy Spirit (8:39). Paul healed a cripple (14:8-10). Paul cast out evil spirits and healed the sick (14:19-20). Paul raised Eutychus from the dead (20:6-12). And at least 10 to 12 more!

The Bible is a Book about God. How do I know that? It has miracles. Take them away, you remove God. Let God be God – let Him act. The Bible is the record of His acts, including supernatural miracles. The presence of the miraculous in the Bible doesn’t send me away from the Bible, but drives me to it! No miracles then no God, no Bible, no salvation, and no hope. But this written revelation of God shows His miracle-working power-and that gives us hope!

CONC: But, what about Jesus and His miraculous works? The Person and Work of Jesus Christ is the greatest miracle of all – we’ll examine His miracles in a stand alone witness next lesson. AMEN!