

# MIRACLES AND SIGNS AND WONDERS

{The Miracle is the work or act, the Sign is the purpose, and the Wonder is the result - **AWE**}

**John 2:11** This beginning of [His] signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. (NASB)

**John 20:30** Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; (NASB)

**Acts 2:22** "Men of Israel, listen to these words: **Jesus the Nazarene**, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know-- (NASB)

**2 Corinthians 12:12** The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles. (NASB)

**Romans 15:18-19** For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, 19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. (NASB)

**Hebrews 2:3-4** how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

**MIRACLES** -- 1411 *dunamis* {doo'-nam-is} -- "The act or work done" -- "The *power* displayed"

Special testimony of Luke. **Luke 4:38-39** And He arose and [left] the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever; and they made request of Him on her behalf. 39 And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately arose and waited on them. (NASB)

The Biblical idea of **miracle** as an extraordinary work of God, generally though not invariably, transcending the ordinary powers of Nature, wrought in connection with the ends of revelation, is illustrated by the terms used to describe miracles in the Old Testament and New Testament.

**Matthew 11:20-23** Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of **His miracles** were done, because they did not repent. 21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the **miracles** had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 "Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in [the] day of judgment, than for you. 23 "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the **miracles** had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. (NASB)

**Matthew 13:54** And coming to His home town He [began] teaching them in their synagogue, so that they became astonished, and said, "Where [did] this man [get] this wisdom, **and [these] miraculous powers?** (NASB)

**Matthew 14:2** and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead; and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him." (NASB)

**2 Corinthians 12:12** The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles. (NASB)

Our Lord's ministry was attended from first to last by events entirely beyond the ordinary course of Nature. He was born of a Virgin, and His birth was announced by angels, both to His mother, and to the man to whom she was betrothed (Matthew and Luke). He suffered death on the cross appeared as an ordinary man, but on the third day after His crucifixion He rose from the tomb in which He was buried, and lived with His disciples for 40 days (**Acts 1:3 To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over [a period of] forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. (NASB)**), eating and drinking with them, but with a body superior to ordinary physical conditions. At length He ascended to the heavens, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. But besides these two great miracles of His birth and His resurrection, Jesus was continually performing miracles during His ministry. His own words furnish the best description of the facts. In reply to the question of John the Baptist, His predecessor, He said, **"Go and report to John what you hear and see: 5 [the] blind receive sight and [the] lame walk, [the] lepers are cleansed and [the] deaf hear, and [the] dead are raised up, and [the] poor have the gospel preached to them."** Matthew 11:4-5 (NASB).

Specimens of these miracles are given in detail in the Gospel narratives; but it is a mistake to consider the matter, as is too often done, as though these particular miracles were the only ones in question. Even if they could be explained away, as has often been attempted, there would remain reiterated statements of the evangelists, such as Matthew's that He **"...was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people."** Matthew 4:23 (NASB), or **Luke 6:17-19 And He descended with them, and stood on a level place; and [there was] a great multitude of His disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, 18 who had come to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. 19 And all the multitude were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing [them] all. (NASB)**

### **Miracles Part of Revelation:**

It is therefore an extraordinary mistake to suppose that the evidence for our faith would not be damaged if the miracles were set aside. We should lose the positive evidence we now possess of our Lord's saving power. In this view, the miracles are not the mere proofs of a revelation; they are themselves the revelation, since they are the work or acts. They reveal a Savior from all human ills, and there has been no other revelation in the world of such a power. The miracles recorded of the apostles have a like effect. They are wrought, like Peter's of the impotent man, as evidence of the living power of the Savior (**Acts 4:10-12 let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead-- by this [name] this man stands here before you in good health. 11 "He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, [but] which became the very corner [stone.] 12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."** (NASB)).

In a word, the miracles of the New Testament, whether wrought by our Lord or by His apostles, reveal a new source of power, in the person of our Lord, for the salvation of men. Whatever interference they involve with the usual order of Nature is due, not to any modification of that order, but to the intervention of a new force in it. The nature of that force is revealed by them, and can only be ascertained by observation of them. A man is known by his words and by his deeds, and to these two sources of revelation, respecting His person and character, our Lord expressly appealed **"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."** John 10:37-38

“Most fervently do I contend, that the miracles worked by Christ, both as miracles and as fulfillments of prophecy, both as signs and as wonders, made plain discovery, and gave unquestionable proof, of His Divine character and authority; that they were to the whole Jewish nation true and appropriate **evidences**, that He was indeed come who had promised and declared to their forefathers, **"Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, But He will save you."** Isaiah 35:4 I receive them as **proofs**, therefore, of the truth of every word which He taught who was Himself the Word: and as sure **evidences** of the final victory over death and of the life to come, in that they were manifestations of Him who said: **"I am the resurrection and the life!"** This seems the fittest manner in which to contemplate the evidence afforded by miracles.

**SIGNS** -4592 -sēmeion -say-mi`-on -“The PURPOSE of signs is always evidential” “They credentialed” “They are marks of divine legitimacy and authority.”

**John 2:11** This beginning of [His] signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. (NASB)

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### Sign, mark

**Matthew 26:48** Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I shall kiss, He is the one; seize Him." (NASB)

**2 Thessalonians 3:17** I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, and this is a distinguishing mark in every letter; this is the way I write. (NASB)

**Token** -- **Luke 2:12** "And this [will be] a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger." (NASB)

**Miraculous sign, miracle** (Jn. 2:11; 18, 23; Acts 4:16, 22; 8:6; 1 Cor. 1:22).

**Signs and wonders**, occurs many times (Matt. 24:24 par. Mk. 13:22; Jn.4:48; Acts 2:19 [Joel 2:30], 22, 43 [cf.5:12; 14:3]; 4:30; 6:8; 7:36; 15:12; Rom. 15:19; 2 Cor. 12:12; 2 Thess. 2:9; Heb. 2:4). The apocalyptic meaning of sign of the end is found in Mk. 13:4; Matt. 24:3; Lk. 21:11, 15 f.

### 1. It is the OT conception of the prophet as Yahweh's sign that underlies Jesus' being the:

A. God-given sign, by which the rise or fall, the salvation or ruin of every man is decided.

**Luke 2:34** And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this [Child] is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed-- (NASB)

B. In this connection we also have Jesus' rejection of the demand for signs.

**Matthew 16:1-4** And the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Him asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. 2 But He answered and said to them, "When it is evening, you say, '[It will be] fair weather, for the sky is red.' 3 "And in the morning, '[There will be] a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot [discern] the signs of the times? 4 "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah." And He left them, and went away. (NASB)

C. **Jesus unmasks the demand for signs as a deception concealing a refusal to repent. Anyone who does not believe the final word of God going forth in him will not be brought to repentance even by miracles (Luke 16:27 ff.) or even by the movie, "The Passion."**

- D. The only sign which God will give to the unrepentant generation is God's representative who will be shown to be such by his deliverance from death. As once Jonah came back from the dead, so at His coming (*parousia*) the Son of man will come in judgment.
- E. Thus, Jesus' table-fellowship with sinners (Lk. 5:29 f.; Matt. 9:9-13; Mk. 2:13-17; 15:1 ff., 19:7) is a prophetic sign, a valid anticipation of the acquittal of the final judgment, and a practical illustration in advance of the messianic meal in the age of salvation. See Luke 14:15-24; Rev. 19:7-10
- F. Alongside the miracles performed by God himself (e.g. Acts 5:19; 12:3 ff.; 16:25 ff.) one can also distinguish in the NT:
- (a) The miraculous power of elements hostile to God which are evil agencies.
1. But as supernatural acts, miracles are recognized as possible to evil agencies.
 

**Matthew 24:24** "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. (NASB)

**2 Thessalonians 2:9** [that is,] the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders

**Revelation 13:14** And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

**Revelation 16:14** for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. (NASB)
- (b) The miracles of Jesus.
1. The Gospels record numerous healing miracles of Jesus (e.g. the healing of those possessed by evil spirits, lepers, blind, lame, and deaf-mutes.
  2. Three instances of people being raised from the dead (Jairus' daughter, Matt. 9:18-26; Mk. 5:21-43; Lk. 8:40-56; the widow of Nain's son, Lk. 7:11-17; and Lazarus, Jn. 11.
  3. Seven so-called nature miracles:
    - (1) The stilling of the storm, Matt. 8:18, 23-37, Mk. 4:35-41, Lk. 8:22-25.
    - (2) The feeding of the five thousand, Matt. 14:13-21, Mk. 6:32-14; Lk. 9:11-17; Jn. 6:5-13; the feeding of the four thousand, Matt. 15:32-39, Mk. 8:1-10.
    - (3) The walking on the water, Matt. 14:22-33, Mk. 6:45-52, Jn. 6:15-21.
    - (4) The cursing of the fig tree, Matt. 21:18 f., Mk. 8:12 ff., cf. Lk. 13:6-9
    - (5) The coin in the fish's mouth, Matt. 17:24-27.
    - (6) The draught of fishes, Lk. 5:1-11 ; cf. Jn. 21 :1-1.
    - (7) The water into wine, Jn. 2:1 ff.).
  4. The essential characteristic of the effective work of Jesus is seen in the combination of proclamation and healing work (cf. Mk. 1:38f.; Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Lk. 9:11; cf. also Jesus' testimony to himself in Lk. 13:32, and the seeing and hearing in the Matt. 13:16 f. par. Lk. 10:23 f. [cf. Jn. 8:56; Heb. 11 :13; 1 Pet. 1 :10 ff.; Isa. 6:9 f.]).
  5. He declined to perform miracles in order to rescue himself (Matt. 4:1 ff. par. Lk. 4:1-4; 26:51 ff.; 27:39 ff. par. Mk. 15:29 ff.
  6. He rejected demonstrations of power designed to prove his divine sending (Matt. 4:5 ff. par. Lk. 4:9-12; Matt. 16:1-4 par. Mk. 8:11 f.; Lk. 11 :29).
  7. Jesus forbade those whom he had healed to relate his miracles to others (e.g. Matt. 8:30; Mk. 5:43; 7:36; Lk. 8:56); in the case of the healed lepers the man was to show himself "to the priest, and offer what Moses commanded, for a proof to the people."
  8. It is not personal gain but thanks to God that Jesus looked for in men who have known his miraculous help (Lk. 17:11 ff.).

9. In Matt. 9:2-8 par. Mk. 2:3-12, Lk. 5:18-26 -- forgiveness of sins is linked with the healing. Healing becomes a turning point in the life of the healed person (cf. Matt.9:32; 20:34; Mk. 5:18ff.; 10:52; Lk. 18:43).
10. Anyone who experiences a miracle of Jesus is thereby placed on the road of discipleship, in the same way that miracles in general are related to faith.
11. Only faith, i.e. trust in the power of Jesus which transcends all human possibilities, can receive miracles (Mk. 2:5; 5:34; 7:29; 9:23 f.; Matt. 8:10; 9:28 f.; cf. Jn. 4:50; 11 :40).
12. Unbelief is denied miracles (Matt. 13:53-58; Mk. 6:1-6; cf. Lk. 4:16-30). It is noteworthy that Jesus' miracles presuppose faith, they do not first create it.
13. Miracles are not proofs which silence all opposition: if the believer sees God at work, the verdict of his opponents is that Jesus is in league with Satan (Matt. 12:24; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:15).
14. What finally and radically distinguishes Jesus' miracles from all other so-called miracles is their end-times reference. As Matt. 11 :2 ff. par. Lk. 7:18 ff. and Lk. 11 :20 clearly show, they are signs of God's kingly rule, the dawn of which Jesus announced in his , proclamation (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mk. 1:39; 6:6; Lk. 4:14 f., 44).
15. Jesus' words and works are the beginning of the age of salvation.
  - (1) The casting out of demons signals God's invasion into the realm of Satan and its final destruction (Matt. 12:29 par. Mk.3:27, Lk. 11:21 f., cf. Isa.49:24f.; Lk. 10:18).
  - (2) The raising of the dead announces that death will be forever done away with (I Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4; cf. Isa. 25:8)
  - (3) The healing of the sick bears witness to the cessation of all suffering (Rev. 21 :4).
  - (4) The miraculous provisions of food are foretokens of the end of all physical need (Rev. 7:16f)
  - (5) The stilling of the storm points forward to complete victory over the powers of chaos which threaten the earth (Rev. 21 :1).
  - (6) What took place were promises and intimations, anticipations of a redeemed nature, of a state of freedom, of a kind of life in which there will be no more sorrow, tears, and crying, and where death as the last enemy will be no more."
- (c) The miracles of His apostles.
  1. According to the witness of the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus sent out his disciples to preach and to perform miracles (Matt. 10:7 f.; Mk. 3:14 f.; Lk. 9:1 f.; 10:9; cf. Mk. 6:7ff.; Lk. 9:6).
  2. The same is reported in the ending of Mk. (16:9-20) concerning the sending-out of the disciples by the Risen Christ.
  3. Similarly, Acts mentions many times the correlation of apostolic proclamation and apostolic miracle-working (2:2f.; 4:29f.; cf. 3:1ff.; 4:16, 22; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6ff.; 9:32 ff.; 15:12; 20:7ff.).
  4. The miracles are co-ordinated with the preaching - they are "accompanying signs", by which Christ confirms the word of the witnesses (Acts 14:3; cf. Mk. 16:20).  
**Acts 14:3** Therefore they spent a long time [there] speaking boldly [with reliance] upon the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands. (NASB)  
**Mark 16:20** And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed...
  5. As in the authoritative word (Acts 6:10) so in the signs is manifested the power of the Holy Spirit promised to the disciples (Acts 1:8).  
**Acts 6:10** And [yet] they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking. (NASB)  
**Acts 1:8** but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...

6. For Paul, too, "word and deed", preaching and signs belong together; in both Christ is at work in the power of the Spirit (Rom. 15:18 f.).
7. Signs and wonders accompany the proclamation which takes place "in demonstration of the Spirit and power"  
**1 Corinthians 2:4** And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, (NASB)  
**1 Thessalonians 1:5** for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. (NASB)
8. They are marks of the divine legitimation and authority of the apostolic office and work .  
**2 Corinthians 12:12** The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles. (NASB)  
**Romans 15:18-19** For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, 19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. (NASB)
9. Finally, Hebrews also bears witness that God confirms the preaching of salvation, which proclaims the dawn of the age of salvation, by signs and wonders.  
**Hebrews 2:2-4** For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. (NASB)  
**Hebrews 6:5** and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come.

**WONDERS** -- 5059 teras {ter'-as} "The result of the miracles" They marveled or were amazed or astonished. They were in AWE!

**Luke 8:25** And He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were fearful and amazed, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?" (NASB)

**Luke 11:14** And He was casting out a demon, and it was dumb; and it came about that when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke; and the multitudes marveled. (NASB)

**Luke 9:43** And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. But while everyone was marveling at all that He was doing, He said to His disciples, (NASB)

**Matthew 15:31** so that the multitude marveled as they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel. (NASB)

**Mark 6:51** And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. (KJV)

**Luke 4:22** And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" (NASB)