

MIRACLES

1. We use the word "miracle" rather loosely. For example:
 - 1) Car wreck or an airplane crash
 - 2) Birth of a baby
2. An event which is not easily explained is not necessarily a miracle.
3. Definition: A miracle is a temporary, supernatural miraculous, intervention of natural law.
 - 1) For example: Law of gravity cf. 2 Kgs. 6:4-6
4. **PURPOSE:**
 - 1) Christ's miracles were direct interventions of the power of God over life and nature; they were for the benefit of people; and they authenticated and confirmed the deity of Christ. cf. Jno. 20:30,31
 - 2) Apostles' miracles were confirmatory of both the message and the messengers as being God appointed.
5. The miracles of Christ demonstrated his power over:
 - 1) Disease cf. Matt. 9:1-6 the paralytic
 - 2) Demons cf. Mk. 5:1-15 demoniac ---demons enter swine
 - 3) Death cf. Jno. 11:43,44 Lazarus
 - 4) Nature cf. Matt. 8:23-27 storm on the Sea of Galilee
 - 5) Material things cf. Matt. 14:15-21 loaves and the fishes
6. Ministry of Jesus: Most of Jesus' teaching was done in conjunction with his miracles.
 - 1) Jesus proclaimed, "I am the light of the world..." (Jno.8:12) and then in chapter 9 he heals a blind man.
 - 2) Jesus proclaimed, "I am the bread of life" (Jno.6:4) and in Matt.14 he takes 5 loaves of bread and 2 small fish and feeds 5000 men, besides the women and children.
 - 3) In John 11 Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead and in v.25 he said, "I am the resurrection and the life..."
 - 4) There are 678 verses in the gospel of Mark, 209 (31%) involve miracles.
7. Jesus' miracles were never done to draw attention to himself. Note the use of the words "signs" and "wonders."

8. Some objections to miracles:

- 1) Miracles violate the laws of nature, i.e. the law of gravity.
- 2) Miracles are unscientific. Two kinds of proof: scientific method and legal/ historical----proof beyond a reasonable doubt
 - (1) Scientific method can only prove events that are repeatable in a lab.
 - (2) Legal-historical proof depends on oral testimony, written testimony, and physical exhibits. Using the legal-historical method, you can prove you ate at CrackerBarrell last night. How? You can show your receipt for your meal; your friends saw you; the wait staff recalls your being there; try proving this by the scientific method!

Only historical proof can account for George Washington being our first President, that Babe Ruth once played for the N.Y. Yankees, and the existence, in the first century, of a Jew named Jesus.

9. Historical proof for miracles

- 1) Scholars claim that if any ancient event is recorded in at least two documents, then it is probably true. Still we have in the New Testament four independent witnesses---Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It is prejudicial bias that rejects Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and yet accepts other histories of the era that are not attested to as much.

The New Testament has been preserved in some 25,000 textual witnesses, among them are some 5,600 manuscripts or portions of the Greek New Testament. These copies come to us very early, some within fifty years after their composition.

The gospels and the book of Acts are filled with names of cities, people, events, and locations that have been confirmed in history or archaeology. These are not fictitious, fanciful, stories of magic or superstition. People do not normally die for what they know to be a lie, but the writers of the New Testament died for the Cause of which they wrote.

It is claimed there are less than 500 extant copies of Homer's Iliad and the Odyssey, still few reject these copies. How does this compare with the existence of all the fragments, copies of portions of the Greek N. T, and 5,600 manuscript copies of the New Testament? Truly, God has not left himself without witnesses!