

Signs, Miracles and Healings

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These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Preface: The doctrines and essays below were culled from various exegetical works. *Signs and Miracles* came from lessons #031, #034, #35, #85 in the **Basic Exegesis of Exodus** series ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Signs and Miracles: An issue brought up here is the "wonders" which God will perform. Since we are mostly acquainted with the more spectacular portions of the Bible, we seem to think that the Christian life should be fraught with miracles and signs and wonders. We should walk out our front door and there should be a cloud in the sky indicating that we should make a left turn or a right turn. How did we ever become so foolish? Firstly, our lives are filled with supernatural activity that we will never recognize until we have passed into phase three of the Christian life—but this activity is not something that we actually

recognize as powerful or miraculous (I am thinking of the angelic conflict which is occurring all around us). However, the kinds of signs and wonders which we associate with the Christian life did not occur on a regular basis throughout history. These things were the exception to human experience, not the rule.

Every thousand years or two, there might be a short period of time when there would be signs and miracles and wonders. These things all occurred when God was making an important change in the way He dealt with man. Or they would occur at a particular cross roads of history. When God went from dealing with mankind through all families and centered in on the race of the Jews, there were some miraculous things which occurred, but miraculous to Abraham and Sarah only, and not to the outside world. When designating exactly what that genealogical line would be, God played a significant role in that family through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The bulk of their lives, including the portion with Joseph, were not filled with miracles. In the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, there were a few unusual situations—primarily involving God speaking to one of them—but even in their lives, this was very rare.

After this, 400 years will go by without any miracles occurring. Now, at this point in the history of the Hebrew people, there will be miracles associated with the exodus because God is not going to work through an unbelieving nation. All of these miracles will help the people of Israel to develop some faith in their God and exit Egypt. Furthermore, when it comes to Israel forming their own independent nation in Canaan, that will require some more supernatural encouragement.

What we will study in the book of Exodus will be a series of miracles which will take place in chapters 7–11, and God will allow the people of Israel some miraculous events in the desert-wilderness, ideally to bolster their faith. However, all of this is related to the formation of nation Israel out of the Hebrew people.

Now, after Israel is established as a nation in the land of Canaan, there will occur the odd miracle or act of power from God, but they will not occur on a daily, weekly or even monthly basis. Many years and even decades will pass between sign miracles in nation Israel.

Once God has established nation Israel in the land, there was less reason for signs and miracles to occur. King David, for instance, known as a man after God's heart, did not ever see a manifestation of God like Moses will see in the book of Exodus. David, in fact, only spoke with God through prophets and never directly.

In the far future, there will be a host of miracles and wonders associated with our Lord Jesus Christ, as He is the Promised King, the Messiah of Israel. Furthermore, there will be a great many miracles associated with the *foundation* of the church, because that indicates a complete change in God's plan (God would no longer work through the individual nation of Israel, but through an entity known as the *church*).

Throughout most of human history, even though God's hand is present and fully recognizable, there will be long periods of time where there are a dearth of signs and miracles and wonders. I clearly perceive and understand God's will in my life; but God does not guide me with a series of miracles, signs or feelings. God's guidance in my life is by means of the filling of the Holy Spirit (by means of naming my sins to God) and Bible doctrine in my soul. This is how God guides *every believer*.

Signs and Miracles, part II: What we are studying helps us, as students of the Word of God, to understand the purpose of miracles. These miracles often would give credence to the person performing the miracles (or pointing to the miracles—which is mostly what Moses will do before Pharaoh). One might say, these signs and wonders are Moses' credit card. Because he is able to do these things, people will give him a hearing (first the elders of Israel; secondly, Pharaoh).

Signs and wonders are a means to an end. We often remember the signs and wonders that we read in the Bible because they are amazing, but they are designed with a purpose in mind—which is, to convey God's will to God's people.

Believers are often confused about miracles and they think that the Bible is just one chapter of miracles followed by another chapter of miracles, but that is not exactly true. Or, they read about the miracles here in Exodus or about those that Jesus performed, and too often we think, *we should see miracles or we should be able to perform miracles*. Not true.

Miracles, in the Word of God, are generally used for very big events. If there are more than 3 miracles, then usually, what is happening is a very big deal. God does not find Himself bored and then decides, "I need to do some miracles to shake things up." This is not how God functions.

There are four times in human history where there are a plethora of miracles: (1) when Moses is about to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. By doing this, Moses is going to establish nation Israel. (2) Jesus performs many miracles, because He is the Son of God. These miracles give His Person credibility. There is nothing more important or more fundamental to the believer than Jesus dying for us sins on the cross. This is what Jesus has come to do. (3) The church, an entity separate and different from Israel, is established with a number of miracles and sign gifts. These are very big events in the history of God and man. (4) The next big event where there will be a number of signs will be during the Tribulation.

Today, a pastor does not need to establish his authority by speaking in tongues or curing people at the front of the stage, or throwing down his staff and having it turn into a snake (or by picking up deadly snakes and wandering about the church auditorium). The pastor-teacher today establishes his authority by his careful and accurate teaching of the Word of God. The believer ought to be able to read the Word of God, listen to the pastor teaching, and then see that these are in congruence with one another (or not). The established authority is the Word of God; and the pastor receives his authority from the Word of God by properly teaching the Word of God.

Today, God's great power is in His Word; not in a series of miracles. The greatest event in our lives is when we believed in Jesus Christ. We did not see someone perform some cheap slight of hand, and then believed; we heard the gospel—we heard that Jesus Christ died for our sins and opened up the way to God. We responded to the gospel message with faith. Suddenly, we understood that we needed to make this decision, and we did.

Nearly every one of us has seen a magician; and seen that magician perform tricks that we cannot explain. I can guarantee you that people will be far more impressed watching a Penn and Teller live show than seeing some pastor-teacher try to perform a miracle or two. First of all, God has not given pastor-teacher's the ability to perform miracles; and, even if they could, they would not be anywhere near as impressive as Penn and Teller. Does this mean that we ought to be listening to the teachings of Penn

Jillette? Of course not! He's a nice enough guy, but he is (if memory serves) an atheist and a libertarian. Neither of those concepts are Biblical. Following either of those approaches to life would be problematic for any believer.

A brief review of Luke 4:38–40, using Green's Literal Translation:

Luke 4:38 *And rising up from the synagogue, He [Jesus] went into the house of Simon. And the mother-in-law of Simon was being seized with a great fever. And they asked Him concerning her.*

Jesus was apparently asked by Simon (Peter) and others to come to Simon's house to heal his mother-in-law.

Luke 4:39 *And standing over her, He [Jesus] rebuked the fever; and it left her. And rising up instantly, she served them.*

Jesus simply rebuked the fever and Simon's mother-in-law was well. She immediately began to serve the people who are there.

Luke 4:40 *And the sun sinking, all, as many as had sick ones with various diseases, brought them to Him. And laying hands on each one of them, He healed them.* (Green's literal translation)

Jesus, prior to this, cast out a demon. Here, He heals Simon's mother-in-law. People suddenly start to bring their sick to Him to be healed.

Signs, miracles and healings:

Bringing these people to Jesus indicates that all those concerned (the person bringing and the person being brought) have faith of some sort in the Lord. We know for this simple reason: in nearly every city, there are Pentecostal and full gospel churches, churches which believe in regular miraculous healings. I have been sick before; and you reading this have been sick before. But neither of us has gone to a *full gospel* church in order to be healed. That is because, we have no faith in the minister there or in current-day faith healings by church pastors.

On the other hand, I do appreciate prayers, as do many believers; as we are told in Scripture to pray for one another and to pray for the sick (or to pray in general for one another). Going to a healer today is not Biblical; but having people pray for you is.

God could bring down a storm all around my house, and let leave my home untouched by moisture. Now, that would be cool and a miracle, *but*, it is not going to make me have greater faith in the Word of God. Such a miracle is unnecessary for my life. The better you know the Word of God, the less reason your soul requires/desires the miraculous.

What about to those who do not believe? Again, a miracle does not cause anyone to believe. I have seen Penn and Teller on stage on 3 different occasions. I could not explain how they did what they did;

but that does not mean that I now place my faith in Penn Jillette for matters philosophical, political or religious. We are going to read about Jesus doing a variety of miracles and the religious class does not question the miracles themselves; but they nevertheless question who Jesus is.

A surfeit of miracles was appropriate when there were major changes taking place in the plan of God. When God changes the way that He manages His household (= dispensation), He reveals this with signs and wonders. This happened at the exodus, at the public ministry of our Lord, and at the beginning of the Church Age. There is no indication that these signs and miracles are to continue throughout any particular dispensation.

If you are thinking of the book of Acts and the gospels where many healings do take place, we must bear in mind that there is a time and a season for many things. These public miracles did occur for a time and for specific reasons: (1) here, to give credence to Jesus as the Messiah; and (2) in the book of Acts, to transfer the authority of the religious class in Israel to the Apostles of Jesus. The latter transfer of authority has already taken place. The fact that I am working for many hours examining and exegeting this book of Luke indicates that I have faith that this is the Word of God. So, the purpose of these miracles, to transfer authority to the Apostles, has taken place. This transfer of authority is over and done with. The end result is, we have the New Testament, which Church Age believers accept as authoritative. Since we accept the writings of the Apostles as Scripture, there is no longer a need for miracles.

Let me be specific. I do not require any miracles to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing in Him, I have eternal life. People who come to the Lord in this way also do not require some sign or miracle. I do not need any signs or miracles to convince me that I am presently in the Church Age; and that I do not belong to the Age of Israel in any way. However, when those two events (the first advent of Jesus and the establishment of the church) were first taking place, such signs and miracles were a necessity. People had been waiting for hundreds of years for their Messiah. When Jesus arrived on the scene, if He simply said, "Here I am" He would not have been accepted as Messiah (witness what happened in Nazareth). However, throughout His public ministry, Jesus performed many miracles and signs of power, to confirm that He was indeed sent by God.

The change from the Age of Israel to the Church Age was also a very big deal. We don't think about this transfer of authority much today, as we simply accept it as fact. We don't go to the nearest synagogue and bring a lamb to sacrifice; we don't think that we need to go to Israel and live there. However, the changes which took place around A.D. 30–33 were quite dramatic when it took place. There were a great many changes in the lives of believers which took place as a result. God needed to show, through the Apostles, that His power was with them, and not with nation Israel. God no longer would work through nation Israel (at least for the duration of the Church Age).

Since Jesus no longer needs to be established as the Christ; and since the local church is now where Bible doctrine is taught; there is no longer a need for miracles to establish those things. When I go to church, I don't need to see my pastor heal a few people, speak in tongues, and then teach a message from the Bible. I recognize his authority by choosing that church, and listen intently and take notes. If I did not recognize his authority, I would quietly leave the church and find a pastor whose teaching I could trust.

These signs very likely symbolize some very specific things.

The Three Signs Given to Moses

The Signs	What the Signs Mean
Moses throws his staff onto the ground and it turns into a serpent; he takes it up again, and it turns back to a staff.	The serpent is often used as a biblical metaphor for Satan or demonic powers (e.g., Gen 3:1; Luke 10:19 cp. 9:1 and Mark 16:18; Rev 12:9; 20:2). What Moses faces in the land of Egypt is a plethora of Egyptian gods (that is, demonic powers). Moses will have the ability to neutralize them at any time, despite their appearance (more accurately, God through Moses can neutralize the Egyptian gods).
Moses places his hand into his robe and takes it out, and it is leprous. When he places it back into robe and takes it out, and his hand returns to normal.	Leprosy is often a sign of sin or an indication of sin. The leper is often seen as being completely consumed by sin (I am speaking metaphorically; not literally). When Moses takes his leprous hand and places it back within his robe, and then brings it out, whole again—this is what God is able to do. God is able to take that which is consumed by sin and make it whole again. Along the same lines, if Moses' heart is right, then he is able to accomplish good things with his hand (we are motivated by the heart; and what we do is represented by the hand). If Moses' heart is not right, then his hand is leprous and incapable of doing God's work.
Moses will take water from the Nile River and pour it out on the ground, at which point, it will turn into blood.	Water speaks of blessing and blood speaks of judgment. Egypt, a nation which has enjoyed blessing because Israel resides there. However, because of their actions against Israel and Israel's God, Egypt will now be under judgment from God.

From Nathan Lawrence: *The serpent represents sin, since it is Satan the serpent who introduced sin to man in the Garden of Eden, which brought upon man the curse of death. Yeshua took that curse on himself when he was lifted up on the cross of judgment as Moses lifted up the bronze serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14). Yeshua defeated Satan the serpent at the cross, even as Moses' serpent defeated the serpents of the satanic Pharaoh's magicians.*

Lawrence continues: *The three signs that YHVH had Moses perform to Pharaoh were merely warning shots against a wicked and unrepentant nation instructing them to submit to Y^ehowah's will. YHVH was telling the Egyptians that if they refused to obey his prophet, he would unleash demonic spirits, plagues of sickness and economic destruction on that nation. These are YHVH's judgments against a nation that refuses to repent. Of course, Egypt refused to obey YHVH, and so he not only brought these judgments against Egypt, but much more, such that Egypt was totally destroyed.*¹

I read several opinions on these signs; the information in the table I believe is the most accurate understanding of the spiritual meaning of these signs.

¹ From <http://hoshanarabbah.org/blog/2016/01/02/whats-the-significance-of-mosess-three-miracles/> accessed November 13, 2018.

Addendum

God's power and the utility belt of a policeman:

Let me try to explain God's power and His use of His power in another way. I saw a policewoman the other day, and she had a utility belt with quite a number of things attached to it. She had a baton, a spray device, a gun, a taser, and several other items. Now, 99% of the time that this woman interacts with people, she does not use anything from her utility belt. In a rare event, she may reach for the baton, or for the taser. She has the option of using anything in her belt, and her training is all about what to use when. She does not reach for her gun in every instance of a problem. In fact, if she did, she would lose her job. It is not unusual for a cop to go for years—even decades—without ever unholstering their gun (unless they are a cop on a tv show, and then they pull out their weapon every 5 minutes). For myself, and for most people, a cop has the authority in any given situation, and I am going to respond with "Yes, sir" or "No, ma'am" throughout our entire interaction. I give the policeman deference *not* because I think they are going to pull a gun on me, but because they have the governmental authority when we interact (and because, I am not an idiot).

Policeman Utility Belt; from [WeaselZippers](#); accessed September 25, 2019.



Think of God as that policeman, and He has a utility belt that He can go to at any time to suddenly unleash a plethora of frogs on any given nation. Just like the policeman, God shows normal restraint. God uses different options at different times. One thing that we will learn from the Pharaoh of Egypt, unleashing a plethora of miracles does not change everyone's mind. Even though Pharaoh will give in from time to time, he does not ever worship the God of the Hebrews, despite seeing incredibly powerful signs. To the very end, Pharaoh will continue to be negative towards the Hebrew people and towards their God. Bear in mind, he saw the exact same miracles that Moses did.

In the same way, I don't need to see a policeman reach for his gun in order for me to give them deference and respect. People not brought up with the same sense and respect, might find out to their own detriment that they do not want to give a cop any reason to reach for anything in his or her utility belt. Even the slightest amount of parental guidance in this area can go so far as to save a life.

When I interact with a cop, it is unnecessary for them to reach for anything in their utility belt. When God interacts with man, He does not bring out the frogs every time that man is problematic. Now, if you understand that, apply it to the use of miracles in general—we know by recorded history that miracles

are not enough. If a person has negative volition, all of the miracles in the world is not going to change them.

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