

## Miracles in the Bible

In **Exodus 7:9**, God told Moses that when he appeared before Pharaoh, Pharaoh would ask Moses to perform a miracle. This was to demonstrate God's power, or the power of God through Moses, to Pharaoh, because Pharaoh did not believe in one God but in the existence of many gods, some more powerful than others, and he wanted to deal only with one powerful god. God told him to throw his staff to the ground, and it would turn into a snake. He did so, but this miracle did not convince Pharaoh, because Pharaoh summoned his wise men and sorcerers, "*now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments; For each cast every man down his rod, and they became serpents*" (**Exodus 7:11-12**). Therein lies the very problem with trusting in miracles: **Satan's representatives can perform them just as well as men of God.** So, what do they really demonstrate?

### Does a miracle matter?

When we investigate how we should approach miracles, we must carefully consider the matter. First, there is the principle that the true God is the owner or Lord of the laws of nature and physics, and He can disregard these laws that govern us at will (which is a miracle). This is what we should think and believe about the true God. Prayer is directly a request to the God and Lord of nature to provide or change a circumstance for our benefit or to fulfill our desire.

**1 John 5:14** *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.* The problem with many people's understanding is that God can perform miracles, but **according to His will, not your desires.** In other words, just because you ask Him or because you want something, it's not as if God will heal you, give you something, or change your circumstances. In the Bible, miracles happen to demonstrate God's love for us, but also within the framework of God's work and plan. If it's not God's will, there won't be a miracle. Many times, good people close to God didn't receive rescue (**Hebrews 11**), help, healing, or any other kind of miracle because it wasn't God's will in their case. So, God does what He wants, and He's not

necessarily obligated to fulfill our desires or wishes. Look at the literature on miracles and miraculous healing, and you'll quickly see the attitude of trying to force God above all else. The idea of "*if it's Your will, Lord*" never appears except as an attitude of a "loser," a sign of weakness, or a lack of faith.

The second consideration regarding miracles is that they are not always beneficial. In **Exodus 3:20**, God told Moses, "*I will smite Egypt with all my wonders.*" That is, when God performs a miracle, it is sometimes a form of punishment rather than a blessing. In **Nehemiah 9:10** and **Acts 7:36**, God teaches us that He used miracles and signs to clarify that Israel was God's chosen people. Similarly, God performed miracles at the beginning of the prophetic age, at the beginning of the Church age, and at the beginning of each dispensation, but not continuously throughout this age.

### Seeing but not believing

**Exodus 4:21** *And the Lord said to Moses, "When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand; but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go."* (This is the first mention of a miracle in the Bible.)

But look at how God sees the matter. God showed Pharaoh a miracle, a power over nature, to demonstrate His power, but the result is that his heart was hardened, not his faith built up. Contrary to common thinking, miracles do not produce faith, but rather hardness of heart in some cases (**Exodus 7:3, 9; 11:9-10**). Indeed, there is an inability to truly believe and understand when people pursue miracles instead of the truth: "*The great temptations which thine eyes have seen the signs, and those great miracles ... Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.*" **Deuteronomy 29:3-4.**

**2 Thessalonians 2:10** *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* The approach is this: God allows people to

remain amazed by miraculous power so that it may be revealed who is truly saved, and who is pretending.

**Isaiah 29:9** *Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. 10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. 14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.*

Supernatural power sometimes works against faith. The Bible says that Jesus could not perform any miracles there (**Mark 6:5; Matthew 13:58**) because of their unbelief. When people have a desire to love God, God can work in their lives, but when they seek to be entertained by miracles and signs, God can do nothing for them.

### Miracles are for knowing God and for not fearing enemies

Contrary to creating faith, miracles are given so that we may know God and not fear God's enemies. This aligns with the use of miracles with Pharaoh. The idea behind a miracle is "*to fear the Lord our God.*" **Deuteronomy 6:20-24.** Moses told Israel (**Deuteronomy 4:34-35**) that God revealed himself "*by temptations, by signs, and by wonders... unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God, and there is none else beside him.*" The same idea occurs in **Deuteronomy 6:22-24**. In **Deuteronomy 7:19-21**, the idea is that you should "*not be affrighted at them*" the enemies "*all the people of whom thou art afraid. Do not be afraid of them.*"

### Obey this fearsome God, not the miracle worker.

In **Deuteronomy 4:39-40** (shortly after the passage I quoted above), the awesome presentation of God is so that "*Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart... the Lord he is God... Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes and commandments.*"

**Deuteronomy 13:1-4** *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, 2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us*

serve them; **3** *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.* **4** *Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.*

The entire focus of the Bible is on the inspiration of God's Word (revealed truth), and God's supernatural power to show us who God is, not to focus on the servant who performed a miracle.

God himself warned us of the danger of believing or following the false prophet who has supernatural powers, the power to perform miracles, and to amaze us.

**Matthew 7:21** *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.* **22** *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?* **23** *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* **24** *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:*

**2 Corinthians 11:13, 15** *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.* **15** *Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

In other words, when miracles are the sole credential of a prophet, there's a problem. Conformity with the Word of God (in word, spirit, and deed) is what makes a minister a man of God or not, not his "spiritual powers." Ultimately, the Antichrist will be the prophet with the most powers, miracles, and signs of all.

**2 Thessalonians 2:8-9** *And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:* **9** *Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

The Antichrist and Satan use the Bible extensively to grab everyone's attention and focus it on supernatural power (miracles and signs), but they stop there, because they don't want to focus on the moral message of the Scriptures; they just use enough bait to trap the simple-minded.

The Bible also presents the false prophet (even with the power to perform miracles) as someone whose character is not "to walk even as he walked" (**1 John 2:6**). **Titus 1:16** says, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." A true man of God is identified by his exaltation of God's Word and by his moral character, which is like that of Jesus Christ. A man of God practices what the Bible says (**Romans 2:13; James 1:22**). Jesus said that prostitutes and tax collectors will enter heaven before the religious because they obey the will of God the Father (**Matthew 21:29-31**). This element of obedience to God's Word and will is what allows us to recognize good doctrine from bad, and a true minister from a false one (**Matthew 7:21-24**). A man of God's service should focus on pleasing God, not on what men want to hear and see (**Ephesians 6:6**, "not with eyeservice, as menpleasers").

## Our Attitude Towards Miracles



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In some Christian circles, the presence of miracles is an absolute requirement for a ministry to "be from God." They see any miracle as God's approval of the person or ministry.

From what these people say, miracles are the sole or most important element that proves a ministry is from God.

They seek miracles, demand miracles, and rely on their miracles to defend their ministries as a blessing from God, regardless of their sins and unfaithfulness in other areas.