

1. Last week I taught in part Joh 2:18 by way of the *Doctrine of Miracles* and when the clock tolled 7:45 P.M. we had just begun the study of certain **Caveats Concerning Miracles?**

2. Before we return to our study, I want to give you opportunity to use 1Jo 1:9 as may or may not be necessary.

3. I want to review some of that learned and then begin new material on page four. Let's start the review by looking at an expanded translation of Joh 2:15-18.

Expanded Translation

Joh 2:15 So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.

Joh 2:16 To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

Joh 2:17 Later, His disciples remembered what was written in Psa 69:9: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

Joh 2:18 Then several of the Scribes demanded from Jesus, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to rebuild the Temple in three days?"

Doctrine of Miracles

Introduction

1. The age of miracles is not per se over but the gift of miracles has vanished. We must look to the Scriptures for guidance with reference to miracles.

2. Every heart beat in the Devil's world is a miracle, the sick being cured, the baby being born, the Gospel being proclaimed, the Word being taught and many other mundane, everyday occurrences are miracles in this the Devil's domain.

3. Should we therefore pray for the extraordinary? Of course, declares the Scripture. Since the term miracle is popularly applied to unusual events, it is not easy to give the word miracle its true biblical significance.

4. A miracle occurs when God does something beyond what could be accomplished according to the laws of nature as we understand them, and may be in violation of them.

5. Some tend to view miracles as isolated events. Miracles always have a purpose. Every event in the life of a believer has a definite purpose and though we may not view it as such, it is a miracle. Miracles served to authenticate the message and the messenger of God at critical junctures in the development of the Hebrew-Christian story.

6. They also helped preserve the truth of God from extinction given the many efforts to destroy God's Word. By all rights the Bible should have been destroyed and yet it is the most accurate book available from antiquity; a miracle!

7. Moses was a stranger to his people and needed a means to demonstrate that he had been sent by God to lead them from bondage. Moreover, "He needed" a way to persuade Pharaoh to release the enslaved Israelites. God led the Israelites out of Egypt, He had to exercise miraculous power to bring millions of them through the wilderness and into Canaan.

8. Elijah and Elisha ministered to Israel in a day when calf worship and Baal worship threatened to exterminate faith in God. 1st Ki 18:21-40

9. Daniel and his associates were thrust into positions of leadership in a day when the temple and Hebrew political power had been destroyed, and when a large percentage of the leading members of the Hebrew community were exiled, raising many questions in the minds of those exiled ...

The Miracles of Jesus

1. They had several purposes:

- to demonstrate His Deity and thus to prove that He was sent from God,
- to support His Messiahship,
- to lead His followers to saving faith,
- to help prepare His disciples for the ministry they were to perform.

What About Miracles Today?

1. The question is often raised as to whether the modern church may enjoy the same power of performing miracles as the early New Testament church. It must be granted that God is omnipotent and could enable His own to perform miracles today.
2. While it is clear from Scripture and history that God generally and gradually ceased to work through “signs” and “wonders” as the Canon was being completed and distributed.

What About the Gift of Miracles? Is There Evidence of Their Gradual Decline?

1. A categorical study of the early temporary gifts give further documentation that a gradual decline did in fact occur. For example: Paul, early in his ministry could heal and often did so; the same is true of the other Apostles. Acts 19:11-12
2. Later the whip gifts vanished as prophesied by Paul in 1st Corinthian Chapter thirteen and Phi 2:25 compared with 2Ti 4:20.
 - 2.1 Unger in his book on Tongues speaks of the temporary gifts as having been hissed off the stage when the Canon of Scripture is completed, i.e., **“when that which is perfect came.”**
 - 2.2 Additionally, both Unger and Thieme conclude that Scripture itself seems to indicate a gradual reduction in the use of temporary or whip gifts as the Bible unfolded.
 - 2.3 After the writing of 1st and 2nd Corinthians in c. 56 and 57 A.D., there is no mention of the whip gifts; a significant number of books of the Bible were in fact written and distributed after 1st and 2nd Corinthians.
 - 2.4 For example, we had: Colossians, Galatians, Philemon, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus, 1st and 2nd Peter, 1st, 2nd and 3rd John, Hebrews, Jude and Revelation.

Caveats Concerning Certain Miracles

1. Christ prophesied that false Christs and false prophets would perform miracles during the Kingdom Age and the Tribulation.

Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

2. Certainly, in the Age of the Church we must be very careful with reference to analyzing what appears to be a miracle.

2Co 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

2Co 11:15 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.

Mat 7:22 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?

Mat 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

3. The AntiChrist and his supporting cast will be men of miracles.

2Th 2:8 And then shall that Wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

2Th 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

2Th 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.

2Th 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

Rev 13:12 And he (the False *Prophet*) exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

Rev 13:13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

Rev 13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

Non-Christian Sources of Miraculous Power

1. In the end times miracles will be performed by demonic power.
2. The work of the Egyptian and Babylonian magicians, Simon Magus, and Elymas the sorcerer should be placed in the same category.

Exo 7:11 Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the **Egyptian magicians** also did the same things by their secret arts:
Exo 7:12 Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

Dan 1:20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the **magicians and enchanters** in his whole kingdom.

Acts 8:9 But there was a certain man, called **Simon**, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

Acts 8:10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

Acts 8:11 And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Acts 8:14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

Acts 8:15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

Acts 8:16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

Acts 8:17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

Acts 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

Acts 8:19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Acts 8:20 But Peter said unto hm, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

Acts 8:21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

Acts 8:22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Acts 8:23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

Acts 8:24 Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

Acts 13:6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

Acts 13:7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

Acts 13:8 But **Elymas** the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

Acts 13:9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.

Acts 13:10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

Acts 13:11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

Acts 13:12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

Conclusion

1. The miracles performed by Moses and Joshua may easily be found and studied in the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua.
2. The works of Elijah are described in 1Kings chapter 17 and 2Kings chapter 2; the works of Elisha are described in 2Kings chapters two through eight.
3. The miracles of Daniel are recorded in the book of Daniel.
4. The miracles of our Lord are scattered throughout the gospels.
5. Miracles performed by leaders in the early church may be found in the book of Acts, beginning in chapter three and the early epistles to the church.
6. The gospels record 35 separate miracles performed by Christ.
7. Of these, Matthew mentions 20; Mark 18, Luke 20 and John 7.
8. Obviously the gospel writers under the leadership of God the Holy Spirit only selected a few.
9. There are many ways of arranging the individual miracles noted in the gospels depending on the purpose of the commentator.
10. As earlier noted, the Apostles did perform many miracles but clearly with time seemed to diminish in terms of frequency.
11. In closing let me repeat, since we have no idea of the source of certain miracles, we must not place ourselves in a position of dogmatically asserting which are Satanically or Divinely inspired; but rather our job is to know what the Bible teaches about each miracle.
12. For a study of discernment of the source of miracles today I would recommend you read Hal Lindsey's book; "*Satan Is Alive and Well on Planet Earth.*"
13. Now let's see what we can learn from Joh 2:19-22.

NIV

Joh 2:19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”

Joh 2:20 The Jews replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?”

Joh 2:21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body.

Joh 2:22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Comments:

Doctrine of the Ascension and Seating of Christ

1. Definition and Concept:

1.1 the bodily transfer of our Lord from the earthly to the heavenly sphere of existence,

1.1.1 the Ascension and Seating is then that doctrine of Christology pertaining to the glorification of Jesus in hypostatic union being seated at the right of the Father in the place of honor.

1.1.2 Both the Ascension and Seating of our Lord were accomplished in resurrection body.

1.1.3 This Ascension and Seating of our Lord forms the climax of Jesus' strategic victory in the angelic conflict.

1.2 The primary account of the Ascension and Seating appears in Acts 1:9-11 and Luk 24:51:

Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Acts 1:10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

Acts 1:11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Luk 24:51 "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them and carried up into heaven."

1.3 The reference to the Ascension in Mar 16:19 is rendered questionable by inferior textual evidence. Mar 16:9-20 is not in the better manuscripts.

1.3.1 However, the Ascension and Seating is assumed as the foundation for numerous statements in the New Testament.

Examples:

Col 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Rom 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Heb 8:1 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,

1.4 In fact, there is hardly a New Testament writer who does not give testimony, directly or indirectly, to the truth of the Ascension and Seating.

2. According to Luke, the event took place approximately 40 days after the resurrection.

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

3. Luke also tells us it took place near Bethany on the Mount of Olives where Jesus disappeared into a cloud.

Luk 24:50 When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them.

Luk 24:51 While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Acts 1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.

Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

3.1 Whether the cloud was that of the Shekinah glory or a natural cloud of vapor, the record does not make clear.

4. The Ascension and Seating was anticipated in the Old Testament.

Psa 68:18 When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train; you received gifts for men, even for the rebellious--that you, O LORD God, might dwell there. Eph 4:8 is a related verse.

Eph 4:8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."

Psa 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

5. The Ascension and Seating was prophesied by our Lord.

Joh 6:58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever..."

Joh 6:61 Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you?"

Joh 6:62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

Joh 20:17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

6. Objection has been raised concerning the Ascension by those who approach the record from a purely naturalistic viewpoint.

6.1 They assert that such violation of the law of gravity is unthinkable.

6.2 However, for those who accept the possibility of supernatural intervention in the world, the Ascension and Seating is not a problem.

6.3 Given an omnipotent God, both Resurrection and Ascension are easily conceivable.

7. Some view the Ascension as being merely a symbolic representation of Christ's entrance into divine glory.

8. This is an attempt to retain the spiritual value of the Ascension account without sacrificing the concept of the natural world as a closed system not susceptible to supernatural intrusion.

9. The significance of the Ascension and Seating is manifold.

9.1 For Christ Himself the Ascension and Seating meant exaltation to a position of glory as the victorious Lord, the Head of the Church.

Eph 1:20 which such power He exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,
Eph 1:21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

Eph 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

Eph 1:23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Phi 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

9.2 The Ascension also made possible the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell the believer as our Helper, to convince of sin and to teach us the Word of God.

Joh 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Joh 16:8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

Joh 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Joh 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

9.3 The Ascension and Seating signifies our identification with Christ; Our Lord is seated with the Father in the heavenlies and we are identified with our Savior in the heavens.

Eph 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

Col 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Col 3:3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

9.4 The Ascension-initiated Christ's high priestly advocacy before the Father on the believer's behalf, a truth which is given major treatment in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Heb 4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.

Heb 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Heb 6:20 Jesus, who went before us, has entered into the third heaven on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 7:22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

Heb 7:23 Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office;

Heb 7:24 but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.
Heb 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Heb 8:1 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,

Heb 9:24 For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.

9.5 Christ will return to the earth in the same manner in which he ascended.

Acts 1:11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

10. The resurrection body of Jesus was capable of horizontal and vertical travel and He went through walls, passed also through two heavens to the Third Heaven. The Ascension and Seating establishes the authority of our Lord to intercede for us.

Rom 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life-- sits at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

12. The power and perfection of His total being and work is portrayed in the Ascension and Seating.

Heb 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

End Lesson

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