

The Miracles of Jesus

Introduction

As we begin our study of “The Miracles of Jesus” there are a few things that we need to examine by way of introduction.

What Constitutes A Miracle?

“A popular but wrong, definition is to say that a miracle is a point in time in which God intervenes in the world.... That definition fails for one good reason: It gives the false impression that God only occasionally intervenes in the world. ... A miracle happens when God, who is continuously active in the world, breaks His usual pattern and does something extraordinary.” [Erwin W. Lutzer. “Seven Convincing Miracles.” (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999) pp. 16-17.]

Are all miracles of God?

Not everything that is miraculous is from God. To put it simply, either miracles are based on Christ and the Bible or else they are connected with demons and the world of the occult. Just as Christ’s miracles were intended to lead men and women to Him, Satan wants his miracles to lead multitudes to worship him.

As far as the miracles of Christ are concerned it is particularly notable that the enemies of Christ never sought to deny the powerful works he performed. They attempted to attribute this works to the power of the Devil (Matt 12:22-24) but they did not argue that they had not taken place.

What Is The Purpose Of God’s Miracles?

Usually miracles help someone in need. But the meaning is always deeper: God gets our attention so that we are invited to look beyond the event to a Miracle Worker. Clearly if the purpose of Christ’s miracles was only to help some one in need, thousands more would have been healed etc. The simple fact is this: The primary purpose of the miracles was to authenticate the message of Christ and the apostles.

As we conduct our study of the miracles that Jesus performed I want us ask two and seek to answer, two principle questions: “What does this miracle reveal about the person of Christ?” And “What does this miracle say to us today?”

Did Jesus Perform Any Miracles As A Child?

Since the record of the miracle at Cana (John 2:11) ends with the statement that this was “*the beginning of the signs* (miracles)” it would seem to indicate conclusively this was absolutely the first miracle that Jesus had performed.

He had lived for thirty years, and this is the first time he has exercised his power to perform a miracle. As such this nullifies those extra-biblical accounts of miracles performed by Jesus as Child. These miracles are immediately suspect not only because they are not included in the Bible but because they are meaningless. The miracles of Jesus were never meaningless.

This is a study of the miracles performed by Jesus, and so do not include the miracles associated with of His birth.

The order of the miracles as they are given here is the actual historical order – as best that we can tell (indications of time and place are often not precisely given – in which these miracles occurred, although they may be sequenced differently in the different Gospel accounts.

1. **Jesus Turns Water Into Wine** (Jn 2: 1- 11)
2. **Jesus Heals The Noble Man’s Son** (John 4:46-54)
3. Jesus Provides A Great Catch Of Fish (Lk 5:1-11)
4. Jesus Heals A Demonic In A Synagogue (Mark 1:21-28, Luke 4:31-37)
5. Jesus Heals His Peter’s Mother-In-Law (**Mt 8:14-15, Mark 1:29-31, Luke 4:38-39**)
6. Jesus Cleanses A Leper (Mark 1:40-45, Luke 5:12-15)
7. Jesus Heals A Paralytic (**Mt 9:2-7, Mark 2:3-12, Lk. 5:18-26**)

8. **Jesus Heals A Cripple At Bethesada** (John 5: 1-18)
9. **Jesus Heals A Withered Hand (Mt 12:9-12, Mark 3:1-6, Luke 5:6-10,)**
10. Jesus Heals A Centurion's Servant (Mt 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10)
11. Jesus Raises A Widow's Son (Luke 7:11-17)
12. Jesus Stills A Storm (**Mt 8:23-27, Mk 4:35-41, Lk 8:22-25**)
13. Jesus Delivers A Demonic In Gedara (Mt 8:28-34, Mk 5:1-20, Luke 8:27-39)
14. Jesus A Woman Of A Hemorrhage (**Mt 9: 20-22, Mk 5:25-34, Luke 8:43-48**)
15. Jesus Raises Jairus's Daughter (**Mt 9:18-26, Mk 5:22-43, Luke 8:41-56**)
16. Jesus Heals Two Blind Men (Matt. 9:27-31)
17. **Jesus Feeds The 5,000** (Mt 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-14)
18. **Jesus Walks On Water** (Matt. 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52, John 6: 15-21)
19. Jesus Heals A Syro-Phoneician Girl(Mt 15:21-28, Mk 7:24-30)
20. Jesus Heals the Deaf and the Dumb Man (Mark 7:31-37)
21. Jesus Feeds The 4,000 (Mt 15:30-38, Mark 8:1-9)
22. Jesus Heals The Blind Man (Mark 8:22-26)
23. Jesus Delivers The Demonized Boy (**Mt 17:14-21, Mk 9:14-29, Luke 9:37-43**)
24. **Jesus Heals A Man Born Blind** (John 9:1-7)
25. Jesus Heals A Woman Bound By Satan (Luke 13: 10-17)
26. Jesus Heals A Man With Dropsy (Luke 14:1-6)
27. **Jesus Raises Lazarus** (John 11)
28. Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers (Luke 17:11-19)
29. Jesus Heals Bartimaeus (**Mt 20:29-34, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:35-43**)
30. Jesus Curses A Fig Tree (Mt 21:17-22, Mark 11: 12-14, 20-24)
31. **Jesus Replaces Malchus's Ear** (**Mt 26:51-56, Mk4: 46-47, Lk 22:50-51, Jn 18: 10-11**)
32. Wonders At Calvary
33. **Jesus Provides A Catch Of Fish** (Jn 21:1-14)

[Larry Richards. "Every Miracle of the Bible." (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1998) pp. 198-199]

There are 35 miracles of Jesus (the number can vary from 33-40 depending on the commentator) given in the New Testament.

- No Gospel writer includes all 35.
- Scripture makes it clear that Jesus performed many more miracles than the Gospel's record. (John 20:30-31)
- Some miracles are included in all four Gospels and some in only one.
- The miracle accounts may occur in a slightly different order in the different Gospels.
- In the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) the writers tended to cluster miracles together to establish something important about the person of Jesus.

Jesus' First Miracle at Cana - Water Turned to Wine (John 2:1-11)

This story begins with the words "*On the third day,*" that is to say just three days after his baptism in the river Jordan, and His identification as the Lamb of God by John (John 1:33-34), Jesus performs His first recorded miracle. Jesus performed his first miracle, not at a funeral but at a wedding; not in the temple but in a private home.

The occasion of the miracle was a village wedding feast to which Mary, the mother of Jesus had been invited. I find it fascinating that the earthly ministry of Jesus began at a wedding and all of human history will culminate with a wedding (Rev 19:9).

“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. (2) Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. (3) And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” (4) Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.” (5) His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.” (6) Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. (7) Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. (8) And He said to them, “Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.” And they took it. (9) When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. (10) And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!” (11) This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.”

The Request that Mary Made. (v. 3)

“And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”

We really have no way of knowing what Mary’s expectations were when she made this statement to Jesus. Some suggest that she is hinting that he and the disciples need to leave, but I hardly think this is likely. J. Vernon McGee suggest that Mary is asking for that he at last vindicate her reputation that he is indeed the son of God. But since He had not yet performed any miracles, this was probably not asking for something supernatural, she just wanted his help. [Warren Wiersbe. Classic Sermons on the Miracles of Jesus. Ch 1. “Empty Waterpots.” (Grand Rapids:Kregel, 1995) p.8]

A shortage of wine at a wedding may not seem like a big deal but Warren Weirsbe points out that it was necessary for the groom in those days to have adequate provision at the wedding. It would be extremely embarrassing for him and his family to run out of food or wine. If the supplies had run out at a wedding feast, the family and the young couple would never have lived down the shame.

The Response Of Jesus To His Mother (v. 4).

“Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”

On the surface, Jesus use of the *“woman”* in addressing His mother seems harsh and abrupt, but it was in fact a common term. It would be the form of address that he uses from the cross to commend her in the Apostle John’s care (John 19:26). Jesus’ response seems to be setting new parameters in his relationship with his mother. For many years (Jesus is now 30 yrs old) she has raised Jesus as her son. It is a gentle reminder that she could no longer view him as other mother’s viewed their sons.

The Miracle Jesus Performed (vv. 6-8) *“Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. (7) Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. (8) And He said to them, “Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.” And they took it.”*

There were six stone waterpots that were used by the people who attended the wedding for ceremonial washing (according to Jewish customs people’s hands had to be washed before a meal), each of these pots would have held 20-30 gallons. Multiply 20-30 gallons by six and you have some 120-180 gallons.

Jesus and Wine

Did Jesus create alcohol or “fermented wine”? I wish I could settle this issue once and for all tonight but men are much more scholarly than I have not been able to do so. So I would just like to make a couple of points in passing.

We need to understand that if indeed this wine did contain any alcohol it is much different than what is consumed today. The Jews did not distill their wine make it more potent they did just the opposite they diluted it with 2 to 3 parts water to make it go further and less potent.

The word translated “*wine*” here is the Greek word (*oinos*) and can be used to describe any “fruit of the vine” and need not refer to fermented wine. Indeed it would seem that why that juice was preserved in ancient times was by boiling it until it became a thick syrup. This substance was then stored in new skin bottles and referred to as “new wine.” (Putting new wine into old wineskins could introduce fermentation). When needed the syrup would be squeezed out of the skin bottles and would be reconstituted as a drink by the addition of water.

Certainly to use this text to justify drinking alcohol, distorts and twists it’s intended meaning.

The Results of the Miracle. (vv. 9-11)

“When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. (10) And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!” (11) This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.”

Some where between the water pots and the master of feast the water became wine.

In verse eleven, John says *“This beginning of signs (semeion) Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.”* The Greek word (*semeion*) translated here as “sign” occurs 77 times in the New Testament, and is used to identify an act which calls for the exercise of supernatural power. (John 20:30-31) The miracle stories confront us with the question of whether the power of God was or was not revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ. They compel us to say Yes or No!

Present Application.

We are assured that the best comes last. The devil however, gives his best first. He lures us into sin with promises he cannot and does not intend to keep and doles out his trinkets up front. Whatever passing pleasures he does hand out in this life will be best that will ever be experienced. He sheds those he has deceived from the pain, heartache and impending eternity of torment. The devil never shows you where he is taking you; he only shows you the next enticing step.

“But for those who know Christ as Savior is as bad as it ever will get. Sometimes our heavenly Father gives us a bitter cup to begin with, perhaps the cup of conviction of sin, but its purpose is that we might take the cup of salvation. Sometimes He gives us the cup of loneliness that we might drink from the cup of His presence. Or we are asked to drink from the cup of failure that we might remember that we serve Him alone. But the day is coming in which our fortune will be reversed: “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18) The best is yet to come.” [Erwin W. Lutzer. *“Seven Convincing Miracles.”* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999) p. 48.]