



# The Miraculous: 1. OT & NT Miracles

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# What is a Miracle?

- Dictionary definition: *Webster's New World Dictionary* (1966):
  - *An event or action that apparently contradicts known scientific laws.*
  - Not too bad, but this eliminates striking providences, like the quail blown into camp in Numbers 11:31.
- Let's have a look at biblical terminology for miracles.

# Biblical Terminology

- Terms expressing the wondrous or marvelous aspect:
  - Hebrew *mofet, niflaot, pele', temach*
  - Greek *teras, thauma*
- Terms expressing its power:
  - Greek *dunamis*
- Terms expressing its significance:
  - Hebrew *'ot*
  - Greek *semeion*

# What is a Miracle?

- So we suggest a biblical definition of miracle:
  - *A Biblical miracle is a striking or wonderful event, displaying supernatural power and intended to carry a certain significance.*
- We will operate with this definition, which does not rule out striking providential events.



# Old Testament Miracles

A quick tour of their nature & purpose

# Creation

- Narrated in Genesis 1-3
- Numerous events here seem to involve the miraculous, even though humans were not present.
- So the miraculous may not occur only for the benefit of humans.
- Or they may occur for the benefit of later generations of humans, e.g., us!

# The Flood

- Narrated in Genesis 6-9
- There seems to be both intervention and providence involved here.
- The purposes of the flood are clearly:
  - Judgment, for those not on the ark
  - Deliverance, for those who are

# The Patriarchal Period

- Babel (Gen 11) – judgment
- Abraham
  - Flaming torch (Gen 15:17)
    - covenant, revelation
  - Sodom & Gomorrah (Gen 18-19)
    - judgment with deliverance
  - Isaac's birth (Gen 18, 21) – promise
- Joseph's dreams (Gen 37, 40-41)
  - revelation, deliverance, attestation

# The Mosaic Period

- Burning bush (Ex 3)
  - revelation, promise, deliverance
- Moses' signs (Ex 4) - staff, hand
  - attestation of message, messenger
- The Plagues (Ex 7-12)
  - attestation, judgment, deliverance
- Crossing Red Sea (Ex 14)
  - deliverance, judgment

# The Mosaic Period

- Provision in Wilderness
  - Cloud - guidance, protection, attestation
  - Manna, water, quail – provision
  - Clothing, sandals (Deut 29:5) – provision
  - Sinai events - revelation, attestation, covenant
  - Amalek defeated (Ex 17) – judgment, attestation, deliverance
  - Korah, Dathan, Abiram destroyed (Num 16) – judgment, attestation
  - Aaron's rod (Num 17) - attestation

# Conquest of Canaan

- Crossing Jordan (Josh 3)
  - attestation (3:10-13, 4:6-7, 22-24)
  - provision (3:15)
- Jericho (Josh 2, 6)
  - judgment, deliverance
- Sun at Gibeon (Josh 10)
  - judgment, attestation

# Period of Judges

- Angel of Lord (Judg 2)
  - revelation
- Gideon's fleece (Judg 6)
  - attestation
- Samson (Judg 13-16)
  - judgment, deliverance

# Kingdom Period

- Birth of Samuel? (1 Sam 1) - attestation?
- Samuel's vision (1 Sam 3) - revelation, attestation?
- Ark among Philistines (1 Sam 5-6)
  - revelation, attestation to pagans
  - phenomena surrounding return especially interesting (cart, cows, etc.)
- Call of Saul (1 Sam 10) - attestation (10:7)

# Kingdom Period

- Jonathan's exploits (1 Sam 14)
  - attestation (14:8-10)
- David & Goliath (1 Sam 17)
  - judgment, deliverance, attestation
- Disaster moving ark (2 Sam 6) – judgment
- Cloud in temple (1 Kings 8) – attestation
- Sign to Jeroboam (1 Kings 13)
  - attestation, judgment

# Kingdom Period

- Sign to Abijah (1 Kings 14)
  - judgment (14:6-11)
  - attestation (14:12,17)
- Ministry of Elijah (1 Kings 17 - 2 Kings 2)
  - See separate slides
- Ministry of Elisha (2 Kings 2-13)
  - See separate slides

# Ministry of Elijah

- Drought (1 Kings 17-18)
  - judgement, attestation
- Ravens (17) – provision
- Replenished food (17)
  - provision, attestation
- Resurrection of widow's son (17)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Fire on Mt Carmel (18) – attestation

# Ministry of Elijah

- Run to Jezreel (1 Kings 18)
  - provision? attestation?
- Manifestation at Sinai (19)
  - revelation, provision
- Deliverance of Ahab from Syrians (20)
- Fire falls on soldiers (2 Kings 1)
  - judgment, attestation
- Elijah's ascent, Jordan parted (2 Kings 2)
  - attestation

# Ministry of Elisha

- Opening Jordan (2 Kings 2) – attestation
- Healing water (2) - provision, attestation
- Two bears (2) - judgment, attestation
- Water-filled valley (3)
  - judgment, deliverance, attestation
- Multiplication of oil (4) - provision
- Raising Shunemite's son (4) – deliverance
- Canceling poison (4) - provision

# Ministry of Elisha

- Multiplication of loaves (2 K 4) - provision
- Healing of Naaman (2 Kings 5)
  - deliverance, attestation to pagan
- Floating axe-head (6) – deliverance
- Heavenly army (6) – attestation
- Blinding Syrians (6) – deliverance, attestation
- Prediction of plenty (7) – attestation
- Resurrection touching bones (13)
  - deliverance, attestation

# Kingdom Period

- Uzziah's leprosy (2 Chr 26)
  - judgment, attestation
- Assyrian army devastated (2 K 19)
  - judgment, deliverance, attestation
- Hezekiah healed (2 Kings 20)
  - deliverance
- Sun's shadow reverses (20)
  - attestation

# Babylonian Captivity

- Daniel interprets dream (Dan 2)
  - revelation, attestation
- Fiery furnace (3)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Nebuchadnezzar's madness (4)
  - judgment, revelation, attestation
- Handwriting on wall (5)
  - judgment, revelation, attestation
- Daniel in lions' den (6)
  - deliverance, attestation

# Summary: OT Miracle Themes

- Attestation of messenger
- Attestation of God
- Judgment (on false belief, sinful practice)
- Protection & Deliverance
- Picturing God's nature
  - Wilderness provisions, Holiness of ark
- Carrying out God's program
  - Abraham, Exodus, Elijah



# New Testament Miracles

A quick tour of their nature & purpose

# Miracles of Jesus

- His birth
- His ministry
  - Will return to these for the bulk of the course
- His resurrection & ascension

# Apostolic Miracles

- Pentecost (Acts 2) (Jesus)
  - fulfillment, attestation
- Healing lame beggar (Acts 3) (Peter)
  - deliverance
- Death of Ananias & Sapphira (5) (Peter)
  - judgment
- Apostles rescued from prison (5) (angel)
  - deliverance

# Apostolic Miracles

- Holy Sp to Samaritans (8) (Peter & John)
  - fulfillment, attestation
- Guidance & Transport of Philip (8) (HS)
  - revelation, ministry
- Conversion of Paul (9) (Jesus)
  - deliverance
- Healing paralytic Aeneas (9) (Peter)
  - deliverance, attestation

# Apostolic Miracles

- Resurrection of Dorcas (9) (Peter)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Conversion of Cornelius (10) (angel)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Famine prophecy (11) (Agabus)
  - revelation
- Peter rescued from prison (12) (angel)
  - deliverance

# Apostolic Miracles

- Death of Herod Agrippa I (12) (angel)
  - judgment
- Elymas struck blind (13) (Paul)
  - judgment, attestation
- Lame man healed at Lystra (14) (Paul)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Macedonian vision (16) (?)
  - revelation

# Apostolic Miracles

- Demonized girl at Philippi (16) (Paul)
  - deliverance
- Earthquake at Philippian prison (16) (?)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Vision at Corinth (18) (Lord) – revelation
- HS on followers of Jn Bapt (19) (HS)
  - fulfillment, attestation
- Demonic attack on sons of Sceva (19) (Satan) - judgment

# Apostolic Miracles

- Resurrection of Eutychus (20) (Paul)
  - deliverance
- Arrest prophecy (21) (Agabus)
  - revelation
- Vision at Jerusalem (23) (Lord)
  - revelation
- Vision re/ shipwreck (27) (angel)
  - revelation

# Apostolic Miracles

- Paul not hurt by snake (27) (Paul)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Healings on Malta (28) (Paul)
  - deliverance, attestation
- Visions to John on Patmos (Jesus, angel)
  - revelation

# Summary on NT Miracles

- Much the same as OT re/ themes
- More Christocentric
- Probably all of the miracles of judgment and deliverance have some function as attestation for the miracle worker or for the Gospel and the Christian church.
- No clear evidence in Acts of decrease in miraculous toward end of book.

# The End