

# The Miracles Of Jesus Christ (Part One)

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Because the prophet Isaiah foretold the Messiah's exercise of miraculous power (Isaiah 35:4-6; 42:7), John the Baptizer asked for such a sign of Christ (Matthew 11:2-3). Jesus replied: "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (verse 5). His miracles provided proof of who He was.

Christ came into the world, not only as God's personal representative on earth, but as God manifest in flesh. He was Himself a miracle in human form, and His miraculous works are bound up inseparably with His life. When we accept the miracles of His prophesied birth, sinless life, and glorious resurrection, then any other miracle is possible. Born holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners (Hebrews 7:26), He was conscious of His God-given responsibility to bless and relieve mankind in miraculous ways.

In describing Jesus' healing miracles, Luke, a doctor, emphasized the power of God by saying, "The power of the Lord was present to heal them" (Luke 5:17), and "the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all" (Luke 6:19). Similarly in Acts, Peter describes "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38).

One could say Christ's miracles were parables in deeds, just as His parables were miracles in words. God designed His miracles to symbolize His power to meet spiritual needs, as well as physical and material ones. Jesus' recorded miracles are real-life experiences of what it means to be under the wonderful rule of the powerful but merciful King of God's Kingdom.

## 1. Is there a difference between Old and New Testament miracles?

**Comment:** For the most part, the miracles of the Old Testament were of an external nature, sometimes on a global scale, as with the Flood, but more often on a national scale, as with the Exodus. Those of the New Testament, however, were primarily of a personal and spiritual nature. An individual's domestic life was often the scene of Christ's mighty works.

For example, the Old Testament records such miracles as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19) and of Jericho (Joshua 6), yet in the New Testament, the sick are healed, demons are exorcized (Luke 6:17-19), and the dead, like Lazarus (John 11:1-44), are resurrected. In sum, Old Testament miracles tend to glorify God in relation to His sovereignty over the physical realm, while New Testament miracles chiefly glorify God in relation to His sovereignty over the spiritual realm.

## 2. Was Christ's purpose merely to excite His audiences, or did His miracles prove something significant?

**Comment:** Christ's object in performing miracles was not merely to astonish those who witnessed them. When asked for a startling sign from heaven, Christ refused to oblige

(Luke 11:16-17). He was not a magician or an illusionist, as Herod learned, who thought he could command Jesus to perform a miracle to satisfy his curiosity. Nevertheless, some of His miracles did overwhelm onlookers (John 7:45-46; 18:6).

Because Christ was authoritative as a teacher (Matthew 7:28-29) and sinless in His character, His miracles not only formed an integral part of His teaching, but they were also proofs of His identity as the Messiah and of His purpose. Jesus' miracles, an exercise of God's creative power, were the Father's way of authenticating His divine Son's mission among humanity.

### 3. What was the main purpose of Christ's miracles?

**Comment:** Jesus' miracles place the focus and glory on His Father. Thus, they serve to declare and prove God's existence and sovereignty. Christ never worked a miracle on His own behalf (perhaps the coin found in the fish's mouth is an exception to this rule; see Matthew 17:27). It appears that He did not do any miracles until He was thirty years old, and none that He did after that promoted His own ease and comfort. He performed no miracles for His own relief when suffering intense anguish in Gethsemane, when being beaten by Roman soldiers, or when hanging on the stake, since doing so would not have promoted the glory of God. Legions of angels waited to obey His command, but He never requested their help (Matthew 26:53). Though He provided ample food for hungry followers, He would not transform stones into bread to satisfy His own great hunger (Matthew 4:1-4; Mark 6:35, 41).

Christ never paraded His supernatural power. On occasion, He even commanded those He healed not to broadcast the news of their healing (Mark 1:43-44; 5:43; 9:9). He never performed a miracle to create a sensation or to win adherents. He rejected such use as a temptation, always refusing to perform a miracle to satisfy the demands of unbelief (Matthew 4:6-7; 16:4). When a miracle was necessary, He performed it: It took a miracle to raise Lazarus from the dead but not to roll the stone away from his tomb, since the disciples could do this.

The gospels reveal a purposeful and careful use of divine power. We can see that Jesus' miracles display His humility, mercy, and lovingkindness, and simultaneously, declare the sovereignty and glory of His Father.