



MIRACLES

1. A miracle is called a sign (Hebrew *'ot*, Greek *semeion*), wonder (Hebrew *mophat*, Greek *teras*), or power (Hebrew *koah*, Greek *dunamis* and *energeia*) in the Bible. A sign communicates a message and is the most frequent word for miracles in the Bible. A wonder emphasizes the amazement of those who see miracles. A power points us to the source of the miracle—the one with the power to perform miracles. Miracles, then, communicate (signs), amaze (wonders), and point to the existence of an omnipotent God (powers).
2. Miracles are rare, out-of-the-ordinary events that supercede the laws of nature (e.g., a barren women giving birth in old age).
3. The time of occurrence is often as miraculous as the miracle itself. Miracles often occur at predetermined (the walls of Jericho) or critical times (stilling of the storm on the Sea of Galilee); many are last minute saves (such as Israel with their backs to the Red Sea). The overruling of natural law coupled with split-second timing proves the existence of God and His complete control over nature.
4. Miracles have specific purposes and are never performed to entertain.
5. Miracles often confirm or authenticate the messages and messengers of God (Heb. 2:3–4).
6. Jesus performed about thirty miracles—more miracles than anyone else in the Bible.

The gospels report approximately thirty miracles performed by Jesus...nowhere, throughout the whole Bible, do we find so many miracles performed by a single person. For example, if the miraculous elements were deleted from the first ten chapters of Mark, almost half of these chapters would be gone; more exactly, some 200 out of 425 verses. Miracle stories represent 209 of the 660 verses of Mark, *i.e.*, 31 per cent of the whole gospel (Herman Hendrickx, *The Miracle Stories of the Synoptic Gospels*, 6).

7. False miracles (signs and wonders) are performed by false prophets, demons, and Satan (Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9–10; Rev. 13:13; 16:14; 19:20).
8. Miracles bring glory to God. When they became pregnant, Elizabeth and Mary, for instance, both glorified God (Luke 1:25, 46–55). Their conceptions were miracles: Elizabeth was barren and past the age of childbearing (1:7, 36) and Mary was a virgin (1:34).