



**TRINITY CHURCH ROCKY HILL**  
*Bible Study - January 28, 2021 6:00 PM*  
*Matthew 8 - The Miracles of Jesus*

*When something amazing happens, we often say, “It’s a miracle!”. But more than likely that is not technically correct. It was not a true miracle. It was amazing, it was abnormal, etc., but was it a miracle?*

**WHAT IS A MIRACLE?**

(1) A scientist gave the following definition of a miracle on an April 14, 1995 PBS program. He said, **“A miracle is nothing more than a natural law not discovered.”** So, he doesn’t believe in miracles. He thinks everything can be explained scientifically. This is an attitude which at the least denies any intervention into our world by God, and more than likely means that scientist denies the existence of God. I don’t see how raising someone from the dead, restoring a blind man’s sight, etc. are natural laws not yet discovered. This is obviously a bad definition. The fact that anyone would take this guy seriously is a sad commentary on our society.

(2) A computer magazine had the following definition in its word-for-the-day section: **“Coincidence is a miracle where God chooses to remain anonymous.”** In other words, there is no such thing as coincidence. This elevates almost everything to the status of being a miracle. I would have to go along with the idea that there is no such thing as coincidence or chance. If there is such a thing as chance, then God has an equal out there in the universe, against which He is competing. Think about that statement for a minute. *If there is such a thing as chance, then God has an equal out there in the universe that He is competing against.* In other words, God is not in control. So, although I think that God is control and is involved in our lives, does that mean that these events are miracles? No.

These two illustrations represent opposite extremes. The truth is somewhere in the middle. What is a miracle?

## I. DEFINITION

If we look at the words the New Testament uses for miracles we see the following:

1. It is an act of a supernatural being. The word *dunamis* has the idea of a supernatural power. It speaks primarily of the agent of the act. That power may be delegated to a human agent. The question is where did Jesus' power to do the miracle come from. There are two options - either from God or from Satan. Obviously, Jesus' power came from God. Some suggest that Satan only imitates miracles. I think Satan can perform miracles. He does not have divine power, but he does have supernatural power. So the idea from the word *dunamis* is that there is supernatural power involved.
2. Another word - *terasa*- speaks of the effect. A miracle is an unusual event. *Terasa* speaks of the wonderment of the event – as in signs and wonders. As a matter of fact, *terasa* is always used with *semeion*.
3. The Greek word *semeion* means sign. A miracle is a significant event. It has purpose. Matthew, Mark, and Luke uses the first two more. John uses the word *semeion*, because he is focused on the purpose of Jesus in performing the miracles.
4. Therefore, in our search for a definition, if we combine the ideas of these words used in the New Testament, we might come up with the following definition:

**Definition:** *A miracle is an unusual and significant event (terasa) which requires the working of a supernatural agent (dunamis) and is performed for the purpose of authenticating the message or the messenger (semeion).*

I don't want to imply that God can't do a miracle without a miracle worker or that He can only do miracles when He needs to authenticate His message. But, examination of Old Testament and New Testament miracles shows that *when a human is the agent performing a miracle*, the purpose is authentication of the person and his message. For example: Moses, Elijah, Jesus, Apostles... That is the norm. It is a little oxymoronic to use the words norm and miracles in the same sentence, but I think it is important to establish what the norm is if possible because of what various people teach concerning miracles.

What do people teach concerning miracles? I don't think a study on the miracles of Jesus would be complete if we didn't take a little time to look at what's going on today and examine what is being taught by various groups in the church concerning miracles. But I'm not quite ready to dive into that discussion. I've been doing much reading and studying on the arguments from both sides and although I've come to my conclusion. I haven't organized my thoughts well enough to explain it right now. Hopefully in a few weeks we can take a break from the study of the miracles and study the arguments. For

now we will begin our study of the miracles. First though, we need to learn how to study the miracles.

## **II. METHOD OF STUDY**

Many people go to the Bible looking primarily for theological statements or propositional statements - statements that tell us what not to do, what to do, what to think, etc. Historically, American pastors and theologians have spent little time teaching or preaching the Gospels. Americans are practical, bottom line people and the Pauline and General epistles are easier to dig practical principles out of. They don't typically know what to do with the Gospels because the Gospels are not very propositional. They are really a collection of small stories arranged to tell a bigger story about the life of Christ. The accounts of the miracles Jesus performed are contained in stories, and stories have context, characters, plot, climax, etc. Stories are literature, and in order to understand them, we need to look at the miracles *literarily*.

**We will study the miracles following the usual steps of Observation, Interpretation and Application, but since the miracles are stories, we will need to look at things like plot, character development, etc. to understand them fully.**

## 37 MIRACLES OF JESUS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

#	MIRACLE	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
1	Jesus Turns Water into Wine at the Wedding in Cana				2:1-11
2	Jesus Heals an Official's Son at Capernaum in Galilee				4:43-54
3	Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit from a Man in Capernaum		1:21-27	4:31-36	
4	Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law Sick with Fever	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39	
5	Jesus Heals Many Sick and Oppressed at Evening	8:16-17	1:32-34	4:40-41	
6	First Miraculous Catch of Fish on the Lake of Gennesaret			5:1-11	
7	Jesus Cleanses a Man with Leprosy	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-14	
8	Jesus Heals a Centurion's Paralyzed Servant in Capernaum	8:5-13		7:1-10	
9	Jesus Heals a Paralytic Who Was Let Down from the Roof	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
10	Jesus Heals a Man's Withered Hand on the Sabbath	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
11	Jesus Raises a Widow's Son from the Dead in Nain			7:11-17	
12	Jesus Calms a Storm on the Sea	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
13	Jesus Casts Demons into a Herd of Pigs	8:28-33	5:1-20	8:26-39	
14	Jesus Heals a Woman in the Crowd with an Issue of Blood	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:42-48	
15	Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter Back to Life	9:18, 23-36	5:21-24, 35-43	8:40-42, 49-56	
16	Jesus Heals Two Blind Men	9:27-31			
17	Jesus Heals Man Who Was Unable to Speak	9:32-34			
18	Jesus Heals an Invalid at Bethesda				5:1-15
19	Jesus Feeds 5,000 Plus Women and Children	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-15
20	Jesus Walks on Water	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:16-21
21	Jesus Heals Many Sick in Gennesaret as They Touch His Garment	14:34-36	6:53-56		
22	Jesus Heals a Gentile Woman's Demon-Possessed Daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		
23	Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man		7:31-37		
24	Jesus Feeds 4,000 Plus Women and Children	15:32-39	8:1-13		
25	Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida		8:22-26		
26	Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind by Spitting in His Eyes				9:1-12
27	Jesus Heals a Boy with an Unclean Spirit	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
28	Miraculous Temple Tax in a Fish's Mouth	17:24-27			
29	Jesus Heals a Blind, Mute Demoniac	12:22-23		11:14-23	
30	Jesus Heals a Woman Who Had Been Crippled for 18 Years			13:10-17	
31	Jesus Heals a Man with Dropsy on the Sabbath			14:1-6	
32	Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers on the Way to Jerusalem			17:11-19	
33	Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead in Bethany				11:1-45
34	Jesus Restores Sight to Bartimaeus in Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
35	Jesus Withers the Fig Tree on the Road from Bethany	21:18-22	11:12-14		
36	Jesus Heals a Servant's Severed Ear While He is Being Arrested			22:50-51	
37	The Second Miraculous Catch of Fish at the Sea of Tiberias				21:4-11