

**Lesson Ninety-two****THE GENUINENESS OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES**

---

Scripture Reading: John 14:1-13, 20:24-29.

Scriptures to Memorize: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall be no sign given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet: for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:39-40). "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (John 14:11). "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

---

**1. Q. Upon whom did Jesus bestow His miracle-working power when He returned to the Father in heaven?**

**A. He bestowed His miracle-working power upon the Apostles.**

Mark 16:19-20, "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed." Heb. 2:4—"God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." I Cor. 2:4, 5—"And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

**2. Q. List the miracles performed by the Apostles and their co-workers, as recorded in the New Testament writings.**

**A. They may be listed as follows:**

(1) A man lame from birth is enabled to "walk and leap" (Acts 3:1-4:16); performed by Peter, in Jerusalem. (2) Ananias and Sapphira struck dead for lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11); performed by Peter, in Jerusalem. (3) Stephen, the deacon, "wrought great wonders and signs among the people," in Jerusalem (Acts 6:8). (4) Unclean spirits cast out, and many cases of palsy, lameness, etc., cured (Acts 8:6-13); by Philip the evangelist, in Samaria. (5) Eneas, who had been confined to his bed with palsy for eight years, is "made whole" (Acts 9:33-35); by Peter, at Lydda. (6) Dorcas (or Tabitha) raised from the dead (Acts 9:36-42); by Peter, at Joppa. (7) Elymas, the sorcerer, trying to prevent the conversion of Sergius Paulus, is stricken with temporary total blindness (Acts 13:6-12); by Paul, at Paphos. (8) A man who had been such a cripple from birth that he "never had walked" is enabled to "walk and leap" (Acts 14:8-11); by Paul, at Lystra. (9) A spirit of divination cast out of a maiden (Acts 16:18); by Paul, at Philippi. (10) Special miracles wrought by Paul without his seeing the persons concerned, at Ephesus (Acts 19:11-12). (11) Eutychus, killed by a fall from a window, restored to life (Acts 20:9-12); by Paul, at Troas. (12) A deadly viper proves harmless to Paul, on the island of Melita (Malta); (see Acts 28:3-6). (13) The father of Publius, and many other sick persons cured (Acts 28:7-9); by Paul, on the island of Melita.

**3. Q. When and why did miracles cease to be performed?**

**A. Miracles ceased to be performed when divine revelation was completed and embodied in permanent form in the Scriptures.**

(1) As miracles are for the purpose of attesting revelation, it follows that when *revelation* ceased, *demonstration* ceased also. As *revelation* and *inspiration* came to an end with the Apostles, for the simple reason that through them all things pertaining to life and godliness had been revealed (2 Pet. 1:3), the miraculous element passed away with the termination of the apostolic age. Cf. I Cor. 13:8

—“whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be [supernatural] knowledge, it shall be done away.” (2) During the infancy of the Church, when her members had to depend on the *oral* teaching of the Apostles and their co-workers for guidance, God graciously confirmed the Word by the signs that followed (Mark 16:20). Cf. Rom. 1:11—“For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.” When, however, all necessary divine truth had been revealed, and had been properly attested by miracles, and embodied in permanent form in the Christian Scriptures—all of which had been done, as we have learned, by the end of the first century—miracles were no longer necessary. In short, when the Church “became a man,” she “put away childish things.” (3) Our faith today is not founded in miracles, but in the written Word of truth, in which the record of the miracles which were originally performed to attest the divine origin of Christianity, has been faithfully preserved. Rom. 10:6-8, “But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, “Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down): or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach,” etc. Rom. 10:17—“So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” The New Testament Scriptures are our all-sufficient rule of faith and practice: our divine standard, guide, discipline, etc. This word of truth is all that we need to build us up in the most holy faith, and to guide us to heaven, our eternal inheritance. (4) Thomas Fuller: “Miracles are the swaddling-clothes of the infant church.” John Foster: “Miracles are the great bell of the universe, which draws men to God’s sermon.” Henry Ward Beecher: “Miracles are the midwives of great moral truths; candles lit before the dawn but put out after the sun has risen.”

Dr. A. H. Strong: "Miracles are the natural accompaniments and attestations of new communications from God. The great epochs of miracles—represented by Moses, the prophets, the first and second comings of Christ—are coincident with the great epochs of revelation. Miracles serve to draw attention to new truth, and cease when this truth has gained currency and foothold" (*Systematic Theology*, p. 128). We may reasonably anticipate that the age of our Lord's second coming will be another age of stupendous works and wonders and signs.

**4. Q. What is the principal issue involved in the question of the New Testament miracles?**

**A. The principle issue involved in the question of the New Testament miracles, is their genuineness.**

(1) That is, not, *Could they have happened?* but rather, *Did they happen?* Having been *observable* events, they had an *historical* setting; therefore their genuineness is to be tested *historically*, and not *theoretically*. The question is, then: Are we justified in accepting them as actual historical incidents? Or, to put it in another way: Are we justified in accepting *as genuine and trustworthy* the testimony of the men who expressly claim to have been eyewitnesses of them? (2) The fundamental assumption of all rationalists is that "miracles are contrary to human experience." Therefore, they contend, all accounts of alleged miraculous events must be interpreted as mythical or legendary at least, if not rejected as absolutely false. As Renan has written: "Until we have new light, we shall maintain this principle of historical criticism—that a supernatural relation cannot be accepted as such" (*Jesus*, p. 45). Or, as Baur contends, any one who accepts a miracle as such "steps at once outside all historical connection" (*Church History*, I. 1). Hume says, in similar vein: "It is not, therefore, in the interest of this or that philosophy, but in the name of constant experience, that we banish miracle from history" (quoted by Renan, *Jesus*, p. 44). Thus do men of this type, instead of considering

each miracle recorded in the Bible from the viewpoint of the trustworthiness of the testimony regarding it, promptly rule out all miracles *in toto* with a blunt, dogmatic assertion that "miracles do not happen." Instead of allowing the Bible to speak for itself and judging it on the basis of the trustworthiness of its representations, as they would any other book, they proceed to rewrite the whole Bible story in the light of their preconceived assumption. *This is a vicious method of criticism.* (3) On this ground the very life of Jesus in the flesh must be ruled out or in some manner "explained away," for the obvious reason that it, too, is contrary to experience; since it is contrary to experience for a man to live a life that even approximates perfection. That Jesus did, however, live just such a life, is universally conceded. They who rule out His miracles are called upon, therefore, to *first* account for the faultlessness of His life and teaching, before they presume to discredit His works. (4) Again, human experience is an uncertain and changing quantity. One hundred years ago the telephone, electric light, radio, television, motion picture, etc., would all have been contrary to experience. Today they are mere incidents of our everyday life. (5) Uniformity undoubtedly prevails in nature quite generally—except when God, the Author of nature, intervenes and breaks this uniformity for His own ends. The methods of God's regular activity "in no way preclude unique exertions of His power when these will best secure His purposes in creation." Hence a man's attitude toward the miracles is determined by the extent of his faith in God. He who truly believes in God is not going to limit Him in His operations. In other words, if there be a God, and if God be a personal being, miracles are possible. No doubt about it! (6) Moreover, miracles are *not* contrary to experience, since it is not contrary to experience for a new cause to be followed by a new effect. The will of God must be admitted to be sufficient cause for a miracle. (7) Hence

the whole question of miracles is not a matter of the possibility or impossibility of the event itself, but solely a matter of the authenticity of the testimony with regard to it. Can we believe, then, the testimony of the Scripture writers on the subject of miracles? Moreover, if we cannot believe their testimony on this subject, how can we be justified in believing what they have written on any other subject?

**5. Q. On what grounds then are we justified in accepting the New Testament miracles as genuine?**

**A. We are justified in accepting the New Testament miracles as genuine, on two grounds, viz., (1) that of the genuineness of the Christian Documents; and (2) that of the trustworthiness of their writers.**

This matter has been fully treated in preceding lessons. Cf. the testimony of Nicodemus: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2). This is the testimony of a well-informed man, "a ruler of the Jews," *i.e.*, a member of the Sanhedrin. Why should we reject the testimony of competent and honest men, such as Peter, John, Nicodemus, etc., who were on the ground when the miracles of Jesus were performed, and who saw them performed with their own eyes; and accept the speculations of modern intellectuals who are removed from the events which they seek to discredit by a span of almost two thousand years?

**6. Q. In view of His mighty works and wonders and signs, what do we conclude with respect to Jesus Himself?**

**A. We conclude, and we confess, that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.**

John 14:11—"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." John 20:29—"Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

## REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON NINETY-TWO

1. Upon whom did Jesus bestow His miracle-working power when He returned to the Father in heaven?
2. List the miracles performed by the Apostles and their co-workers, as recorded in the New Testament writings.
3. When and why did miracles cease to be performed?
4. What is the principal issue involved in the question of the New Testament miracles?
5. On what grounds then are we justified in accepting the New Testament miracles as genuine?
6. In view of His mighty works and wonders and signs, what do we conclude with respect to Jesus Himself?

### Lesson Ninety-three

## THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

---

Scripture Reading: Matt. 12:38-45; Acts 2:22-36.

Scriptures to Memorize: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign: and there shall be no sign given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet: for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:39-40). "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32). "Him God raised up the third day" (Acts 10:40).

---

7. Q. What sixth aspect of the Jesus of history shall we now proceed to investigate?
  - A. We shall now proceed to investigate His Resurrection from the dead.
8. Q. On what outstanding miracle did Jesus stake all His claims?