

The Unique Nature of Miracles

By Timothy Sparks

TimothySparks.com

See also Miracles: From God or Man? by Jimmy Jividen

Review

- Miracles, wonders, signs, works reflect different aspects of the NT miracles
- Came from supernatural power
- Struck awe and wonder in the hearts of those who witnessed them
- Pointed to and confirmed God's message
- Works designed to produce faith

Beyond the Terms

- We must look at more than just the meaning of the terms to understand NT miracles
- Events that have occurred in human history can be classified in three categories

First Category: Miracles

- Contrary to the normal observable patterns of the universe
- Not normal to walk on water or resurrect a man
- Contradict the laws of nature

Second Category: The Normal

- Observable by our senses
- Sometimes called “laws of nature”
- God established these laws at Creation
- Follow a pattern, for example, “the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind” (Gen. 1:11): apple tree/apples
- Orderly, consistent, predictable

Third Category: The Paranormal

- Means “along side of” the normal
- Not miraculous; no contradiction of laws
- Not normal; different from the usual
- May be understood at some later time
- Examples: “witching water,” hypnotism; “providence”—God might “manipulate” but not contradict laws of nature

What Is a Miracle?

- An occurrence when God transcended and violated the physical laws he formulated at Creation to show divine sanction to a man and a message
- Not normal or paranormal: supernatural
- The cause can only be God, no other possible explanation (contrast modern-day “miracle workers”)

Conclusion

- The believer accepts the miracles of Scripture (Jn. 20:30-31; Rom. 10:17)
- This faith is reasonable considering the unique nature of scriptural miracles
- Specific purpose: confirm God's Word to create faith leading to salvation
- Those who saw them could objectively perceive and test the miracles