Miracles
Different Descriptions
Same Purpose

By Timothy Sparks
TimothySparks.com

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

- The inspired writers of the gospel wrote from different backgrounds to readers with their respective backgrounds.
- Their readers would be able to see that the miracles confirmed Jesus as the source of salvation and delivering God's message of salvation.
Observations

• Jesus and the apostles did not work miracles to confirm OT Scripture
• God confirmed the Law by the miracles he performed through the prophets
• Once a thing is confirmed, it does not need to be reconfirmed in every generation
• The Law needed no further confirmation by Jesus and the apostles
Review

- The New Testament needs no confirmation today
- The decline of miracles seen from the beginning to the end of the New Testament shows that miracles were accomplishing their purpose of confirmation
Miracles in Matthew

- Rabbinic Jewish background
- Miracles confirmed Jesus as the Messiah and the fulfillment of Scriptures
- Jewish readers would be sensitive to this approach
Miracles in Mark

• Focusing on the action and power of Jesus' miracles
• Miracles confirmed the direct power of Jesus' person and authority
• Roman readers would be responsive to this approach
Miracles in Luke

• Background: Greek literary culture and medical knowledge

• Miracles confirmed Jesus' work as being the fulfillment of prophecies and a sign of God's Kingdom
Miracles in John

- Symbolic meaning in the miracles
- Miracles gave sufficient evidence “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (20:31)
- The Jewish reader concerned with the symbols of apocalyptic literature and the readers attracted to the symbols of the Greek Mystery Religions would be sensitive to this approach
Miracles in Acts

- Background: same as Luke
- On the day of Pentecost the miracles showed that Old Testament prophecies were being fulfilled (2:16) and that the church was God's Kingdom, proven by what they could “both see and hear” (2:33)
Miracles in the Letters

- Use of miracles is rare; previous miracles had confirmed God's man and message.
- The main purpose of the letters was not to establish new revelation but to remind readers what they had been taught and to correct them to God's standard.
- As time passed, miracle workers died.
- Miracles were not so numerous or important.