

## Doctrine of Miracles and Cessation

1. While some may dissent, the consensus of the church is that miracles occur in every generation and can be counterfeited by Satan.
2. Others embrace the doctrine of cessation as part of Reformed Theology.
3. A miracle is not easily defined. A theologian may have a different understanding than a non-theologian.
  - A miracle has been defined as any manifestation of the presence of God such as an answer to prayer.
  - A miracle has been defined as any supernatural act of God, such as regeneration.

“My Father is all powerful”  
 And that you can't deny.  
 A God of might and miracles  
 Tis written in the sky.

It took a miracle to put the stars in place.  
 It took a miracle to hang the world in space.  
 But when He saved my soul,  
 Cleansed and made me whole,  
 It took a miracle of love and grace.

The Bible tells us of His power,  
 And wisdom all way through.  
 And every little bird and flower,  
 Are testimonies too.

It took a miracle to put the stars in place  
 It took a miracle to hang the world in space  
 But when He saved my soul,  
 Cleansed and made me whole,  
 It took a miracle of love and grace.”

John W. Peterson

- A miracle is anything that is amazing, or fascinating, such as the birth of a baby.
4. In strict, technical definition, a Biblical miracle is the suspension of the laws of nature in order to manifest the power and glory of God. A miracle demands something extraordinary.
  5. If Christians are to “expect a miracle every day”, then they would be ordinary. In Scripture, miracles are honored because they are extraordinary.

6. There are several periods in Biblical history in which there are a blaze of miracles that took place in a short period of time.
- There were miracles in the life of Moses.
  - There were miracles in the life of Elijah.
  - There were miracles in the life of Elisha.
  - There were miracles in the life of Christ.
7. The word “miracle” is translated in the Authorized Version by the Hebrew word, mowpheth (mo-faith’), in the sense of conspicuousness, and by the Greek word, semeion (say-mi’-on), an indication, especially ceremonially or supernatural.
8. In the New Testament Greek, there is no single word for miracle. The idea of a miracle, the concept of a miracle, in theology, is extrapolated from three words: sign, power, and wonder.
- Sign (semaino, say-mah’-ee-no). John used this term to speak of the miracles of Jesus.

*John 2:11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.*

*John 20:30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*

***Special Note.***

The works of Jesus were called signs, because a sign points to something else. Attention is to be turned from the event, to God. Signs have significance. They signify something. The miracles of Christ signified that He was of God. The miracles helped people, but the miracles were signs that Christ was sent from God.

*John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

Jesus Himself pointed to His signs that He was whom He claimed to be.

*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.*

The purpose for signs and wonders is to confirm the gospel spoken by the Lord.

*Hebrews 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?*

9. If a non-agent of God, such as the devil, can perform miracles, then the evidential value of miracles is nullified for the one who claims to be the agent of divine revelation.
10. What is at stake in this issue is the authority of God, the authority of Christ, the authority of the apostles, and the authority of the Bible.
11. The authority of Moses was established by the miracles God showed him, and then by the miracles Moses performed.
  - *Exodus 4:2 And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. 3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. 4 And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: 5 That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.*
12. One of the arguments used against the Reformers by the Catholic Church was that it had miracles in its history. Miracles were used to prove validity of the Catholic Church. The Reformers were asked for their miracles.
13. The Reformers said they too had miracles that support their teachings, and those miracles are recorded in the New Testament. The authority of the apostles, and the authority of the Scriptures are united with the miracles of the gospel.
14. If modern day miracles are really being produced according to Biblical terms by advocates of the health and wealth gospel, then their teachings should be embraced, and ratified by the church.
15. The issue is this: what is a miracle?
16. If a miracle is defined in the broad sense of God's providential care manifested in answers to prayers, souls being saved, and the giving of good gifts, then yes, miracles do take place today.
17. However, if a miracle is defined in the narrow sense, miracles have ceased. In this context a miracle is defined as an extraordinary work performed by the immediate power of God, in the external, perceivable world, which is an act against nature, that only God can do, such as bringing life out of death, or bringing something out of nothing.
18. Most people who claim present day miracles stop short of proclaiming the kinds of miracles we find being performed by Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Christ, and the apostles.
19. Some modern equivalent miracles to a Biblical miracle might include the following.

- A person who is stone-cold dead comes back to life from the dead apart from human intervention.
  - A severed leg at the hip is replaced apart from artificial limbs or surgery. Leg extension is not counted, for a good chiropractor can help in that area.
  - Water being turned into wine.
  - An axe head floats.
20. A distinction must also be noted by the quality of miracles being claimed today, and the quality of miracles performed by Jesus and the apostles. The modern day testimonies of miracles are not really the things that only God can do.
21. As there are no miracle workers today, so there is no such thing as a satanic miracle. The Bible calls these actions, “lying wonders.”
- *2 Thessalonians 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*
22. If Satan can perform an authentic miracle, then how can anyone know the Bible is the Word of God, and Jesus is the Son of God?
23. In the Bible, miracles do not prove the existence of God, for that is assumed, and proved in other ways, such as the glory of the heavens. What miracles do, is prove the authentication of God for someone.
- *Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*
- Christ is confirmed by the resurrection. If Satan can produce a resurrection, then what good is the resurrection by God? And remember, Jesus was accused of performing His miracles by the power of Beel’zebub.
- *Matthew 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.*
24. An unbelieving Jew could argue that Satan’s greatest trick is to get people to stop worshipping God, and start worshipping a man, by raising him from the dead. In other words, the whole church is a lie. But Christians do not believe that. Why? Because we believe that Satan cannot do what only God can do.
25. A lying sign, a lying wonder is a false sign, a false wonder, and not a bonified miracle. It is a counterfeit. It is a fake. Satan does not have the power of creation. He does not have the power of the laws of nature. He is a skillful magician.

26. Moses was not a magician, for his miracles were legitimate. He was different from the magicians of Pharaoh who also claimed divine authority. It was soon made apparent that the magicians of Pharaoh were phony when they ran out of tricks, and Moses prevailed.

- *Exodus 7:10 And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. 11 Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. 12 For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. 13 And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.*

27. Do not give Satan the ability to do only things that God can do.