

Focusing in upon the Miracles of Jesus

The Gospels record 38 specific miracles of Jesus. There are many more miracles that are concerned "generic" in that we do not know how many were healed.

Matthew: 23 miracles
Mark: 21 miracles
Luke: 22 miracles
John: 8 miracles

Performed by Jesus

Only 3 miracles are repeated in all four Gospels:

- Feeding of 5,000
- Healing of severed ear of Malchus
- Resurrection of Jesus

- Mt 4:23 "And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people."
- Mt 4:24 "And the news about Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them."
- Mt 8:16 "And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill."

A. There are two aspects of the overall picture of Jesus' miracles that are important to notice

1. The miracles of Jesus were upon people and before people

- Jesus didn't heal sick dogs, hurt oxen or fix broken carts
- Jesus didn't restore lost money or fix bad investment
- Of the specific miracles that Jesus did, they were upon outward and visible things that the crowds could see, know and test. Often they were upon people that were known in villages
- blindness, demon possession, paralysis, leprosy, deafness, fevers—those were all observable handicaps that the multitudes could see healed
- there are no examples of Jesus healing cancer, ulcers, bad hearts—those "internal" problems are much harder to observe and to "witness"

2. Most of the miracles of Jesus were impromptu, unplanned

- Mark 5:2, 6 "And when He had come out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him...and seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him"
- Mark 5:21a, 22-23 "And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered about Him...and one of the synagogue officials name Jairus came up, and upon seeing Him, fell at His feet and entreated Him earnestly, saying, 'My little daughter is at the point of death; please come...'"
 - (a) by giving us this specific name, Jairus, the readers had a way of verifying this story
 - (b) Mark 10:46 is another example. The place (Jericho) the name of the blind beggar (Bartimaeus) and the name of the blind man's father (Timeaus) are all given
 - (c) John 18:10 The high priest's servant whose ear was cut off is Malchus
- Jesus did not bring with Him "diseased" people to show the multitudes could witness miracles
- Jesus healed "locals"

John 9:8 "The neighbors therefore, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?"

B. Jesus did not use miracles:

1. for personal benefits

In the temptations, Jesus did not turn stones into bread (Mt 4:3)

On the cross, He did not come off as the crowd challenged Him to do (Mt 27:42)

2. to make life better for mankind

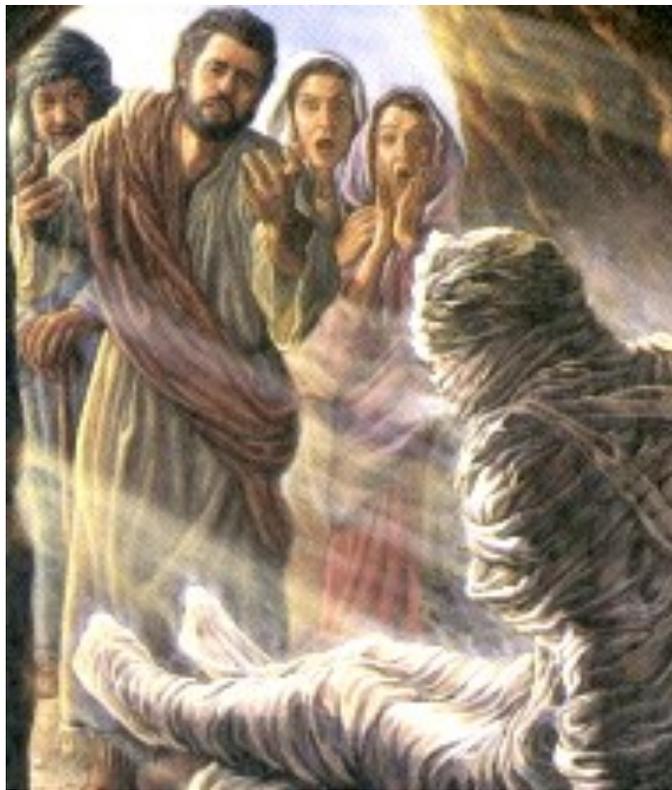
- Jesus could have told a first century world about sanitation, vaccines, and water treatment
- Jesus could have told the apostles about copy machines to mass produce the word of God
- Jesus could have surrounded Himself with scientists, engineers, manufacturers and shared with them the things that He knew

3. just to heal people

- Paul told Timothy to drink wine for a stomach ailment (1 Tim 5:23). Paul did not heal Timothy.
- Paul left Trophimus sick in Miletus (2 Tim 4:20). Paul did not heal Trophimus.
- The Philippian jailer washed the wounds of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:33). There is no indication that a miracle was used to "heal" them.

4. to remove temptation or to make the right choices for people

- Luke 22:31 Jesus tells Peter that Satan wants to sift you like wheat. Jesus said that He prayed that Peter's faith would not fail. No miracle was done here to keep Peter safe.



For Next Time:

The First Miracle: Water to Wine (John 2:1-11)

Who witnessed this miracle?

What did Jesus mean by "My hour has not yet come?"