

History and Authenticity of the Bible
Lesson 3
Miracles

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Let's have a word of prayer.

Father, we thank You that Your word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. It is a hammer. It is a fire that burns in our soul. We thank You Lord that You have given us a word that is totally reliable and authoritative and I pray, Lord, that You will help us to understand again the power that is in the Bible that we, Lord, will be students of the word always, all of our days. Thank You in Jesus name. Amen.

We were talking about revelation which means how God has communicated Himself to us. And we mentioned He has done so through what He has made, the universe. As we left our last class session, we were talking about how God speaks through supernatural acts, one of which was clearly laid out for us in [Exodus 7:5](#).

Now I would like you to go to [Numbers 14:11](#). God does reveal Himself, especially His power and the kind of power He has, because often it is rooted in His mercy and compassion. But we learn about Him through His miraculous acts, supernatural acts. One of the number one attacks about the Bible is they think these supernatural acts are mythological, that they aren't really true miracles.

[Numbers 14:11](#) says,

And the Lord said unto Moses, how long will this people provoke Me and how long will it be ere they believe Me for all the signs [miracles] which I have showed among them.

One of the purposes of those supernatural acts is that we will believe in Him. So if a person is not believing there is a God, he is really going to react against supernatural miracles. He is not going to believe it. So it is very important to be able to understand the purpose of God

behind that. When Moses is reiterating God's law to the people on Mount Nebo, or what is now Jordan, in [Deuteronomy 4:35](#) we read this: "Unto thee it was showed that thou might know that the Lord He is God that there is none else beside Him." Now, he is speaking about the signs and wonders and miracles He did, according to verse 34.

You see one of the purposes of God is not only that we will believe in Him, but we will really know that He is God. When God does a miracle, you know it. It proves that He is God. When man does so-called miracles we got to flip the coin sometimes, figure out whether it is really of God or not because we are not sure. But when God does one, everybody knows it and the Lord intends that His miracles, His supernatural acts, will point to who He is.

I have not developed this thought, but I have thought it many, many times, that there are degrees of let's say "impact" among the miracles of God—degrees of impact. For instance, there are degrees of impact as it relates to unbelievers, as it relates to believers, as it relates to nations versus individuals. There are lots of different things. We know for instance, when the Lord healed the ten lepers only one came back to thank Him. So what was the impact on the other nine? At least they became very ungrateful or maybe they just ignored it. The point I am making is that sometimes we speak of miracles and they truly are miraculous, but they are not what we mean by the revelation of God in supernatural acts.

For an example, the way God is taking care of us at times, to me is quite miraculous. But if I analyze it as an unbeliever looking at it and say well, John Doe gave you that money when you needed it and that is how your bill was paid. I see it as an answer to prayer and a miracle from the hand of God, but in reality that's not what I am speaking about now. Do you understand me? There are degrees of impact as it relates to the miracles of God. I see miracles all the time and I hope you do too. I hope that is your mind, your heart, to see the hand of God in things. But when we are talking about how God has revealed Himself through supernatural acts in the Bible, they are never like that. They aren't through human agency. They are the interruption of natural

processes. They are the intervention of the supernatural into human history causing something that no one can question. It had to come from God. That's very important to understand.

In John 20 we have this remark concerning the miracles that are listed in the Gospel of John. It says, "Many other signs did Jesus which are not written in this book." Now how many more? Well, at the end of [John 21:25](#) it says that it would be impossible to even have enough books to contain all the things that He was doing all the time, all the people that were healed by Him. But we do know that the miracles that were listed. In John he says, "These signs are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Messiah and in believing you would have life through His name" ([John 20:31](#)).

Now, there is an emphasis there that some of us have missed because the miraculous is done also through the apostles. And it does not prove they are the Messiah. The miracles that Jesus did that are recorded in the book of John are all miracles that only God could do and which in fact the Messiah, according to the Old Testament, had to do. Why is an incident of a lame man being healed in John? Why is the incident of a man born blind there? Why is the emphasis on the feeding of the 5,000? Do you understand what I'm saying? All of these things, including the resurrection of the dead are things that were credentials of who Jesus is. That He is the Messiah.

Now saying that means that the Messiah is in fact also the Lord God. Because only the Lord God could do these miracles which we see recorded. And not everybody believes that. But if you go to Isaiah chapters 40 to 66, you will have a big discussion about the Messiah as the servant of the Lord. And over and over again it says that by what He does, He demonstrates He is the Lord God and there is none else like Him. So the supernatural acts of God do reveal the very nature and ability of God in contrast to man. Not similar to what man may do by trusting the Lord and working through him, but something only God could do.

The third thing we notice about revelation, how God communicates, is that He has spoken directly to certain individuals in the past, amen? Now there is a very troublesome matter here. People say that God does the same thing today. Now if He does the exact same thing today

then we really have no argument about a complete and final revelation from God in written form. There is no argument against the Mormons, for instance, who claim that God spoke directly with Joseph Smith. You see this is an issue a lot of people don't think about. In their effort to believe that God has spoken to them, they are undermining what is truly called direct revelation in the Bible. I do not question that God speaks to us. I feel many, many times God has spoken to me. But I do not believe that He is giving direct revelation that He wants me to put into the Bible. Do you understand? But there are a lot of people who do today. And that's why we have cults and aberrant religions.

So, one of the purposes of our course is to help us with these things, to understand from an apologetics point of view, why it is so important to believe the Bible is a complete and final revelation from God. Now we are going to really hammer that issue. And hopefully you will all know what you believe.

But let's start first of all, by saying that in the book of Genesis alone we have a long list. God spoke directly to people and it says so. He talked to them and they heard Him. All the way through the Bible we have that record.

Now let's start with Matthew 5 and let me show you this whole problem of God speaking directly to individuals. In [Matthew 5:17-18](#), we know in this verse, something I mentioned earlier to you about the accuracy of the statements of the Bible that not one jot, which is a *iota*—the smallest letter in the Hebrew language. Not one *tittle*—a marking on a letter to distinguish it from another letter when they both look alike. None of that will pass away until all is fulfilled. Right? That is what He said, verses 17 and 18. It will never pass until everything is fulfilled.

Now the reason why that is critical is that if you ever had any writing that was never fulfilled, it would come under question and scrutiny, wouldn't it? In the Bible we have fulfilled prophecy and we have unfulfilled prophecy. But what if in the Bible we had a prophecy that was supposed to be fulfilled 2000 years ago, but wasn't? You see if that were true, in just one instance, we would undermine the whole doctrine that the Bible is the word of God. Is everybody

following me? Let me repeat this again so you're clear because the cults really do a number on this.

First, in the Bible you have fulfilled and unfulfilled prophecy. Amen? You understand that? There are prophecies that have already been fulfilled about nations of the world that were written before they existed, also about the first coming of Christ. And we know they were in existence before Christ because of the Dead Sea scrolls. Now when we look at this matter, it isn't that there are unfulfilled prophecies that undermine the authority of the Bible, because they will be fulfilled. What Jesus said, "Not one of these letters or markings on the letters will ever pass away until all of it is fulfilled," it is going to be fulfilled. But what we mean is, if there was any prophecy about something that was already to have taken place before our time today and it did not take place, then we do not have a reliable accurate revelation from God. Do you understand? You see in our view, there is no possibility of such an error. Does everybody follow me? If you are not, let's talk about it now because I don't want you to be mistaken on this.

Well, with the prophecies that are not to be fulfilled until the future, there is no problem because eventually the future will prove them. But let's suppose that there was a prophecy that was supposed to be fulfilled in past history and it has not been fulfilled. Now, we have a problem. In our view that is an impossibility based on the promise of Jesus. Do you understand? Suppose the Bible predicted as it does, that Alexander the Great's empire would be broken into four parts with four generals, four leaders. The Bible predicts that but suppose that were not true. Suppose his empire was divided among five generals? Is that a small matter to us in this course? And the answer is "no" that is a major issue. We could not teach with confidence that we have an accurate, totally reliable Bible if there is just one point like that.

You see that helps us to understand why people who don't want to believe the Bible attack it so much and try to undermine it because they are struggling to find something like that to disprove it to us. This is very important. Suppose the Bible predicted that from the 20th year of Artaxerxes until the time Messiah would be cut off that there would be 40 years instead of 69

times 7. Suppose it was just 40? Well, it didn't happen. If that was so then we cannot say to people that we have an authoritative accurate Word. It would be impossible. So in our discussion about how whether God has spoken to these people or not, remember [Hebrews 6:18](#) says it is impossible for God to lie. So whatever God has told these people it has to be the truth if He is God—or He's not God! I know this sounds almost elementary, but it is amazing to me, when we get into a tough spot reasoning with this subject how we don't keep the facts straight. The facts are that everything that is in that book will be fulfilled. And that which is not fulfilled in our day has to be in terms of predictive prophecy in the future of our day. If it is in the past and it wasn't fulfilled then it undermines our confidence in the accuracy and reliability of the Bible. Are we following that so far?

Okay now, let's take that just a step further. Go to Luke 24. The other thing we learn from the Lord Jesus in [Luke 24:44-45](#) is that all of this direct revelation was divided into three parts and all speaks about the Messiah. So when God spoke directly to individuals of the past by direct revelation, all of these words were intended to lead us to the Messiah. They were all to be organized around that. Here is what Jesus said, verse 44. "These are the words I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled." There is our argument again, but look at this. It is clearly stated where the "all things" that are to be fulfilled are found. In the law of Moses, the five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, and in the prophets and in the Psalms.

Psalms is the beginning book of five books called the writings. And whenever the Jewish people refer to that division of the Old Testament, they call it the Psalms, but they're really referring to five books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. You take those five and the five of the law of Moses, ten. How many do we have left that are called prophets? In a Jewish Bible we have only twelve left. In a Protestant Bible we have 29 left. So people look at that and say, "Wait a minute! The only Scriptures they had, it wasn't English then, it was Hebrew." So they have twenty-two books and we have thirty-nine. What is wrong here? And it is

very common that people use this argument to undermine the Bible and it really shows their ignorance. The twenty-two books in Hebrew are exactly the same as the thirty-nine in English. They're simply organized differently. For example Jeremiah and Lamentations are all put in one book. We have the Kings, not separated as First and Second Kings or First and Second Samuel or First and Second Chronicles and these are put together. You have to go to a Hebrew Bible to see that. So in a Hebrew Bible, there are twelve prophets.

Now you have to listen carefully here. I don't want anybody to be mixed up. You may want to jot this down in your notes so it is clear to you. When you say that everything the Lord wanted to be fulfilled that came from God about the Messiah is in the prophets, it is in twelve books in Hebrew and it does correspond to twenty-nine in English. Twelve prophets and all twelve of these prophets as to their main message, is a message of the Messiah and that is very interesting.

The whole reason for the history of the kings and all of that is tracing the line of the Messiah and showing God's prophetic plan to bring a savior, a redeemer into this world who can solve the world's problems. God tells us in [Revelation 13:8](#) that He was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world. So, all of God's intention for this One who would deliver us is all laid out ahead of time. If we had a book let's say that did not do that, could we not rightfully question its inspiration and authenticity—at least on the testimony of Jesus? Now what some people say, like the Jesus Seminar, they do not believe that Jesus actually did this. You say, "Well, how do they know?" Well, they threw a little marble into the center of the table indicating their opinion as to whether He said it or not. Do you understand how serious this matter is? We have the law of Moses, we have the writings, we have the prophets, and Jesus said all that is in them will be fulfilled.

I love to show Mormons out of their own Book of Mormon what is obviously impossible to fulfill and what is grossly inaccurate, so that it cannot be from God. And when you start at that point and start laying it out, you can see the trouble that comes into their hearts because they have

been programmed to believe that God spoke directly to Joseph Smith. Their whole belief system, everything about what they are, is all built on that. Well, don't be surprised, everything you and I believe is all based on these books we call the Bible. It is all built on it.

We had a big smoke screen sent up a few years ago over the gospel of Thomas, called *The Forgotten Gospel* or whatever. There are all kinds of books like this. We call them "pseudographic writings." They are false writings, in terms of that which we can prove comes from the hand of God. So this issue is a very, very critical one. Jesus has already identified the three-fold division of the Old Testament and He didn't include the Book of Mormon. It doesn't matter if it is the Mormons or who it is, the issue of whether or not God speaks directly (by direct revelation that was intended to be Scripture) is a very important one.

Jesus has clearly shown us that all that He said was going to be fulfilled, because "heaven and earth will not pass away 'til all this is fulfilled," is clearly the law of Moses, Psalms or *The Writings* and the prophets. That is what He said. We preach the truth about the Bible. In other words, the truth always exposes the error. Light always exposes darkness. So one of the traps the devil likes to get us into in apologetics is we start arguing in the area of the darkness. We start arguing the area of their beliefs or trying to show why they are not of God or whatever. Hey, just preach the truth and they will be done. They are finished. That is why this issue is critical.

What exactly was direct revelation from God? And my answer to that is: in the Hebrew Bible there are twenty-two books. And in the Protestant there are Bible sixty-six books, thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament. And that we believe is the completed revelation from God. Well, how do you know that?

Let's go to [John 10:32-35](#) and keep following this argument. This is a very difficult passage. First of all it comes after the Jews were wanting to stone Jesus because He said "I and the Father are one." And in verse 32, Jesus answering them said, "Many good works have I showed you from my Father, for which or those works do you stone Me?" And the Jews answered and said, "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy and because that thou

being a man maketh thyself God." Now Jesus answered them and said, "Is it not written in your law?"

Now here we learn that the word "law" can apply to the law of Moses or the entire Bible. Here, it is going to apply to the Psalms. And the Lord made the application. Some people say when they read Psalm 119, where there is an emphasis on the law, "I love thy law. I delight in thy law." I had somebody actually tell me, "Well that is the law of Moses." We are not under law, we're under grace. No it is not the law of Moses. It is a broad term referring to the entire Bible. Here is a direct passage to show that Jesus referred to a passage in the Psalms as being the law of God. Interesting!

This is Psalm 82 which I want you to turn to in a moment. He said, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said ye are gods'" ([John 10:34](#); [Psalm 82:6](#)). If He called them gods—now watch this carefully— "unto whom the word of God came"—this is direct revelation again and the Scripture cannot be broken. Do you understand? Before I even answer this problem, I know that the Lord taught me what is Scripture and what is not. Scripture is direct revelation from God. Scripture is not a journalist observing an event and making up the facts as he saw them.

Class, listen to me carefully. Before we are done with this course, we are going to talk about the views of inspiration. And you will learn about the differences between mechanical dictation and that which is sometimes called the personality of the writer or his viewpoint. This is especially applied to the gospels in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Before we ever get to those problems, I want you to know something about what your teacher believes and what I believe is the view of Scripture. And that is that everything in this Bible that we are calling the complete and final revelation from God is a direct revelation of God. Everything.

Some guys say to me, "You mean only when it quotes when God speaks." No! No even when it quotes who's going to say God speaks. Everything is a direct revelation from God. And I meet many Christians today, in fact this has once again become a battleground among evangelicals and it is warring right now. Once again it just keeps coming up all the time because

it is a strategy of the enemy to weaken us on what the Bible is. And what they are saying now among evangelicals is that we should not take the hard line on inerrancy. That what we should say is almost like the Mormons say: "Well, it is the word of God as it is accurately reported or accurately translated." Now, I just want you to know that that is not our view at all. We believe that it is not only accurately reported, but it's inerrant. It is without error in the original languages as it came from God and that it wasn't up to these men to say whatever they wanted to say. According to the Bible, the Holy Spirit of God superintended the whole project and made sure that what they wrote was exactly what God wanted written. They never had the option of making up their own mind about it.

Now, that is not taught in many of the Bible colleges and universities here in our country any more. It used to be, but it's not now. And it is getting rarer all the time. If this keeps going another twenty to twenty-five years—perish the thought—we may not have a college or seminary to go to that believes that this entire Bible is the result of direct revelation from God. That is how bad it is right now. This is a serious matter. And if I die tomorrow I'm hoping and praying that one of the accomplishments that I may have contributed to the general cause of Christ on this globe is to get people back to believing that the Bible is the word of God. And we don't make up the rules. This is so important. You take this Book away from people in terms of undermining their confidence in it, and you will destroy, ultimately their relationship with Jesus Christ. You will undermine everything and a lot of evangelicals don't think that. All you have to do is look at some of the major denominations that fifty or sixty years ago already departed from this and they are already long gone. It is really serious. May it never happen to us.