

Do You Believe in Miracles

I said something last Sunday night in the Altars. I said next Sunday night was going to be Miracle night. If you need a Miracle or know someone that needs a Miracle. Get them here tonight.

This Morning I'm trying to set an atmosphere for us to receive tonight.

1 Kings 17:17-24; Now it happened after these things *that* the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him.

¹⁸ So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?"

¹⁹ And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. **(SOME OF YALL MAY NEED TO MAKE A TRIP TO THE UPPER ROOM AND GET INTO THE PREANCE OF GOD)**

²⁰ Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?"

²¹ And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him."

²² Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.

²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"

²⁴ Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you *are* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in your mouth *is* the truth."

Don't we believe in Miracles Church Family? *Christianity is a religion of Miracles.* Take the Miraculous out of our faith and you are left with nothing but a set of ethical instructions that has no power to change the heart.

Subtract the Miracles and suddenly Christianity becomes just another religion.

Without Miracles, we have no good news to share with the world. And the Bible is book of Miracles from first to last.

Take the Miracles away and suddenly the Bible is no longer the Word of God. **It's just another book.**

You can no more take Miracles out of Christianity than you can take light from the sun. Without the light, there is no sun. Without the Miracles, there is no Christianity.

Having said that, I will confess that miracles are a problem for a lot of people.

The Miracle stories of the Bible pose problems that are partly historical (*did this really happen?*),

Partly theological (*why did this happen*),

Partly personal (*can something like this happen to me?*)

And partly emotional (*why doesn't something like this happen to me?*).

Sometimes we focus on marginal questions (how did Jesus turn water into wine?) That distract us from the central truth of our faith.

We believe God became a man.

That the Creator became part of the creation.

That the immeasurable became the limited.

That Almighty God took on the form of a man and was born as a tiny baby.

This is the central truth of our faith. To Christians it is impossible to speak about God without speaking about Jesus because God became a man 2000 years ago.

The insight to Miracles

Miracles are not merely a random display of God's power. Every miracle has a purpose. When God works a miracle, **He's not just doing something. He's also saying something.**

Sometimes we focus on the amazing thing that happens without considering what message it is intended to take. When God works a miracle, or when we read a miracle story in the Bible, we ought to ask; What is God saying to us through this amazing event?

That leads me to make these two remarks:

- 1) The Bible is filled with miracle stories.
- 2) But they do not happen routinely or predictably.

We read of amazing miracles in the time of Moses when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt.

We read of more miracles during the days of Elijah and Elisha.

We read of amazing things that happened during the earthly ministry of Jesus.

And we read of other miracles in the book of Acts.

That's one side of the story. The other side is that you can read page after page in the Bible without running into any miracles at all. It's not as if miracles were an everyday occurrence even in Bible times. **They did not happen routinely or predictably.**

That is, the blind man in John 9 had no way of knowing when he got up that morning that he was about to regain his sight.

Also, for the lame man at the Gates called Beautiful in Acts 3 didn't know he was going to be made whole that day and walk.

As a general rule, those who received miracles in the Bible had no advance notice.

We Pray, Believe, Hope, Trust and Wait for miracles to occur. **But we understand**, God works according to His own Will and Time, and we cannot anticipate miracles even as we pray and wait and hope for them.

No one questions the Power of God to work amazing miracles. He's God. *He can break into our world any time He chooses to do things that we cannot explain.*

It's not God's Power that is at issue. And it's not our belief in miracles, past or present. The issue rests at a much deeper level with the sovereign plan of God for our lives.

The question is not, do we believe in miracles? But what kind of God do we believe in? Sometimes our understanding of how God works is beyond what we can understand.

Here is another way to say it.

Miracles are not about us. Miracles are about God.
That's where the story in 1 Kings 17 becomes so helpful.

In 1 Kings 17:17-24, The widow's son died, Elijah stretched himself over the boy's body and prayed, God heard his prayer, and the boy's life returned to him. But I also acknowledge the emotional difficulties because it raises questions we don't often talk about. If God does this some of the time, why doesn't He do this all the time? That is call the great mysteries of God and in His mercy and sovereignty, what God does and what God doesn't do; we must trust Him in all things.

A Sudden Sorrow

v. 17,18; *Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. ¹⁸ So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?"*

Notice the words, *Now it happened after these things*. The Hebrew literally says, *After these things it happened*.

That's a powerful statement about God's sovereignty. Whatever else you want to say about this unforgettable story, don't call it an accident. The child didn't get sick by chance, and he didn't die by chance. His sickness and his death were both part of the sovereign plan of God.

There are so many mysteries about why God does what He does. Tony Evans said, Everything in the universe is either caused by God or allowed by God, and there is no third category.

That's a huge statement. So many times, we look at heartbreaking tragedy, and we want to invent a third category called, "Bad things that just happened for no reason." But there is no such category.

When the text says that *that the child grew ill*, it's the writer's way of saying that what happened to this young boy was not an accident. It was not chance. It was not fate. **God was present in the home when that boy died.**

The timing of all this deserves our attention. The boy gets sick after many weeks and months of miraculous provision by God. After many months of the flour and the oil never running out (1 Kings 17:8-16), suddenly the boy gets sick and dies. **Why does it happen that way?**

We walk with the Lord and we do the best we can, and one day the phone call comes that changes life forever.

Or we get a report from the doctor with bad news.

Or our children get into terrible trouble.

Or our marriage falls apart.

Why do these things happen?

It is very easy for us to become complacent during the blessings of God. We secretly begin to think, "Everything's okay now; I've got life all wired up. My marriage is good, and my kids are doing well, and my job is good, and life is good and I love my church. ***I EVEN LOVE MY PASTOR!!***

Everything in my life is exactly where I want it to be. If that happens to be your situation at this moment, don't feel bad about that. If your life is like that, you ought to enjoy it and be grateful to God. But know these 2 things for certain:

1) You don't deserve these blessings.

2) They won't last forever.

After the time of God's blessing, disaster strikes. We don't know why the child got sick. It almost seems like its illogical. **There was the testing, then the blessing, and then the sorrow came.**

A Powerful Prayer

Let's look at this Powerful Prayer; v. 19-23; And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" ²¹ And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." ²² Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. ²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"

As I read the text, a question comes to mind that I cannot answer. When the child first became ill, where was Elijah? Was he there and did he pray for the boy? the Bible doesn't tell us. and yet when the child died, why did Elijah do what he did?

Here's my answer. *He got involved because he saw God in everything, including all the sorrows of life.*

BUT He doesn't get angry.

He doesn't try to explain why her son died.

He doesn't argue with her.

He doesn't make any excuses.

There is no easy way to explain what happens next. Elijah lays down on top of the body of the child. From head to foot. **He does it not once, not twice, but three times.** No one really knows exactly why he laid down even once, much less why he did it up to three times.

Maybe Elijah understood that to do anything for this boy he was going to have to get very personally involved.

One writer said, By lying down on the body of the child, it is as if he is saying "Oh Lord, take some of the life from within me and give it to this boy.

A Joyful Testimony

We are now at the end of this story. Seeing that her son has come back to life, the grateful mother declares to Elijah, *Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth.*

Her words explain the miracle, and they also explain why not every mother receives this miracle when a child is sick to the point of death. **The miracle happens to validate Elijah as God's anointed prophet.**

God had promised to sustain all three of them. The Mother, The Son and Elijah, until the rain came and the drought ended. On the basis on that promise, Elijah believed that God would bring the boy back to life.

God answered this prayer by this Man of God in this way at this particular moment in time. **AND IT COULD BE YOUR TIME!!**

CON:

God is Great and Powerful beyond our conception. All that He does is right, **even those things we do not understand.**

And that brings me back to the original question:

Don't you believe in Miracles? Yes!

Do you believe God can work miracles today? Yes!

Should we pray for miracles? Yes!

The Good news is; God doesn't limit Himself to our understanding.

He is fully able to do miracles today just as He did in Bible times. ***But more often He gives strength to the weary and courage to the fainted heart, and hope to those who feel like giving up.***

But if you need a Miracle; know this.

God still loves you AND you are Valuable.

He has not forgotten you.

He knows what He is doing in your life.

He loved you enough to give His Son to die for you.

He is with you even when you do not sense His presence.

Keep Believing. Never give up.

Trust in the Lord with full confidence, remembering this truth:

Miracles aren't about us.

Miracles are about God.

Let God be God and all will be well.