

Miracles of the Kingdom

WE have the privilege of being able to read in the Bible about the birth, life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He came into the world with the express purpose of dying as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. He was also born to be a king (Luke 1:30–33).

The ministry of the Lord Jesus was really quite short: only three and a half years. Yet during this time he accomplished so much.

He preached the Gospel, performed many miracles and chose and taught his disciples so that they could continue this work after he had ascended to the Father in heaven.

The leaders of the day had failed the people, they were described as ‘evil shepherds’, but here was the Good Shepherd who had been sent by God to care for the flock.

He strengthened the diseased, healed the sick, bound up the wounded, brought back those who were driven away and sought those who were lost. In so doing he fulfilled prophecy (Luke 4:17–21 with reference to Isaiah 61:1–2).

Why Perform Miracles?

Jesus performed miracles for several reasons. They were signs to the people at that time and to those following, showing that he was the Son of God (John 20:30–31). Only someone with the power of God could do such things.

He also performed them because he was full of compassion for the sick, the hungry, and the bereaved (e.g. Matthew 14:14). While we cannot heal, we should try to follow his example by loving our ‘neighbours’ and helping them as much as we can (Matthew 22:37–40).

But Jesus’ miracles were also like his parables. They were both living ‘visual aids’ and a foretaste to show us in some small part what the Kingdom of God will be like. He told the unbelieving Pharisees that they could look to him and see the Kingdom in what he preached and what he did (Luke 17:20–21).

The miracles of Jesus can be divided into two types: the healing miracles and the nature miracles.

They were all phenomenal demonstrations of God’s power, and the people and disciples were often ‘amazed’ by them. The table overleaf shows a small selection of these miracles and some teachings for us today.

God’s Kingdom on earth is something we should prepare for. The words in the Bible are ‘life’ to us (John 6:68) and we should treasure them and learn from them. After all, it is our choice now whether we are in the Kingdom of God.

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Miracle	Comment
Miracles of Healing	
Healing Peter's mother-in-law	She 'immediately arose and served them' with no need for convalescence.
Healing a leper	The man was 'full of leprosy' but completely healed or 'cleansed'.
Raising the dead (three times)	Death is the final sickness. Jairus' daughter was not long dead; the widow's son was on the way to be buried and Lazarus had been dead for four days.
Miracles of Nature	
Turning water into wine	The miraculous wine was better than the original wine.
Great catches of fish (twice)	The first time the large number of fish broke the net; the second time the 153 fish did not break the net.
Stilling the storm	The disciples were amazed when Jesus slept through the storm.
Feeding the multitudes	The first time, 5 loaves and 2 fishes, with 12 baskets left over; the second time, 7 loaves and a few fishes, with 7 large baskets left over.
Cursing the fig tree	The fig tree had leaves but no fruit; it was not the season for figs.

Reference	Extra Meaning
Mark 1:29–31 & Luke 4:38–39	This was evidence of who Jesus was; it fulfilled prophecy about Messiah; and pointed forward to physical and spiritual healing in the Kingdom of God (Isaiah 29:18; Isaiah chapter 35).
Matthew 8:1–4 & Mark 1:40–43 & Luke 5:12–14	Leprosy is symbolic of sin. We are all full of sin and can only be healed by Jesus; first by baptism associating with his death and ultimately in the Kingdom of God.
Mark 5:22–43 & Luke 8:41–56; Luke 7:11–16; John 11:1–45	However long we have been dead Jesus can raise us – to eternal life in God’s Kingdom.
John 2:1–11	The first ‘sign’ of Jesus. The ‘old covenant’ between God and mankind (under the Law of Moses) was fulfilled by Jesus and replaced by something better, the ‘new covenant’ (Hebrews 8:6–7) in the blood of Jesus (Luke 22:20).
Luke 5:4–11; John 21:1–11	Jesus showed the disciples that their work was to ‘catch’ men rather than fish, by preaching. The second time was evidence that Jesus was risen from the dead and was a reminder of their role as preachers.
Matthew 8:23–27 & Mark 4:36–41 & Luke 8:22–25	Nations in turmoil are like the troubled sea (Isaiah 17:12–13). In God’s Kingdom, Jesus will establish peace, and nations will be at rest (Revelation 15:2). We should also have faith that God can help us through the storms of life if we are faithful to Him.
Matthew 14:14–21 & Mark 6:32–44, Luke 9:10–17 & John 6:5–14; Matthew 15:29–38 & Mark 8: 1–8	We need food to live (as requested in the Lord’s Prayer). But we also need spiritual food. In God’s Kingdom there will be plenty of both physical and spiritual food.
Matthew 21:18–20 & Mark 11:12–14	The fig tree is a symbol of the Jewish nation. It did not bear fruit to God and so was destroyed in 70 AD. But Jesus said it would revive (Luke 21:29–31) and the Jews are now back in Israel. This is a sign that the return of Jesus is near.