Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Biblical Inspiration Validated By Miracles
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 90-325

For a number of weeks we have been working our way through the doctrine of inspiration, that is that the Bible is inspired by God. That it is infallible, that is it is true in all that it affirms and teaches, that it is inerrant, that is that every word of God is pure. This is the true Word of God contained in the 66 books of the Bible.

Now admittedly it is a big subject and much can be covered in any study of the great doctrine of inspiration. We are trying to cover some of the very basic things that will be helpful to you in strengthening your confidence in the Word of God. So we have learned then that the Bible is true, that it is the true Word of God, that is the testimony of God in the Bible. He speaks repeatedly about 3800 times the Scripture says, "Thus says the Lord," in one fashion or another. The Scripture also is inspired by the Holy Spirit so you have not only the testimony of God the Father but the testimony of God the Spirit. And, of course, Jesus Christ Himself lends His testimony by affirming the validity of the Scripture, both the Old and the New Testament. We have then the Word of the living God, a true word, an authoritative word, an infallible word, a complete word to which nothing is to be added and nothing to be taken away. We have a determinative word, that is it fixes divine truth permanently and even eternally.

Now I know that to believe the Bible is a work of God in the heart. The natural man apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, no matter how much evidence you give him about the veracity and validity of Scripture does not have the capacity in the darkness of his unbelief to believe the Bible. It is a work of the Spirit of God. But to those of us who have had that work done in our hearts who understand that the Word of God is in fact the true Word of the living God. It is important for us to be further strengthened and encouraged by the evidences that that which we believe is in fact true.

I said something this last week when I was talking to some of the men I was ministering with through the week, I said, "If I never preached a sermon, if I never stood behind a pulpit, if I never stood in front of a class, if I never made a tape, if I never expressed any truth from the Bible publicly, I wouldn't want to have spent my life in any other way than to have the privilege of studying the Word of God every week of my life for all these many, many decades because it is so profoundly rich to spend days every week of your life, month after month, year after year, decade after decade pouring over the detailed understanding of the Word of God is a marvelous and thrilling benediction in your life because I've enjoyed the benefit of the sanctifying work of the Word in my own heart. I have also had my confidence in the Word of God tested at every single point of Scripture, having gone through the

Bible verse by verse, word by word, phrase by phrase in the preparation of writing the Study Bible, having gone in greater detail through many of the books of the Old Testament and almost all the books of the New Testament as carefully as I possibly can reading along the way at least 20 to 25 commentaries on every passage that I ever preach on, exposing myself to every view, those that agree and those that disagree, critical views as well as affirming views, I've had the privilege of testing the Word of God at every single point and I have at this juncture in my life greater confidence in its veracity than ever. It has stood the test of scrutiny by me and by many who are far more capable than I am of examining its detail. It has been an incredibly wonderful journey to come to this point in my life where my confidence in the Word of God is at an all time high. And as I said, if I never preached it, just living in the light of its truths and having them do their work in my life, and having this level of confidence which feeds my joy and feeds my praise and feeds my worship would be a gift that would be more than I could ever have asked. And then, however, beyond that to be able to preach it to you and encourage you is a great bonus for which I thank the Lord.

Now tonight I want you to consider some of the elements of Scripture that affirm to us its truthfulness. And we could cover a lot of things but for tonight I want to talk about two things. I want to talk about miracles and I want to talk about science. I want to talk about miracles and science.

Let's talk about miracles for a moment to start with. The Bible is filled with miracles. In fact, it starts with the most massive miracle of all miracles, the creation of the entire universe in six 24-hour days...a monumental miracle or a monumental sequence of miracles. That's only the beginning. Soon after that you have another staggering and incredible set of miracles that begins to unfold. The most notable of which is the miracle of drowning the entire human race and rearranging the surface of the earth and changing the atmosphere in the Great Flood where the canopy of water that surrounds the earth is broken up, a deluge pours down on the earth, where the continents are rearranged and divided and the reservoirs of water in the deep are cracked open and water gushes up and the whole surface of the earth is changed and altered and the drowning of the whole human race except for eight people out of which comes the earth as we know it today, its life having been protected and preserved animal life and even human life on the ark. And all the plant life begins to bloom again after the Flood, staggering miracle.

Not long after that you have another monumental miracle after miracle, you have the Tower of Babel where God in a miraculous way creates all the languages of the world and separates people by virtue of those languages as a judgment on them so that they cannot easily circulate their heretical and false religions and were off and running in a series of miracles. You go all the way through the Bible and there are some times when miracles come at a more concentrated level, such as at critical times in the life of the prophet Elijah and the prophet Elisha. But there is an explosion of miracles, the likes of which had never occurred since the time of Genesis in those early physical miracles and that is the time of our Lord Jesus Christ when miracles abound in the three-year period of His life for all intents and purposes He vanishes disease from the land of Israel. He does miracles that have no explanation

other than divine and they proliferate in every direction. The Apostles then have a delegated ability to do miracles. They continue for a little while through the book fo Acts, then they disappear. By the time you come to the book of Revelation, we hear that in the end of the age there will be massive miracles that will occur again, physical miracles will occur in the sky and on the earth as the Lord brings judgment. And finally the creation of a new earth and a new heaven.

So when we talk about a miracle, we're not talking about finding a parking place at the mall on Friday night. Okay, let's just get that straight. I know you throw that word around. "Wow, that's a miracle." But we're not talking about a miracle in the sense of something out of the ordinary or unexpected. That's not what we're talking about. Let me use C.S. Lewis' definition of a miracle. He said, "A miracle is an interference with nature by supernatural power." It is an interference with nature by a supernatural power. Westminster Dictionary of the Bible says this, "Miracles are events in the ex...in the external world wrought by the power of God and intended as a sign. They are possible because God sustains, controls, and guides all things and is omnipotent."

To sum all that up, a miracle is when God does what is supernatural, when God breaks in to the natural course of things and does something that is supernatural. A miracle is God stepping in to our world, setting aside normal laws of nature to do something that has no natural explanation, to do what is naturally impossible.

Now either we live in a universe in which there is a God, or we live in a universe in which there is not a God. Fair enough? You only have those two options. Either there is a God or there is not a God. Either there is a supernatural being, or we live in a natural world. And we are the product of natural forces that essentially came from nothing. If naturalism is true and there is no God, then there can be no supernatural invasion because there is no supernatural reality. If there is no God, there can be no miracles. They can't happen. If there is no God, nothing can come into nature from the outside because there isn't anything outside. And all there is is nature, that's naturalism. All there is is nature, that's all there is, there isn't anything else. There's nothing outside. There is no such thing as a miracle. And if you're going to use the word miracle, you're going to have to apply it to finding a parking place at the mall on Friday night.

But, if there is God, if there is a supernatural power in the universe, if there is a supernatural creator who made the universe, then miracles will occur every time that supernatural God acts independent of the natural world. So if we have no God in the universe and we just have a natural universe and the equation "nobody times nothing equals everything" is true and we've all just sort of come out of an evolutionary process that started with a one-celled thing, lying in some primordial ooze, we don't know where that came from but let's just assume it for the moment, if that's all there is, then there's no such thing as a miracle because t here's only the natural and there is nothing else. But if there is God and there is a supernatural God, then for Him to act is easily allowable. If there is God, then outside thrusts from the supernatural world into the natural world is to be expected. If there is God,

then there will be miracles. God who created can invade His world which He created any time He wants to do anything He wants with anyone He wants.

So if you believe in God, miracles isn't a leap at all. And let me take it a step further. If God wanted you to know He was there, how would He convey that? If He wanted you to know that there was in fact a supernatural God outside our natural world, what would He do to introduce Himself to us? He would have to step into our otherwise natural existence. And so not only are miracles to be expected and normal, they are necessary for us to know that there is in fact a God. And in fact there is a God and He wants to reveal Himself, then He must do what is supernatural, stop the natural process, inject Himself and we must assume that He will do that in order to let us know that He is there. And that is all a miracle is, it is God letting us know that He exists.

That's why the so-called Christian, can you believe this, the so-called Christian attempt to demythologize the Bible is so ridiculous. So-called Christian higher critics have attempted to demythologize the Bible and what they mean by that is take all the miracles out. They want to de-miracle the Bible.

Well if you do that, then in what sense are you a Christian? In what sense are you a theist? In what sense do you even believe in God if you cannot let God act? And so the critics come up with the story of Jonah and they say that when the Old Testament says that Jonah was swallowed by a whale, all it really means is that they took Jonah off the ship and put him in a dinghy and set him off on his own. And so they demythologized the idea that he was swallowed by a great fish. Peter walking on water? No, one writer says he was walking on some very dense lily pads. Another writer says he was actually walking on a sandbar. I guess it had a whole in it at the appropriate place so he could sink. And they will tell us that the feeding of the five thousand can't happen, we've got to demythologize the feeding of the five thousand. What really happened was one little boy came forward with his lunch and everyone felt so guilty that they hadn't done that that they all pulled their lunches out that they were hiding in their baskets and it was a big lesson in sharing and everybody turned into sharers. By the way, that's William Barclay's explanation on that who wrote a series of New Testament commentaries. And I...I wish I could ask William if he were around, how is it you can believe in the existence of God, and have a problem with Him doing something supernatural? What's the point? You're caught somewhere between believing in God and believing in the critics.

If God is, then let Him act. Miracles prove that God is and that God acts is consequent to the fact that He is. And so if there is a book which God has written, it will be filled with God acting, right? Because the Scripture has to be the revelation of God and if God has revealed Himself, then He just can't do what everybody else can do otherwise it's no revelation at all. He has to do what nobody else can do. So when you're looking around for a sacred book, find the one that contains the most miracles which are believable, which have eye witnesses, which are historical and which have stood the test of time and you're going to come to one book, and that's the Bible. It's what we have in the Bible. And if you

don't have miracles, all you have is a book on ethical philosophy, and furthermore, you have a forgery and a fraud and a sham because this book claims that God does do miracles. It claims miracles from front to back and all through the middle and if that's not true, then this book is a lie and you might as well not be a Christian who demythologizes the miracles, you might as well be a Muslim or a Hindu or an Atheist cause if God is, He has acted. And if there is a book that is a true revelation of God, it will be the book in which there is a record of God acting supernaturally in the midst of a natural world.

So when I ask...what is evidence for believing the Bible is the Word of God? I will answer immediately, it is miracles...it's miracles. And these miracles must qualify...I give them sort of three little tests...they must qualify on three counts. One, the miracle must be a sensible event...a sensible event. It's not something God can do in secret. You remember when Paul was caught up to the third heaven and came back in 2 Corinthians 12 and he said, "I'm not going to speak about that because it's not helpful, because it wasn't sensible, it wasn't observable, it couldn't be seen by anybody but him. He wasn't even sure what kind of miracle it was." He says, "I don't know if I was in the body or out of the body, so it's not even helpful to talk about that." But miracles that do reveal God must be subject to sensibility. They must be open to the human senses, something that people heard, something they saw, something they felt, something they tasted, something they experienced.

Secondly, they must be clearly supernatural. That is to say there cannot be another explanation. There cannot be another explanation. This is not providence. This is not God kind of working things out a little bit to make things kind of fit together in ways that appear on the surface to be somewhat...somewhat natural. A miracle to be deemed a miracle must be transcendent to all natural law. It must be an invasive act by God in which He suspends the natural law and does what is supernatural. So it must be sensible and it must be divine so that there is no other explanation. We'll call it supernatural.

And I would say, thirdly, it must have a redemptive purpose. That is to say it is directed at people recognizing the true and living God for the revelation of His own glory in redemption, that is to cause people to turn to Him with all their hearts and worship and embrace Him as the true God. They are not tricks by a magician, they are not to appeal to human curiosity. They are not designed to entertain. They are to reveal God as the Savior and Redeemer. And so, the Bible should be, if it is the Word of God, a record of God acting, God acting supernaturally, God invading the natural world. The miracles should be throughout the Bible. They should be sensible. They should be supernatural. And they should be directed toward salvation, pointing to God as the one alone can redeem. When you look at the Bible then, you should find miracles that are visible, audible, sensible, that are clear revelations of supernatural power and the presence of god that have absolutely no other explanation. And that they are never for the sake of entertainment or the curiosity of people, but rather to point to God who in the end is offering Himself as a Savior of sinners. And the Bible has these kinds of miracles...not just a few of them, many, many, many miracles...many.

And you don't even need to say, "Well, there are some extraordinary miracles and there are some not so extraordinary miracles." No, they're all absolutely extraordinary...absolutely extraordinary. And the thing that's so amazing is that throughout the Bible the writers of the Bible who record these miracles never say, "Now what I'm about to say is really going to be hard to swallow. What I'm about to say is going to be hard for you to accept because it's way out of your normal experience." It never says that. If God is who He is and if God is who He is, He has a right to act however He chooses to act. And if He wants to reveal Himself, He reveals Himself in a miraculous way and the true Scripture would then be the record of those revelations. So you expect the true Scripture not to have no miracles but to be loaded with miracles. And that is precisely where we begin with the Bibles self-authentication. The true revelation of God must be THE record of God acting miraculously. And that's the Bible, miraculous from beginning to end, from creation to new creation and all in between.

Now I can't take you through all the miracles of the Bible or even many of the miracles of the Bible, but let's look at some of them just because they're so fascinating. Let's go to Exodus chapter 14, that's a good place to start for a little bit, and look at the familiar miracle associated with the parting of the sea. By the way, there are about 25 or more miracles around the time of Moses. In verse 13 Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today." Great statement. Stand by, don't be afraid, God is going to act, God is going to act in a miraculous way. God is going to act in a sensible way. God is going to act so that there is no other explanation than that is supernatural. And God is going to act in such a way as to demonstrate that He is a Savior and a deliverer, all the criteria are there. "He will accomplish this for you today, for the Egyptians whom you have seen today you will never see them again forever." The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent. "And the Lord said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward.'" Remember, they're leading Egypt now and there's several million of them most likely. "As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land. As for Me, behold I'll harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them and I'll be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. Then the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I am honored through Pharaoh through His chariots and His horseman. And the angel of God who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel." Now they're protected by the presence of God represented in the Shekinah presence, the pillar of cloud and the angel of God. And it says, "There was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night, thus the one did not come near the other all night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land so the waters were divided. And the sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land and the waters were like a wall to them on the right hand and on their left. Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit and all Pharaoh's horses, chariots, horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. It came about at the morning watch that the Lord looked down on

the army of the Egyptians at the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of Egyptians into confusion, caused their chariot wheels to swerve and He made them drive with difficulty so that the Egyptians said, 'Let us free from Israel for the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians.' Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.' So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, the sea returned to its normal state. At daybreak while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it, the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, covered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them, not even one of them remained. But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, the waters were like a wall to them on the right and on the left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. And when Israel saw the great power in which the Lord had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and they believed in the Lord and in His servant, Moses."

So you have a miracle here that is visual, vividly visual, experiential, historical, a real event with no explanation but a supernatural one that points to God as the one to be feared and the one to be worshiped. Plenty of witnesses, you have an entire nation as eye witnesses and down to this day the Jews still affirm the reality of this great event.

From the days of Josephus on, however, there have been critics who tried to attack the historicity of this event. One critic says there were some lakes around there. They're called the Bitter Lakes. Don't know where that name came from. But they're somehow connected to the Red Sea by a narrow shallow channel. You've got the Red Sea, you know where that is, and there are some little lakes there and there's this sort of shallow channel connected to the lakes and a southeast wind blew stiffly up the channel and held the water in the lakes between the lakes and the sea, the land became a little dried out. It was sort of a natural ebb tide aided by the wind and they walked across on that. This is weak. There is no geographical evidence, historical evidence of any such lakes...none at all.

Another professor, Gallenopolus(?) of Athens University says this, "That in the thirteenth century B.C., a volcanic explosion occurred," how he knows what happened in the thirteenth century B.C. I'm not sure, but anyway, he says, "A volcanic explosion occurred setting off air masses and waves three hundred and fifty times more powerful than the hydrogen bomb devastating the presumed continent of Atlantis and creating the parting of the Red Sea." Perfect timing, perfect, just when they got there. And how in the world did the Israelites walk across so easily if the whole earth was falling apart like 350 hydrogen bombs had hit it?

Another very popular view is that the Israelites crossed in a genuinely shallow and marshy area. This is a very popular view, find it in a lot of liberal literature. They actually walked across in a few inches of water. That's even a bigger miracle. How in the world did a trained Egyptian army drown in two inches of water?

Well the simple explanation here is that the breath of God was in the strong east wind. Why is that a problem if there is God? Psalm 74:13 says, "You divided the sea by Your strength." It's a miracle. We shouldn't be shocked at that. There is God and God is revealing Himself, that's the whole point of Scripture. He reveals Himself in His acts and He reveals Himself in His words through His priests and prophets and patriarchs.

Look at the sixteenth chapter, for a minute, of Exodus, sixteenth chapter, verse 14. In the morning there's a little layer of dew, it evaporated on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground, like a dusting. They're wandering in the wilderness, remember, for forty years here. "And when the layer of dew evaporated, behold on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. When the sons of Israel saw it they said to one another, 'What is it?'" They didn't know what it was. "And Moses said to them, 'It's the bread which the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has commanded, Gather of it every manna as much as he should eat. He should take a homer of each according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent.' And the sons of Israel did so and some gathered much and some little, and when they measured it with a homer, he who had gathered much had no excess and he who had gathered little had no lack. Every man gathered as much as he should eat." God adjusted what they had miraculously, just as He provided it miraculously. "And Moses said to them, 'Let no man leave any of it until morning.' But they didn't listen to Moses, some left part of it till morning thinking there might not be any the next day...lack of faith....it bred worms, became foul and Moses was angry with them." God did a miracle of corrupting it over night. "They gathered it morning by morning, every man as much as he should eat. When the sun grew hot, it would melt."

Now what is this? This is what we call manna, isn't it? Or angel-food cake, if you like. Now many people have tried to explain this miracle away. They have said, "Well, what this really means there was a lichen that grew on the rocks and it produced pea-sized globs that were sweet to eat. They were really picking pea-sized globs of lichen off the rocks." It doesn't say that there. No such thing has ever been existing in Sinai. This view, by the way, hasn't made it.

The popular current view is that this is a sticky-like colored honeydew excretion on a tamarisk twig. I don't see any tamarisk twigs in this text. They used to think that the tree produced it, now there was a certain study of the excretion they found on tamarisk twigs, turned out to be left there by bugs. And by the way, this is no good anyway, because those bugs only secrete that in June and July...not all year for forty years for several million people, by the way.

In Numbers chapter 22, just highlighting some of the more interesting miracles, you have the wonderful story of Balaam's talking ass, or donkey, as the New American Standard more nobly translates the word. Verse 21 of Numbers 22, "Balaam arose in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the leaders of Moab. God was angry because he was going and the angel of the Lord took

his stand in the way as an adversary against him." Here is this prophet for sale who'd sell himself to the highest bidder and he's going to go to the Moabites and he's going to wind up trying to curse Israel. Anyway, he's on his way. The angel of the Lord stands in the path. He's riding on his donkey. His two servants are with him. So some eyewitnesses are there. Everything needs to be confirmed with two or three eyewitnesses. "When the donkey saw the angel standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand, the donkey turned from off the way and went into the field but Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back into the way. Then the angel of the Lord stood on a narrow path of the vineyard with a wall on this side and a wall on that side and when the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pressed herself to the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall so he struck her again." He's getting irritated. "And the angle of the Lord went further and stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn to the right or the left. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she laid down under Balaam, so Balaam was angry and struck the donkey with his stick." Now after this point, we can assume that the only...the only one who saw the angel of the Lord was the donkey and Balaam doesn't know what's going on and he's whacking the daylights out of this poor donkey.

And verse 28, "The Lord opened the mouth of the donkey and she said to Balaam, 'What have I done to you that you struck me these three times?'" That's got to be the shock of his life. But he engages immediately in the conversation. "Then Balaam said to the donkey," it seems like there ought to be a gap in there while he catches his breath. "Because you've made a mockery of me. If there had been a sword in my hand, I would have killed you by now." He didn't like being humiliated by a donkey.

"And the donkey said to Balaam, 'Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden all your life to this day? Have I ever been accustomed to do so to you?' And he said no." This is...it's just amazing that he's carrying on this conversation. Verse 31, "The Lord opened the eyes of Balaam and he saw the angel of the Lord standing away with his drawn sword in his hand bound...bowed all the way to the ground."

What is going on here? Second Peter 2 verses 15 and 16 refers to this miracle of the talking donkey. Some say, "Well, this can't happen. No, no, no, no. You can't have a talking donkey. This whole affair took place while Balaam was in a trance. Or it took place in his dreams. He was dreaming this." It's actually hard to dream or be in a trance with a donkey banging you into the wall. I'm not sure that that experience wouldn't have awakened somebody even in a dream.

Others said, "No, Balaam was used to talking to himself and he was so used to it he started answering himself as if he were a donkey." Others say, "It was just the braying of the animal that Balaam was so accustomed to that he gave it meaning, like you talk to your dog kind of goochie, goochie, puppy talk, you know." I don't do that but some do. I don't think the big miracle here is the talking donkey, I think the big miracle here is that Balaam kept up the conversation. And then other critics say that what you have in verse 30 and following is just...oh, donkey thoughts, as if the donkey was actually thinking this.

No, what you really have here is God stopping a prophet miraculously. And there's a total lack of defensiveness by the writer for such a bizarre thing. Bible writers never defend miracles, they never treat them with fanfare. Moses wrote this without explanation. Moses wrote this, listen to me, without explanation. Moses wrote this and he's the same one who wrote the whole Pentateuch. He's the same one who wrote the whole law of God with all its deep truths, great doctrines, sweeping history. He's the same one who wrote accurate accounts of the creation of the world, of the Flood, of Babel, of the patriarchs who gave God's great Law and spoke of God's redemptive purpose. He writes without self-consciousness about a man having a conversation with a donkey, cause it happened. And why not? God is God and if God wants to talk through a donkey, He can do that. This is proof that indeed this book is the book of God's revelation.

Go to 2 Kings chapter 4 for a minute, 2 Kings chapter 4 verse 18...Elisha. It's about a lady who had a son and we'll just kind of catch the story in the middle. He...the child was grown, went to his father to the reapers, he said to his father, "My head, my head," he's having severe headaches indicative of some very, very severe illness malady. He said, "Carry him to his mother." When he had taken him, brought him to his mother, he sat on her lap until noon then died. She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, Elisha, shut the door behind him and went out.

What happened? Verse 32, "Elisha came into the house, the lad was dead, laid on his bed. So he entered and shut the door behind them both, prayed to the Lord and went up and lay on the child, put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, his hands on his hands, stretched himself on him and the flesh of the child became warm. Then he returned and walked in the house once back and forth and stretched himself on him and the lad sneezed seven times and the lad opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi and his servant, 'Call this Shunammite.' He called her, when she had come into him he said, 'Take up your son.' She went in, fell at his feet, bowed herself to the ground. She took up her son and went out."

God was pointing to Elisha as His true prophet. God gave Elisha the power to raise a dead boy. Well the critics say the boy wasn't really dead, he was in a semi-coma. And others say he was just having a hard time breathing and Elisha gave him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. But there is no explanation for one who is dead. He was dead. His mother knew he was dead. His mother left him dead. His mother found him alive.

Why are we surprised? You want a book with no miracles? Then you don't have a book that tells about God.

Let me show you another one, and again this is one that you're familiar with. Daniel chapter 3...Daniel chapter 3 and these are the three friends of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and they are to worship Nebuchadnezzar and Nebuchadnezzar alone and he is in a rage and he is angry because

they're not doing that. And so he says in verse 15, "If you're ready at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music to fall down and worship the image that I have made, very well. If you will not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire and what God is there to deliver you out of my hands? Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered and said to the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this. If so be, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of flaming fire or blazing fire, He will deliver us out of your hand in any case, O King, even if we don't live here, we'll live in His presence. But even if He doesn't, let it be known to you, O King, we're not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.' Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage. His facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. He commanded certain valiant warriors who were in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in order to cast them into the furnace of blazing fire. Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps, their other clothes which would add to the flames and cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire. For this reason because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace had been extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire still tied up."

And then what happened? "Nebuchadnezzar, the king, was astounded. Stood up in haste, responded to his high officials, 'Was it not three men we cast into the midst of the fire?' They answered and said to the king, "Certainly, O King, there was three.' He answered and said, 'Look, I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm and the appearance of the fourth is like the Son of the gods.'" Preincarnate Christ joined them there. "And Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire, responded and said, 'Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here.' Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the midst of the fire and the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the king's high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that the fire had no affect on the bodies of these men, nor was the hair of their heads singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them. Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him violating the King's command and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any God except their own God." And then he made a decree that this was a God who could be worshiped and should not be offended.

So you have a miracle confirmed by a pagan king. The king confirms the miracle. This is testimony from an unbelieving eyewitness. Miracle after miracle after miracle. Come in to the New Testament, the life of Jesus, miracles proliferate. You come into the lives of the Apostles in the book of Acts, you have Peter and John who cure a lame man. If Peter and others being delivered miraculously from prison as God throws the door open and breaks the chains and shackles. You have Philip being

transported by the Spirit of God in Acts 8 up to meet a certain person for the salvation of that person. You have Paul in Acts 14 healing a handicapped person. You have Paul casting out evil spirits in Acts 16, curing the sick. You have Paul in Acts 14 raising the dead...raised, I should say, from the dead. And you have Paul raising Eutychus from the dead in the twentieth chapter of Acts. All through Scripture miracle after miracle after miracle. You don't need evolution to explain origin. Creation doesn't have to be evolution. God is, God can act, God does act. The Flood doesn't need to be a local rainstorm where the drains got backed up and drowned a few people. The confounding of languages at Babel isn't a myth. The parting of the Red Sea was not wading through a marsh. Manna is not tamarisk twig globs of secretion. The raising of a dead boy was not mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. The fiery furnace, as some critics say, was put out at the instant that the three men were put in by a convenient moist wind that blew through.

Let them be miracles, unless you're an atheist. If you have no God, then you have no revelation and you have no Bible and you have no hope because you have no salvation. But let God be God. And when I open my Bible and I see miracle after miracle after miracle after miracle I say, "This is the book that reveals God." He acts and He speaks. And if it's not a supernatural book, you can pitch it, throw it in the bin with all the rest of the lies and deceptions. This reality of the miraculous element of Scripture is the evidence that this is, in fact, the revelation of the living and true God.

Now I want to talk to you about science and how accurate the Bible is scientifically, but I see our time is gone. So we'll save that for next time. Join me in prayer.

Lord, we love You and we love Your truth. We exalt Your Word. We are perfectly comfortable, more than that, we rejoice in a book filled with miracles, the great miracle with which it begins, the great miracle with which it ends and all the miracles in between, all the miraculous acts, all the miraculous revelations, all that You have done that is recorded here that is clearly Your own doing supernatural and divine. All that You have said that is clearly Your truth again supernatural and divine, it's all contained in this book. We want a book that reveals the true and living God. What point would there be to have a Bible with no miracles? There would be no record that You even existed. We thank You that You do step into this world and make Yourself known. You did it. You revealed Yourself in many ways and You've given us the record of that revelation. And because of its miracles, we know it to be an account of the unveiling of Your person, Your glorious person. These are historical, sensible miracles witnessed by those who believed and those who did not, attested to by eyewitnesses. They have no other possible reasonable explanation than supernatural power and they are always with a view to salvation to direct those who were there when they happened and all who read them to the glory of the one true and living God whom to know rightly is eternal life. We thank You for Your Word and we look forward to what we will yet learn about its glorious trustworthiness. And we thank You for the incarnate Word through Him we understand the written Word, for it was He who has sent us the Holy Spirit to be our teacher. Thank You for our wonderful day together. We commit this truth to Your usefulness as we endeavor to live in response to what we know to be Your true revelation. May the

Word come alive in us and may a miracle of regeneration be manifest as we live according to Your revealed will. And we thank You in Christ's name. Amen.

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