

MIRACLES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Bible begins with the miracle of creation saying, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). Paul says all are without excuse because “since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead” (Rom. 1:20). In regard to the Exodus God said, “And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them.” (Ex. 7:5)

God told Pharaoh: “for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth” (Ex. 9:16, cf. Rom. 9:17). When Israel saw what God miraculously did to the Egyptians “the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses” (Ex. 14:31; cf. 15:11).

After God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt, He continued to miraculously demonstrate His reality and yet the Israelites generally persisted in unbelief. In Numbers 14:11 God said, “How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them?” God held them accountable for His miraculous workings saying, “because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.” (Num. 14:22-23).

Moses in recounting the history of Israel to a new generation said: “Did any people ever hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live? Or did God ever try to go and take for Himself a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? To you it was shown, that you might know that the Lord Himself is God; there is none other besides Him.” (Deut. 4:33-35)

In Deuteronomy 29:5-6 God said: “And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or similar drink, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.”

When the children of Israel came to the Promised Land, Rahab testified: “I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen

on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.” (Josh. 2:9-11; cf. Heb. 11:31)

When Israel crossed over the Jordan on dry ground Joshua said to the people: “for the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever.” (Josh. 4:23-24)

When David in faith went out to meet the giant Goliath, he said to him: “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands.” (1 Sam. 17:45-47)

In 1 Kings 18 when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal he put forth a “miraculous challenge” saying, “you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” (1 Kg. 18:24). When the prophets of Baal called on their god nothing happened.

But then when Elijah prayed: “Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, ‘The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!’” (1 Kg. 18:38-39)

When Naaman, the commander of the army of Syria had leprosy he sought out the Jewish prophet Elisha. Elisha instructed him to wash in the Jordan seven times and he would be restored. Reluctantly Naaman finally did it “and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean (2 Kg. 5:14).

2 Kings 5:15 (NKJV)

15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant."

In recounting Israel's history Psalm 78:11 says they "forgot His works and His wonders that He had shown them." Verse 22 goes on to say the problem was "they did not believe in God". And then verse 32 goes on to say in spite of God's miraculous workings "they still sinned, and did not believe in His wondrous works."

When God delivered Daniel from the lions' den, King Darius then responded: "I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, And He works signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." (Dan. 6:26-27)

When Jonah tried to run from the commission of the LORD he ended up on a ship in a great storm. The men on board were terrified but, by way of lots, determined that Jonah must be the cause. Jonah said, "I am a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land." (Jonah 1:9) Jonah knew he was the cause of the storm and proposed they throw him overboard and all would be well. So reluctantly they did "and the sea ceased from its raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly" (Jonah 1:15-16).

The major purpose of God's miracles in the Old Testament was so that He might demonstrate that He is the LORD GOD overall and that people would come to believe in Him for Who He is. Genesis is the book of beginnings, and there, starting in Genesis 12, we find that God intended to build a special nation (Israel) through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and that this nation would be His special witness to the world.

It was essentially in conjunction with Israel that we find God performing sign-miracles in the OT. This evidenced God's covenant relationship with them and that the God of Israel is indeed the ONE true God. And once God established Himself via sign-miracles, He then intended that to be standing evidence going forward, not needing to be constantly repeated. For example, God demonstrated Himself (the God of Israel) to be the ONE true God in the mighty miracles of the Exodus. These are constantly referred

back to in ongoing redemptive history as having sufficiently established the reality of Who God is. This was all the proof needed!

Once sign-miracles were validated in history and codified in the Word of God that is seen as sufficient proof going forward. There is no need for God to continue to prove Himself over and over. The evidence is then firmly established and those presented with this truth are then responsible to believe it.

The Bible is a HISTORY book of what God has done, and we are now accountable for believing it! There is a lot of history there, a lot of miracles, a lot of irrefutable proof, and behind it all is the witness of the Spirit!

Acts 26:27–28 (NKJV)

27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”

28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”

Hebrews 1:1 (NKJV)

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,