



Y8 Miracles Examined

Knowledge Organiser

Philosophy and Religious Studies

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Miracle: a good event which is usually contrary to the laws of nature; believed by many to be the work of God in this world.

- Religious people would accept that Miracles are always good events.
- Religious miracles are not normal – they seem to be impossible.
- Miracles are not things that people can ordinarily do without help from God.
- Religious miracles go against the laws of nature.

Miracles of the Old Testament

The shofar blast that brought down the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6:20).

The bush that burned with fire and spoke with Moses, but was not consumed. (Exodus)

The Ten Plagues of Egypt (Exodus 7:14).

The parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21).

Passover celebrates the miraculous rescue of the Jews from slavery in Egypt.

Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem and the tiny cruse of oil that burned for eight straight days.

Purim recalls an improbable Jewish escape from genocide because of Esther.

We generally think of a miracle as an event that violates the laws of nature.

However, this idea would not have made sense for Jews in antiquity who did not conceive of God, the creator, as outside nature.

A miracle was something God did in order to make a statement, to change the course of human affairs.



The Hindu Milk Miracle

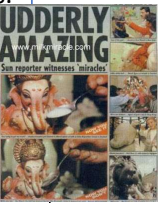
- It is part of Hindu tradition to make offerings to their gods.
- In 1995, statues of the Hindu deity Ganesha were observed to be drinking milk offerings.
- Many Hindus believed in this miracle and flocked to see the miracle for themselves.

Evidence against the miracle:

The phenomenon was a result of Surface Tension and Capillary Action, showing that physics was the cause of many miracles.

Milk that people were offering coated the idol hidden beneath garlands of flowers, collected at the pedestal and flowed into the gutter.

Some scientists claimed that some stone idols were more porous, and accepted milk more easily.



Parting of the Red Sea Summary

Moses and the Israelites have escaped Egypt after the tenth plague that all first-born Egyptians die.

- As the Israelites attempt to escape, they are trapped at the edge of the Red Sea.
- Moses asks God for more help and as he lifts his staff, God parts the sea in front of them.
- The Pharaoh has had a change of heart and is chasing them down and wants them back!
- Once God's people are across, the sea closes in on the Pharaoh and his men, killing them and setting the Israelites free.

Some alternate ideas...

- There is no conclusive archaeological evidence directly supporting the story of the Red Sea crossing, other than the biblical text itself.
- Research determined that a strong east wind, blowing overnight, could have exposed wide mud flats, creating a land bridge that would remain high and dry for four hours.
- Some theories have speculated that the eruption of the volcano at Santorini created a tsunami that caused the rapid retreat of the waters.

New Testament Miracles

Why Christians Believe:

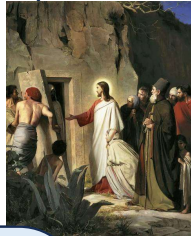
- Jesus is God incarnate made flesh on earth; fully human and fully divine
- Jesus is a part of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Jesus has the power of God to help those suffering
- The miracles fulfilled prophecies in the Old Testament



There are 37 miracles of Jesus documented in the Gospels of the Bible
Christians believe that God wants to help us because God is omnipotent, omnibenevolent, and Jesus is God.

Raising Lazarus

Jesus was a friend to Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha. There are many witnesses to this miracle because they were mourning the death of Lazarus. The witnesses spread the news, like social media today. There is no medical reason to explain Lazarus rising from the tomb *if* Lazarus was dead.



In what way do miracles appear to change with Jesus?

- Many miracles of the Old Testament seem to help a whole nation of Israelites, such as the parting of the Red Sea.
- Most of Jesus' miracles are helping individuals, or small groups, such as lepers.
- The Resurrection of Jesus was about saving humanity through His death, not an individual.
- Jesus is teaching that God's love is for everyone who follows his teachings, not just the Jews.



Ascetic: Living a strict and simple lifestyle with few pleasures or possessions.

Buddhist Miracles



In every religion we hear of miracles being performed by either the founders of these religions or by some of their disciples.

In the case of the Buddha, he performed what people would call miracles on the day of his birth until his passing away into Nirvana.

However, Buddha did not teach people to worship him or gods and taught that if a wicked man can become a pure and religious man, this is a practical miracle.

Any miracle powers of the Buddha were attained through his long and intense training in meditation.

The Buddha's enlightenment through deep focus and meditation are seen as the greatest miracle.

Among Buddha's many abilities were the power to levitate, to multiply his body, to calm wild animals.

The Buddha taught that such powers can be acquired by anyone, through training in meditation and mental concentration to very high levels.

Miracles are less important than helping to end someone's suffering, and this does not need faith, it needs "the miracle of instruction".

Sikh Miracles

Using miracle powers is not allowed to prove a point, show off or any other ego related reason. True miracles should only be done in the flow of nature, not ego.

Guru Nanak and the Boulder

- Power of faith - Guru Nanak had faith in God to help so that the boulder would not crush him.
- Generosity - Sharing what we have with others is important, like the water.
- Giving a chance to do what is 'right' - Guru Nanak was clear that the man had three chances to do what is 'right'.
- God provides for those who have faith - Having faith in God is the most important thing.

