***Demons Will Perform Miracles

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We have come to the fifth bowl of judgment, which has covered the world with darkness. This plague, added to the previous four, has increased human suffering to an unbearable degree. The response of mankind to this suffering has been to blaspheme God who is punishing them in order to bring them to repentance and to trust in Jesus Christ. People foolishly do not understand that it is God's grace that is bringing this punishment to give them one more chance to straighten out. But these people do not repent of their evil deeds, but instead, we're told, they intensify their hatred of God.

When we come to the sixth bowl judgment, we find that the Euphrates River in modern Iraq is dried up. This removes a natural barrier to troop movements, which have begun to take place at that time, of oriental kings moving toward Jerusalem. The kings of the East are on the move because they want to attack the city of Jerusalem which is the center of the worship of the antichrist, who at that point in time (the last part of the tribulation) will be the ruler of all the world. The Euphrates River dries up for them to give them easy access to cross that river.

A council of war is held in Babylon by Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet. They decide that they must confront the threat from the East, which is a challenge to the authority of the antichrist as the world ruler. In reality, behind all of this action on the human scene, is the fact that God Himself is moving these nations to a final showdown with Himself and with His Son, Jesus Christ at the battlefield of Armageddon.

Following Revelations 16:12, the sixth bowl, we have interjected in verses 13-16, a short set of parentheses. This set of parentheses, between the sixth and seventh bowls actually serves as a commentary on the sixth bowl. It is a little expansion and clarification, giving a little more background connected with the Euphrates River drying up, and the troops on the move. This set of small parenthesis may also be considered a final warning to tribulation unbelievers to repent and to turn to Jesus Christ.

**Frogs**

So, we now begin at Revelation 16:13, where John is startled to see something amazing. He says, "And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs."

**The False Trinity**

What we have introduced to us here is what is aptly called the false trinity (the counterfeit trinity). John, in an overall viewing of the scene, suddenly sees the dragon (the "drakon"). Revelation 20:2 identifies the dragon as Satan. He is the first member of this evil trinity, and he assumes the role of God the Father. Secondly, John sees the beast (the "therion"). This refers to the antichrist. He assumes the role of the second member of the false trinity – the role of God the Son. Then John says that he sees the false prophet (the "pseudoprophetes"). This refers to the false prophet. He assumes the role of the third member of the false trinity, taking on himself the role of God the Holy Spirit.

These three members of the false trinity have something coming out of their mouths, which John describes as "unclean spirits." The word "unclean" in the Greek looks like this: "akathartos." "Akathartos" means something that is "filthy." It is vile in the extreme. It also connotes something that is terribly repulsive. He says that these are "dirty spirits." The Greek word of "spirits" is "pneuma" – the very same word that is used of God the Holy Spirit. But the point of this word is that these are not human beings coming out of the mouths of Satan, of the antichrist, and of the false prophet. What is coming out of their mouths is a spirit creature which in fact is a demon angel. These three filthy demons come from the mouths of the members of the unholy trinity.

What comes out of their mouth are not actually frogs. It says that they are "*like* frogs." What it is conveying is that it is speaking of something that normally is repulsive to people. It refers to those cold-blooded amphibians – slimy and unpleasant. You might not mind to have your little cat jump up and sleep on the foot of your bed. You might not even mind your little doggy nuzzling in with you on a cold winter's night. But you're not likely to take kindly to a frog nuzzling up to you. Frogs are repulsive. They're offensive. They're disgusting. That is the point of using this symbol, because what these people are saying is horrid. A message is coming through that you recoil from.

So, what comes out of the mouth of the false trinity here is repulsive. These demons are actually carrying a message that is compared to the loathsomeness of frogs. Frogs are disgusting. This characterizes their message. Leviticus 11:10, quite understandably, characterizes frogs as unclean animals. You're not supposed to eat frogs. It's in the category of potentially disease-creating animals. So, just as a swamp at night is a cacophony of frog noises (croaking), so these demons are pictured here coming out of the false trinity. Remember that the false trinity is now sitting there in Babylon, and the whole country is covered with darkness. So, like the darkness of a swamp, these members of the false trinity are sitting there in the darkness, and they're contemplating what to do. These frog-like spirits are actually seducing spirits.

**Doctrines of Demons**

In 1 Timothy 4:1, we read, "But the Spirit explicitly says that in the latter times, some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons." So, what is coming out is a message from the mouth of Satan, antichrist, and the false prophet is doctrines of demons. And demons do have doctrines. It is not always easy to spot those doctrines because demons make their doctrines be very close to true doctrine. And unless you yourself are a discerning individual, you will not see where the little twist is that has created a false doctrine out of something that may sound so right.

One of the favorite stunts of liberals that you should be aware of, is to take the terminology of fundamentalists, which is basically biblical terminology, and they give it whole new meanings. They talk about something that you would say, "Yeah, I'm for that, boy. I believe that." But they don't mean the same thing that you think they mean, and the scriptural meaning of those words that you have become acquainted with.

So, this is a great subtlety here that is taking place – doctrines of demons. This message is being directed, as we will see in a moment, to the leaders of the nations of the world. Verse 14 goes on to say, "For they are spirits of demons." Now we have it very clearly clarified for us. They are spirits of demons. The Greek word is "daimonion." I don't know why, but when the translators of the King James Bible came to the word "diamonion," which you can see how even in Greek, it's clearly connected with the English word "demon," they had the bad habit of translating this as "devils." So, that's why you see the word "devils" in the King James translation in the plural. Of course, they should have known that there's only one devil, but there are many demons. So, when you read in some of those older translation "devils," just know that it's this word "diamonion," which is a word for "demons."

Again, these demons are filthy. They have a characteristic of the repulsiveness of frogs. They're bringing a message out of the mouth of the false trinity. They're actually agents of Satan, moving government leaders of the world to confront God. Here is the little act of deceit that's being played upon these leaders. It is the same kind of deceit that we fall into when we are out of fellowship with God. That is that these leaders think they're in charge of everything. They think they're in control. They think they're making the decision to move against Jerusalem. They think they're moving toward the confrontation with the antichrist, which ends up being a confrontation with Jesus Christ. But they don't know that God is behind the scenes, moving them in that direction.

**Demons can Perform Miracles**

For these demon spirits to bring conviction to the rulers of the world, we're told that they: "Go out performing signs." The word is "semeion." "Semeion" refers to a miraculous act to confirm supernaturally (by supernatural acts) the frog message. The demons of Satan are capable of performing miracles.

**Charismatics**

There's a pretty good charismatic preacher, of all things, from down in San Antonio, who comes on the TV every morning about 8 o'clock. Generally, he knows his stuff, and he is very sound. And he has a habit such that when he says something important, he says, "Now say that after me." Well, here's something you can say after me: "The demons are capable of performing miracles." It is amazing how many Christians do not know that Satan is a great miracle worker, and he empowers his angels (who already have great powers), because they are angels, to be able to perform the miraculous. It is a naive and false concept that only God performs miracles, and that if something miraculous takes place, it comes from God. That is what has trapped the whole charismatic movement in wasting their lives and coming in poverty spiritually into heaven, because they're chasing the rabbits of false doctrine created by this desire to chase miracles.

The miracles that are in the Bible have a very specific purpose. Those miracles that come from God are to establish credibility for the message. In Mark 13:22, this principle that God uses of confirming truths with miraculous events is what Satan is going to imitate. He's going to counterfeit miracles. Jesus warned His followers in Mark 13:22: "The devil is going to throw miracles at you. And unless those miracles are telling you something that is compatible with the integrity of Scripture, don't be fooled." Mark 13:22: "For false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders in order, if possible, to lead the elect astray." Yes, all of you Christians can be led astray with false miracles if you are foolish enough to believe that kind of falsehood without confirming it with Scripture. Miracles are used to establish the credibility of a message. It can be used by God to establish His message; or, it can be used by the devil to establish his message. We must remember that Satan is a liar.

One time, I warned somebody about accepting hypnosis to get information. Hypnosis is a condition where you have total loss of control of yourself; you have total loss of your mental processes; and, you are totally emptied of all knowledgeable controls. I warned him that that also opens the door to satanic delusions. And this person responded, "I am open the truth in any direction by any means." Well, the foolishness of his statement is found in John 8:44, which tells us that: "The devil is a liar. He does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks, he speaks a lie. He speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of liars." You couldn't get a more specific, powerful statement of the fact that Satan is a liar.

How is he going to lie to you? In an open way that you will catch on? No, it's going to be the same kind of lie that some slime ball, who has no honorable intentions toward some young lady, and he's going to lie to her in a way that he would seem credible, in order to gain some end that he has in mind. So, Satan comes along, and he will lie to you. And there's no greater possibility for him lying than when you're under hypnosis, and he can interject through you ideas that are totally false.

One of the great examples was Edgar Cayce. He had the capability of putting himself under self-hypnosis, and then when people asked him questions, he would answer. And some of the questions that he would often be asked were relative to health matters. People would say, "So-and-so is suffering this. What can we do about this? How can we solve this?" And boy, the demons are the best doctors in the world. If you want a doctor that can really solve your problem, get a demon, because they have enormous information. And Edgar Cayce would receive this information. People would write it down. He might say, "Squeeze so many of this particular kind of grapes to get to this particular kind of juice, and drink it within one minute," which we now know is within the span when maximum vitamin and nutritional value is in a juice – when you squeeze it and dispose of it within a minute's time, or very shortly thereafter. And the people would get well.

On one occasion, he was the spirit speaking (giving the directions) on how to help a man who was desperately ill and at death's door. And suddenly, the demons stop talking, and they couldn't get him to talk anymore. They found that at that particular moment, the man had died, and the demons knew it, and they stopped giving the instruction.

One of the things that often was prescribed by Edgar Cayce through the spirits was drinking so much Coca-Cola. I don't know if that's a health measure that you should take seriously. But you can go down to the bookstore at the mall, you go to the occult section, and there are the books by Edgar Cayce. And there you can find a book that says, "The prescriptions of Edgar Cayce for various illnesses." You'd be surprised how many times Coca-Cola is one of the things you take, along with something else. You might want to send that to your favorite doctor to help them along. Obviously there was power in that because the demons were doing it.

Edgar Cayce, being a Methodist Sunday school teacher in the days when Methodists were more sound in terms of the Word of God, was very uneasy about this. And he came to a conclusion that if the information he was getting was doing good for people, it must be from God, and what he was getting were miraculous acts, and if it did good, it must be from God. But that was a false conclusion. He was not testing experience by the Word of God.

Finally, somebody got the idea to have him hypnotize himself so they could ask him questions on religion. When I got to that section in the writings of Edgar Cayce, I really got interested. I said, "Here we will know." And sure enough, what came out of the mouth of the demon spirits of instruction on religious matters was pure New Age doctrine. It was deception of the worst kind. It revealed that the information that Edgar Cayce had was not from God, but it was coming from the demonic world.

So, in the tribulation, there are going to be great displays of occult miracles. These are going to hypnotize people in such a way that they will be ready and enthusiastic to join the antichrist's movement against God. They will be deceived by these miracles because they will think that he really is God, or he couldn't do these things. Matthew 24:24: "False Christs, false prophets, and signs and wonders, if possible, even to deceive the elect." And if the elect do not know the principles of the Word of God, they will be deceived themselves.

I think at this point, it's important for us to review a little bit of information that you may have forgotten, because the charismatics are cranking up today with one conference after another, and the word "miracle" is always there. They're having the great miracle conference here, and the great miracle conference there: "Come to our church, and have the great miracles that are going to be performed." But what little hope I had that the charismatic can perform miracles, I lost in the Irving Hospital. On two occasions, the charismatic preachers, who are down there jumping and jiving on Sunday night, healing people, wouldn't touch me with a ten-foot pole. What a great classic opportunity!

Here's a guy such that there's no question about what's wrong with him. There are several things wrong with him that you're not sure about, but five breaks down one side of a leg – that you're sure about. And helplessness in walking on that leg – that you're sure about. Wouldn't it have been grand indeed for them to say, "Why spend all this time here? We're going to fix this leg, and perform a healing miracle?" They couldn't do it. They wouldn't have attempted it. And if I had gone to one of their meetings in my Roll-Royce wheelchair, I'd have pulled up there, and they'd have put me at the end of the line, and the meeting would be over before they got to me, once they found what they were faced with, because they knew that Katherine Kuhlman wouldn't get me jumping and jiving out of that wheelchair. They knew that this guy, W. V. Grant, out at Eagle's Nest Chapel in Oak Cliff, as he does on television, gets those folks to jump up out of their wheelchairs. Boy, I wish I'd have thought of this sooner. I should have gone to one of their meetings. What an opportunity!

**Miracles during Moses' Time**

These are frauds. And one of the things you should know about the miraculous in the Bible to get your mind straight on this, is that the Bible never indicates that miracles are a commonplace experience among Christians. Who was the first person that ever performed a miracle in the Bible? What was the first era in which miracles of God came on the scene? The answer is Moses. Until you came to Moses, there were no miracles in Scripture, and miracles were used at the time of Moses to display God's power in order to secure the release of the Jews from their slavery in Egypt. The purpose of the miracles which God enabled Moses to perform was to confirm his claim that he spoke for God, and to confirm the fact that his message was from God.

First of all, he had to authenticate his message to the Jews. Suddenly, this Moses been gone for 40 years. He's 80 years old now, and he had been gone from them for 40 years out of Egypt, and here he comes back on the scene. Exodus 4:1-9 and Exodus 4:29-31 indicate that the miracles were to convince the Jews that Moses spoke the truth. He was who he said he was – the spokesman of God.

Then, furthermore, the miracles were to authenticate his message to the unbelieving pagan Pharaoh. In Exodus 7:8-10, Exodus 7:19-20, and Exodus 8:5-6, we have indicated to us that that was the purpose of the miracles – so that Pharaoh would know that here was something that this man could not do on his own, and that he was indeed speaking for a God who had this kind of power.

The miracles of Moses, furthermore, were to be signs to the people of Egypt themselves, such that what their king was being asked to do was something that he better do, because it is coming from one who had such enormous power that they were not used to among their gods – this power being demonstrated so they would understand that they had better release the Jewish slaves.

In Exodus 7:3-5, we read that God says, "But I'll hardened Pharaoh's heart that I may multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. I'm not going to open his mind to accepting this, so that I'll have multiple opportunities to perform works of miracles. When Pharaoh will not listen to you, then I will lay My hand on Egypt and bring out My hosts, my people, the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great judgment. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst." God says, "These miracles are going to give them ample warning that they should accept the authority of Moses and release the Jewish slaves.

Satan tried to use his power to neutralize this message of divine confirmation. He did it by coming up, as he always does, with counterfeit miracles. Again I remind you that Satan is a miracle-worker. You should say that to yourself again: "Satan is a miracle worker." We have this demonstrated in Exodus 7:11:12, Exodus 7:22, and Exodus 8:7. What he proceeded to do was to enable the magicians that served Pharaoh to be able to respond to the miracles that Moses did, and do the same thing. Yeah, they took a stick, and in some miraculous way, it became a snake. But they had a bit of a problem because Moses' snake ate up theirs. I mean that got a little discouraging. But they did make a snake.

So, Pharaoh said, "Whoop-de-doo" What do you have? My boys can do the same thing." Well, that was true, up to a certain point. Exodus 8:18-19 tell us that suddenly, the Egyptians couldn't produce the gnats. They came and said, "We can't do it. We're sorry, sire, but we cannot perform this miracle." Their powers were limited.

A variety of miracles were performed by God while the Jews were in their period of wandering in the wilderness after they were finally released from Egypt, and out of their slavery. God took care of them in a variety of ways, performing miracles for their care. And you know a great deal about many of those. But once they crossed the line into the Promised Land, the miracles suddenly stopped. Acts 7:36 tells us about that: "This man, (speaking of Moses) led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for 40 years." But once that 40 year period was over, that was the end.

Suddenly, there were no more miracles. God's purpose of miracles has been achieved. He confirmed His message through Moses. He authenticated Moses as being His true spokesman. He took care of the physical needs of the people during their time of wandering in the wilderness when they needed that help, but once they were back in the stable condition in the Promised Land, miracles were no longer God's way of dealing. God does not deal with people or with societies on the basis of miracles as a standard operating procedure.

**Miracles during Elijah's and Elisha's Time**

Centuries go by without a whisper of a miracle. Bible Scripture after Bible Scripture is written, and there were no miracles indicated anywhere. Suddenly, you come to a period where Israel had been going downhill nationally, as well as spiritually. Things got worse and worse until, finally, a king came to their throne named Ahab, who was married to a Baal worshiper (a pagan woman), Jezebel. And the government of Israel sponsored the prophets of Baal out of tax money, and they were the spiritual leaders of the nation of Israel – not the true Prophet Elijah.

So, this was a time when God had to again confirm again His voice. What happened was that the people of Israel had become so spiritually disoriented, they went along with Ahab and Jezebel. They were listening to the prophets of Baal. They were impressed. Naturally, they were attracted to the phallic sex cult practices. They liked that kind of a religion. But here was a time when God had to do something to jerk them out of their blindness. So, there comes a time when God has to confirm once more with works of miracles.

This great hiatus (this great break of centuries with no miracles) does establish for us that the charismatics today are wrong when they say that whatever God has done in the past, and in New Testament times especially, is for today also. That's not true. They keep quoting that Hebrew verse: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Yes, He is the same, but He does not work the same.

So, here we have a break where miracles are not used. Now conditions developed, and they needed them. The Jews, subsequently, could have insisted that God performed miracles to prove the word of Moses, and to prove the Mosaic Law. But once the Scriptures were written, the inerrant Bible was their authority. You don't need miracles to prove the Word of God after that.

Well, Elijah was Israel's prophet in this time of great spiritual apostasy under Ahab and Jezebel. You can read about that in 1 King 16:33, 1 Kings 18:4, and 1 Kings 18:17-18, which will tell you just how really bad Ahab was as a national leader, and what vileness he brought into the worship of the people of Israel. I mean, he built a temple for Baal worship, and sponsored it.

Israel was plagued with a lying message from the false prophets. The Jews were in rebellion. They were in a disobedient condition toward God (1 King's 18:20-21). They were listening to the frogs again with their false message, croaking out that which was not true. The people of Israel had become so spiritually callous that they did not even fear Elijah. When Elijah said to them, "Let's face it. You people are so disoriented, the time has come when you're going to have to make a decision. Either God is the true God, or Baal is God, and you must make your choice. Now, what do you think? Is God God, or is Baal God? Which is it?

So in 1 Kings 18:20-21, Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel, and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel. The prophets of Baal are going to have a face-off: "And Elijah came near to all the people. He is their true prophet. He is their communicator from God. He said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but, if Baal, follow him." And notice the arrogance of these people. They wouldn't talk to him. That's the first sign that somebody is really spiritually on a down road and out of it. They won't talk to the communicator. They avoid him, because he makes them feel unpleasant with the truth: "But the people did not answer him a word." They were so calloused that they just stood there sullenly glaring at Elijah for trying to confuse them about their religion.

So, God says, "Elijah is my man. I now going to restore the practice of miracles to confirm the truth of Elijah's message." 1 King 17:1 says, "Elijah kept it from raining on the land" for something like three years. 1 King 17:2-6 tell us that God fed Elijah by food brought to him by the ravens. It was an early food delivery system that they had, that God set up for Elijah. You're acquainted with Meals on Wheels. Well, this was Meals on Wings, and it came directly to your door. Every day, ravens would fly in, and sometimes they're bring a pizza, and sometimes a little Mexican food, or whatever Elijah put on the order. Sometimes I'm sure they had a lot of bagels and salmon, you know. Anyhow, that was really a miracle. In come the ravens to feed God's man.

Then 1 Kings 17:14-16 tell of the widow's bowl of flour and jar of oil from which she made food for herself and Elijah, and it never became empty. She always had enough for one more meal. She said, "My boy and I are going to die." And he said, "Go ahead and make it." Bob Tilton loves this verse. Boy, he uses this one again and again. He says, "You don't have very much, but if you send an offering to me, your bowl of flour will never run out, and your jar of oil will never become dry." And he looks at you with a straight face when he says it.

1 Kings 17:21-23 tell about his raising of the widow's dead son? And I just want you to note one verse here in 1 Kings 17:24. He raises the son: "Then the woman said to Elijah, 'Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the Word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.'" That's the reason for miracles, folks: "Now I know that you are who you say you are – a communicator of the true God, and that the word of the Lord is in your mouth. You speak the truth." Miracles are not for the things that the charismatics do to have a jumping and jiving in time. They are for a confirmation of the messenger and the message. Then they cease.

Then of course, there was the miracle of the confrontation with the priests of Baal. You have that in 1 Kings 18:24-29 and 1 Kings 18:36-39. Notice 1 Kings 18:36: "Then it came about at the time of the offering, and of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, 'Oh Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel, and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your Word.'" What is he doing? Confirmation: "I am your servant, and I have spoken Your truth." So, God did a magnificent demonstration, because the fire did come down, soaking wet as the sacrifice was, and consumed the altar and the sacrifice of Elijah that he had prepared, whereas the prophets of Baal couldn't get a whimper out of their God.

Then there was the miracle in 2 Kings 1:9-12 where Elijah brought fire down on Ahaziah's soldiers.

Elijah was replaced by his understudy whose name was Elisha. Elijah was taken alive to heaven. Elisha said, "God, give me twice the spiritual power that you gave to my teacher, Elijah." Elijah said, "If me when I'm caught up to heaven, you will have twice my power." And Elijah did see Elijah caught up in that chariots of fire, and taken to heaven, and Elijah's cloak, his mantel (his cape) fell back and Elisha grabbed it. And, sure enough, Elisha proved to be twice the power of miracle worker that Elijah was in the kingdom of Ahab and Jezebel. Elisha actually performed twice the miracles.

So, we have the parting of Elijah to heaven alive. 2 Kings 2:14-15 tell us about that. You will note in that passage that the seminary students that stood by were, by this miracle, confirmed in their own minds that Elisha was now the true prophet of Israel. In 2 Kings 2:20-22, Elisha purifies contaminated water. In 2 Kings 4:1-7, Elisha supplies the oil to the woman who was in debt. In 2 Kings 4:14-17, Elisha enables the Shunammite woman to conceive a child. However, the child dies. So, in 2 King's 4:32-36, Elisha performs the miracle of raising the Shunammite's dead son to life. In 2 4:40-41, he neutralizes the poisoned food. In 2 kings 4:42-44, me multiplies the loaves of bread. In 2 Kings 5:14, he heals Naaman the leper. In 2 Kings 6:5-7, he recovers the ax head which was lost in the Jordan River. He caused it to float to the surface so they could pick it up. In 2 Kings 6:18, he blinds the Syrian soldiers. Elisha was a great miracle worker, and every time he did it, all the world knew he was God's man, and he spoke the truth.

**Miracles during Jesus' Time**

But after Elijah and Elisha, the curtain falls on miracles. Everything is out. There was not another miracle for century after century after century. I think that that is significant. It tells us that miracles have a certain purpose at a certain point in time, and then they cease. When Jesus Christ came to earth appeared, the period of miracles resumed. John the Baptist was the last prophet of the Old Testament era, but John 10:41 tells us that he didn't perform a single miracle. Jesus Christ comes on the scene. He says, "I'm here to fulfill the promise to Judaism of the Davidic kingdom. I am the God-man. I am the Messiah of Israel. I have come here to set up the Davidic kingdom on this earth promised and 2 Samuel 7:12-16."

Is this some nut, or is this really the God-man, the messiah of Israel? He claimed deity, and He claimed authority, therefore, for His message. The claims of Jesus Christ as God's messenger, and the truth of His message, were authenticated by His miracles. I'll not read to you the number of verses, but I've just easily collated twelve of the great miracles of Jesus. You're well acquainted with them. He constantly was demonstrating that He was who He said He was with the miracles.

**Miracles during the Apostles' Time**

The message and the divine authority of the apostles of Jesus were further authenticated with miracles (Luke 10:8-12, Matthew 10:1, Matthew 10:5-8, Acts 8:5-6). All of these were confirmations that the message of the apostles was also that from God.

**Miracles during the Time of the New Testament Church**

Then there were miracles during the period of the New Testament church. The church comes on the scene on the day of Pentecost, and the church says, "The era of Old Testament Judaism is over. With the day of Pentecost, God has begun a new era, the era of the New Testament church." That's what Acts 2:1-4 is all about on the day of Pentecost. Now, how could the Jews really believe this? Did Christianity really, after all these centuries, substitute (replace) Judaism and the Mosaic Law? That's unthinkable.

Well, Jesus anticipated the need for the confirmation of the church age with miracles. Mark 16:17 told the apostles that: "You will confirm that this is a new era by the miracles you can perform." So, the apostles authenticated their message of Christianity with their miracles. You have this in Acts 2:42-43, Acts 5:12-14, Acts 4:29-31, Acts 14:1-3, and 2 Corinthians 12:12, and the miracles of Paul, and so on. The confirmation was, furthermore, to unbelievers. 1 Corinthians 14:22 says that: "This was a confirmation to unbelievers that Judaism was over, and Christianity was the thing." And it was the work of the Holy Spirit in confirming the church message (Hebrews 2:4).

But when that New Testament church period came to an end, the apostles were gone, and John wrote the book of the Revelation. When John laid his pen down, the Bible was finished. Once the Bible was finished, the New Testament Scriptures had all been brought together to add to the Old Testament Scriptures, and the gift of miracles ceased. As a matter of fact, it really ceased some 30 years before that in 70 A.D., when the Romans finally came in and destroyed the nation of Israel, and tore down the temple, and broke down the walls of the city. The period of miracles has ceased.

That's the period that we have been connected with – the nearly 2,000 years since the cross. During this era, there have been people like the charismatics on and off who have claimed that they have the miracles of the New Testament times again. But as we have seen already, between Moses and Elijah and Elisha, there were many centuries with no miracles. Between Elijah and Elisha and Jesus and the New Testament church and the apostles, there were no miracles. Now what has happened was that miracles came to an end. When is the next period?

That's where we get back to our passage in Revelation. The Bible is very clear that the next period of great miracles will be the tribulation itself. During the tribulation, God again is going to perform miracles to authenticate His message. In Luke 21:11, we read, "And there will be great earthquakes and, in various places, plagues and famines. There will be terrors and great signs from heaven." There will be miraculous acts on the part of God to confirm to the people that what they see happening is the work of God.

In Hebrews 11:3-6, you may read about the miracles performed by the two witnesses of God. The greatest miracle of all is that they are immortal. They can't be killed. They're immune to death until God decides to let them die. These will be miracles confirming the truth of God, but the devil is going to come right in with his false miracles, and tribulation miracles will take place left and right, which are going to give the illusion of coming from God, but are actually going to be the work of Satan. You can read about this in Matthew 24:24, 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10, Revelation 13:13-14, and our passage here in Revelation 16:14. All of these verses, if you would follow them through, you would find that Satan is performing miracles.

**Bible Doctrine**

How will these people not be deceived? There is only one way. Doctrine will preserve the tribulation saints from being deceived by Satan's miracles. They know that he's going to do it. They will know that what he is confirming (about the antichrist being God), that that's wrong. The Bible makes it clear that the antichrist could not be God. So, even though the antichrist does perform spectacular miracles, and even though he can take Satan's power and give it to his false prophet, who performs spectacular miracles, it's still not true.

The truth of God is found in Scripture – not through miracles or experiences. These people will have real powers. You can go to Las Vegas, and there is an all-time great program. It costs about $89 dollars for a ticket, but it's one of the greatest magician shows in the world today. It is the equal of David Copperfield, which is astounding in itself, if you've ever seen his program on television. And you know the people sitting in the audience, so it's not just camera trickery. He makes a whole train disappear before your eyes. In Las Vegas, the same kind of amazing things are taking place such that you say, "This cannot be trickery." Well, who knows how much demonic power indeed is taking place in the Las Vegas program? You cannot dismiss that that is not part of the thing. But my point is that the miracles are going to look real. Boy, they are going to be authentic.

So, we as the people of God, as those who in the tribulation, are going to have to know our stuff when it comes to the Word of God in order to know what is true and what is not true. Revelation 16:14 says, "These frogs are demons. They're performing signs for a very specific purpose." God is about to move all of the world, which, under the influences of people like Ahab and Jezebel and the prophets of Baal, have now risen to the highest level of evil in the history of the world, and the lowest level of personal conduct and corruption, and the time has come for God to bring the critical mass of nations together for self-destruction. And that is what these lying spirits are going to do. They're going to bring a critical mass of gentile nations together on the field of Armageddon where they will explode and destroy themselves.

This, again, I remind you, is not theory. This is time and space history, and the world that we live in today is rapidly being prepared for that thing. I'm constantly reading articles about: how are we going to stop the evil; the violence; and, all of the terrible things that come from our society? One writer said, "We need people back to studying the Bible." The idea gets a big, "Boo!" Then he makes a very clever observation. He says, "Suppose that you had to work late one night, and you finally go out, and you're walking down this dark street all alone, and you see a bunch of young guys coming and yelling and carrying on, and then you see them coming toward you, and you're a young woman walking there by yourself. Would it make any difference to you if you knew they were coming from a Bible study class?"

It is the Word of god that holds us to integrity within ourselves and within our society. Because we've abandoned that, you're never going to straighten out the violence. You're never going to change things until you get back to the authority of the Word of God. Bible doctrine is where it's all at.

When General MacArthur spoke for the last time to the cadets at West Point, that last famous speech with which the movie MacArthur opens, he came to the end, and he said, "Finally, when I cross the great river to the other side, and I pass over." He said, "As I go over, my final thoughts will be the army, and the army, and the army."

I thought: "For us Christians, when we pass over the river, our final thoughts should be that which was in the mind of Christ, as we read the Psalms, and He was crossing the river to death. And we discover, of all things, He's sitting there in His mind, reviewing doctrine, and reviewing the promises of God, of what the result will be after He dies. So, when we cross the river, for us, it's going to be Bible doctrine, and Bible doctrine, and Bible doctrine. Then we shall cross the river with confidence and with great capacity. And when we get to the other side, we're going to rejoice in the fact that we have taken all that with us to enrich us and to reward us for all eternity.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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