



PERSONAL APPLICATION – THE EXODUS MIRACLE  
EXODUS 1–2, 7:14–11:10, 12:29–36, 14:1–31

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I have never in my life seen an instant healing. Not once have I witnessed an angel appear in my room in the middle of the night, directing me toward divine action. I have never seen anyone resurrected from the dead (neither have you). I would genuinely like to see the food in my refrigerator multiply on its own when the doors are closed and no one is looking. And I would certainly love to dazzle my friends by walking across the waters of Newport Bay. None of this has ever happened to me. I am doubtful it ever will, but I will never discount the possibility. Because I seriously, willfully, and wholeheartedly believe in miracles. I believe they are happening all around us.

So, what is a miracle? C.S. Lewis in his book *Miracles* defines one as “an interference with Nature by supernatural power.” I suppose we might more clearly define miracles as those moments when the normal laws of nature are violated by an outside force. Of course, that happens all the time. I can lift the pencil off my desk and hold it there, thus violating the law that “what goes up must come down.” Yet, I don’t consider myself a supernatural force. So, perhaps we need to redefine miracles as those moments when the normal laws of nature are violated by an unexplained outside force. However, as Christians, we believe in the continual presence of an almighty, all-knowing God. Thus, for us, outside

interference into the laws of nature is not unexplained. We know the source of such interventions. And that's why for believers in a real and present God, there is no solid distinction between the natural and the supernatural.

Consider, for example, the miracle at the wedding in Cana. Water is suddenly turned into wine. So what? Every year, following natural law, the Lord creates wine. He does it by creating a seed, which in soil, water, and sunlight turns into a fruit which is full of liquid, and will, under certain circumstances, ferment and become wine. So, you see, the Lord is always turning water into wine. Once, and only once, God in Jesus Christ took a shortcut. Instead of creating wine through a long process, He did so instantaneously. He intervened. But the shortcut was the miracle. The process goes on all the time.

Or consider the miraculous feeding of the five thousand. Jesus turned five loaves of bread and two fish into enough food to feed the multitude. But, every year the Lord turns a little corn into a lot of corn, a few tomatoes into a lot of tomatoes. The seed is placed in the ground and many more seeds are created. The same way, He multiplies fish. We can be amazed at the teeming fish which inhabit a flourishing lake or stream. Again, the miracle is in the shortcut, but not necessarily the process. The process occurs all the time.

In one of my children's sermons, I "defied" the laws of nature. I placed two plastic glasses on a book and turned the book upside down. The glasses did not fall. It seemed I had performed some great miracle by defying the laws of nature. Actually, it was a magic trick. I placed a staple between the two glasses, and then wedged my thumb between the glasses and over the base of the staple. The result was the impression that natural law had been violated. But, I was actually using natural law in an unanticipated fashion, creating the illusion I had superseded the natural law. Now this is not to say that the miracles of the Bible are all merely illusionary. The point is that the Lord who created the laws of nature can use those laws and change them at will. There is no reason why we should disbelieve them.

And so, I am constantly amazed at those who may be convinced in the reality of the healing of blind Bartimaeus, but never find conviction in the Virgin Birth. They confess it easier to accept the multiplication of the poor widow's flour, but stumble at the possibility of Jonah living in a big fish for three days. When it comes to our Lord's miracles, the lines between what can be believed and what should be disbelieved are artificial. If Jesus can "shorten" the laws of nature by turning a little bread and fish into food sufficient to feed the masses, then He can shorten the process of healing by which nature can heal a woman who has been hemorrhaging

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for many years, or bring sight to someone who has been blind from birth.

Of course, there is one miracle that has no counterpart in the processes of nature. That is the Resurrection. As a matter of fact, the laws of nature seem to suggest that organisms grow more disorganized, that in time all which is orderly becomes disordered. That is the natural order. But, by returning from the dead after three days in the tomb, and appearing in a physical, yet glorified body, the Lord Jesus was demonstrating to us some new laws to come. As Paul wrote, “He is the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” The Resurrection revealed to us what will one day be the law by which we are governed. Something totally opposite our present understanding is in the works. And yet, is it so unprecedented?

In a concept which would have seemed totally absurd a generation ago, physicists suggest that our universe was created in an explosive act erupting from a mass so dense it kept light itself from escaping. In less technical language, they are beginning to understand the universe as something created from nothing. Until “something” broke the bonds of nothingness. Whether one accepts this theory as fact is really not the question. The point is we may occasionally uncover new laws which govern our universe at various times and in various places, some of them contradicting

those with which we are currently familiar. It affirms our understanding that the Lord is the Creator of all natural law and can bend and shape those laws according to His will. Thus, the Resurrection seems impossible only to those who narrowly hold to our current understanding of natural law as the norm for all time and all place.

In this study, we will examine some of the tremendous moments of our Lord's intervention in the natural course of history and human events. This author will do so with the understanding that such miracles have literally occurred as described in Scripture. We wish to see how God's interventions were important to His overall plan of demonstrating redemption and salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, and consider how similar “miracles” may continue today, but perhaps without the “shortcuts” provided so often in biblical history.

I pray this study gives us a greater appreciation of the Lord's ongoing presence in our lives and communities, an appreciation for His constant providence and care in the midst of a fallen world suffering the consequences of sin and death. May the Lord bless your study of His Word and may you gain a greater sense of His closeness as you continue your earthly journey.

**PERSONAL APPLICATION**

*THE EXODUS MIRACLE – EXODUS 1-2, 7:14-11:10, 12:29-36, 14:1-31*

*Lord, guide us by Your Spirit to give thanks for Your blessings. Share with us the mysteries of Your Word so that our faith may be strengthened and our lives enriched. Amen.*

1. How old was Moses when the Lord began intervening in his life and preparing for the great Exodus event? (Exodus 1:22-2:10)

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Tell when the Lord first intervened in your life. (Acts 2:38-39, 16:32-34; Titus 3:5-7)

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2. What does your Bible give for the meaning of the name "Moses"? Why is this an appropriate name?
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3. How did the Lord deliver Moses as an infant from almost certain death? (Exodus 1:22-2:10)
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4. How would you expect Pharaoh's daughter to react to finding the small baby?
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What emotions are recorded in Matthew 2:16 by a less compassionate individual?

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Who do you think may have intervened to create a sense of compassion in Pharaoh's daughter? (Matthew 19:26; Job 42:2)

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Share with the class a moment in your life when your perspective toward a person or an idea suddenly changed.

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How might you consider this one of God's "miraculous" interventions at a very unspectacular level?

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5. At what other times did (or will) the Lord reveal His presence in the heat and light of fire as He did in the burning bush? (Exodus 3:1-6)  
Exodus 19:18
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Exodus 40:38

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Acts 2:1-4

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2 Peter 3:10

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6. Where is the Lord Jesus present with us in a special way?

1 Corinthians 11:23-27

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John 1:14, Revelation 19:13

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Matthew 18:19-20

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7. The Lord enabled Moses to strike the Egyptians with 10 plagues (Exodus 7:14-11:10). What happened to Pharaoh's "heart" after each plague? (Exodus 10:1-2)
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If you had experienced these plagues personally, would you have labelled them "miracles" or "coincidences, freaks of nature"?

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How might you describe the heart of a contemporary individual who refuses to believe that the Lord works any and all miracles today?

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8. At what point of Israel's emotional trauma does the Lord perform the last and greatest of the Exodus miracles? (Exodus 14:10-12)
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At what point in your emotional trials might you be more likely to appreciate a miracle? a. When everything is already coming up roses? b. When the "wolves are at the door"? Does this help explain why we tend to overlook the many "miracles" of food, clothing, shelter, and goods that God provides every day, while we pray for miracles during periods of ill health, financial crisis or some other time of sorrow? Discuss.

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9. Share with your group a time when you felt your "back to the Red Sea with the Egyptians marching toward you," in other words, a time when you felt there was no escape from dire circumstances surrounding you. Tell how the Lord provided a way out.
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10. If you had seen the miracle at the Red Sea personally, how do you think it would have affected you and your impression of God's presence in your life?

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11. How long did it take the people of Israel to lose faith in their Deliverer from the Red Sea? (Exodus 16:1-3)

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12. In what way does the Bible explain the creation and maintenance of faith? (Romans 10:17; John 3:5-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)

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*Thought to ponder: The Lord does not routinely perform spectacular miracles to convert the ungodly.*