

Jesus of Nazareth – Man Approved of God

- *"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know — Acts 2:22-23*
- If this wasn't true, the sermon would have ended right there. They would have scoffed and slowly drifted away. But 3000 of them knew it was the truth and it convicted them

God Bore Witness

- *For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 **God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?** Heb. 2:2*
- God bore witness to Jesus by the signs / wonders
- God bore witness to the preaching of the apostle about Jesus through their signs and wonders

Signs: That you May Believe

*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that **Jesus is the Christ**, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. Jn. 20:30-31*

Purpose of all signs: to produce and increase faith

Satan's Victory: All the signs produced today are false. But they have undermined true miracles in two fundamental ways:

- 1 If they are false today... may have been false then
- 2 We spend so much time refuting ... lose sight...

Three Important Elements of Signs

- Scope: Number of miracles performed.
- Range: Number of people who witnessed it:
feeding 5000 / 4000
- Magnitude: Amazing Nature of the Sign or Wonder

Scope:

*And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.** 24 And the report of him went forth into all Syria: and **they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them.** Mt. 4:23-24*

Jesus had no control over who came. Not scripted. No selection process. All that were sick, brought by friends because they were sick. Natural witnesses.

Scope:

And there came unto him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at his feet; and he healed them: 31 insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and lame walking, and the blind seeing: and they glorified the God of Israel. Mt. 15:30-31

There is nothing like this today!

Both in scope and magnitude. All signs today are internal and never verified. These were external!

Range and Magnitude

*"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"
... So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.*

● How can you fake something this big?

● They saw the 5 barley loaves and two fish.

● They watched the distribution.

● How many loaves for 5000 men with women/child

● They all ate as much as they wanted.

Magnitude

- *So when they were filled, ... He said to His disciples, ... Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. 14 Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jn 6:*
- The baskets were mute testimony.
- Those seeing this sign knew what it proved.
- Later they just did not like what it proved.

Magnitude

● *"Whatever He says to you, do it." 6 **Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.** 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. 9 When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), Jn 2:5-9*

● Amazing ... but once again Satan has made it a battleground. We are so busy thinking refuting the arguments against alcohol we lose sight of the sign.

Man Born Blind

- *Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. So he went and washed, and came back seeing. 8 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" 9 Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he."*

A Trial

They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. 14 Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ... But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. 19 And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" 20 His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21 but by what means he now sees we do not know

The Raising of Lazarus

- *So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. 19 And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. ... 31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there."*

The Righteous Lives by Faith

● *And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." John 11:41-44*

- *Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. 46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. 47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. John 11:45-48*
- *Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. 10 But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, 11 because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus. John 12:9-11*

Only a Small Portion

● *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. Jn 20:30*

● *Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? 10 Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? Mt. 16:9-11*

The Response

- *There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." John 3:1-2*

The Problem Not the Signs

- *But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, 38 that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"... 41 These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. John 12:37-41*
- The problem was the message the signs proved. They didn't want the message so they ignored the signs.

They Knew

- *But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. 17 But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." Acts 4:15-17*

The Logical Conclusion

- *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. 10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. 1 John 5:9-11*