

Palmetto Baptist Church: February, 16, 2020

The Glory of the Gospel: Acts 19:11-20

- **God validates His message.**
- **God protects His message.**
- **God blesses His message.**

THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL (connection to Ephesians 6:10-18)

I. **God validates His Message. (11-12)** [through signs, wonders, and exorcism]

Acts 19:11–20 (BEC): In Bible history, you will find three special periods of miracles: (1) the time of Moses; (2) the time of Elijah and Elisha; and (3) the time of Jesus and His Apostles. Each period was less than 100 years. Depending on how some of these events are classified, the total number of miracles for all three periods is less than 100. Of course, not all the miracles were recorded (see John 20:30–31).

A. **He used prophets. (Moses; Elijah and Elisha)**

- Moses participated in forty-two miracles:

<https://www.faithfamilybillings.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/42-Miracles-and-wonders-done-through-Moses.pdf>

- Elijah participated in 8 miracles and Elisha in 16:

<https://www.agapebiblestudy.com/charts/Miracles%20of%20Elijah%20and%20Elisha.htm>

- Similarities between the miracles of Elisha and the miracles of Jesus

<https://www.martineoborne.com/10-similarities-between-jesus-and-the-prophet-elisha/>

Here are ten of them:

1. **Their names have similar meanings.**

Elisha means ‘God is salvation.’ Jesus means ‘Yahweh will save.’

2. **Their ministries both start at the River Jordan.**

Elisha takes up the mantle of Elijah at the River Jordan and starts his ministry. Jesus is baptised by John at the River Jordan and starts his ministry. Elisha sees the heavens open and Elijah being taken up in a whirlwind and then receives a ‘double portion’ of the Holy Spirit. At Jesus’ baptism John sees the heavens open and the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus like a dove.

3. **They both raise a woman’s adult son from the dead.**

Elisha raises the son of the ‘Shunaammite woman’ from the dead. Jesus raises the son of the ‘widow of Nain’ from the dead.

4. **They both feed large numbers with a small quantity of food.**
Elisha feeds 100 men with a few barley loaves and there is food left over. Jesus, on two occasions, feeds 5000 and then 4000 with a few loaves and fishes and there is food left over.
5. **They both turn a small quantity of liquid into an abundance.**
Elisha turns a small amount of oil into enough oil to fill every vessel in the community. Jesus turns water into huge quantities of wine.
6. **They both heal lepers.**
Elisha heals Naaman, the Syrian commander, of leprosy. Jesus heals many lepers.
7. **They both make things that should sink, float.**
Elisha makes an iron axe head float. Jesus walks on water and enables his disciple Peter to walk on water.
8. **They are both betrayed for love of money.**
Elisha is betrayed by his servant Gehazi because Gehazi sees an opportunity to make money from betrayal. Jesus is betrayed by his disciple Judas because Judas sees an opportunity to make money from betrayal.
9. **They both give sight to the blind.**
Elisha first blinds his enemies and then restores their sight. Jesus often restores sight to the blind.
10. **Their deaths bring new life.**
Elisha's tomb was a place of resurrection. Raiders interrupted a burial and the body was thrown hastily into Elisha's tomb. On touching Elisha's bones, the dead person came back to life. Jesus' tomb was a place of resurrection. He himself was raised to life and brought the promise of new life to all.

It's fascinating to see all these parallels and how the ministry of Elijah points forward to the time when the will of God would be revealed uniquely and fully through the person of Jesus Christ.

The ministries of Elisha and Jesus share similarities – not that surprisingly, as they both lived their lives in relationship with God. But Jesus, as God's son, lives fully in relationship with God in a way that no other has or can. This is why, as Christians, we believe that God is completely revealed in Jesus.

B. He used the Apostles. (Acts 2:43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6, 13; 14:3; 15:12; cf. 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3–4)

List of the miracles of Jesus' Apostles:

- Peter walked on water (Matthew 14:28-31)
- All believers spoke in foreign languages (Acts 2:4)
- Many signs and wonders performed (Acts 2:43; 5:12)

- Peter & John healed the lame man (Acts 3:1-11; 3:16)
- Peter's shadow fell on the sick, healing them (Acts 5:15-16)
- Stephen performed amazing miracles and signs (Acts 6:8)
- Philip cast out demons and healed the lame (Acts 8:7; 8:13)
- Peter heals lame Aeneas in Lydda (Acts 9:32-35)
- Peter raised Tabitha, aka Dorcas, from the dead (Acts 9:36-43)
- Paul & Barnabas performed signs and wonders in Iconium (Acts 14:3)
- Paul & Barnabas healed the crippled man who had faith (Acts 14:8-10)
- Paul & Silas cast a demon out of a fortune telling slave girl (Acts 16:16-18)
- Paul given extreme power for many unusual miracles. (Acts 19:11-12)
- Paul raised Eutychus from the dead after a terrible accident (Acts 20:9-12)
- Paul unharmed by poisonous snake bite in Malta (Acts 28:3-6)
- Paul healed Publius' father of fever and dysentery (Acts 28:7-8)
- Paul healed all sick people on the island of Malta (Acts 28:9-10)

C. He used/uses Jesus. (Heb. 1:2; 37 Miracles of Jesus)

37 Miracles of Jesus in Chronological Order¹

#	Miracle	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1	Jesus Turns Water into Wine at the Wedding in Cana				2:1-11
2	Jesus Heals an Official's Son at Capernaum in Galilee				4:43-54
3	Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit From a Man in Capernaum		1:21-27	4:31-36	
4	Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law Sick With Fever	8:14-15	1:29	4:38-39	
5	Jesus Heals Many Sick and Oppressed at Evening	8:16-17	1:32-34 -31	4:40-41	
6	First Miraculous Catch of Fish on the Lake of Gennesaret			5:1-11	
7	Jesus Cleanses a Man With Leprosy	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-14	
8	Jesus Heals a Centurion's Paralyzed Servant in Capernaum	8:5-13		7:1-10	
9	Jesus Heals a Paralytic Who Was Let Down From the Roof	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
10	Jesus Heals a Man's Withered Hand on the Sabbath	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
11	Jesus Raises a Widow's Son From the Dead in Nain			7:11-17	
12	Jesus Calms a Storm on the Sea	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
13	Jesus Casts Demons into a Herd of Pigs	8:28-33	5:1-20	8:26-39	
14	Jesus Heals a Woman in the Crowd With an Issue of Blood	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:42-48	
15	Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter Back to Life	9:18, 23-26	5:21-24, 35-43	8:40-42, 49-56	
16	Jesus Heals Two Blind Men	9:27-31			
17	Jesus Heals a Man Who Was Unable to Speak	9:32-34			
18	Jesus Heals an Invalid at Bethesda				5:1-15
19	Jesus Feeds 5,000 Plus Women and Children	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-15
20	Jesus Walks on Water	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:16-21
21	Jesus Heals Many Sick in Gennesaret as They Touch His Garment	14:34-36	6:53-56		

¹ <http://blog.adw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/37-Miracles-of-Jesus-in-Chronological-Order.pdf>

22	Jesus Heals a Gentile Woman's Demon-Possessed Daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		
23	Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man		7:31-37		
24	Jesus Feeds 4,000 Plus Women and Children	15:32-39	8:1-13		
25	Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida		8:22-26		
26	Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind by Spitting in His Eyes				9:1-12
27	Jesus Heals a Boy With an Unclean Spirit	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
28	Miraculous Temple Tax in a Fish's Mouth	17:24-27			
29	Jesus Heals a Blind, Mute Demoniac	12:22-23		11:14-23	
30	Jesus Heals a Woman Who Had Been Crippled for 18 Years			13:10-17	
31	Jesus Heals a Man With Dropsy on the Sabbath			14:1-6	
32	Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers on the Way to Jerusalem			17:11-19	
33	Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead in Bethany				11:1-45
34	Jesus Restores Sight to Bartimaeus in Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
35	Jesus Withers the Fig Tree on the Road From Bethany	21:18-22	11:12-14		
36	Jesus Heals a Servant's Severed Ear While He Is Being Arrested			22:50-51	
37	The Second Miraculous Catch of Fish at the Sea of Tiberias				21:4-11

When our Lord performed miracles, He usually had at least three purposes in mind: (1) to show His compassion and meet human needs; (2) to teach a spiritual truth; and (3) to present His credentials as the Messiah. The Apostles followed this same pattern in their miracles. In fact, the ability to do miracles was one of the proofs of apostolic authority (Mark 16:20; Rom. 15:18–19; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:1–4). Miracles of themselves do not save lost sinners (Luke 16:27–31; John 2:23–25). Miracles must be tied to the message of the Word of God.

Acts 19:11–12 (BKC): 19:11–12. These feats of Paul parallel the miracles of Peter in 5:15–16. Quite clearly God's hand of blessing and endorsement was on Paul. Apparently the handkerchiefs and aprons were tangible symbols of God's power through His apostle; these objects had no magical powers in themselves. Certainly this is no basis for people trying to repeat such miracles today. As seen many times in Acts, miracles confirmed the work of the apostles (2:43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6, 13; 14:3; 15:12; cf. 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3–4).

The mention of evil spirits bridges this portion with the next incident (Acts 19:13–20).

Acts 19:11–12 (Baker NTC: Acts): However, Luke gives no indication that the people worshiped Paul or that they idolized his handkerchiefs and aprons. Calvin points out that worthless things were chosen so that the people might not fall into superstition and idolatry.

II. God protects His Message. (13-16)

- A. Against incantation and meaningless repetition. (13)
- B. Against false teachers and false teaching. (14-16)

[He exposes charlatans. The attempt made by the seven sons of Sceva and the rejection by the demons.]... truth prevails in the spiritual realm!

Acts 19:11–20 (BEC): God enabled Paul to perform “special miracles” because Ephesus was a center for the occult (Acts 19:18–19), and Paul was demonstrating God’s power right in Satan’s territory. But keep in mind that wherever God’s people minister the truth, Satan sends a counterfeit to oppose the work. Jesus taught this truth in His Parable of the Tares (Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43); Peter experienced it in Samaria (Acts 8:9ff); and Paul experienced it at Paphos (Acts 13:4–12). Satan imitates whatever God’s people are doing, because he knows that the unsaved world cannot tell the difference (2 Cor. 11:13–15).

Acts 19:14 (Baker NTC: Acts): From the Gospels we know that Jews in Israel were casting out demons (Matt. 12:27; Luke 11:19). Also, the Jewish historian Josephus reports that he saw a countryman driving out a demon from a possessed man in the presence of the Roman general Vespasian. At times, Gentiles asked Jewish teachers to exorcise demons. Some of these teachers visited fellow Jews living in the dispersion and used magic formulas to adjure the evil spirits. Because the formulas often failed to achieve results, the magicians were forced to acquire new adjurations to enhance their craft. A number of ancient manuscripts attest to a variety of incantations that Jewish exorcists employed, and as this account discloses, the city of Ephesus proved to be a storehouse of magical scrolls.

I. God validates His Message. (11-12)

II. God protects His Message. (13-16)

III. God blesses His Message. (17-20)

- A. Jesus was magnified. (17)
- B. People were converted. (18-19)
- C. The church multiplied. (20)

Acts 19:20 (BKC): 19:20. The cleansed church became a powerful and growing church. (The spreading of God’s Word is also mentioned in 6:7; 12:24; 13:49.) With this sixth “progress report” Luke brought another section of his book to a conclusion (cf. 2:47; 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 28:30–31).

The city of Ephesus purged itself of bad literature by burning magic scrolls and became the depository of sacred literature that made up the canon of the New Testament. While Paul resided in Ephesus, he penned his first epistle to the Corinthians. When Paul was under house arrest in Rome, he sent his epistle to the Ephesians. In later years, when Timothy was pastor in Ephesus, Paul dispatched the two epistles that bear Timothy’s name. Some decades later, the apostle John composed his Gospel and his three epistles in Ephesus. In a manner of speaking, as the Jews had been entrusted with the Old Testament Scriptures (Rom. 3:2), so the Ephesians became the custodians of the New Testament books.

Application:

- Do you have confidence in the Message?
- Are you able to discern between truth and error?
- Have you witnessed God blessing His message in your context?

