

## The Conservation of Miracles

Happy Sabbath to everyone.

Tonight I would like to talk for a bit about a subject that I've been considering, from a number of different angles, for years. It's a question that we may often get asked during evangelism, during talking to others about the Gospel, and it's something for which I believe we can give a convincing answer.

"Where is Yahweh?" Even for those not fully converted, but inclined to believe, we can be sure that Satan has placed this thought in their heads. We look at the Scriptures, and we read examples of miraculous deliverance. We see healings, and divine protection. We see battles fought in which those on Yah's side receive no injuries whatsoever. We see angels appearing to prisoners, breaking their chains.

But alongside the record of these dramatic events, we also find verses like the following: "And the children of Israel remembered not Yahweh their Elohim, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side." (Judges 8:34)

We read, "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deu 11:16, 18, 19)

Some have said, "Why were the children of Israel so disobedient? How is it that they so often forgot Yah's goodness to them, and become rebellious?"

Interestingly, an examination of the lives of such individuals will generally reveal an experience of being caught in the "sin-repent" cycle. Those who are not settled into the truth so securely that they cannot be moved, those who do not claim and then proclaim the victory over sin, are actually living representations of Biblical Israel before Christ. They will praise, and they will fall away, and they will justify these occasional (and sometimes common) lapses with the usual statements about being overcome by the flesh, that all continue to come short of Yahweh's glory, and that only Yahshua is perfect.

These are indeed the common traditions, yet the promises in our Father's Word tell us that He has overcome the flesh for us (and we henceforth consider it "dead"), that all "have" come short of Yahweh's glory but in Christ have obtained justification and henceforth live "to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past," (Rom 3:25) and that while Yahshua was the only One perfect from the beginning, "ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born [again] of Him." (1John 2:29)

The history of Israel before Christ is the history of the individual human before Christ, especially those who identify as His followers without a complete conversion. But righteousness comes when Yahshua arrives, and just as the Israelites were given instructions to remember the goodness of Yah, and to teach Him to their children, so the Christian is instructed to abide in Christ, and to give an example, a testimony, to the world.

The gentleness and subtlety of our Father is revealed in that the parents are expected to reveal the Creator and Savior to future generations. They are not to expect to see grand miracles in every age, and we have

gone over the reasons for this before. Yahweh does not wish to obtain worshippers who follow Him only because of “loaves and fishes,” but those who follow Him because He is Love and He is Life, because of His character and His Law of Righteousness. He lets Satan play out his principles before the world so that they can be revealed, so that people can choose, and in this we can find some comfort.

It is ever Satan’s way to silence and suppress the voice of opposition. He will restrict, and limit, whereas Yahweh will permit even controversy, even dissent, in order to reveal the truth to the on-looking universe. As CSDAs, we find that the Enemy is often seeking to take our voice away, so that we cannot proclaim the Gospel as it ought to be proclaimed. In this we know that we speak the truth, not because we are oppressed (for many false religions are also oppressed) but because we are oppressed for following the instructions of inspiration, the Commandments of Yah, and the dictates of a Spirit-guided conscience.

But Yah will let things play out in our case, as He has in the past, to reveal that His Law is not merely what He declares, but He declares His Law because that Law is truly best. Let the principles of the Law be acted out, and there will be blessings.

But in times of trouble, it is the nature of the flesh to forget. It is the nature of the carnal man to think only of immediate survival, and this is why the instruction was given, “Teach your children these things.” If Yah has purposed to reveal Himself in fire and thunder to every generation, this command would be unimportant; but as Yahshua said to Thomas, “Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” (John 20:29)

This describes those who cannot be fooled by the senses. These are they who can overcome temptation and the most subtle of deceptions, because they have “divine stubbornness” to keep believing the Word of Yah even when false witnesses and false evidences are arrayed against their faith.

In times of trouble, Yah will not often appear with an immediate solution. He will allow His sincere believers to fall into diverse problems because, as with ancient Israel, He is looking for the development of an invincible faith. He is looking for a generation that, like Job, will trust in Yah’s will and mercy even if their senses testify of punishment, and their “friends” speak the words of the tempter.

So why is it, then, that Yah delivered some in the Bible miraculously, and not others? Why should we not expect divine and dramatic rescue in every trial? The fact of the matter is, even among the faithful, even among the Biblical heroes’ records, Yah’s direct and visible intervention was extremely rare.

We have the Bible, containing books from Genesis to Revelation, that record the actions of angels, Yahweh speaking like thunder, and fire coming down from Heaven to consume pagan priests. I have never counted all the miraculous, clearly supernatural events in the Scriptures. A quick Google search brought up a partial list of 124 miracles, but I have not verified it personally. Still, if we allow even 200 miracles recorded in the pages of Scripture, this isn’t really that many.

Consider that, as believers in the Creation, we believe that there are perhaps a bit more than 6000 years of earth’s history, beginning with the formation of the physical universe described in Genesis 1. If we divide 200 miraculous events across 6000 years, that is 0.03 miracles per year, or to put that another way, one miracle every 30 years. From an observer’s perspective it would actually be less than this, since many miracles took place in “groups,” such as during Elijah’s ministry or Yahshua’s time on earth, so – even being very generous – that would amount to a single set of miracles every 40 years, or once a generation.

Now, this figure makes good, Biblical sense to me; but consider that this is only one miracle in the entire world... unlikely to be seen by humanity at large. By even the roughest of estimates, overt miracles are rare. However, this does not mean that Yahweh is not working at every moment. There are two things worth keeping in mind:

1) Not everything Yah has done was recorded. In fact, it is actually the case that MOST of what Yah has done has not been recorded. We read, for example, that even His brief few years of ministry “there are also many other things which Yahshua did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” (John 21:25)

The incidents that ARE recorded in Scripture were written for a reason. They were designed to be everlasting examples that would impact many; but each of us attending tonight would probably be able to describe many incidents of deliverance, “mini-miracles” that might only be meaningful to us, or to the Brethren. These are the things that the Spirit brings to the mind of the converted in times of trouble, to Comfort us as It was commissioned to do.

2) As I mentioned, I have been considering this issue for some time. Because miracles tend to appear in “groups,” I have called this study “The Conservation of Miracles,” because this is how Yah operates. He holds His intervention, His appearance, for just the right time, and this particularly with regard to His more visible miracles. We read all the way back in Job’s book, Yahweh asks the mortal man, “Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?” (Job 38:22)

Now, Job would have no way of knowing just what this meant, but thousands of years later, the Apostle John writes of the fulfillment of that verse, “And there fell upon men a great hail out of Heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.” (Rev 16:21)

It is clear that our Father knows “the end from the beginning,” (Isa 46:10) and that He is never taken by surprise. Every least trial, every least inconvenience to His people, the Father knows it. Every trouble that approaches us can only exist by His express permission, and if we do not see immediate, fiery deliverance, it is only because we do not yet need to see this work. And yet, as Sis. Guerline pointed out after our meeting this morning, we know that all things work together for good, for those of us who love Yah and are called according to His purpose. (Rom 8:28)

The fact that Yahweh conserves His miracles for the proper time does not mean that He is not always working with His people. The Spirit of Prophecy, a unique blessing for Seventh-day Adventists, reveals that much takes place “behind the scenes.” The writings of Ellen White, my books about the War in Heaven and then subsequently through history, show that our Father and His bright servants are tirelessly seeking our best good. With such sure knowledge before us, who would not rejoice?

Those that live to the senses, to the flesh, may well be tempted to ask, in difficult days, “Where is Yahweh?” But since we live to the Spirit, we know exactly where our Father is. Beyond the writings of more recent prophecy, we know this principle quite well.

We read, “And when the servant of [Elisha], the man of Elohim, was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, ‘Alas, my master! How shall we do?’

“And he answered, ‘Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.’ And Elisha prayed, and said, ‘Yahweh, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.’ And Yahweh opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (2Kings 6:15-17)

“And, behold, one of them which were with Yahshua stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest’s, and smote off his ear. Then said Yahshua unto him, ‘Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?’” (Mat 26:51-53)

We must have eyes that are “opened.” When it seems that little is happening, at least little in our favor, remember that for most of the Biblical heroes’ experiences, the Creator seemed just as “silent.”

Moses lived in Egypt for 40 years, and Yah did not speak to him. He was then cast out of Egypt and, while he was preserved by some of those “mini-miracles” and brought safely to Midian (surely led and protected by angels), again Yah did not visibly intervene. Nevertheless, throughout all this time, “Elohim remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And Elohim looked upon the children of Israel, and Elohim had respect unto them.” (Exo 2:24, 25)

It was not until he was about eighty years old that Moses saw the Angel of Yahweh appearing to Him as a burning bush, and heard the Voice of the Almighty. Yahweh had reserved His miracles in the life of Moses for the proper time. He had been working in Moses’ life from the beginning, from his salvation in the ark of bulrushes, but the burning bush would not appear until after the time of two generations.

Where was Yahweh all that time? He was with Moses, preparing him for a great work. These things are our examples, so that when we are tempted to wonder “why” such and such things are happening, we must also remember that we are alive to ask the question. If we have the strength to wonder why something is happening to us, we have the strength to praise our Father for preserving us thus far.

With such thoughts, we recall Yah’s promises. We meet temptations head-on. We teach others to do this, brethren, children, friends... so that they also may learn to live by every word that proceeds forth from the Father. In light of such precious gifts, I can say, as all of Yahweh’s messengers have said, “Fear not.” When the world reminds us that it is a cruel place, dominated by the person and principles of Satan, we say, “We fear not, for our Father and Savior are with us, even to the end of the world.” When the time comes for miracles, there will be miracles, signs that fill the earth with wonder and fill the redeemed with joy. Until that day, however, we know with great assurance that the Almighty One of Israel is with us. We each declare by the Testimony of Yahshua, “He that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him.” (John 8:29) This is the testimony that overcomes the world, and leads us victoriously home.