

## MIRACLES

by Donald S. Lord

In answer to a question about Jesus walking on the waters of the Sea of Galilee.  
(Mt 14:22-27; Mk 6:45-52; Jn 6:16-21)

The problem of "miracles" did not arise historically until people had first been convinced that the visible, material world is made of discrete, that is, separate, bits of matter, with voids between them. The actions of these bits was supposed to be "governed" by the "Laws of Nature", which could not be broken, or would not be broken, (according to your point of view) by God Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.

The ancient Greeks produced a number of theories about the basic substance of the universe, but it was Democritus (460-370 B. C.) who declared in 430 B. C. that the basic substance of the universe consisted of very tiny, indestructible particles, or atoms (Greek atomos, meaning 'uncuttable').

In 1830 A.D. the chemist John Dalton began work on his atomic theory, which proposed that all matter occurs in the form of basic elements (oxygen, iron, carbon, etc.) which are themselves irreducible and indivisible (like tiny ball bearings of varying weights). It was not until 1911 that Lord Rutherford published his theory of atomic structure, namely that the "solid material particles" of Dalton consisted of a positively charged nucleus around which negatively charged electrons moved in orbits, like the planets around the sun. He "split" the atom in 1919. At this time the parts of the atom, the nucleus and the electrons, were still thought of as being in a sense "bits".

In 1924 Schroedinger took the investigations further. By applying Einstein's mathematics, he showed on purely mathematical grounds that although the "billiard ball" picture of the atom made a useful model, there could in reality be no solid "bits", but only functions of energy in a field of power.

Unfortunately, many modern Biblical critics and teachers remain lamentably out of date, still living psychologically in the last century. In the 19th century a number of materialist scholars, principally in Germany, attacked the Biblical accounts of "miracles" and "prophecies" as being impossible. And because prophecy was impossible, so they said, the prophetic books must have been written after the events which they describe. (They re-dated the Biblical documents on the basis of this "evidence".) Miracles became myth. And so forth. The shadow of that dark period is still with us. It used to be said, with some justification, that you sent a believing Christian to a theological college and he came out an atheist.

From the point of view of all the ancient religions, as understood by their highest exponents, reality is a continuum (a single field, if you like) of power. It has no separated parts. The "parts" are as an illusion caused by identification with individual whirlpools in the continuum. A great lake, or a great sea, is in no way divided in its substantial wholeness by the currents within it, or the waves on its surface.'

What appears from the finitely identified point of view as a "miracle" is simply something not understood, and therefore causing wonder (Latin: mirari - 'to wonder, to be surprised'; the German word for 'miracle' is Wunder).

We are hypnotised by Newton's gravitational considerations, and the fact that, as predicted by Newton, if we step off a wall we tend to fall to the ground! When we observe that all the people we know fall when they step off walls, with a predictably increasing velocity, then we tend to talk about a "Law of Gravity", which states that ALL people stepping off walls, unless supported, will fall. There is no such law in the absolute sense. All such laws are no more than statistical observations.

If we wish to be truly scientific, we have to take into consideration many accounts from diverse sources, for example, those of "saints" floating above the ground in ecstasy. St. Teresa of Avila(1512-1582) is a case in point. There is good historical documentation stating that she floated up in the air during Divine Service, to her considerable embarrassment. Even "stranger" things have been stated. Milarepa(1052-1135), considered by many to be one of Tibet's greatest yogi, was reported to be seen in several places simultaneously, a story paralleled in accounts of Christian holy men in Europe; and there are Asian accounts of levitation sufficient to cause anyone to reassess the evidence. (It is true that conjurers can fake a great deal, but they do this after the event and in imitation of it, not before it, and they don't fulfil all the conditions.)

How many people professing to teach (pre-Christian) yoga have understood the implications of Chapter III of Patanjali's "Aphorisms", which details how to obtain "powers"? One verse is relevant to Jesus's walking on water: "By conquering the currents called Udana the Yogi does not sink in water, or in swamps, he can walk on thorns etc. and can die at will" - III-40. This is Vivekananda's translation, and he comments as follows: "Udana is the name of the nerve current that governs the lungs, and when he is master of it, he becomes light in weight. He does not sink in water; he can walk on thorns and sword blades, and stand in fire, and he can depart this life whenever he likes". The tradition of the power to walk on water, therefore, is not confined to the New Testament.

Failure to believe in "miracles" frequently arises from mere prejudice (that is, judging in advance). First we have a view of the world, and then we make the facts fit our view, ignoring those for which we cannot find a place. The mere idea of miracles actually happening to themselves, or to people they know, frightens most people.

In an infinite continuum of power, there is neither up nor down. What we call movement up or down is movement with respect to a specific point, in our case the planet earth; (if we go in a straight line from the earth to the moon, we simultaneously go up from the surface of the earth and down to the surface of the moon). There is a will to centring on the earth-point, and this willing to centre we call "gravity". But once the "normal" state of consciousness is broken by a willed shift of consciousness, it is theoretically possible for anyone to levitate. If we examine ourselves, we shall find that most of us would be terrified if we started to float. We stay put because we prefer to.

The disciples in the boat were terrified when they saw Jesus walking on the water. When Peter saw Jesus close to the boat, for an instant he also walked on the water, and then, failing to remain in the correct state, sank, only to be lifted up again by Jesus, who was still standing on the water. At that point, as a result of shock, the disciples went into a state of stasis, and did not recover normal consciousness until they were grounded on the shore. (This explanation by Eugene Halliday solves the problem of why, although the text of John's Gospel places Jesus far from the shore when he reached the boat, it then says that "immediately" they were on the other side of the lake. We have the report of the event written by the disciples as they remembered it; they had blanked out.)

I repeat, it is mere prejudice to say that it could not have happened. Unbelief is as magical as faith. When Jesus went into his own village "he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13:58). Not for those villagers the restoring of sight to the blind! As they said, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? Where did this man get all this?" (Matthew 13:55-57)

"Material bodies" in the 19th century sense do not exist. All gross bodies are power bodies, in the same senses that volitional and subtle bodies are power bodies. However, gross bodies are designed for a specific purpose - they are inertia-system whereby we learn. One of the first observed characteristics of "out-of-body" experiences is that the subtle body has no weight, and is not confined by material walls etc. The gross body can however, be transformed, as in the case of Jesus after the resurrection. Whereas those who travel in the subtle body cannot eat material food, Jesus is recorded as having done so after supreme transformation of the physical body. But that would not have been possible if the material body were the kind of ball-bearing-like atomic structure it was conceived to be in the 19th century.

All the mystics who perceived the truth of this have alluded to it in a more or less guarded manner. It is the fallen consciousness of human beings (fallen in the sense of being identified with the "external" world) which blinds them to the true nature of the temporal world as an on-going function of the eternal, infinite, absolute sentient power. Men, having erroneously invented a division between matter and spirit, cannot solve the problems which arise from that erroneous analysis.

When Jacob Boehme wrote: "He to whom Time is an Eternity and Eternity as Time is freed from all strife," he consciously gave a key to the origin of miracles. However, in so doing he was guarded in expression as were his eminent predecessors, the Apostles; and especially Jesus Christ Himself, who also said: "Seek, and ye shall find".

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