

Sunday, November 25, 2012

Miracles

I received this important question and I am glad to discuss it in this article:

Should we believe each and every miracle that we see or hear about? Why don't these miracles happen to us? Is it possible for the devil to make miracles?

First: We are not expected to believe in all the miracles we hear about. Miracles are in our lives every day. We believe that God never abandons us; He cares for us, guards us, and manages our lives. As to miracles that we may hear about, we can simply accept them or not accept them, this has no effect on our faith in God whatsoever.

Second: Our faith should not be based on some miracles. Our faith should be built on the living word of God and His faithful promises. It should be built on completely submitting our lives to Him, carrying the cross and walking with Him in the narrow path. And it also should be based on experiencing His presence in prayers, reading the scriptures, and the church sacraments.

Third: God doesn't run the world by miracles, but with set natural laws. Miracles come as exceptions. We ought not to ask for miracles all the time nor should we consider it as a fundamental rule in our lives.

Fourth: Saints always prove to us that they are, together with us, living members in the body of Christ. They give rejoice to our hearts from time to time by clearly helping us in some situations. Nonetheless, they are more keen on seeing us repentant and serious in our spiritual lives.

Fifth: Our Lord Jesus taught us to seek nothing but the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things will be added to us. That is to say, we should not seek materialistic miracles but only the salvation of our souls. We should seek the gift of love to fill our hearts, the gift of gentleness and purity, the gift of humility and wisdom, etc. As to materialistic matters, God knows all our needs and He gives us what we need in its due time with His loving generosity without us asking or worrying.

Sixth: some people tend to exaggerate or be inaccurate in delivering news and stories of miracles; this is common in all societies. Sometimes when someone tells a story it comes out mixed with personal views and perceptions. In some cases, a story may be perfectly normal but some may see it as a big miracle to show it off, this is not spiritually beneficial.

Seventh: being preoccupied with the stories of miracles could consume man's time and energy. This is time that could be used in spiritual nourishment through prayer, studying the Holy Scriptures and praise. This infatuation with miracles could make man always expect fast and miraculous solutions to his problems just as in the miracles that he is fascinated with. When a miracle doesn't take place, his faith in God and in the saints becomes shaken and may think that all stories of miracles are false and mere fables.

Eights: God's will is the salvation of our souls. He uses all possible means to help us being saved either through tribulations or miracles. It is important to benefit spiritually from all the circumstances that God allows in our lives. Great miracles happen to many people but unfortunately they do not benefit spiritually from them. Also God allows tribulations to happen to people and they are a cause for the salvation of their souls.

Ninth: The devil can perform miracles within certain limitations. These miracles distract some people from their salvation or mislead some from the upright faith. Revelation 13 mentions impressive miracles that will be performed by the power of the devil such as bringing fire down from heaven. Here lies the danger for those who base their faith on miracles rather than a living relationship with Christ and the deep understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Those can be easily misled.

Tenth: the greatest miracle that should preoccupy our minds is the process of transformation that takes place within us, through the divine grace, and changes us to be conformed to the image of God. Through repentance, we become transformed. Through partaking from the Holy Sacraments, we become transformed. Through the divine word and in toiling in long prayers before God, we become transformed. And then our conduct changes to be similar to that of our humble and forgiving God who outpours His love on everyone. This is the most magnificent miracle that could happen in our lives.

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