

Craig keener miracles

Unlocking the Power of Miracles: A Deep Dive into Craig Keener's Perspective

Craig Keener, renowned New Testament scholar and author, offers a compelling perspective on miracles that resonates with both academic rigor and practical relevance. His approach, deeply rooted in historical and textual analysis, emphasizes the transformative potential of miracles in shaping faith and impacting the world. This delves into Keener's work, exploring key themes, examining his methods, and highlighting the practical implications for individuals and communities today.

Understanding Keener's Approach: Keener's scholarship on miracles departs from traditional, apologetic defenses. Instead, he dives into the historical context of the New Testament, meticulously scrutinizing the accounts and examining their implications.

This meticulous approach involves:

- **Historical Contextualization:** Keener emphasizes understanding miracles within their historical, cultural, and religious frameworks. He meticulously explores the socio-political landscape of the first century, the prevailing views on miracles, and the cultural significance of various healing practices.
- **Textual Analysis:** Keener analyzes the New Testament texts, focusing on the literary features, genre conventions, and authorial intent. He engages with the complexities of ancient texts, considering factors like oral traditions, eyewitness accounts, and the potential for embellishment.
- **Theological Interpretation:** While acknowledging the historical and textual aspects, Keener explores the theological significance of miracles. He delves into the implications for faith, the nature of God, and the potential for transformation in human lives.

Key Themes in Keener's Work:

1. Miracles as Acts of Divine Power: Keener argues that miracles were not merely extraordinary events but powerful demonstrations of God's active intervention in the world. They were acts of divine power, designed to challenge human limitations and offer hope for transformation.

2. The Transformative Power of Miracles: Keener emphasizes the impact of miracles on individuals and communities. He argues that miracles had the potential to bring about physical healing, spiritual restoration, and societal change. They challenged prevailing social structures and offered a glimpse of God's transformative power.

3. The Role of Faith and Belief: Keener underscores the importance of faith and belief in the experience of miracles. He argues that miracles were not simply events that happened independently of human response but rather acts that were intertwined with faith and belief.

4. The Necessity for Critical Engagement: Keener encourages critical engagement with the texts and the historical context. He acknowledges the potential for human error and embellishment, but he also emphasizes the importance of seeking understanding and discerning truth.

Data Visualization:

Miracles in the Gospels [Insert a chart or graph here displaying the types of miracles recorded in the Gospels, their frequency, and their intended audience. This visualization could offer a visual representation of Keener's analysis and highlight the key themes discussed above.] **Practical Applications of Keener's Insights:** Keener's work offers valuable insights for individuals and communities seeking to engage with the concept of miracles:

- **Reframing Perspectives:** Keener challenges us to reframe our understanding of miracles, moving beyond simplistic explanations and embracing the complexities of the historical and textual evidence.
- **Deepening Faith and Belief:** By understanding the context and theological significance of miracles, we can deepen our faith and belief in God's transformative power.
- *Embracing the Potential for Change:* Miracles provide a glimpse of the potential for change in human lives and communities. Keener inspires us to seek transformative experiences and embrace the possibilities for positive change.
- *Engaging in Critical Reflection:* Keener encourages critical reflection on our own faith, beliefs, and experiences. We can examine our assumptions, seek understanding, and engage in open dialogue about miracles and their meaning.

Conclusion: Craig Keener's scholarship on miracles offers a rich and nuanced perspective, challenging traditional approaches and encouraging deeper engagement with the texts and the historical context. His work is not only an academic exploration but a call to action, urging us to embrace the transformative potential of miracles and seek to live lives that reflect God's active presence in the world.

Advanced FAQs:

1. *How does Keener's approach differ from traditional apologetics?* Keener rejects the simplistic apologetic approach that views miracles as mere proofs of God's existence. Instead, he seeks to understand miracles within their historical and theological contexts, emphasizing their transformative potential.
2. **What are the implications of Keener's analysis for contemporary miracles?** Keener's work suggests that we should approach claims of contemporary miracles with a critical yet open mind, seeking understanding within their historical and cultural contexts.
3. How does Keener's work address skepticism about miracles? Keener recognizes the need for critical engagement and acknowledges the possibility of deception or misinterpretation. However, he also emphasizes the importance of seeking truth and understanding the multifaceted nature of miracles.
4. **What are the potential limitations of Keener's approach?** Some critics argue that Keener's focus on historical and textual analysis may downplay the personal experiences of faith and belief. They also question the extent to which we can truly understand the complexities of ancient miracles.
5. How can individuals and communities apply Keener's insights to their own lives? By engaging in critical reflection, seeking understanding, and embracing the possibility of transformation, individuals and communities can learn from Keener's work and find new ways to live out their faith in the world.

Unveiling the Phenomenon of Craig Keener's Miracles: Faith, Theology, and the Supernatural

The world has always been fascinated by the extraordinary. From ancient legends to modern-day phenomena, the idea of miracles—events that defy natural explanation and point towards a divine intervention—captures our imagination. In contemporary discussions about faith and the supernatural, the name Craig Keener often emerges. Known for his rigorous academic scholarship and deeply held Christian beliefs, Keener has dedicated a significant portion of his work to exploring the reality and significance of miracles, particularly as depicted in the New Testament. This article delves into the life, work, and theological implications of Craig Keener's perspective on miracles, offering a comprehensive look at this compelling subject.

Who is Craig Keener? A Scholar of the Supernatural

Before diving into his specific views on miracles, it's essential to understand who Craig Keener is. Dr. Craig S. Keener is a highly respected New Testament scholar and theologian, currently a professor at Asbury Theological Seminary. His academic career is marked by an impressive output of scholarly works, characterized by meticulous research, deep engagement with historical and textual evidence, and a consistent commitment to a high view of Scripture. Keener is not just an academic; he is also a respected voice within the evangelical Christian community, known for his ability to bridge scholarly rigor with accessible theological insights. His most significant contributions to the discussion on miracles are found in his multi-volume commentary on the Gospel of Acts and his dedicated work, "Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts." These works are not mere theological treatises; they are deep dives into the historical context, literary genres, and theological underpinnings of supernatural events described in the Bible.

The Core of Keener's Argument: The Credibility of New Testament Miracles

At the heart of Craig Keener's work on miracles lies a robust defense of their historical credibility. He doesn't shy away from the challenges posed by skepticism, particularly from naturalistic or Enlightenment perspectives that tend to dismiss supernatural claims a priori. Instead, Keener argues that the New Testament accounts of miracles are far more credible than many critics assume.

Examining the Historical Context: Miracles in the Ancient World

One of Keener's key strategies is to place the New Testament miracles within their broader ancient Mediterranean context. He demonstrates that miraculous accounts

were not unique to early Christianity. Other religious and philosophical movements of the time also featured stories of divine intervention, healings, and supernatural occurrences. This doesn't diminish the uniqueness of Jesus's miracles but rather shows that the *concept* of miracles was understood and accepted in the ancient world. Keener argues that by understanding the cultural and religious milieu in which the New Testament was written, we can better appreciate why these accounts were preserved and believed by the early church. He engages with ancient biographies, hagiographies, and philosophical texts to draw parallels and contrasts, highlighting both the distinctiveness of the Christian narrative and its resonance within its original setting.

Addressing Skepticism: Naturalism vs. The Supernatural

Keener directly confronts modern skepticism, which often operates under a naturalistic worldview. This perspective posits that only natural causes are real and that supernatural events are impossible. Keener challenges this assumption by arguing that: ** **The Miraculous is not Necessarily Implausible:*** He contends that if God exists, then supernatural intervention is not only possible but also to be expected as part of His interaction with creation. The debate, for Keener, is not about the *possibility* of miracles but about the *evidence* for them. ** **The New Testament Evidence is Strong:*** Keener meticulously examines the gospel accounts and the book of Acts, looking at the sources, the testimony of witnesses, and the rapid spread of Christianity, which he argues is difficult to explain without acknowledging genuine supernatural empowerment. ** **The Historical Method Can Acknowledge the Supernatural:*** Keener advocates for a historical methodology that is open to the possibility of supernatural events, rather than one that automatically excludes them based on philosophical presuppositions. He believes that the historian's role is to evaluate evidence impartially, even if that evidence points to phenomena beyond current scientific explanation.

The Theology of Miracles: Why God Performs Miracles

Beyond the historical defense, Keener also explores the profound theological significance of miracles. For him, miracles are not random acts of power but intentional expressions of God's nature and purpose.

Miracles as Signs of God's Kingdom

A central theme in Keener's theology of miracles is their role as signs of the inaugurated Kingdom of God. He argues that Jesus's miracles were not just displays of power but were tangible demonstrations that God's reign was breaking into human history. ** **Healings and Restoration:*** Jesus's healings, from blindness to paralysis, were not just medical interventions but symbolic acts of spiritual restoration, pointing to a future where all suffering and brokenness will be overcome. ** **Exorcisms and Deliverance:*** The casting out of demons signified Christ's victory over the forces of evil and Satan's

dominion. * **Nature Miracles:** Control over the natural world—calming storms, feeding multitudes—demonstrated Jesus’s authority over creation itself, a preview of the renewed creation to come.

Miracles and God's Compassion

Keener emphasizes that miracles are often rooted in God’s profound compassion for humanity. The Gospels frequently portray Jesus being moved with pity before performing a healing. These acts highlight God's concern for the marginalized, the suffering, and the broken. They reveal a God who is not distant and indifferent but intimately involved in the plight of His creation.

The Role of Faith in Receiving Miracles

While Keener defends the objective reality of miracles, he also acknowledges the crucial role of faith. He explores how faith often plays a catalytic role in the experience of divine intervention, as seen in numerous New Testament accounts where Jesus or the apostles commend or require faith for healing or other miraculous outcomes. However, his understanding of faith is nuanced; it is not a mere psychological state but a receptive posture towards God and His power.

Craig Keener's Influence and Legacy: A Respected Voice

Craig Keener's work has had a significant impact on theological scholarship and Christian apologetics. His comprehensive approach, combining deep historical analysis with theological insight, has provided many with a more robust framework for understanding and defending the reality of biblical miracles.

Impact on Apologetics and Evangelism

For Christian apologists and evangelists, Keener's scholarship offers powerful arguments to counter skeptical objections. By providing well-researched evidence and theological reasoning, he equips believers to engage in meaningful conversations about faith and the supernatural. His work helps to dismantle the notion that belief in miracles is irrational or uneducated.

Encouraging a High View of Scripture

Keener's unwavering commitment to the trustworthiness of the New Testament has also encouraged a high view of Scripture among many Christians. His detailed textual analysis demonstrates that the biblical accounts are not mere myths but are grounded in historical testimony.

The Ongoing Discussion: Miracles Today

While much of Keener's work focuses on the New Testament, his exploration of miracles implicitly raises questions about their continuation in the present day. Scholars and theologians continue to debate the frequency and nature of miracles in contemporary times. Keener's rigorous approach to historical evidence encourages a discerning yet open attitude when evaluating claims of supernatural activity in the modern era. His work invites believers to consider the possibility of God's continued intervention in the world, guided by biblical principles and discerning discernment.

Conclusion: Embracing the Extraordinary Through Faith and Reason

Craig Keener's scholarly contributions offer a compelling case for the credibility and theological significance of miracles, particularly those described in the New Testament. By meticulously examining historical contexts, engaging with skeptical objections, and articulating a rich theology of divine intervention, Keener provides a framework for understanding the supernatural that is both intellectually robust and deeply faith-affirming. His work invites us to consider that the God of Scripture is a God who not only created the universe but also actively interacts with it, demonstrating His power, compassion, and redemptive purposes through extraordinary means. For those seeking to reconcile faith with reason and to understand the profound implications of supernatural events, the writings of Craig Keener offer an invaluable resource, inviting us to embrace the extraordinary without abandoning the intellectual rigor and discerning inquiry that faith demands. The discussion surrounding Craig Keener and miracles continues to inspire and inform, reminding us that the realm of faith is one where the human quest for truth intersects with the divine invitation to the miraculous.

The Transformative Journey of Craig Keener's Miracles

Craig Keener's story is one of profound spiritual transformation and divine encounter, resonating deeply within Christian circles and beyond. As a prominent figure known for his preaching, writing, and leadership in faith-based ministry, Keener's life has been marked by profound "miracles"—not merely as supernatural events, but as pivotal moments of spiritual awakening and purpose. His journey reflects a deep commitment to biblical truth and a heart shaped by divine intervention, inspiring countless individuals to explore faith with renewed conviction.

Understanding the Essence of "Miracles" in Craig Keener's

Narrative

When discussing miracles in the context of Craig Keener's life, the focus extends beyond dramatic miracles like healings or prophecies. Instead, his testimony centers on transformative, often internal experiences—moments where God's presence became unmistakable in everyday life. These are not isolated events but sustained encounters that reshaped his identity, ministry, and worldview. Keener describes these as moments of divine revelation, clarity, and empowerment that enabled him to lead with authenticity and courage. This broader understanding of miracles underscores their role not only in spectacular displays but in the quiet, powerful shifts that fuel lasting change.

Key Insights from Craig Keener's Spiritual Journey

Keener's narrative reveals several key insights that illuminate the nature of faith and divine purpose. First, his journey highlights the importance of surrender and openness—miracles often emerge when one steps fully out of self-reliance and into trust. Second, his life exemplifies how divine encounters can ignite passion and clarity in ministry, turning personal transformation into a force for service and teaching. Third, his willingness to share vulnerabilities and struggles—rather than present a polished image—has deepened his connection with audiences, demonstrating that genuine faith thrives in honesty and resilience. These insights invite others to see miracles not as exceptions but as integral parts of a lived, dynamic relationship with God.

Applications in Ministry and Personal Growth

Keener's experiences offer practical applications for both ministry leaders and everyday believers. His emphasis on ongoing spiritual discipline encourages followers to cultivate habits of prayer, scripture study, and community, creating fertile ground for divine activity. Within ministry contexts, his story inspires leaders to embrace authenticity, model vulnerability, and remain responsive to God's leading—even when outcomes are uncertain. For individuals, Keener's journey serves as a reminder that spiritual growth is a process marked by both breakthroughs and setbacks, where miracles often follow periods of deep introspection and commitment. His life becomes a living example of faith in action, applicable across diverse contexts and calling.

Benefits of Embracing Craig Keener's Miracles Paradigm

Adopting Keener's perspective on miracles brings multiple benefits. It deepens personal faith by grounding it in real, relatable experiences rather than abstract doctrines. It fosters resilience, teaching that divine purpose unfolds through trials and quiet moments alike. For communities, his legacy strengthens collective identity, offering a

shared narrative of transformation that inspires hope and unity. Professionally, his approach encourages thoughtful, intentional ministry that values substance over spectacle, promoting sustainable impact. Ultimately, embracing this paradigm nurtures a holistic faith—rooted in lived truth, open to the supernatural, and grounded in human experience.

The Future of Miracles in Modern Ministry

Looking ahead, Craig Keener's influence points to an evolving understanding of miracles in faith circles. As society grapples with distraction and spiritual fatigue, there is growing demand for meaningful, authentic encounters with the divine. Keener's emphasis on personal journey and relational authenticity aligns with this need, suggesting that future ministry will increasingly focus on creating spaces where people can encounter God in everyday moments. His legacy encourages a shift from seeking grand signs to cultivating a deeper, more intimate awareness of the sacred. In this way, the miracles he embodies—transformative, relational, and deeply human—will continue to shape a more resilient, compassionate, and spiritually alive world.

Unpacking the Phenomenon: A Deep Dive into Craig Keener's Work on Miracles

The concept of miracles has captivated humanity for millennia, sparking debate, inspiring faith, and challenging the boundaries of our understanding of reality. In contemporary discussions, the name Craig Keener frequently emerges as a significant voice. A renowned New Testament scholar, Keener's extensive research and prolific writings, particularly his seminal two-volume work *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*, have become a cornerstone for those seeking a rigorous, scholarly examination of biblical miracles. This article will delve into Keener's approach, explore his key arguments, and analyze the implications of his work for both believers and skeptics, positioning him as a pivotal figure in the modern discourse on supernatural events.

Keener's engagement with the subject of miracles is not driven by blind faith or an agenda to prove the supernatural. Instead, it stems from a deep commitment to historical and textual accuracy. He approaches the New Testament narratives not as abstract theological propositions but as historical documents requiring careful scrutiny. His methodology involves a meticulous examination of the linguistic, cultural, and historical contexts of the biblical accounts, seeking to understand how these events would have been perceived and communicated by their original audiences. This scholarly rigor is what sets his work apart and makes it compelling to a broad spectrum of readers, including those wrestling with issues of faith and reason. His exploration of

divine intervention and the **power of God** is grounded in empirical research, making his conclusions all the more impactful.

The Historical-Critical Method and Supernatural Events

At the heart of Keener's approach is a sophisticated application of the historical-critical method. This scholarly discipline, often employed in biblical studies, aims to understand ancient texts by examining their historical origins, literary forms, and cultural settings. Keener, however, pushes this method further by deliberately engaging with the supernatural elements within the texts. He doesn't shy away from the seemingly improbable accounts of healing, exorcism, and even resurrection. Instead, he seeks to understand what the original authors and their audiences would have understood by these events.

One of Keener's central arguments is that a proper understanding of the historical and cultural context of the first century renders many of the New Testament miracles more comprehensible, even if not necessarily scientifically explainable in modern terms. He highlights the prevalence of belief in supernatural phenomena – healing, spirit possession, and divine intervention – across the ancient world, not just within Judaism and early Christianity. This widespread belief system, he contends, shaped how people interpreted extraordinary events. Therefore, dismissing these accounts solely based on modern scientific presuppositions risks anachronism and a misunderstanding of the worldview within which these narratives were born. His detailed analysis of **ancient healing practices** and **demonology** is crucial here.

Examining the Credibility of New Testament Accounts

Keener's magnum opus, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*, meticulously dissects the various categories of miracles recorded in the Gospels and Acts. He doesn't present a simplistic "believe it or not" approach. Instead, he systematically evaluates the evidence, considering factors like eyewitness testimony, the corroboration of accounts, and the intended audience. He scrutinizes the internal consistency of the narratives and compares them with similar phenomena reported in other ancient sources.

A significant portion of his work is dedicated to addressing common skeptical objections. For instance, regarding alleged healings, Keener examines the diagnostic criteria and understanding of illness in the ancient world. He explores the psychological and social dimensions of healing, acknowledging that while the biblical accounts attribute these cures to divine power, the historical record also reveals a complex interplay of factors. However, he consistently argues that the sheer volume and consistent pattern of reported miracles, especially those attributed to Jesus, point to something beyond mere psychosomatic effects or natural explanations.

His discussion on **Jesus' miracles** is particularly extensive, covering his healings, exorcisms, control over nature, and raising the dead. Keener meticulously examines each category, presenting evidence and counterarguments with scholarly fairness. He grapples with the problem of historical verification for events that, by their very nature, transcend the observable and repeatable. He acknowledges the inherent difficulty in proving supernatural claims in a scientific age, but he argues that the historical data, when interpreted within its original context, provides strong support for the reality of these events as understood by their contemporaries. The concept of **divine power** is thus explored through rigorous historical analysis.

LSI Keywords: Bridging Faith and Reason in the Miracle Debate

Throughout his work, Keener implicitly and explicitly engages with concepts that are crucial for understanding the broader conversation around miracles. These include **divine intervention**, the **nature of faith**, **historical evidence for miracles**, the **reliability of the Gospels**, **supernatural claims**, **resurrection accounts**, and the **impact of miracles** on early Christianity. He seeks to demonstrate that the New Testament accounts are not inherently unbelievable but are rather historically plausible within their original context. His careful consideration of **scriptural accounts** and **ancient testimonies** lends significant weight to his arguments.

Furthermore, Keener's analysis helps to bridge the perceived chasm between faith and reason. While he is a scholar of the New Testament and a Christian himself, his methodology is rigorously academic. He doesn't appeal to emotion or blind faith to make his case. Instead, he presents a wealth of historical and linguistic data, inviting readers to engage with the evidence intellectually. For believers, his work offers a robust defense of the historicity of biblical miracles, reinforcing their faith. For skeptics, it provides a nuanced and challenging perspective that demands a careful reconsideration of their assumptions about the limits of the natural world and the potential for supernatural activity. The discussion of **religious experiences** and their historical context is also vital to his work.

The Impact of Keener's Scholarship on Contemporary Discourse

Craig Keener's scholarship has had a profound and lasting impact on the study of miracles. He has elevated the conversation beyond simplistic affirmations or denials, offering a sophisticated, evidence-based approach. His work has been instrumental in shaping academic discussions and has also resonated with a wider audience seeking to understand the biblical miracles more deeply. The ongoing debate about **Christian apologetics** and the **historical Jesus** often circles back to the evidence for miraculous events, and Keener's contributions are indispensable to this discussion.

His meticulous research, clear prose, and balanced approach have made him a leading

authority on the subject. He has demonstrated that it is possible to engage with the supernatural claims of scripture with academic integrity, without sacrificing intellectual honesty. His exploration of **divine healing** and other miraculous interventions provides a framework for understanding these events not as aberrations but as integral to the message and mission of Jesus and the early church. The question of whether miracles are still happening today is also implicitly addressed by his thorough examination of historical accounts, offering a foundation for understanding the nature of **divine power** across time.

Conclusion: Craig Keener and the Enduring Mystery of Miracles

In conclusion, Craig Keener's work on miracles is a monumental achievement in biblical scholarship. His rigorous historical-critical methodology, combined with a deep engagement with the cultural and linguistic context of the New Testament, provides a compelling case for the credibility of these extraordinary accounts. By treating the biblical narratives as historical documents worthy of serious investigation, Keener invites readers to move beyond pre-conceived notions and engage with the evidence. While the ultimate belief in miracles may remain a matter of faith, Keener's scholarship offers a robust intellectual foundation for understanding their significance and their place in the historical record of early Christianity. His insights into **supernatural occurrences** and **ancient beliefs** continue to shape the conversation, making him an indispensable figure for anyone interested in the intersection of history, faith, and the enduring mystery of the miraculous.

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Questions & Answers About craig keener miracles

No	Question	Answer
1	What is Craig Keener's primary focus when discussing miracles?	Craig Keener's primary focus is on demonstrating that miracles, as described in the Bible, are not isolated incidents but part of a consistent pattern of divine intervention throughout history and across cultures. He emphasizes understanding the biblical text within its historical and cultural context.
2	What is Keener's stance on the frequency of miracles in the early church?	Keener argues strongly that miracles were a pervasive and common feature of the early church, not rare occurrences. He uses historical evidence and the writings of early Christians to support this view, challenging skepticism that dismisses these accounts.
3	How does Keener address skeptics who question the historicity of biblical miracles?	Keener addresses skeptics by meticulously examining historical and extra-biblical evidence, providing scholarly analysis of ancient texts, and demonstrating the plausibility of miracles within their historical and cultural settings. He emphasizes understanding the worldview of the time.
4	What is the significance of Keener's work 'Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts'?	This seminal work is significant for its comprehensive, scholarly defense of the historicity of New Testament miracles. It systematically refutes skeptical arguments by engaging with vast amounts of ancient literature and historical data.

5	Does Keener believe miracles continue today, or were they limited to biblical times?	While his primary focus is on biblical miracles, Keener's approach suggests an openness to the possibility of continued divine action. His emphasis on God's consistent nature implies that miracles are not necessarily confined to the past, though his detailed arguments focus on biblical accounts.
6	What kind of evidence does Keener rely on to support his arguments about miracles?	Keener relies on a wide range of evidence, including biblical texts, contemporary ancient literature (both Christian and non-Christian), historical records, and anthropological studies. He analyzes these sources critically to establish the context and credibility of miracle accounts.
7	How does Keener's understanding of miracles relate to broader theological concepts?	Keener's work connects miracles to core theological concepts such as God's power, sovereignty, faithfulness, and his ongoing involvement in human history. Miracles, for him, are expressions of God's active presence and redemptive purposes.
8	What is a common misconception about Keener's views on miracles that his work aims to correct?	A common misconception Keener addresses is the idea that miracles are inherently irrational or unbelievable. He works to show that within their historical and cultural contexts, these events were often understood and accepted, and that modern skepticism can be anachronistic.
9	In what ways does Keener's scholarship inform discussions about the supernatural?	Keener's scholarship informs discussions about the supernatural by providing a rigorous, evidence-based framework for understanding supernatural claims. He encourages a thoughtful engagement with historical accounts rather than immediate dismissal, fostering a more nuanced dialogue.
10	What practical implications can believers draw from Craig Keener's study of miracles?	Believers can draw the implication that God is powerfully active in the world and that faith is often accompanied by tangible divine intervention. His work can strengthen faith by showcasing the historical reality and theological significance of God's miraculous works.

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