

Can We Take The Bible Literally?

Intro: What we seek to address this evening is whether the Bible can be taken as historically accurate or be treated as mythology. At the heart of this discussion is whether miracles should be accepted as true. Consider the three views (see slide) on how we are to go about interpreting scripture. After that, we will look at four guiding principles for how we should look at miraculous events recorded in the Bible.

1. Accept events as stated, unless the writing style demands otherwise.
 - A. Recorded in historical documents.
 - B. Miracles are presented as part of history, not science.
 - C. There is a lack of evidence of myth.
 - D. Contrast the telling of Bible miracles with the way cultural myths are told.

2. Remember, Jesus spoke of recorded miraculous events as being true.
 - A. Creation (Matthew 19:3-6)
 - B. Jonah (Matthew 12:38-41)
 - C. Noah (Luke 17:26-30)
 - D. Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:26-30)
 - E. Burning Bush (Luke 20:37-38)

3. There are some scriptures which use figurative language.
 - A. The “sun stood still”. (Joshua 10:13)
 - B. The “four corners of the earth”. (Ezekiel 7:2)
 - C. The “four corners” and “four winds (Revelation 7:1)
 - D. Like we often do, things are sometimes stated as they are seen.

4. Miraculous events should be expected with an all-powerful God.
 - A. The plagues of Egypt were to demonstrate God’s power.
 - B. The Resurrection was to show God’s power. (Acts 26:8)
 - C. Various miracles were done to give credence to words spoken (Heb. 2)

Conclusion: We have seen the power of God in the way the Bible was written. The massive manuscript evidence supports our confidence that we have the words as they were first written. The miracles within the book are presented as events within a context where a demonstration of God’s power is appropriate to its purpose. If you accept the Bible as God’s word, the power behind the book is the same power that was that was behind the miraculous. They, too, should not be questioned.