

Expect the Miraculous

Our theme: It's our time to *shine* and for *each one to reach one* (thousand, hundred thousand, million?).

We are the "light of the world". We are here so that Christ may be seen in you and me in all we do and say. Where His light shines, darkness is driven out, displaced and replaced with His light and life.

It's our time to boldly speak forth God's word in our preaching and praying and see Him confirm His word with signs following.

Our focus: As Christ's ambassadors here on earth, we will speak and pray His word and **expect Him to confirm His word with signs and wonders. It's a call to expectant prayer!**

Mark 16:19-20 ... *"So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked together with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.*

Rom 8:34 ... *"Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us".*

Heb 10:19-23 ... *"Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for **He who promised is faithful.**"*

Heb 11:1-3 ... *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible".*

Heb 11:6 ... *"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God **must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.**"*

John 14:12-14 ... *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, **I will do it**".*

Examples: Now let's look at some examples of those who went before us who did expect God to confirm their preaching, praying and laying on of hands with the answers - the miraculous".

1. Elijah Ahab – 8th king of Israel, married to Jezebel, a heathen princess. She dominated him and led the nation in evil and idolatry. Because of that God sent drought on the land.

1 Kings 17:1-7 ... "Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, **except by my word.**" The word of the LORD came to him, saying, "Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. It shall be that you will drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there." So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook. It happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land".

Ch 18 Elijah meets up with Ahab and challenges him to a competition to see who the true God is. The prophets of Baal put their ox on the altar and call out all day to their gods in vain. Then Elijah takes over:

1 Kings 18:30-46 ... "Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD which had been torn down. Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name."³² So with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he made a trench around the altar, large enough to hold two measures of seed.³³ Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood.³⁴ And he said, "Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." And he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time.³⁵ The water flowed around the altar and he also filled the trench with water.

³⁶ At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things **at Your word.**"³⁷ Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that You, O LORD, are God, and that You have turned their heart back again."³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the **stones** and the dust, and licked up the **water** that was in the trench.³⁹ When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, He is God; the LORD, He is God."⁴⁰ Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape." So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

⁴¹ Now Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of the roar of a heavy shower."⁴² So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he crouched down on the earth and put his face between his knees.⁴³ He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." So he went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go back" seven times.⁴⁴ It came about at the seventh time, that he said, "Behold, a cloud as small as a man's hand is coming up from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go

down, so that the heavy shower does not stop you.”⁴⁵ In a little while the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and **there was a heavy shower**. ... the hand of the LORD was on Elijah”.

2. Daniel’s friends Daniel’s friends would not bow down to Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image and so they were thrown into the fiery furnace.

Dan 3:13-28 ... “Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; then these men were brought before the king.¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?¹⁵ Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, very well. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?”

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter.¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and **He will deliver us** out of your hand, O king.¹⁸ But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.²⁰ He commanded certain valiant warriors who were in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast them into the furnace of blazing fire.²¹ Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their other clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.²² For this reason, because the king’s command was urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.²³ But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire still tied up.

²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, “Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?” They replied to the king, “Certainly, O king.”²⁵ He said, “Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!”²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire.²⁷ The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king’s high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was

the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them.

²⁸ *Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants **who put their trust in Him**”.*

3. Peter and John

Acts 3:1-8 ... “Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer. ² And a man who had been lame from his mother’s womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he began asking to receive alms. ⁴ But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, “Look at us!” ⁵ And he began to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ But Peter said, “I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!” ⁷ And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. ⁸With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God”.

4. The contrast - Unbelieving people

Acts 12 - Herod had thrown Peter into prison where he was to stay until after the Passover when Herod would bring him out in front of the Jews – who most likely would put him to death.

Acts 12:5 ... “So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God”.

Then the angel is sent by God to release Peter. When Peter gets out he goes to Mary’s house.

Acts 12:12-16 ... “And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. ¹³ When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter’s voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate. ¹⁵ They said to her, “You are out of your mind!” But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, “It is his angel.” ¹⁶ But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened *the door*, they saw him and were amazed.”

Be Specific in Prayer

1. That God will enlighten the eyes of our hearts that we may **know** what is the surpassing greatness of His power to us who believe. (Eph 1:17-23 & Eph 3:20-21) – **Water on the wood won’t be a problem for God! His fire power even consumes stones! Nothing is impossible for Him!**

2. That we will constantly walk with our ears **attuned to the Holy Spirit** to hear what He is saying and get direction from Him – **Be ready in season and out of season – like Peter and John.**

3. For obedience and boldness to ***speak out and act on His word*** to us regarding the situations of need as they present themselves to us – ***Bold like Peter with the lame man.***

4. That our ***trust in Him*** will be absolute and without question. If He has said it He will do it! – ***No fiery furnace will hurt us!***

5. That we His people will ***expect the signs to follow*** the prayers and proclamation of God's word and will not doubt or pray without expecting answers – ***That we will not like the unbelieving people of Acts 12.***