

Fresh Start

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The 9-Minute Miracle

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“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah. 55:9

If you’re a Christ-follower and you’ve never done a serious study of the Book of Acts, you truly don’t know what you’re missing. The book is filled with supernatural events as the Holy Spirit ignites wildfire growth of the early church in the first century. That includes Paul being either miraculously healed or risen from the dead after a stoning, being told by the Spirit where he couldn’t travel to preach, examples of other miraculous healings and two men having visions that bring them together. On and on.

Skeptics point to that early church supernatural activity to challenge the Bible. The argument generally goes like this. If that kind of activity happened then, why doesn’t it happen now? Why are there no modern-day miracles? As believers, we know miracles happen, often. Non-believers choose not to see them. A pilot landing a crippled jetliner in the Hudson River is dismissed as “luck” by many, while being dubbed “Miracle on the Hudson” by a usually skeptical media. A young child declared brain dead and being readied for organ harvest suddenly shows signs of life and eventually makes a full recovery is written off as a “fluke.”

Then, there was June 14, 2017. That was the day nearly two dozen Republican Members of Congress and staffers were shot as they were wrapping up baseball practice in Alexandria, Virginia. Several victims were seriously wounded, including Congressman Steve Scalise. Some might ask where God was that day; why was there no miracle then? Fair question. BuzzFeed may have unintentionally answered it in a piece titled: “The 9 Minutes That Almost Changed America.” Through meticulous reporting, the website chronicled the highly improbable (and even that is an understatement) confluence of events that prevented the episode from being much, much worse:

That the shooter never got a good shot into the dugout. That his first shot hit the fence, diverting the bullet’s path away from Rep. Trent Kelly who was standing directly in front of him, at third base. That he (the shooter) never thought to climb the announcer’s booth (which could have acted as an elevated sniper’s nest). That the pitchers weren’t there that day, instead of trapped in a batting cage. That Matt Mika was turning his body when the first bullet struck him, so it didn’t hit his heart. That Zack Barth could still run. That Dr. Brad Wenstrup didn’t leave early. That Richard Krimmer’s ambulance hit green lights the entire way to the field. That the gate next to third base — through which the shooter could’ve walked through right onto the field — was locked, another fact nearly everyone on the team credits with saving their lives.

Buzzfeed reported that survivors refer to them as a series of miracles: Rep. Jeff Duncan called them “God winks.” Scalise put it this way: “If it was just one thing, you could maybe call it a coincidence, but when you add them all up together, the only way you can explain it is that they were all miracles.”

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” Proverbs 3:5-6

God executes a similar series of events billions of times a day around the world. And He had them planned before He created the earth. It is indeed futile to attempt to understand God’s thoughts and ways.

“As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in a mother’s womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things.” Ecclesiastes 11:5

Try this: the next time something bad happens in your life, after some time passes, examine the events and ask yourself how it could have been much, much worse. Then, instead of thanking your “lucky stars,” say a prayer of thanks to God. BuzzFeed has it backward. It’s not nine minutes that *almost* changed the world; it’s nine minutes in which God *did* change the world.

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!” Romans 11:33