

“Our God is a God of Miracles”

Sara Olsen

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For further information, email:
womens_conference@byu.edu
or write to:
253 Harman Continuing Education Building
Provo, Utah 84602
801-422-7692
Website: womensconference.byu.edu

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Hello sisters. I am so pleased to be able to be here with you today, back on campus, enjoying a spring day filled with sisterhood and learning through the Spirit. I pray that the Holy Ghost will be with us now and that we can each receive inspiration to learn what we specifically need today.

When I was asked to be a presenter at BYU Women’s Conference, after the initial shock, I thought, “Oh, I hope I get a subject where I can crack jokes and be funny and engaging... maybe the next Mary Ellen Edmunds,” ...you know...super awesome expectations for myself. And then I got the subject—Our God is a God of Miracles—and thought, “Wow, that’s so big. And honestly, how do I joke around with that?”

And then I started to truly ponder and pray. What could I say to help the sisters who choose to attend this session? And the Spirit testified to me, and honestly, I know this so personally as well, that we are all going through such hard things. This world is a challenge for sure right now. We need the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, and we need miracles! Well, I am happy to testify to you that our God is a God of miracles!

Elder Michael A. Dunn of the Seventy said, “Miracles have been and will always be an operational part and parcel of a merciful and loving God and His Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, expect to see miracles in your life.”¹

It has been truly amazing to put this presentation together as we are studying miracles in the New Testament. I won’t rehearse all of those stories in too much detail here since they have been recently studied but wanted to share a few things that I have learned from them. One of the things that I learned was how much our Heavenly Father knows and loves each one of us individually. He is our Father. He loves us. He sent His son, who also loves us. Because of this fact, we can know that all things are ultimately for our good.

Think about so many introductions of the Gospel that the church does. In Preach My Gospel the first concept taught is: God is our Heavenly Father.² The second sentence of the Family Proclamation³ is, “All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents...”

The old Young Women’s theme stated, “We are daughters of a Heavenly Father who loves us”⁴ and the new theme states, “I am a beloved daughter of heavenly parents...”⁵ Once you start to investigate it, you realize how often not only is that fact stated, but that it is stated *first*. Because once you realize this eternal fact, everything else comes together so beautifully.

There have been many times in my life when I knew that Heavenly Father was there and that He loved me. Those experiences have been very sacred to me, but one very simple one I want to share with you is when I was driving alone one day and thinking about my family. I have seven kids and almost ten grand babies. I’m sure like many of you, my mama heart is always worried about them and constantly praying for their well-being and protection. I worry that I am doing the right things as a mom. This day, one of my daughters who has been struggling with anxiety and depression, was particularly heavy on my heart. I was not sure I was doing the right things to help her. I was fairly positive that I was not adequate for the task. I had been seeking answers from my Heavenly Father.

At that moment, a special feeling of peace came over my heart. My mind was stilled from the worry. And I felt the love of my Father in Heaven and His love for my daughter. I felt His acceptance of my efforts. I knew that He saw me and where my heart was and would support me as I continued to try to help my daughter. Without a doubt, I felt seen and loved by my Heavenly Father. I was not kneeling next to my bed or praying in the temple. It was honestly so unexpected and so very needed. So, I tried to wipe away my tears as I was driving, locked that knowledge of who I am as a beloved daughter of God deep in my heart and soul, and went about my day. There hasn’t been a miraculous miracle for my daughter. She still has days that she really struggles. But I know that Heavenly Father loves me and loves her, and that miracle alone gives me the strength to keep going.

Elder Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “What should you be looking for in your own life? What are God’s miracles that remind you that He is close, saying, ‘I am right here’? Think of those times, some daily, when the Lord has acted in your life - and then acted again. Treasure them as moments the Lord has shown confidence in you and in your choices. But allow Him to make more of you than you can make of yourself on your own. Treasure His involvement.”⁶

So, knowing that God knows us and loves us, He wants us to be happy; and knowing we live in a world where we need miracles—how do we go about seeking those miracles?

Mosiah 8:18 states, “God has provided a means that man, through faith, might work mighty miracles.”⁷

Elder Michael A. Dunn in his talk entitled, “How to Invite Miracles into Your Life,” talked about how we need to “decide today to see, be and kneel the miracle”—and if we do this, “great and wondrous blessings—big and small—surely await you.”⁸

See the Miracle

First, we need to see the miracles around us every single day.

Elder Dunn stated, “Our problem as Saints is not a dearth of blessings. Our problem is that we as a covenant people of the Lord have the windows of heaven wide open with blessings literally gushing forth. We are so abundantly blessed that the myriad of miracles around us sometimes become pedestrian or even invisible in our lives. Sadly, this embarrassment of riches doesn’t get our full attention, nor the gratitude that it should. Like having the wind at our back, we sometimes simply don’t recognize the majesty and might of the miracles around us.”⁹

My sister-in-law, Melissa, shared this miracle story with me when I asked my family what miracles they had witnessed. This is from her journal at the time it happened.

“A miracle happened today. My guess is they happen every day, but this one, this one was more obvious.

“I was climbing into my old 1996 Ford Ranger truck. I noted that she was getting low on gas - right around 1/8th of a tank. I was on my way to an appointment that was 17 miles away, through winding back country roads that would take about 45 minutes. I quickly estimated, I probably had enough gas to make it to the appointment on time, but definitely didn’t have enough to make a round trip.

“As I meandered through the fields and orchards, I watched the needle steadily move towards the red empty line. When I finally popped out at the end of the road, joining society again, I was right at my appointment location. I had made it. The needle was hovering just barely above the red line. ‘Thank you, Heavenly Father, for helping me make it here ok.’ I whispered as I pulled into the parking lot and climbed out.

“When I finished the appointment, I jumped into my truck and started for home. I had already left society and was meandering down the long two-lane highway when I remembered that I needed to get gas. I looked down at the gas gauge. It was pointing directly at the red empty line. I still had most of the trip ahead of me, and I wondered how far I would be able to make it on fumes. ‘Heavenly Father, please help me make it home ok.’

“I went a bit further and checked the gauge again. This time, I watched as it steadily climbed *higher and higher*. It finally stopped at just over 1/8th of a tank. ‘That’s a lot of gas,’ I thought, probably more than I would need. I said a prayer of thanks to God.

“I kept driving. I was listening to an audio book on Angels and Seers. I thought about how our God is a God of miracles. Many of these miracles are represented in the scriptures. God knows the workings and laws of nature much better than we do, and so, He can bring about situations

that appear ‘miraculous’ to us. One of these laws is the law of multiplication. He was able to feed thousands of people, on multiple occasions, with just a few fish and bread. The widow’s cruise of oil did not fail during the entire famine. Something to note about these occasions, he did not produce steak and eggs for the crowd, he did not produce something out of thin air, but he multiplied what was already there. He started with what he already had.

“I marveled that he would choose to multiply my gas, in a clear way, where I would see the large amount of gas, and know beyond a shadow of a doubt that he had multiplied it for me. If he had done it little by little, maybe I could have made the excuse I was running on fumes. Or maybe I wouldn’t have recognized his hand at all and just thought my gas was lasting. Instead, He made it quite obvious.

“As I drove the 17 miles, I watched the gas needle steadily drop closer to the empty line again. I thanked Heavenly Father. As I neared society again, I drove straight to the gas station. When I pulled into the station, the needle on the gauge dipped just below the red line. I had made it. Barely.

“God knew exactly how much gas I would need to make it to the next station. And he performed the miracle in front of my eyes so clearly, there would be no mistaking it. He wanted me to know, ‘He’s still there, and He’s got me covered.’

“Why is it that when we encounter an unexplainable, we search in our minds to find a logical and scientific explanation. And when we have satisfied our wonder, we pass it off as such. What if, instead, we looked for explanations of God’s hand in our lives? What would that do to our faith in Him?

“Maybe we fail to examine the moments as miracles because we aren’t familiar with the possibilities. As I study the scriptures, I write down the things that happened. The miracles He did. This way, I know and have clear “options” and explanations in the forefront of my mind.

“As I go through my day, when something unexplainable or miraculous happens in my life, I turn to these explanations first and see if any match up, instead of turning to science and logic first.

“If one wants their faith to grow, they must look for reasons and explanations that back it up. Signs follow those who believe. Know your possibilities, the scriptures are *full* of examples. It still happens to all of us. We just need to be labeling these moments and miracles correctly.

“Jesus knows more about nature and scientific laws than I do. He can do things that look *miraculous* to me. He has power, light, and knowledge. He commissions angels to help us. To help me. He does not leave me alone.”

She even took a picture of her gas gauge miracle to remember it.

(Photo not available)

This miracle was easy for my sister-in-law to see, but do we see all of the other miracles that surround us each day? Every time your car turns on and gets you from place to place safely. Clean water that flows from the faucet each day. The sunshine and the rain. The cry of a new baby. Angel friends on earth. Having a temple to attend nearby. Every Sunday that you partake of the Sacrament. And having the restored Gospel in your life.

When I first was given this subject, I decided to really watch for miracles every day. I reached out to friends and family to ask what miracles they had seen in their lives. The response was incredible! I heard so many miraculous stories. I thought back over my own life and realized how many miracles have happened. My 20-year-old daughter asked me if I was going to share her miraculous story of her premature birth, death, and being brought back to life, and I had to say, “I don’t know, there are just so many miracles I could share.” I would invite each of you to ponder on all the miracles you have seen in your life. See the miracles. Recognize where they come from—our Father in Heaven—and live in gratitude for them every day.

Be the Miracle

The second thing he talked about was “Be the Miracle”.

As we work to bring our will closer to the Savior’s, we will be able to see miracles worked through us. President Thomas S. Monson said, “Please do not pray—I plead with you—for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle.”¹⁰

As you live your life worthy to be guided by the Holy Ghost, God can answer someone’s prayer through you. As you live with faith in God, you can receive answers and comfort and be sustained and uplifted through all things. That is being the miracle.

At one point in my life, I was a single mom with four little girls. I lived in northern Utah and had recently gotten divorced. It was a very difficult time in my life. I felt lost as I tried to figure out how to find happiness and peace in this new life I found myself in. I was blessed with amazing friends in my neighborhood and ward. In the evenings, a friend would knock on the door and come in and help me get a load of laundry going or tuck kids into bed or do a pickup around the house. Other times, I would get a phone call telling me they were going to pick up my kids to play and I could get some much-needed time to run errands, or even better, go to the temple. They helped me get through each day and basically survive until I got my feet back under me. These sisters were absolute angels and miracles in my life.

I think about the story in the bible where the man with palsy was lowered thru a roof to get to Jesus to be healed. This man’s friends brought him on a stretcher thru crowded streets, and when the way was blocked by people, they didn’t give up—they found a way to bring their friend to the Savior.¹¹ These friends were miracle workers. If you want to see miracles in your life, be a vessel to make miracles happen.

I want to take a minute here to acknowledge those who are caring for loved ones who need extra care as they make their way through this life. If you are a caregiver, you are a miracle worker—every single day.

President Boyd K. Packer gave the most beautiful talk called “The Moving of the Water,” in April 1991. In the talk, President Packer tells the story of the disabled man sitting by the pool of Bethesda who had been disabled for 38 years. Christ asked the man if he wanted to go down into the pool of water and he responded yes, but he had no one to help him and every time he tried, someone else got in before him. Jesus then told the man to take up his mat and walk. And he did just that.

President Packer then said, "There has always been, in all of humanity, a sprinkling of those who are described in the scriptures as the blind, the halt, the lame, the deaf, the wither, the dumb, the impotent folk. We refer to them as having learning or communication disorders, as the hearing or visually impaired, those with motor or orthopedic limitations. We speak of intellectual or emotional impairment, mental illness. Some suffer from a combination of these. All of them cannot function without help. I speak to the families of those who, at birth or as the result of accident or disease, must live with an impaired body or mind. I desire to bring comfort to those to whom the words handicapped, or disability have a very personal meaning."

He then goes on to teach the doctrine of the resurrection, "You parents and you families whose lives must be reordered because of a handicapped one whose resources and time must be devoted to them. Our special heroes, you are manifesting the works of God with every thought, every gesture of tenderness and care you extend to the loved one. Never mind the tears, nor the hours of regret and discouragement. Never mind the times you feel you cannot stand another day of what is required. You are living the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ in exceptional purity and you perfect yourselves in the process. The day of healing will come. Bodies which are deformed and minds which are warped will be made perfect. In the meantime, we must look after those who wait by the pool of Bethesda."¹²

What a beautiful thought. As you care and minister to those who are waiting by the pool of Bethesda, you are doing the Savior’s work. You are someone’s miracle. Keep up the good work sisters. He sees you. He loves you. He will strengthen you.

Knee the Miracle

The final one he talks about is, “Knee the Miracle”. And yes, that does refer to us kneeling in prayer to talk to our Father in Heaven about the needs in our lives.

(Photo not available)

I want to share a miracle that happened in our lives that involved my oldest granddaughter, Cheri. At the time, Cheri had just turned three years old and was a very healthy, beautiful little girl. Cheri started getting sick, nothing too alarming at first—a fever and she wasn’t feeling well. But it just wouldn’t go away, and the fever kept getting higher, even with medicine. They were in and out of the doctor’s office numerous times trying to figure out what was going on. Every time

they were told it was maybe this or maybe that and sent home. They ended up at the ER one night when the fever was 103.3 and wouldn't go down. She was given more ibuprofen and treated for dehydration and sent home. Then, she started to get a rash and hives. Her fever climbed to between 105 and 106. They were on day 20 of fevering. They rushed her into the doctor's again and the doctor called Primary Children's Medical Center and were told to take her there immediately.

(Photo not available)

That evening, she was admitted to the hospital with an unknown illness. She was dehydrated from the weeks of fever; the rash was all over her body, and it was painful and itchy. She couldn't walk because it was so bad on her feet. The doctors were stumped; no one really knew what was going on. Her blood work was showing massive inflammation throughout her body.

We felt like we were in an episode of *House*. They were running so many tests. The pediatrician thought that maybe it was Kawasaki Disease but that didn't seem to fit exactly. Primary Children's at first ruled that out. And then her little body started to really swell up. Everywhere. We reached out to friends and family and asked for prayers. We spent a lot of time on our knees pleading with the Lord.

She was put in the "no contact" ward of the hospital and was confined to her bed. We continued to pray and asked for prayers. After several days of watching her blood work and not seeing any improvement at all, the doctors decided it was Kawasaki Disease and they wanted to treat her for it. She got an echocardiogram and her heart looked good, so they scheduled to put her under to put in a PIC line so that she could get a full blood transfusion with immunoglobulin to fight the disease. But Cheri's parents really didn't feel good about that immediate course of action. They wanted to do the procedure that very night, but her mom and dad felt like they should take one night to give her a special blessing and to fast and pray for her and this big decision. They wanted to bring it to the Lord first. There could be some serious side effects from the blood transfusion. And if she did have Kawasaki, there could be some serious risk to her heart.

We reached out to friends and family again and asked for a special fast that if this was *not* the right course of action, to please let there be a clear answer for her mom and dad. We had obviously been praying for Cheri to get better, but this time specifically, we were also praying and fasting for guidance and direction. There were so many people who loved Cheri and her family, and we were confident that with their combined faithful fasting and prayers, her parents could get an answer.

The next morning, this is what we woke up to. Her rash was virtually gone! Her fever broke! For the first time in over three weeks, she was fever free! This was my post on Facebook from that morning.

(Photo not available)

"A little miracle morning! Look at Cheri's legs!!!! Last night when I was at the hospital her legs were still completely covered in the rash—they are so beautiful this morning! The one doctor

who came in already this morning said Kawasaki would not have cleared up like that—so we are waiting to hear from the whole team of doctors and the results from the viral panel. I can't wait for Cheri to wake up and see her beautiful skin again. She will be so happy.”

(Photo not available)

Cheri's fever completely broke and within a few days, her rash cleared up as well. As I read responses to the post I had put on Facebook, I was shocked by how many people said they had joined in the fasting for Cheri. So many families. We had prayed and fasted specifically to know what to do next, and His will was made known; do nothing. The doctors originally said, “Okay, she looks great, but we have no idea what is going on here.” They still considered the blood transfusion, but my daughter said no, this was an answer to prayers that was not needed. With the fever gone, they opted to keep her there under observation. She finally got to get out of her bed and play.

(Photo not available)

She continued to get better, and she was released a few days later. It took her a few weeks to really be herself again—her body had been wrecked by whatever she had—but we had seen a miracle and received a very distinct answer to prayers. To this day, we give thanks to a loving Father in Heaven for answering our prayers and healing our little Cheri.

Knee the miracle! Pray, fast, have great faith and ask others to join you in your prayers and fasting when appropriate because our God is a God of miracles!

What about those miracles that don't materialize? Why are some requested miracles fulfilled and others not? Maybe even some miracles that seem silly, like a lost set of keys. We don't know for sure. Our view is limited. All we can say is, “We don't know.” But I can testify that He knows. Since we know that He is our loving Heavenly Father who does want the best for us, we can trust Him.

Elder Bednar once relayed a story about a miracle that had happened to a friend who had had cancer, then said this quote—which I think is very appropriate here after sharing a few miracle stories with you today.

“For many of you, their story is, has been, or could be your story. You are facing, have faced, or will yet face equivalent challenges in your lives with the same courage and spiritual perspective. I do not know why some people learn the lessons of eternity through trial and suffering—while others learn similar lessons through rescue and healing. I do not know all of the reasons, all of the purposes, and I do not know everything about the Lord's timing. With Nephi, you and I can say that we ‘do not know the meaning of all things.’ But some things I absolutely do know. I know we are spirit sons and daughters of a loving Heavenly Father. I know the Eternal Father is the author of the plan of happiness. I know Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer. I know Jesus enabled the Father's plan through His infinite and eternal Atonement. I know the Lord, who was ‘bruised, broken, [and] torn for us,’ can succor and strengthen ‘his people according to

their infirmities'. And I know one of the greatest blessings of mortality is to not shrink and to allow our individual will to be 'swallowed up in the will of the Father.'"¹³

And that brings me to the greatest miracle of all—the atonement and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Because of Christ in Gethsemane, our Savior knows everything and can succor us in our trials and hardships. Anthony Sweat once talked about how Christ can cure, but he can also heal.¹⁴ He can heal our souls as we deal with the difficulties of this mortal journey. Because of Him, we have the great miracle of hope.

I want to extend a personal invitation to each of you, to truly focus on *seeing* the miracles in your life and recognizing them as gifts from our loving Heavenly Father. Then work daily on *being* a miracle worker in doing good work and following the example of our Savior. And always bend your knees to sincerely pray for miracles in your lives and watch them happen with a grateful heart. I testify that as I have implemented these three tools in my life more purposefully, I have seen them work and I have grown closer to my Savior. I see His hand daily in my life. Whether or not my miracles have been realized, I see how blessed my life is. I so dearly love my Savior and my Father in Heaven. I know that He is there, that He loves each of you and that He did and still does perform miracles every day.

I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

¹ Elder Michael A. Dunn "How to Invite Miracles into Your Life,"2021.

² Preach My Gospel, Lesson 1: "The Message of the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,".

³ The Family Proclamation, September 1995.

⁴ Young Women Theme, Gospel Media, Images. 1987.

⁵ Young Women Theme, announced October 2019 General Conference.

⁶ Ronald A. Rasband, "By Divine Design," Ensign or Liahona, November 2017.

⁷ Mosiah 8:18.

⁸ Elder Michael A. Dunn "How to Invite Miracles into Your Life,"2021.

⁹ Elder Michael A. Dunn "How to Invite Miracles into Your Life,"2021.

¹⁰ Thomas S. Monson, in Gerry Avant, "*Learn, Serve, Thank, Pray, Gratitude Told*", Church News, May 4, 1991.

¹¹ Mark 2:3-11.

¹² Boyd K. Packer "The Moving of the Water," April 1991.

¹³ Elder David A. Bednar, "That We Might 'Not shrink' (DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 19:18)," CES Devotional for Young Adults, 2013.

¹⁴ Dr. Anthony Sweat "Follow Him" Podcast, Episode 15.