

MIRACLES

I. Miracles in the Bible

1. Different words used to describe:-
 - a) **sign** (Gk: semeion) – a miracle attesting the authenticity of the one producing it, a token of authority;
 - b) **wonders** (Gk: tepasin) – an act which causes astonishment and amazement;
 - c) **miracles** – (Gk: dunamis) supernatural acts of power.
2. Distinguish between the gift of performing miracles specifically given by God; and God performing miracles in answer to Christian prayer.
3. Miracles have occurred right throughout the Bible. The God-given gift of miracle working was only rarely possessed by believers in the Bible. Four main periods where the gift of miracles was given by God, a) Moses and Joshua (Ex 7:1-5); b) Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 18:36); c) Christ; and d) the Apostles.
4. The miracles of the Old Testament prophets were used to authenticate (prove genuine) the prophet who performed them. They were to show that he was sent by God and that his teaching was God's Word and therefore to be accepted and obeyed.
5. The miracles of Jesus proved that He was Christ, the Son of God, and that His Word was true (Matt 11:2-6; John 5:36; 20:30-31; Acts 2:22)
6. The miracles performed by the Apostles were given to prove that they were God's mouth-pieces and that the Word they preached was true (Mark 16:17-20; 2 Cor 12:12; Heb 2:4; Acts 14:1-3; Acts 5:12,15)
7. Nature of these miracles:-
 - a) Only relatively few miracles were performed (not all were healed, 1 Cor 12:29-30);
 - b) the purpose of these miracles – not for believers, but for unbelievers (1 Cor 14:22);
8. Since the Word of God was completed with the passing of the Apostles, the gift of miracles is no longer necessary to authenticate the Word. Its chief purpose is complete. God's Word alone is to be the judge of whether the doctrine and teaching of a pastor is true (Eph 2:20; Rom 10:17; Luke 16:29-31; John 8:31-32). We are not to add to or take away from the Word (Rev 22:18-19)

II. Miracles today

1. Does God perform miracles today? Yes indeed. It is the gift of miracle working that is no longer present today. No promise of Scripture indicates that the gift of miracle working would suddenly reappear to Christians just before the last day. Together with that of speaking in tongues, it has ceased (Heb 2:3; 1 Cor 13:8). Church History confirms that it ceased at the time of the Apostles.
2. God does prophecy that false "miracles" would reappear before Judgement Day. They would be performed by false prophets at the hand of the devil to lead people astray from God's Word (2 Thess 2:8-9; Matt 24:24; Matt 7:22,23). Many in the visible church will be deceived by these false displays.
3. Miracles were used in Bible times to prove the genuineness of the person who performed them. On the basis of God's Word, modern day faith-healers are shown to be false-prophets by their false teachings e.g. denial of Baptism; Lord's Supper; Means of Grace; millennium (Deut 13:1-3; 1 Thess 5:20-21). Even if their "miracles" cannot be disproven, their doctrines show them to be false prophets. Their "miracles" therefore cannot be from God, because God would not authenticate as true that which is against His Word.
4. The fraudulent nature of the "healings" of faith healers today has been exposed by all whose eyes are not blind to the evidence e.g. Benny Hinn. Many "healings" are psychosomatic (a person in their mind

believing that they are well, whereas their true bodily condition has not changed). Many who have been “healed” and do not use their medicine, die soon after.

5. Difference of gift of miracles in Bible times with the claim of this gift today:-

- a) not all healed were believers (Acts 3:1-8; John 9:6,7, 25, 35-36)
- b) no mass meetings and healing schools;
- c) no healing line;
- d) many today relapse into their former sickness;
- e) No psychological methods in Bible times (Hands on the TV; pay for a miracle – sewing a seed; healing cards);
- f) often “miracles” fail. They then claim, “You have no faith;”
- g) Bible miracles were immediate;
- h) They were complete;
- i) they were undeniable, even by Christ’s enemies (John 3:2; 11:47)
- j) Today’s “miracles” emphasize the healer;
- k) They seek after signs rather than the Word (Matt 12:38-39; 16:1)

6. Questions to ask the faith healers:-

- a) Why not empty the hospitals?
- b) What about the other gifts in Mark 16:17-20 which cannot be mimicked?
- c) Do you ever get sick, need to use the doctor or medicine?
- d) Has any faith-healer ever avoided physical death?

7. Much sickness is a result of man’s failings (e.g. worry, bitterness, anger), which have their effect on the human body. Repentance of the sin and out of love to Jesus, the changing of one’s ways, will help with bodily health.

8. When times of sickness come, the Christian should follow these principles:-

- a) Nowhere does the Bible say that the Christian should be or will be free from sickness (Phil 2:27; 2 Cor 12:7-9; 2 Tim 4:20; 1 Tim 5:23); it is a part of the Christian’s life (Phil 3:20-21; Rom 8:18,23), a trial which the Lord uses to test his faith (Job 23:10; Heb 12:6).
- b) When time of sickness comes, we should first trust in God; go to Him in prayer and ask for His help (Ps 37:5); since we do not know what God’s will is for us, we should always pray, “If it be Thy will” (Phil 1:20; 1 John 5:14; Luke 22:42; James 4:15).
- c) There are times God performs miracles in answer to Christian prayer (Luke 2:37); God can heal beyond the ordinary (James 5:14). Miracles however are not to be demanded of God;
- d) Ordinarily God helps us by providing the doctors, hospitals and medicine as His means to help us (e.g. the Good Samaritan). We are to use these means, knowing that they are a part of God’s creation placed there to heal us;
- e) We should be good stewards of our bodies and not misuse them (1 Cor 3:16-17).