

## MIRACLES

The Bible informs us of many wonderful miracles that were performed by God's prophets and apostles. Each account is true and accurate and worthy of our study. The inspired apostle John writes, "and many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John 20:30-31). Here we find that Jesus did not perform miracles just because He had the power to do so; He performed miracles to produce faith in those who were witnesses. Many today believe and teach that miracles are being performed in our generation. They claim that those who do not believe miracles occur today simply do not have enough faith. If one must already have faith in order to believe a miracle is performed today, what then is the purpose of the miracle? This idea is foreign to the teachings of the New Testament – miracles were performed to produce faith and not to entertain those who already believe. This purpose is also substantiated by the inspired author, Mark. After Jesus gives the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-16), Mark reports, "and they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and **confirming the word with signs** following" (16:20, emphasis B.G.). The signs – casting out devils, speaking foreign languages, taking up serpents, healing the sick, etc. (16:17-18) – would prove that the men preaching were from God (cf., John 3:2). After knowing that the preachers were from God, the audience would hear and believe (cf., Rom. 10:17). Thus the signs were used to produce faith.

Additionally, the Bible teaches us that miracles were actions of God that superseded the laws of nature. Many refer to child birth as "miraculous," but women have been bearing children for thousands of years. Pregnancy and birth are according to natural laws. The birth of Jesus, on the other hand, exceeded the bounds of nature because Mary was a virgin (Mat. 1:18-25). The Bible also teaches that miracles were instantaneous. When Jesus healed the blind, "**immediately** their eyes received sight" (Mat. 20:34, emphasis B.G.). With the vast amounts of medicinal knowledge and technology, many diseases and ills have been treated successfully. However, much time (including the years and years of study by the doctors and the pharmaceutical companies), medication, and therapy is usually needed. Though we thank God for these remedies, they cannot be considered miraculous. Further, the Bible teaches that miracles are easily demonstrable. Those who claim they perform miracles or have witnessed miracles today, have no proof or evidence that such took place. When Peter and John healed a lame man, even the enemies of God could not deny it (Acts 4:16). If a miracle was performed today, there would be no way to hide it or keep it a secret. When Jesus performed miracles, "multitudes" flocked to Him (Mat. 15:29-31).

Lastly, the same Bible which truthfully and accurately informs us about miracles also informs us that the miraculous age would come to an end. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:8-10). "That which is perfect" is the Bible – God's Word – which is "the perfect law of liberty" (Jam. 1:25) and "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect,

thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). “That which is perfect,” cannot refer to Jesus in this text, since miracles continued for many years after Jesus had come, died, and had been resurrected. This fact also eliminates the “second coming” of Jesus as being “that which is perfect.” It also makes no sense that God would state that miracles would cease when the world ends. If that were the case, would God not have stated that miracles would continue “even unto the end of the world” (Mat. 28:20)? Additionally, Jesus would not be referred to as a “that,” since He is alive. The inspired Word of God was most likely completed and confirmed around 69 AD and therefore, at that time, the purpose for miracles had been accomplished and miracles ceased.

The Biblical accounts of miracles are true. The truth that these miracles were performed and witnessed is evidence for us today that Jesus is the Son of God and that those who penned the Bible were inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The purpose for the miraculous age ceased and therefore there is now no need for anyone to perform a miracle. God’s purpose for miracles was to confirm His Word (Mark 16:20). The Word of God has been confirmed and now, “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

- *Brad Green*