

# **Do Men Today Have the Power to Perform Miracles?**

by Danny Brown

Some believe that we are standing at the forks of the road and must go in either one direction or the other. We must become atheist, modernist or Deist and deny that the miraculous ever existed or believe that some people are being given the power to work miracles today. However these are not the only choices.

The Bible is the infallible word of God and therefore the source of doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness (2 Tim 3:16-17). The miracles it records all happened just as they were reported. In fact, the Bible not only teaches that such miracles existed but that they accomplished their purpose and are no longer available today. It is not a question of what Deity can do or of divine power. The only limit to the power of God is His own character. It is a question of what God has done and has promised to do.

## **How God Works**

Deity works in three realms: By the laws of nature, miracles and providence.

Laws of nature: The Hebrew writer said, "He upholds all things by the word of His power." (Heb 1:3) God set certain laws in force to govern the physical universe. We call these laws the laws of nature. Examples: the law of gravity. The body will heal itself of cuts, bruises and broken bones over a period of time in favorable conditions.

Miracles: A miracle is an action or effect brought to pass by a supernatural being either directly or indirectly through an agent that either sets aside or is superior to the laws of nature. By miracle we do not mean any unusual happening, such as escape from injury in a serious car accident, etc. It is a supernatural intervention in which no natural laws or forces of nature (including the natural powers of man) are responsible for the effect achieved. In a miracle you have a supernatural source with a supernatural action. For example: The creation. The deliverance of Shadrack, Meshak and Abednego from the fiery furnace without harm or the smell of smoke. (Dan 3).

Providence: That is, God working to bring about an action, effect, or event by the use of natural laws. A supernatural source with natural action. For example: In 1 Sam 1:6-20 Hannah prayed fervently that she might have a son. Then we are told that Elkanah "knew" his wife Hannah and she conceived and

bare a son, Samuel. Did God do that? Yes He did, but by the law of natural procreation.

## **Bible Miracles**

The miracles recorded in the Bible fall into several categories:

1. The Supernatural acts of CREATION. (Genesis 1 & 2)
2. Miracles were performed over NATURE. The laws of nature were temporarily suspended when Jesus stilled the tempest. (Matt 8:23-27) and when he walked upon the water. (John 6:16-21) Also when Elisha caused iron to float. (2 Kings 6:6)
3. Miracles demonstrated power over the PHYSICAL BODY. Jesus performed several miracles of this character. He made a man blind from birth to see (John 9:107) restored a severed ear (Lk 22:50-51) and healed every sickness and every disease. (Matt 9:35)
4. Miracles demonstrated a power over Satan's realm in the casting out of DEMONS that had entered human bodies (Matt 12:22ff)
5. Miracles exhibiting divine authority over MATERIAL THINGS. Jesus turned water into wine (John 2:1-11) and multiplied loaves and fishes so that thousands were fed. (John 6:1-14)
6. Miracles demonstrating divine power over DEATH, Jesus raised Lazarus who had been dead four days (John 11:43-44) and exercised miraculous power in his own resurrection. (John 2:19; John 10:17-18; Rom 1:4) Peter raised Dorcas. (Acts 9:40) Paul raised Eutychus. (Acts 20:9)

## **Miracles to Confirm**

In Exodus 4 God empowered Moses with miraculous powers so that Pharoah would know that the words of Moses and Aaron were the words of God. The miracles confirmed the word. In Matthew 11 John, the Baptist, sends disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you the Christ or do we look for another?" Jesus didn't answer directly, He said go tell him that the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them. His miracles confirmed His claim.

GOD – CHRIST – HOLY SPIRIT – APOSTLES / SOME DISCIPLES – (BIBLE -- inspired revelation written). God gave His word to Christ (John 17:8, 18) and Christ gave it to the Holy Spirit who in turn was to reveal it unto the Apostles (John 16:13) and some early disciples (1 Cor 12:4-11) who wrote it down. God

certified that the words which these inspired men spoke and wrote were His words by the miracles He enabled them to perform.

1. **Mark 16:20**, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and CONFIRMING THE WORD WITH SIGNS following

2. **Acts 14:3**, "Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the LORD, which GAVE TESTIMONY UNTO THE WORD of his grace, and granted SIGNS and WONDERS to be done by their hands."

3. **Hebrews 2:2-3**, "... great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was CONFIRMED unto us by them that heard HIM; God ALSO bearing them WITNESS, both with SIGNS and WONDERS, and divers MIRACLES, and GIFTS of the HOLY GHOST.."

4. **John 3:2**, Nicodemus . . . "came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: FOR no man can do these MIRACLES that thou doest, except God be with him."

5. **Acts 2:22**, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you BY MIRACLES and WONDERS and SIGNS, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."

6. **2 Corinthians 12:12**, When Paul's apostleship and teaching was questioned, he appealed to the miracles he had performed among them. "Truly the SIGNS of AN APOSTLE were wrought among you in all patience, in SIGNS and WONDERS, and MIGHTY DEEDS."

7. **Matthew 10:6-8**, Jesus sent his apostles on the limited commission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he commanded, "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. HEAL the sick, CLEANSE the lepers, RAISE THE DEAD, CAST OUT DEVILS:..." The miracles they performed served as "credentials" to prove that they indeed were messengers of God's word.

## **Who Did Miracles**

There were only three classes of people who performed miracles in the New Testament:

1. Jesus Christ, the son of God.
2. The Apostles of Christ
3. The disciples who were given Spiritual gifts.

## **Why Jesus Performed Miracles**

Jesus' miracles eloquently and excellently demonstrated that he was/is who he claimed to be, the Son of God.

1. **Colossians 1:16**, "For by him (Christ Jesus, db) were ALL THINGS CREATED, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him;" By the miracle of creation He proved that He was Deity. (see John 1:1-4; Gen 1) He merely spoke and it was done. (Ps 33:9)

2. **Romans 1:4**, "And DECLARED to be the SON OF GOD with power, according to the spirit of holiness, BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD." Jesus' resurrection is one of the greatest miracles ever performed.

3. **John 5:36**, "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the WORKS which the Father hath given me to finish, the same WORKS that I do BEAR WITNESS that the FATHER HATH SENT ME."

4. **Acts 2:22**, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man APPROVED OF GOD among you by MIRACLES and WONDERS and SIGNS, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."

5. **John 3:2**, Nicodemus said, "Master, we know that thou art a TEACHER COME FROM GOD, FOR no man can do these MIRACLES that thou doest, EXCEPT GOD BE WITH HIM."

6. **John 20:30-31**, "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."

Jesus claimed to be divine, (Jn 5:18) the Son of God, (John 10:35-37) the Messiah/Christ, (John 4:25-26) and the Savior of the world. (John 14:6) He confirmed these claims by the miracles He did.

His miracles were real. They were done under a variety of conditions and circumstances and for the most part were done publicly. Even His severest critics and opponents did not deny the miracles.

### **Why the Apostles Performed Miracles**

1. Matt 10:5-8, "These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. HEAL THE SICK, CLEANSE THE LEPERS, RAISE THE DEAD, CAST OUT DEVILS; freely ye have received, freely give." Jesus gave His apostles their power to perform miracles.

2. 2 Corinthians 12:11-12, "For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the SIGNS OF AN APOSTLE

were wrought among you in all patience, in SIGNS, and WONDERS, and MIGHTY DEEDS."

3. Acts 2:43, "And fear came upon every soul and many WONDERS and SIGNS were done by the apostles."

4. 1 Corinthians 2:5-6, The apostle Paul said, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT and of POWER: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

In order for men today to prove their teaching to be from God they turn and read it from the Bible. That proves it is from God. The apostles did not have the New Testament in written form. They preached the gospel by direct revelation from heaven. To prove the message was from God they performed miracles. Paul said his speech and preaching was in "demonstration of the Spirit and power." Thus God confirmed His word with miracles, signs, wonders and mighty deeds.

### **How the Early Disciples Performed Miracles**

Jesus was deity, the Father and the Holy Spirit worked with him in performing miracles. The apostles were bestowed miraculous power by the Lord when He appointed them to be His apostles. He fulfilled His promise of giving them power when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. But how did the early disciples receive their miraculous power? The New Testament tells us. Notice:

1. **Acts 6:5-6**, "And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and PHILIP, and Prochorus and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the APOSTLES; and when they had prayed, they LAID THEIR HANDS on THEM."

2. **Acts 8:6-7** "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which PHILIP spake, hearing, and seeing the MIRACLES which HE did. For UNCLEAN SPIRITS, crying with loud voice, CAME OUT of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with PALSIES, and that were LAME were HEALED."

3. **Acts 8:14-18**, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them PETER and JOHN: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then LAID THEY THEIR HANDS on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon SAW that through LAYING ON OF THE APOSTLES' HANDS the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money."

Philip had received his power to perform miracles from the laying on of the apostles' hands. In Samaria he preached and confirmed his message with miracles. But he did NOT have the power to pass it on to others. Only the apostles could lay hands on others and impart this power.

4. **Acts 19:6**, "And when, Paul had LAID HIS HANDS upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." How were these Spiritual gifts imparted to these brethren? Clearly by the laying on of the apostle Paul's hands.

5. **2 Timothy 1:6**, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the GIFT of God, which is in thee by the PUTTING ON of MY HANDS." Whatever Timothy's gift was, it was received by the laying on of the apostle Paul's hands.

6. **Roman 1:11**, The apostle Paul wrote, "For I long to see you, that I may IMPART unto you some SPIRITUAL GIFT, to the end ye may be ESTABLISHED.

Before the New Testament was written they had spiritual gifts, received by the laying on of the apostles' hands, to establish or confirm them in the faith, and thus protect them from the false doctrines of deceivers.

### **No Possible Way to Have Miracles Now!**

- 1) Jesus has ascended into heaven. He is not here to perform miracles.
- 2) The apostles all died without successors. The distribution of miraculous gifts by the laying on of their hands ceased.
- 4) No one alive on whom the apostles laid their hands. The fact that spiritual gifts were imparted only through the laying on of the apostles' hands proves there are none who perform miracles today. When the last person died upon whom an apostle had laid his hands, then (if not before then) miracles ceased.

Conclusion: There is no one alive today to whom the Father, Christ, or the Holy Spirit has given the power to perform miracles.