

## **MIRACLES TODAY?**

Certainly, we must confess that that is a relevant question today. It seems that every city has its "faith healer" claiming miracles. And the number who have been deceived into believing in their practice is not few by any means. Many have claimed to have been miraculously healed or have personally seen miracles performed.

It is this writer's contention that miracles, as defined in the Bible, do not occur today. This does not say that God does not work in a providential manner. He works behind the veil of natural law to accomplish His purposes. But God does not work through miracles today as He did in Bible times.

The very nature of true miracles is evidence that there are no such happenings today.

*Recognizable character of true miracles as proof.* The miracles of the Bible could be clearly recognized as such. Peter healed a lame beggar and there was no question in

the minds of the observers that he had been healed (Acts 3: 4:14, 16). None of the wonderful works of Jesus were performed without observers (Acts 26:26). And none denied His marvellous works. Faith healers today have observers, but these observers are different from those of the first century. None of those in the first century, even the unbelievers, ever denied the actual happening of a true miracle. They knew that a miracle had been performed (Acts 4:14-16). How different is this picture from the situation today. The audiences of modern-day healers are always full of those who are not convinced by the flimsy evidence of supposed miracles performed by the faith-healer. Those in the audience of Jesus never denied His works!

*Presence of supernatural in true miracles as proof:* The presence of the supernatural was clearly seen in the miracles of the Bible. Those who performed the miracles proclaimed the work of God in an uncontradictory manner (Jer. 28:9,15; Deut. 18:20; Gal. 1:6-9; Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3,4), and the miracles confirmed their word. The presence of the supernatural was shown in Jesus and was recognized by those who observed his works (John 4:19, 39-42; Luke 7:11-17).

Obviously, the presence of the supernatural is not evident in the so-called miracles of modern-day faith-healers. We must never confuse emotion and trickery with a miracle. A man may be convinced that he does not have a broken leg by the power of suggestion, but the moment he tries to walk on it he will be convinced that he really does. The fake miracles of modern-day healers do not compare with the miracles of the Bible.

*The miracle's relationship to natural laws as proof:* Miracles in the Bible were recognized as not being in accordance with the ordinary occurrence of natural laws. Jesus calmed a storm at sea (Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41). He brought sight to known blind persons (Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52). He walked on water (Mark 6:45-52; John 6:16-31). He changed water to wine (John 2:1-11). He multiplied loaves and fishes (John 6:4-14). Let those who claim to perform miracles today match the miracles of the Bible. Let them convince their audiences as thoroughly as those in the first century were convinced when they witnessed an actual miracle of God (Matt. 21:18-20).

### CHARACTERISTICS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF MIRACLES

The characteristics of the miracles of Jesus and how He performed them is evidence that modern-day healers do not perform such deeds. Jesus healed what would be to modern-day healers the unhealable (John 9; Luke 7:11,12). He healed completely and not partially as is so characteristic of the so-called healings of modern-day healers (Matt. 15:29-31; Mark 7:31-37). Jesus did not make a point of publicising His healings as do modern-day healers (Matt. 8:1-4; 9:27-31). And Jesus never failed to heal anyone He intended to heal. Such is not the case with modern-day healers. Multitudes go from their meetings unhealed. Also, Jesus did not require faith of all those He healed (Luke 7:11,12; John 5:2-13). Many modern-day healers do require that their subjects have faith. If they do not have enough faith, they cannot be healed.

There are no denials of Jesus' miracles found in the gospel records. None of those who were cured ever said that they really had not been cured. Such is not the case after the meetings of modern-day healings (cf. John 9:20-25). Many are on record stating that they were never really cured during a faith healing meeting even though they claimed to be at the time.

### PURPOSE OF MIRACLES HAS PASSED AWAY

The purpose for the open manifestation of miracles in the Bible was to confirm the work of God. In the first century, the purpose of miracles was to prove that the message preached by Christ and the first Christians was sent from God (Mark 16:17-20; Heb.

2:3,4; cf. 1 Cor. 4:19,20; 12:8-11; Eph. 4:11-16; Acts 20:23; 1 Thess. 1:5). And the word of God was firmly confirmed in the first century by the open manifestation of miracles (Heb. 2:3,4). Many of the miracles that confirmed the word were recorded to continually confirm the Word during all ages of history (John 20:30,31 Mark 16:20). We must conclude, therefore, that there is no need for an open manifestation of miracles today.

The purpose for an open manifestation of miracles has been accomplished. The word of God has been confirmed. Some miracles were recorded to confirm the Bible for all ages. Why would we need more miracles today to confirm the word of God when the Bible says that those miracles which are recorded are sufficient to produce faith and life (John 20:20,31)?

The revelation of the gospel was to be confirmed by an open manifestation of miracles in the first century (Mark 16:20; 1 Cor. 14:22; Heb. 2:3,4; Acts 14:3), but when the revelation ceased (and it did, Jude 3; 2 Peter 1:3), there would be no more need for the confirming miracles. We are receiving no more new revelations from God today. Therefore, we need no confirming miracles. The age of miracles has passed away.