

## **“I WANT TO SEE A MIRACLE!!”**

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Sometimes when talking to people about believing in God and His word, they will say, “I want to see a miracle!!” This may be a sincere request, or just a diversion. Either way, we need to be able to respond to such a statement in a way that would help such a person to understand the truth and obey it.

### **WHAT IS A MIRACLE?**

People can mean different things when they use the word “miracle.” Many times, it is used of some event that is unusual or extraordinary. It may be used of some strange and unexplained occurrence. Still others will use it to describe a wonderful event in their lives. A miracle in the Bible was an observable and real event that could only be attributed to a divine being because it was “supernatural,” that is, above and beyond the realm of natural law.

The Bible speaks of “miracles, signs, and wonders” (Acts 2:22; 2 Corinthians 12:12). These were terms to describe the works of God intended to confirm the divine message of God being revealed in the first century. Nicodemus told Jesus, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him” (John 3:2). Miracles confirmed the message of the apostles and prophets who revealed divine truth (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4).

A miracle, like the ones you read about in the Bible, was no simple magic trick. It was an undeniable act of God (even the enemies of truth admitted miracles – John 11:47; Acts 4:16). If God is working miracles today, then we should expect to see the dead raised, missing arms and legs restored, and the blind made to see. It is interesting to note that these miracles you read about in the Bible are not done by anyone today, and certainly not by those who claim to perform miracles.

### **WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF BIBLE MIRACLES?**

Miracles were not performed as some sort of sideshow in a circus. No one in the Bible set up a tent or rented a hall just to have a “Miracle Night” to raise money. Miracles in the Bible had a specific purpose: “And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and **confirming the word through the accompanying signs**” (Mark 16:20). The working of miracles was a means of giving divine confirmation to the preaching of the truth.

How would men and women of the first century know the difference between a teacher of truth and a false teacher? God approved of the true teacher by his working of miracles which the false teacher could not do. The people of Samaria, who had been fooled by Simon the sorcerer, recognized true divine power when Philip came preaching and doing real miracles (Acts 8:5-13).

Some today think that God has promised them the power of working miracles. This is based on a misapplication of Mark 16:17, “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” The simple fact is that this passage refers to those in the first century who went forth revealing the New Testament, but it was not intended to continue indefinitely, as we will see next.

### **DO WE NEED MODERN-DAY MIRACLES?**

The purpose of miracles was to confirm the word of God as it was being revealed. When it was fully revealed the purpose of miracles would be fulfilled and they would no longer be needed. This is the exact point of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 – “Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, **they will fail**; whether there are tongues, **they will cease**; whether there is knowledge, **it will vanish away**. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part **will be done away**” (vv. 8-10). The miracles and spiritual gifts of the first century were “in part,” and would be done away when the “perfect” came. Since the purpose of miracles and spiritual gifts was to confirm the divine message and aid the early church while the revelation of the New Testament was being given, then when the “perfect law of liberty” (James 1:25) was

completely revealed, those things in part (miracles, spiritual gifts) were done away. That is why we do not see, or need, the working of divine miracles today. When someone says they want to “see a miracle” today, they need to understand that this is not necessary for them to believe. We have all the truth revealed now!

#### **BIBLE MIRACLES STILL CONFIRM THE TRUTH**

The miracles in the Bible have not gone away – they are still recorded on the pages of God’s word. They continue to stand as a testimony to the divine source of the New Testament: “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:30-31). If someone says, “I want to see a miracle!!” open your Bible and show him one. If he is honest, he will then believe the truth revealed therein.