

Did all Christians in the New Testament perform miracles? **No.** Acts 5:12 says, “... *by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people*” In Acts 6:6, the apostles “laid their hands on” certain chosen ones, so that they were able to do miracles. Those special gifts were also given to others, as the church grew and had need of inspired teachers and leaders, proving themselves and their message by the signs that they did.

Miracles, according to Paul, in 1 Corinthians 14:22, were for the **unbelievers**. They were not performed simply to make people well. Paul had a “thorn in the flesh” (2 Corinthians 12:7-9), but he was not miraculously healed. Timothy was told to take a little wine as medicine for his stomach’s sake and his many sicknesses (1 Timothy 5:23). Epaphroditus was so sick he almost died, yet he was not healed by a miracle (Philippians 2:25-27).

Miracles Ceased

Miracles were signs to confirm the new message — the law of Christ — and the messengers — the apostles, and the teachers on whom they laid their hands (Acts 8:14-18). There is no record that anyone else had the power to perform miracles. Therefore, with the death of the apostles and those to whom they gave the spe-

cial gifts, the “miraculous age” ceased. Why? Because, during that time the New Testament was being completed.

In 1 Corinthians 13:8-13, Paul said that the miraculous gifts were only “in part” (not given to everyone, but to select Christians; 1 Corinthians 12:31). He said that there was a “more excellent way” and that miracles would cease when “*that which is perfect has come.*” “That” was a “thing” — not Christ, a Person. The only perfect “thing” in this world is God’s Word.

Today, we don’t have to wonder about a “sign” being real, or if a doctrine or a messenger is authentic. Whatever is taught or claimed can be compared to God’s revealed message. Revelation 22:18,19 warns that we are not to add to what has been written. There are no miracles today, because there is no new messenger and no new message from God.

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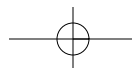
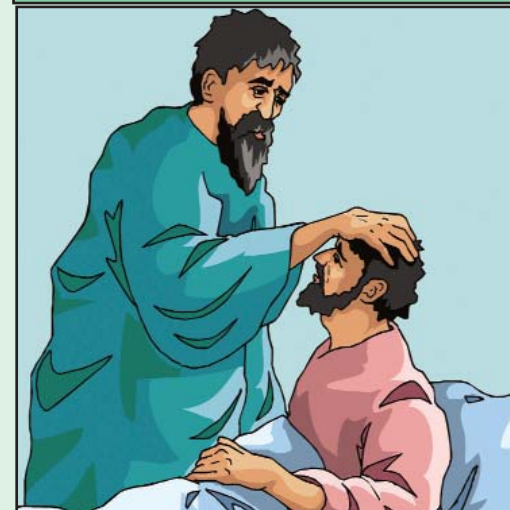
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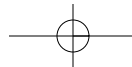
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Are Miracles Being Performed Today?

J.C. Choate





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Many claims are made in the world today of God doing great and wondrous things in peoples' lives. In fact, it is not only in the denominational world that such claims are made, but those who are of pagan religions say that miracles are performed by their gods.

Who are we to believe? *What* are we to believe? The claims are presented as factual, and it is impossible for us to go and actually check them out for ourselves. Is God really working miraculously through people of all kinds of beliefs?

How has God worked among humans in the past? What does His Word say about how He works today?

When has God used miracles, and for what purpose?

The entire creation was done through God's miraculous power. After the fall of man, the newly affected "laws of nature" were set in motion (Genesis 3; Romans 8:20,21) Except when divine intervention was necessary, God has allowed the laws He established to govern the day-to-day operation of the universe.

Miracles

But in the Scriptures, we do read of miracles being performed. **When** did this happen, and **for what purpose?**

Did Adam perform miracles? **We don't read of any.**

Did Noah perform miracles? **No.** Instead, he spent 100 years building the ark and gathering the food in preparation for the flood.

Did Job perform miracles? **No.** He lost everything except his own life, but he did no miracle, even though God attested to his righteousness.

Did Abraham perform miracles? **No.** He lived a difficult life, obeying God's command to go out to the land the Lord would show him, but we don't read of miracles he performed.

Did Moses perform miracles? **Yes. Moses was a new messenger with a new message.** Exodus 4:1-9 says that as their deliverer, and the spokesman for the new law God was giving the Israelites, Moses was empowered to do "wonders and signs" so that the people and their enemies would know that the Lord was working through him (Deuteronomy 34:10-12).

During the Old Testament period, besides the initial law given through Moses, there were many prophets to whom God spoke directly.

Some of them performed miracles, and some did not. From the time of Malachi, God was silent, leaving only the promise of the coming Messiah to undergird the nation of Israel.

Miracles in the New Testament

Did John the baptizer perform miracles? **There is no record of such.**

Did Jesus perform miracles? **Yes.** The prophecy had been that the Messiah would heal the sick, give sight to the blind, make the lame to walk: "... *your God ...will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing...*" (Isaiah 35:4-6) Jesus fulfilled the prophecies, proving by His miracles that He was the promised Messiah.

Did the apostles perform miracles? **Yes.** Again, miraculous power was given as evidence that they spoke by the commission and authority of God: "*And he [Jesus] sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick...*" (Luke 9:2) After Jesus' resurrection, He told the apostles to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. "*And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed*" (Mark 16:20).

