

## ***Do Miracles Occur Every Day?***

What does the Bible teach regarding miracles? Is it true, as some claim, that miracles are happening every day?

In reality, even during Bible times, miracles did not occur "every day." Miraculous activities for the most part were confined to certain periods of Biblical history. These included the miracles of the creation week. Then when Israel was in Egyptian bondage, God sent the ten plagues, caused Israel to cross the Red Sea on dry land, fed them with manna, and on occasion also miraculously gave them water. Later, the ministries of the prophets Elijah and Elisha were characterized by numerous miracles.

The next "cluster" of miracles was during the ministry of Christ, and finally, during the establishment and spread of the church (Acts). Obviously then, miracles were not "evenly distributed" over the centuries of Biblical history, but rather were used by God only at certain times, to meet unique needs, and to accomplish specific purposes.

Among the many miracles Jesus performed we read of His healing the man with an amputated ear by simply touching him (Luke 22:50-51). Honestly, do you see that every day, or any day? When there was a great tempest in the sea of Galilee, Jesus "rebuked the waves and the sea and there was a great calm" (Matthew 8:23-26). On another occasion, on that same sea, Jesus came unto His disciples walking on the water (Matthew 14:26). Jesus miraculously fed 5,000 men plus women and children with five loaves and two fish (Matthew 15:32-39). There are three recorded occasions where Jesus raised the dead. These include the only son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17). Jarius' daughter (Matthew 9:18-26) and Lazarus (John 11).

These are but a few, a very few of the miracles Jesus did. The purpose of Jesus' miracles is stated in John 2:30-31: "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." That purpose has been accomplished.

Further, Mark gives us insight into the purpose of the miraculous when he writes, "And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs" (Mark 16:20). Reference is made to the salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord, "and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His will" (Hebrews 2:3,4).

The purpose of the miraculous then was to reveal and to confirm the word of God. There was a time limitation on the miraculous. Gifts such as tongues, prophecy and knowledge (miraculous) would cease (1 Corinthians 13:8-10) with the completion of the revelation. God's power has not ceased. His presence and glory are evident all around us. We are abundantly blessed by Him (Acts 14:17; James 1:17). He hears and answers prayer (James 5:16). When the revelation of truth was completed, and had been fully confirmed, the miraculous ceased, having accomplished its purpose.

***- by Leon Mauldin***

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## ***Are You Faithful?***

It was a sunny Saturday morning. James stepped outside to get his morning paper. Only a moment later James returned with a disgusted look on his face. No paper! James said, "I'm gonna have to get me a new paper boy. He's just not faithful." The problem was that James' paperboy would deliver about 1 out of every 3 days. Fred was in a hurry to get to work, but it happened again. His car wouldn't start. He had hoped this used second vehicle would be just what he needed, but about 1 out of every 3 turns of the ignition, the car wouldn't start. Fred told his wife, "I'm gonna have to trade that car in. I just need one that's more faithful."

Are James and Fred right to call the paperboy and the car unfaithful? Would you be pleased with a paperboy who delivered 1 day out of 3? Would you be pleased with a car that only started 2 out of 3 times? Certainly not. The apostle Paul was chosen by God to carry the gospel because God counted him faithful. "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because he

counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim. 1:12). Paul was trustworthy. God could count on him when He needed him. Paul would never fail in his duty to God.

What about me and my attendance to the assemblies of God's people? My brethren are counting on me to be there. I need to consider the impact of my absence upon them. My presence helps to stir up my brothers and sisters to love and good works. Furthermore, I am drawing near to God and holding fast to my faith (Heb. 10:23-25). Am I faithful if I hit one out of every 3 services? Am I faithful if I hit 2 out of 3? Does God consider me reliable and trustworthy? Is he pleased with such performance? It's something to think about, isn't it? If I wouldn't call the paperboy faithful and the used car faithful then why do I consider myself faithful in my service to God if my performance is no better? All of us need to realize our obligations to God and to our brethren regarding our attendance. We grow weaker through our absence.

**- by Jeff May**

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## ***Dealing with Babes***

He rudely gulps down his food, pausing only long enough for a conspicuous burp along the way. In his haste some of his dinner dribbles down his chin and onto his already soiled shirt. When he is finished, he offers no thanks, and without considering the concerns or needs of others he settles down for a nap. When he wakes, chances are he will begin immediately to make demands on those around him for some additional attention or some service to insure his own comfort.

How can we tolerate such a thoughtless and ungrateful individual? Easily - he is a baby!!! We expect this type of conduct from infants - it's normal. But slowly, gradually, we teach them. In time they learn to think of others, to express appreciation, to offer help. If this progress does not happen, we begin to look for reasons why. Is there some failure in the child's learning ability; some lack in parenting skills? We must find the answer.

Consider the spiritual parallel: a particular Christian frequently sins. He manifests a real lack of Bible knowledge. He often offends his brethren by words and deeds that are not befitting of a child of God. He is truly spiritually weak. How can we tolerate such a person? Because he is a babe in Christ! He has not matured in his spiritual life.

But this situation can not go on indefinitely. He must be taught, and in time he must more fully learn his duty to God, his brethren, and all men. He grows; and as he does he sins less frequently. If this progress does not happen we ought to be looking for reasons why. What is lacking? Is there something wrong with his personal commitment? Are we failing him in the matter of teaching and encouraging him? We must find the answer! That's what you do when 'babes' don't grow.

**- by Greg Gwin**