

## ***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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## ***If Only...***

If only my boss wouldn't be so rude and domineering, I would be more cooperative at work. "Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable" (1 Pet. 2:18).

If only my husband weren't so lazy and self-centered, if only he would learn to control his temper better, I would live with him. "...wives, be submissive to your husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior" (1 Pet. 3:1-2).

If only the brethren were friendlier and that preacher not so dry, I would go to church more often. "...let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our

own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another..." (Heb. 10:24-25).

If only I had more income and less bills, I would give a lot more. "...in the churches of Macedonia...in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality" (2 Cor. 8:1-2).

If only my family would be more supportive, I would become a Christian. "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me..." (Mt. 10:37).

Do you notice that what God expects of us, He expects regardless of our particular circumstances? Instead of excusing our-selves due to adverse conditions, let us commit ourselves to our Creator and Benefactor. If only we would be like Jesus, who said, "...I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (Jn. 5:30). He not only said it, He lived it - even to the point of death.

**- by Frank Himmel**

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## **Questioning the Resurrection**

We were recently asked to respond to this person who questions the eyewitness testimony of Jesus' resurrection:

*"According to Matthew 27:51-53, at the moment Jesus died there was an earthquake that opened tombs and many people were raised from the dead . . . they went into Jerusalem and were seen by many people. Here Matthew gets too dramatic for his own good. If many people came back to life and were seen by many people, it must have created quite a stir (even if the corpses were in pretty good shape!). Yet Matthew seems to be the only person aware of this happening - historians of that time certainly know nothing of it - neither do the other gospel writers."*

Here's our response:

This is a subjective argument. In other words, YOU think that historians would have mentioned it in their writings, and the fact that YOU can't find any who did indicates that it is a false narrative. But, how do you know for certain that none did? Have you read everything that was ever written from that era? Wouldn't it be possible that some did write about it but their accounts have been lost over time? The reality is that we have very few secular histories of that specific time - few were written and even fewer have survived to our day. The vast majority of historical events recorded in the Bible have no parallel account in secular history, but that is not proof that they didn't happen.

As to the fact that only Matthew mentioned the opened tombs: Again, this is not proof that it didn't happen. John acknowledges that many things happened in the life of Jesus (including many miraculous things) that were not recorded in his gospel record (John 20:30,31).

**- by Greg Gwin**