

Miracles
(Hebrews 2:1-4)

Introduction:

1. These passages warn us against neglecting the great salvation that:
 - a. was first spoken by the Lord
 - b. was confirmed by those who heard Him [the apostles].
2. While we must pay close attention to this warning, in our lesson we are concentrating on the "miracles" mentioned in vs.4.
3. Let us begin by considering . . .

Discussion:

I. THE PURPOSE OF MIRACLES

- A. By performing miracles, Jesus showed that His teaching had God's approval (John 3:2).
- B. (Hebrews 2:4) God bore the apostles witness with signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 1. As the apostles taught what Jesus had taught them, they also performed miracles.
 2. By performing miracles, the apostles showed that their teaching had God's approval.
- C. (Mark 16:15-18) When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He said that the apostles would perform miracles.
 1. (Mark 16:19-20) As the apostles performed miracles, the Lord was working with them and "*confirming the word*" that they taught.
 2. This is precisely what is taught in Hebrews 2:3-4.
- D. Occasions when the apostles performed miracles:
 1. (Acts 2:4) They spoke in tongues [reaction - vs.5-11].
 2. (Acts 3) Peter healed a man born lame [reaction - vs.9-11].
- E. By performing miracles, Jesus and the apostles showed that their teaching had God's approval.

II. IN ADDITION TO THE APOSTLES, OTHERS WERE ABLE TO PERFORM MIRACLES

- A. The apostles could pass on the ability to perform miracles to others by the laying on of their hands.
 1. (Acts 6:6) The apostles laid their hands on the 7 men who served the Jerusalem church.
 - a. (vs.8) Stephen was able to perform miracles.
 - b. (Acts 8:5-7) Philip also performed miracles.
 2. Only the apostles could pass on the ability to perform miracles.
 - a. (Acts 8:14-17) Peter and John laid hands on converts in Samaria.
 - b. (Acts 19:5-6) Paul laid hands on some men in Ephesus.
- B. We have seen that Jesus performed miracles, the apostles performed miracles, and Christians who received the laying on of the apostles' hands could perform miracles.

III. DO MIRACLES EXIST TODAY?

- A. Before we answer this question from the Scriptures, let us be sure that we know what a "miracle" is [a supernatural occurrence; a sign which showed that the person performing it came from God and that what he said came from God].
 1. "Miracle" is often used to refer to something that is amazing or wonderful.
 2. Examples:
 - a. "The birth of a baby" [amazing and wonderful, but a true miracle occurred when God made Adam and Eve and when Jesus was born]
 - b. "Someone spared in an accident" [amazing and wonderful, but a true miracle would be bringing back to life someone else who died in the same accident]
 3. Amazing things that occur are not miracles.
 4. Great things that we are not able to easily understand are not miracles.
 5. True miracles are supernatural occurrences:
 - a. parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14)
 - b. the sun standing still (Joshua 10)

- c. casting out demons
- d. feeding great crowds with a small amount of food
- e. speaking in new tongues [languages]
- f. being bitten by poisonous snakes and suffering no harm
- g. drinking poison without getting sick
- h. healing sick people without any medical means.

6. Many things are called miracles that really are not miracles.

- B. Are there any apostles alive today or any Christians who received the laying on of the apostles' hands?
- C. Is there any need for miracles today? [God's word has been revealed, confirmed, and recorded - 2 Peter 1:3]
- D. The Bible even says that miracles would come to an end (1 Corinthians 13:8).
 - 1. When? (vs.10 - "when that which is perfect is come").
 - 2. (James 1:25) The New Testament of Christ is the "perfect law of liberty" that has come.
- E. Miracles existed at one time; however, they ended long ago.

Conclusion:

- 1. When we say that God does not work miraculously today, we do not mean that He does not work.
- 2. He works providentially (Romans 8:28).
- 3. If we claim that God works miraculously today, we are putting ourselves in a difficult position.
 - a. If God works miraculously today, His Word has not been confirmed.
 - b. If God works miraculously today, that which is perfect has not come.
- 4. Let us speak where the Bible speaks and call Bible things by Bible names.
- 5. Have you received the great salvation mentioned in Hebrews 2:3?