

DO MODERN-DAY SIGNS AND MIRACLES PROVE THAT SOMETHING IS FROM GOD?

When people perform signs and miracles, does it prove that God is doing something?
Does it prove that the message (or agenda) that is being promoted comes from God?

The following verses are intended ONLY to demonstrate that the mere presence of miracles is NOT sufficient proof that something has come from God. *It does NOT deal with the question of whether or not genuine miracles exist at the present time.*

We will start with the words of Jesus himself. He warns against false prophets. One of the things these false prophets will do is perform miraculous, "mighty works." Yet the *true* fruit of a changed heart will be absent. The day is coming in which we will all stand before God and give account of our lives to him. And on that day, these miracle workers will be called workers of iniquity.

Matthew 7:15-27

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits you will know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit, but the corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is cut down, and cast into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits you will know them.

Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name do many mighty works?" Then will I declare unto them, "I never knew you. Depart from me, you who work iniquity."

Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine, and does them, will be like a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house. It did not fall, for its foundation was built on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house. It fell, and great was its fall.

What is the significance of this passage? It shows that even "workers of iniquity" can perform miraculous works of power. Interestingly, the end of the passage (last paragraph) contrasts these evil people with those who pay attention to the words of Jesus and put them into practice!

Near the end of Jesus' ministry, he is still warning about false miracle-workers. And he warns that as the end of the age approaches, the number of false miracle-workers will greatly increase. Some of the miracles will look so "genuine" that even people who are truly saved (the "elect") would *almost* - but not quite - be deceived by them. We are warned to be on our guard against these evil people.

Matthew 24:24-25

False Christs and false prophets will arise. They will show great signs and wonders, to lead astray, if it were possible, even the elect. Look, I have told you beforehand.

Mark 13:22-23

False Christs and false prophets will arise. They will show signs and wonders, to lead astray, if it were possible, the elect. But be alert. Look, I have told you all these things beforehand.

The apostle Paul describes the coming of the "lawless one" - in other passages known as the "Antichrist." This person will display great power (miracles), with all kinds of signs and wonders. Everyone who refuses to place his trust in the Bible will accept these things as genuine. God himself will allow those who have willingly rejected him to be deceived, since they have refused to have a love for the truth and be saved. Note, however, that this group of deceived people stands in direct contrast with those who accept the truth (last paragraph). [Note also that it is *because of* the people's rejection of the truth, that he lets them experience the fruits of their actions. "Do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked. Whatever a man sows, that will he also reap." Galatians 6:7]

2 Thessalonians 2:7-15

The mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but there is one who now restrains it, until he is taken out of the way. Then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of his mouth, and bring him to an end by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one is in accordance with the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all kinds of evil deception for them that perish. They perish because they refused to love the truth, that they might be saved. For this reason, God sends them a deceiving influence, so that all will be judged, who rejected the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, dearly loved by the Lord. For God chose you from the beginning for salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers, stand fast, and hold to the teachings which you were taught, whether by word of mouth, or by our letter.

The following three passages are prophetic. They describe the end times, in which the Antichrist (figuratively called "the beast") and the "False Prophet" (a religious leader who will be respected worldwide... and will probably appear to be "Christian") will perform many miracles and signs. The miracles and signs may be real, but their source will be demonic. It is important to note that these two leaders will look "good" to the average person (who has rejected the warnings of the Bible). They may even appear to be "Christian." [The devil himself doesn't go around wearing horns and a forked tail... he looks respectable... like an "angel of light." 2 Corinthians 11:14]

Revelation 13:11-18

I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke like a dragon. He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed. He does great signs, even making fire to come down out of heaven to the earth, in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by the signs he was given power to do in the sight of the beast; telling those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast who had been wounded by the sword and lived. Power was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast would both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. He causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the slave, to be given a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead; so that no man could buy or sell, unless he that had the mark - the name of the beast or the number of his name.

Here is wisdom. He who has understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man. His number is six hundred and sixty and six.

Revelation 16:12-14, 16

The sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates. The water in it was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the east. I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, like frogs. They are spirits of demons, working signs. They go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. ... They gathered them together to the place which is called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

Revelation 19:19-21

I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered to make war against him [Jesus Christ] who sat on the horse, and against his army. The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his sight, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. They were cast alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword of him who sat upon the horse, even the sword which came forth out of his mouth. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

The above verses do not prove that miracles from God *don't* exist. Rather, they prove that counterfeit miracles *do* exist. We must remember, however, that miracles are not the basis of our faith. Our foundation is the Word that God has spoken, rather than some spine-tingling spectacular happening that can be readily counterfeited by the enemy who wants to destroy us.

The air was filled with excitement. A whole nation was witnessing the most spectacular miracles ever to exist. People would travel for days to see the miracles happen... and perhaps even experience miracles performed upon themselves!

What more could we want? Surely this would change the people! Surely this would convert them to the ways of truth! And look! Everywhere people were saying great things about the miracle worker... and about God himself! Surely a great revival was happening before our very eyes!

A short time later, these same people looked at the miracle worker and shouted, "Crucify him!"

We need changed hearts, not miracles.