

Can the Devil perform Miracles?

by Bruce Woolard

There are some well-meaning Bible teachers who believe only God can perform miracles. All healings they claim are of God. While it is true that God has raised up brilliant medical practioners and bio-scientist, by which remedies are dispensed, when it comes to supernatural occurrences of miracles, only God, it is asserted, is the Healer.

What does the Bible say? The Exodus account of Pharoah's sorcerers ability, is a case in point refer Exodus 7:1-13. The sorcerers performed 3 wonders to replicate the miracles of Moses.

In **Matthew 7:21-23** *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"*

These verses are a sober reminder that not all who purport to be performing miracles in Jesus name are saved or God sent. In the discourse Jesus doesn't dispute their claims, but reveals that their works were iniquitous because of it's deception and it's evil root.

Signs and Wonders

Only the ill informed think that all miracles are God's work. Further Jesus warned of false Christ's (Messiah's) who will rise to deceive many through their ability to perform miracles and signs and wonders—**Matthew 24:24** *"For false Christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."*

So if those who say only God can heal may endorse these miracles as God's approval of these false workers and thereby, be deceived.

Further the anti-Christ will also possess power to deceive those who have no interest in the truth—**2 Thessalonians 2:9** *"The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders."*

Mystery of Iniquity

Why does God allow Satan to spread such confusion the above verse answers the question. Because they did not love the truth—**2 Thessalonians 2:7** *"For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way."*

Can the devil perform miracles / Page 2.....

Miracle Manifestations

There are multitudes who claim that they have been healed by spiritists, faith healers, exorcists, sangomas, witch doctors or positive thought techniques.

1 Timothy 4:1 anticipated these claims.

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.”

Naivate of Supernatural Forces

It's naïve to think that if a healing or miracle occurs it must be of God. This is a deceptive lie that has caused many to fall away from Biblical Christianity only to become victims of experiential movements.

While Satan is not omnipotent, like God, he indeed has power to work wonders so as to deceive.

Put on the Armour of God

If the believer could not be deceived the Scriptures would not have to encourage us to be equipped against such deception.

Ephesians 6:11-12 *“Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*

Angel of Light

We are told that the devil masquerades as an angel of enlightenment.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 *“ I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia. Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.”*

Job's Encounter

God permits evil, He does not commit evil. The story of Job indicates that God permitted Satan to inflict Job—**Job 2:4-9** *“So Satan answered the Lord and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!” And the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life.” So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes. Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!”*

Power to withdraw Sickness

If the devil inflicts people with sickness and disease, he also has the power to withdraw it to deceive. Thus a miracle from God is claimed.

Placebo and Psychosomatic Healings

The positive effects of placebo treatment of psychosomatic conditions is well documented. The power of the mind and auto-suggestion therapy may also remedy some ills. This is a natural phenomenon prevalent in many non-Christian and faith groups.

Organic Healings

Having an organ or leg grow back after surgical removal or amputation is unheard of yet there are some “snake oil charlatans” who claim such happenings. Too often the person claiming to have been healed exaggerates and even fabricates a healing because it catapults them into a category of spirituality. Their hearers repeat the claims and so such healing manifestations are propagated.

Does God Heal Today

The prerogative to heal is God's. This is referred to as Divine healing. God is not limited. What is being questioned in light of Scripture is the modern claim of faith healing and the ministry of healing. Sign gifts dissipated at the close of the inspired Scriptures.

It is human for anyone inflicted with illness or disease to ask, “Why me?”

What about the following verses:

Matthew 10:7-8 *“As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give .” The prophesied Kingdom was at hand.*

Matthew 11:2-5 *“When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.” The sign giver to John testified of Jesus as Messiah.*

He gave delegated authority to the apostles to heal in order to authenticate His resurrection. The Kingdom on Earth necessitated a cleansing of demonic powers and an eradication of disease. The fact is that the Kingdom on Earth Programme was postponed because Israel, as a nation, failed to repent:—

Acts 3:19-21 *“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. “*

Did Israel repent? No—so the Kingdom on earth was suspended.

God then revealed His secret plan, namely Christianity through the Apostle Paul.

Ephesians 3:1-4 *“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentile. Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ.”*

Galatians 2:8-9 *“(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. “*

When God’s Kingdom on Earth is restored, healing will be a norm. Now is the church age, not the Kingdom age.

NOTE: When Paul faced infirmity he was not healed. Why didn't Paul claim his healing?

2 Corinthians 12:7-12 *"..or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the "super-apostles," even though I am nothing. I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles."*

If the power to heal was still operative in the latter years of Paul's apostleship, why did he not heal his fellow companions.

What about Epaphroditus—see **Philippians 2:25-27** *"But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. "*

Why was Trophimus left sick? **2 Timothy 4:20** *"Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus."* Why didn't the apostle heal Trophimus? Because the sign gifts were in abeyance.

What about Timothy? **1 Timothy 5:22-23** *"Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure. No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities."*

Can God heal? Definitely! Does He have to heal today? No.

The sign gifts have ceased, however it's not faith healing we need, it's Divine healing.

The healing of the soul and spirit first, then the promise of immortality in the resurrection when we receive a new body—**1 Corinthians 15:19-22** *" If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive."*

As Paul prayed three times for healing then left the results to God. So should we.

"Beware, be vigilant, be discerning, the devil is on the prowl and will use lying signs and wonders to deceive" **2 Thessalonians 2:11.**