

MEANING BEHIND THE APOSTLES' MIRACLES

Last week we looked at the meaning behind Jesus' miracles and learned that while Jesus had compassion on His people, the main reason behind His miracles were to confirm His role as the Son of God with authority.

Today we'll consider others who had miraculous abilities. I hope that we'll see they shared the same principle (to confirm the speaker), but that they are no longer required today. Again, if you understand their meaning you'll understand why we don't see them anymore.

Of course, our minds automatically go to His 12 apostles, but let's not forget another group we many times overlook - the 70/72 He sent out. This is a brief look, but worth taking note of.

The 70/72:

Luke 10:1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of Him, two by two, into every town and place **where He Himself was about to go**.

Luke 10:9 "Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The **kingdom of God has come** near to you.'"

Luke 10:17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us **in Your name!**"

- **Exodus 24:1** Then He said to Moses, "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar."

- **Numbers 11:16** Then the Lord said to Moses, "Gather for Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you."

- Interesting that in **Exodus 24:1; Numbers 11:16** seventy were chosen. The first time was before the Law was given and a group of men including 70 elders of Israel were instructed to worship from afar before Moses went up the mountain. The second time to help Moses with the people and their complaints. God's spirit was given to them.

The Apostles:

Same thing with the apostles. Take note of:

Matthew 10:1-8 And He called to Him His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him. These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay."

- Along with this Kingdom message was one of repentance (**Mark 6:12**).

Their mission:

Mark 16:14-20 Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who

saw him after he had risen. And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.

Acts 1:8; 2:33-41; Acts 14:3;

Ephesians 4:11-14 And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Their power:

Luke 3:15-17 As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but He who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, to clear His threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

John 15:26-27 "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness about Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

John 16:13 "When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come."

Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-4, 43 We see that the Holy Spirit baptism was promised to the Apostles alone.

Acts 3:6-7; 5:12-16 The only ones performing miracles were the apostles. So, whatever you believe the gift of the Holy Spirit to be in Acts 2:38, it wasn't miraculous powers to everyone or even the majority. The only ones performing miracles are the apostles at this point.

Acts 19:11-20 You'll see the extent of their power again and authority. Demons recognized them.

Their uniqueness:

Acts 6:6-8 The apostles laid their hands of a few men. Not they're performing miracles.

Acts 8:4-8, 14-19 However, these men couldn't pass on the ability.

2 Corinthians 12:12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.

The end:

1 Corinthians 13:8-13 Paul says they will pass away. Context is dealing with knowledge based gifts. The church is not lacking what she needs. She is not in a state of infancy.

- **James 1:25** But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

We have the word of God. Even when the Spirit was directly talking to men along with angles, man had a responsibility. To hear and to listen to God's word - **Acts 8:26-40**