

Israel's Signs

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With the setting aside of Israel, God turned from His “sign” program, and brought in the present dispensation of grace, which is a “signless” dispensation.

As long as the message was being proclaimed to Israel as a nation, signs were in evidence, “*For the Jews require a sign*” (I Corinthians 1:22). They required a sign because their Old Testament Scriptures had foretold the fact that when Messiah came and the kingdom was established, signs, visions, etc., would be the order of the day. See Isaiah 35:5-6 and Joel 2:28-31. The miracles of Christ were thus His credentials to *Israel*, as stated by Peter on the day of Pentecost: “*Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know*” (Acts 2:22).

During the Book of Acts the Jew is being given another opportunity to repent and receive the blessing of God. It is true that there is a gradual turning away from Israel, the apostle of the circumcision giving place to the apostle of the Gentiles, yet during all this period, and in every place, the Jew is still accorded a priority in the offer of blessing. Paul said, “*It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you*” (Acts 13:46), and it is not until, in every place from Jerusalem to Rome, that the blessing had been despised and rejected by the Jew, that solemn words of Acts 28:28 are spoken to that once highly favored nation: “*Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.*”

During the time that Israel was *first*, miracles, signs, healings and visions were the common order of things. ... However, after the setting aside of Israel, and the solemn pronouncement of Acts 28:28, the Scriptures will be searched in vain to find the record of even one such miracle.

The following, which is so clearly stated, is from the pen of Sir Robert Anderson:

“The purpose of the miracles was to accredit the Messiah to Israel, and not, as generally supposed, to accredit Christianity to the heathen, and therefore, as Scripture plainly indicates, they continued so long as the testimony was addressed to the Jew, but ceased when, the Jew being set aside, the Gospel went out to the Gentile world.”

Mr. Anderson also wrote:

“We shall be prepared to find that so long as the kingdom was being preached to the Jews, miracles abounded, but that when the gospel appealed to the heathen world, miracles lost their prominence, and soon entirely ceased.”

There were three periods in Israel’s history which were characterized by miracles; the days of Moses and Joshua, the days of Elijah and Elisha, and the days of Christ and the apostles. Each one of these periods was also characterized by great apostasy on the part of God’s people. The next time that miracles are in evidence will be during the most apostate days of all, when the man of sin shall be revealed, “*Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders*” (II Thessalonians 2:9) ...

During this present age “*the just shall live by faith*” (Galatians 3:11). “*For we walk by faith, not by sight*” (II Corinthians 5:7). We are not to look for signs, but to walk by faith alone in the written Word of God. The Lord rebuked those of His day, and said, “*Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe*” (John 4:48). Later on He said, “*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*” (John 20:29).

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