**The Apostolic Signs and Wonders**

|  |
| --- |
| In Mark 16:17-18, Jesus said to the Apostles, *"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."*  Because of their inability and refusal to *rightly divide the word of truth* (II Tim. 2:15), the Charismatics operate under the false assumption that these signs are still in effect today and that it is THEIR duty to fulfill them. This is why we have charlatans like Oral Roberts and Jim Baker living in mansions and begging people for money.  In their haste to make a dollar, the Charismatics consistently ignore the fact that Jesus said these were *SIGNS*, and that I Corinthians 1:22 tells us that *SIGNS* are for the *JEWS*. Israel *began* with signs (Rom. 4:11; Exo. 4:8 ,9, 17, 23, 28, 30; 7:3; 8:23; 10:1-2; 13:9; 31:13, 17; Deu. 4:34; 6:22), *lived by signs* (Deu. 11:18; Jos. 4:6; I Sam. 10:7; II Kgs. 19:29; Isa. 7:14; 38:7, 22; Eze. 4:3; 20:12, 20), and *demanded signs from Christ* (Mat. 12:38; 24:3). There is more scripture to support the doctrine of signs being for Israel than there is to support the Virgin Birth and the Inspiration of Scripture combined! Anyone who ignores this truth is absolutely unqualified to teach, preach, or write anything about the Apostolic Signs. If you'll take a look at Hebrews 2:3-4 you will see that the signs were used to *CONFIRM* the word of God, and you will also see that the signs are spoken of in the *PAST TENSE.*They are also spoken of in the past tense in II Corinthians 12:12. Those who insist that we should practice the signs today *because they were practiced throughout the New Testament* haven't been reading (or believing) their Bible. They were not practiced throughout the New Testament. In fact, Paul left Trophimus *SICK* at Miletum (II Tim. 4:20); he gave Timothy medical advice instead of healing him (I Tim. 5:23), and he had infirmities of his own from which he could not be healed (II Cor. 11:30; 12:5-10). Now why all this sickness if the Apostolic Signs were still in effect? Answer: *They WEREN'T still in effect, because they were only needed in the early ministry of the Apostles for the purpose of confirming the truth to Israel.*  Now we firmly believe that God can still work miracles and heal anyone He chooses, and we believe that the prayers of God's people can move Him to work miracles, but let's not confuse answered prayers with Apostolic Signs, because there's a vast difference. We believe in healing; we just don't believe in *healers.*  You say, "Well what about speaking in unknown tongues through the Holy Ghost? Do you deny that people today speak in unknown tongues?" No, of course not. People have spoken in unknown tongues for thousands of years. Ever read Genesis 11? Was that an outpouring of the Holy Ghost? When the Church of Satan speaks in unknown tongues (which they do), is that a work of the Holy Ghost? When a psychologist can have you blubbering in unknown tongues within fifteen minutes, is that an outpouring of the Holy Ghost? You see, too many people have the idea that if something is highly abnormal or miraculous that it MUST be of God. The coming Antichrist will have a field day with such feeble minded people, because HE will work such *"signs and lying wonders"* that the entire world will follow after him (II Ths. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:13-14).  Nowhere in the NewTestament did God command anyone to speak with *unknown* tongues. We do read about *"new* *tongues"* (Mar. 16:17), *"other tongues"* (Acts 2:4) and *"divers kinds of tongues"* (I Cor. 12:10), but these are all FOREIGN LANGUAGES, not senseless gibberish! There are no unknown tongues in Acts 2, and there is no baptism of the Holy Ghost in I Corinthians 14. Instead of rightly dividing the word of truth, the careless Charismatics wrest the scriptures to their own destruction by ignoring the set divisions and doctrines that the Holy Spirit has inspired in the scriptures. The Apostolic Signs are not for today, because they were only for confirming the word of God to the unbelieving Jews in the first century. The Bible warns us to beware of anyone who professes to practice these signs today (II Cor. 11:13-15; Mat. 7:15; 24:11; I Tim. 4:1-2), and the Lord commends the church at Ephesus for trying out some professing apostles and finding them to be LIARS (Rev. 2:2).  Friend, don't allow yourself to be led astray by these wolves in sheep clothing. If you've never received Jesus Christ as your Saviour, we urge you to do so right now. Turn from your sins and trust Christ alone to save you.  Isaiah 1:18 says, *"Come now, let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."* All men are sinners and need to be cleansed from sin (Rom. 3:23), and that cleansing can only come through the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:5; Col. 1:14).  Consider Ephesians 2:8-9: *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."* Your only way to Heaven is through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Repent of your sins (Luke 13:3) and trust Jesus Christ alone. Claim His promises and trust Him to save you while there's still time. Romans 10:13 says, *"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."* Romans 10:9 says, *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."* Why not turn to Him right now? Tomorrow could be too late. |

Copyright © 1997 [James L. Melton](mailto:MeltonLion@aol.com)