MIRACLES

A miracle is a beneficial event brought about through divine power that mortals do not understand and of themselves cannot duplicate. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe in the reality of miracles as a consequence of their belief in the existence of God and of his power and goodness.

Just as a shepherd tends his flocks, watches over them, and uses his power to help them, so Jesus Christ used his power and knowledge to help others when he was on earth. For instance, when the supply of wine was exhausted at the marriage feast at Cana, at his mother’s request, Jesus miraculously provided wine (John 2:1–10). This act was consistent with his love and compassion, but the means by which he changed the water into wine is not understood, and of themselves people cannot duplicate it. Thus, it is called a miracle. Numerous other examples of the beneficial results of miracles performed by Jesus include the raising from the dead of the widow’s son at Naim (Luke 7:11–16), the cleansing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:12–19), and the restoration of the sight of the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8:22–26).

Latter-day Saints value miracles because of their beneficial character. As stated in the Book of Mormon, “God has provided a means that man, through faith, might work mighty miracles; therefore he becometh a great benefit to his fellow beings” (Mosiah 8:18). Although God brings about marvelous events to bless humankind, it is known that not every spiritual manifestation necessarily comes from God (TPJS, pp. 202–214; Rev. 13:13–14; see also SIGN SEEKING).

Faith is considered necessary to bring divine intervention in behalf of those in need. For example, as the Book of Mormon prophet ALMAA noted, LEHI and his group of emigrants were given the LIAHONA, a compasslike device to direct their travels toward a new and promised land. “And it did work for them according to their faith in God; therefore, if they had faith to believe that God could cause that those spindles [of the compass] should point the way they should go, behold it was done; therefore they had this miracle, and also many other miracles wrought by the power of God, day by day” (Alma 37:40).

God desires to bless his children, and sometimes does so in ways that require the manifestation of extraordinary power. He is restrained only

MINORITIES

[In the Book of Mormon, God invites “all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God” (2 Ne. 26:33). As LDS missionaries have preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to “every nation, kindred, tongue, and people,” people from many ethnic groups from all over the world have accepted baptism and become members of the Church. See Vital Statistics.

Emphasis has been placed on taking the gospel to the American Indians and to the other peoples of the Americas. See Indian Student Placement Services; Lamanites; Mexico and Central America, The Church in; Native Americans; South America, The Church in.

Substantial LDS populations also exist in the Pacific Islands. See Hawaii, The Church in; Oceania, The Church in; and Polynesians.

In 1978 a revelation extended the priesthood to all worthy males. This allowed the priesthood to be held by blacks. See Africa, The Church in; Blacks; Doctrine and Covenants: Official Declaration—2; Priesthood; South America, The Church in; Brazil; and West Indies, The Church in.]