

Signs, Wonders, Miracles, and Healings in the Early Post-Apostolic Era¹

[Quotes are from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson; 1885-1887; repr. 10 vols. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994. They are cited in *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, ed. David W. Bercot, Hendrickson, 2000]

A. *“For numberless demoniacs throughout the whole world, and in your city, many of our Christian men exorcising them in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, have healed and do heal, rendering helpless and driving the possessing devils out of the men, though they could not be cured by all the other exorcists, and those who used incantations and drugs.”*

Justin Martyr, c. 155 (or shortly thereafter)
1.190

B. *“We call Him Helper and Redeemer. Even the demons fear the power of His name. at this day, when they are exorcised in the name of Jesus Christ, . . . they are defeated.”*

Justin Martyr, c. 155 (or shortly thereafter)
1.209

C. *“He said, ‘I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions.’ . . . And now we have all the demons and evil spirits subjected to us, when we exorcise them.”*

Justin Martyr, c. 155 (or shortly thereafter)
1.236

D. *“Even to this day, the demon-possessed are sometimes exorcised in the name of the living and true God.”*

Theophilus, c. 180
2.97

E. *“Those who are truly His disciples, receiving grace from Him, . . . perform [works] in His name, in order to promote the welfare of others. . . . Some truly and certainly cast out devils. The result is that those who have been cleansed from evil spirits frequently both believe and join themselves to the church. Others have foreknowledge of things to come. They see visions, and they utter prophetic expressions. Still others heal the sick by laying their hands upon them, and the sick are made whole. What is more, as I have said, even the dead have been raised up and remained among us for many years. What more can I say? It is not possible to name the number of gifts which the church throughout the whole world has received from God, in the name of Jesus Christ. . . . For just as she has received without charge from God, so does she minister without charge. Nor does she perform anything by means of angelic invocations, incantations, or any other wicked curious art. . . . Calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, she has*

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worked miracles for the benefit of mankind, and not to lead them into error. The name of our Lord Jesus Christ even now confers benefits. It cures thoroughly and effectively all who anywhere believe on Him.”

Irenaeus, c. 180
1.409

F. *“Let a person be brought before your tribunals who is plainly under demon possession. The wicked spirit, ordered to speak by a follower of Christ, will as readily make the truthful confession that he is a demon....”*

Tertullian, c. 180
3.37

G. *“they realize that one day these woes will overtake them. Fearing Christ in God, and God in Christ, they become subject to the servants of God and Christ. So, overwhelmed by the thought and realization of those judgment fires, at our touch, our breath, and our command, they leave the bodies they have entered - unwilling and distressed. For before your very eyes, they are put to an open shame.”*

Tertullian, c. 180
3.38

H. *“We say that there are demons – as though, in the simple fact that we alone expel them from the bodies of men, we did not also prove their existence.”*

Tertullian, c. 180
3.176

I. *“The demons themselves confess concerning themselves as often as they are driven by us from bodies by the torments of our words and by the fires of our prayers....when renounced by the only and true God, the wretched beings unwillingly shudder in their bodies and either at once leap forth – or else vanish by degrees.”*

Mark Minucius Felix, c. 200
4.190

J. *“What is nobler than to tread under foot the gods of the nations, to exorcise evil spirits, to perform cures, to seek divine revelations, and to live to God? These are the pleasures – these are the spectacles – that befit Christian men.”*

Tertullian, c. 212
3.91

K. *“We not only reject those wicked spirits, we overcome them. We daily hold them up to contempt. We exorcise them from their victims, as multitudes can testify.”*

Tertullian, c. 212
3.106

L. *“See how many men of rank have been delivered from devils and healed of diseases!”*

Tertullian, c. 212
3.107

M. *“...God everywhere manifests His signs of His power – to His own people for their comfort; to strangers, for a testimony unto them.”*

Tertullian, c. 210
3.228

N. *“This is He who places prophets in the churches, instructs teachers, directs tongues, gives powers and healing, does wonderful works, offers discrimination of spirits, affords powers of government, suggests counsels, and orders and arranges whatever other gifts there are of the charismata.”*

Novatian, c. 235
5.641

O. *“Traces of those signs and wonders are still preserved among those who regulate their lives by the teachings of the Gospel.”*

Origen, c. 248
4.397, 398

P. *“A similar philosophy of name applies to Jesus. His name has already been seen in an unmistakable manner to have expelled myriads of evil spirits from souls and bodies. This demonstrates how great the power was that was exerted upon those from whom the spirits were driven out.”*

Origen, c. 248
4.406

Q. *“There are still preserved among Christians traces of that Holy Spirit that appeared in the form of a dove. They expel evil spirits, perform many cures, and foresee certain events.”*

Origen, c. 248
4.415

R. *“The name of Jesus can still remove distractions from the minds of men, expel demons, and also take away diseases.”*

Origen, c. 248
4.415

S. “Some persons provide evidence of their having received through this faith a marvelous power by the cures which they perform. They invoke no other name over those persons who need their help than the name of the God of all things, and of Jesus....By these means, I, too, have seen many persons freed from grievous calamities, from distractions of mind, madness, and countless other ills that could not be cured by either men or devils.”

Origen, c. 248
4.473

T. “Not a few cures are brought about in the name of Jesus, and certain other manifestations of no small significance have taken place.”

Origen, c. 248
4.475

U. “Even at the present time, the demons and other unseen powers show that they either fear the name of Jesus as that of a Being of superior power, or else they reverentially accept Him as their lawful ruler. For if the commendation had not been given Him by God, the demons would not have withdrawn from those whom they had attacked. For they withdrew in obedience at the mere mention of His name.”

Origen, c. 248
4.479

V. “This is also done in the present day. For the devil is scourged, burned, and tortured by exorcists – by the human voice and by divine power.”

Cyprian, c. 250
5.402

W. “Oh, if only you could hear and see them when they are adjured by us. For they are tortured with spiritual scourges and are cast out from the possessed bodies with tortures of words. Howling and growling at the voice of man and the power of God, they feel the stripes and blows and confess the judgment to come. Come and acknowledge that what we say is true.”

Cyprian, c. 250
5.462

X. “The same demons, when adjured by the name of the true God, immediately flee.”

Lactantius, c. 304-313
7.130

Y. “As long as there is peace among the people of God, these spirits flee from the righteous and fear them. And when they seize the bodies of men and harass their souls, they are adjured by [Christians] and are put to flight at the name of the true God.”

Lactantius, c. 304-313

7.159

Z. “Christ’s virtues have been made manifest to you, along with that unheard-of power...that was used over the whole world by those who proclaimed Him. It has subdued the fires of passion and caused races, peoples, and nations that are most diverse in character to hasten with one accord to accept the same faith. For the deeds can be listed and numbered that have been done in India, as well as among the Seres, Persians, and Medes.”

Arnobius, c. 305

6.438