

No. 5, *One Special Revelation Comprised of the Scriptures*

Last week our study focused on the subject *The Occurrence of the Miracle in Scripture*, noting various details about that line of thought. For example, there are relatively few miracles mentioned in Scripture, with actually less than 200 miracles specifically recorded as far as detailed account is concerned. Moreover, we also noted that those that are recorded occurred over a protracted space of time, with long periods concerning which there is no mention made of miraculous activity. The final point made last week was that Scripture records seven main periods of miraculous activity, from Moses right through to the Apostles.

In these studies one of the foundational facts noted is that the miracle is a mode of special revelation, a fact that must always govern our study and understanding of this subject of *The Miracle in Scripture*. However, in the course of the study last week the question arose as to whether other miracles occurred that are not recorded in Scripture. With regard to this issue of whether all miracles are actually recorded in the Scripture we looked at John 20: 30, 31, and I gave you my thoughts concerning that passage. However, there are other Scriptures with respect to Christ's ministry and the ministry of the Apostles also that we must consider with regard to this question of miracles that occurred but are not recorded.

The question actually is this -- were there miracles performed that are not recorded in Scripture and if there were do they belong to the realm of special revelation? The question, therefore, is whether the Scriptures comprise the only revelation that God ever gave or do the Scriptures comprise that volume of *special revelation* that God deemed necessary & sufficient for the Church's needs. Notice here that I am making a distinction between *revelation* and *special revelation*, and my proposition is that God gave much revelation throughout time, but there is only one *special revelation*, the Scriptures of truth. This is a very important issue, thus I wish to address it.

With respect to the miracle itself, we should remember that the period of Christ and the Apostles is the section of time, as far as the record of Scripture is concerned, with the greatest number of miracles. Thus, we will focus there mainly in this study. A key verse with reference to that period is this text John 21: 25. Upon examining this verse there are some points that I noted and wish to bring to your attention

1. **This Scripture indicates that there is much that the Lord *did* that is not recorded for us.**

In this verse John essentially states that there were so many things that Jesus did that it was not possible to record them. Obviously the statement in John 21: 25 could include miracles in that it speaks of Messianic activity. Cf. Matt 4: 23, 24; 9: 35; 14: 14, 36 -- in these verses there is reference to a lot of miraculous activity but no detail is given. The same observation should also be made with regard to the Apostolic period. See also Acts 8: 6, 7; 19: 11, 12; 28: 8, 9. However, at this point let us note that John 21: 25 reveals that there was much divine activity in Christ's own ministry of which we are not told in Scripture.

2. **We could also say that there are many other things that Christ *said* that are not recorded for us.**

When we consider the terms of John 21: 25 carefully, the verse surely implies that there are words that Christ spoke that we do not have recorded for us. Actions and words normally belong together. Thus, when Christ acted, what He did would have been accompanied by words, Acts 1: 1 -- where *doing and teaching* are joined together with regard to Christ's ministry.

However, with regard to His word itself, see Acts 20: 35 -- here is a statement that Christ made but is not recorded by any of the Gospel writers. The inference is that Scripture does not contain all that Christ would ever have spoken to men. Think also of the frequent references to Christ's praying -- yet very little of what He actually said in prayer is recorded. For example, see Luke 6: 12 -- He prayed all night but not a word is recorded of what He said in prayer. See also Luke 19: 47 -- "*He taught daily in the temple.*" See also John 8: 2 -- teaching again in the temple but nothing of what He said is recorded.

In relation to this, it should be pointed out that the New Testament records for us words revealed by God in O.T. times that are not, however, recorded in the Old Testament. For example, see Jude v.v. 9, & 14-15. V. 9 tells us about an incident that is not recorded in the O.T. and words that were spoken on that occasion. Then, v.v. 14 & 15 contain a prophecy of Enoch's concerning the Lord's return, in words that were obviously divinely inspired but are not recorded in the O.T.

3. **Moreover, remember this important point at this stage -- what Christ would ever have spoken was always pure & perfect, and indeed, infallible.**

When Christ spoke it was God who spoke. When Christ acted it was God who acted, thus it could not be anything else but infallible revelation. Moreover, right throughout time, whenever God spoke and acted all would have been marked by absolute authority and infallibility. Yet, it is true, in the light of John 21: 25 that only a part of all that Christ did and taught is contained in the N.T. This would also be true of the O.T. as well. Much more revelation would have been given than is comprised within the O.T. Scriptures.

4. **However, the vital point is that whatever is necessary for the Church is recorded in the Scripture.**

John 21: 25 actually implies this point: whatever revelation is necessary for the Church throughout her earthly existence is recorded in the Scripture. There is much more that could have been recorded, but it was not,

inferring that the Lord in His wisdom gave the Church whatever was necessary for her to have. Thus, He deemed that it was not essential for the Church to have in her possession much of the revelation that He had given.

**5. Thus, similarly, what Scripture contains is sufficient for the Church.**

John tells us that there are many other things done by Christ not recorded, including miracles, thus in the category of revelation. However, whatever is recorded the Lord deemed it sufficient for His Church.

Now, since we are dealing with the subject of *The Miracle in Scripture* the main conclusion of these points is that it would not be correct to say that all miracles God ever wrought are recorded in Scripture. As we have noted, this is obviously not the case. Therefore, God gave much revelation throughout time, which included the performance of miracles other than those recorded in Scripture.

However, the question is -- where do those other miracles belong? In response, I say this -- they do not belong to the realm of special revelation. Only what is comprised in the Scriptures can be termed *special revelation*, for one of the marks of special revelation is that it is inscripturated or written. Therefore, while there is evidence in Scripture itself that God did & said, much, much, more than is recorded for us in Scripture, yet it does not belong to the realm of special revelation. God gave various revelations for specific persons, for particular situations but the Church does not have the content of it -- it is not known to us for God in His infinite wisdom did not deem it necessary for the Church to have it. However, what He wished His Church to have in all ages is comprised in Scripture, therefore Scripture alone is special revelation. Consequently, while other miraculous & supernatural events occurred undoubtedly, they do not belong to the realm of special revelation.

Therefore, while the Scriptures do not comprise the only revelation that God ever gave, they do comprise the only *special revelation* that He ever gave. During the ages before the completion of the canon of Scripture, God would have been constantly giving revelation of Himself to His people in various circumstances because with regard to Scripture they had either none or only part. Remember that before Moses' day, God's people had no Scripture, and from Moses' day to the end of the apostolic period, His people only had partial Scripture. Therefore, there would have been need on God's part for a constant revealing of Himself to men, meaning that there must have been much more by way of revelation than we have in Scripture. However, with the completion of the canon of Scripture, this revelation ceased for the Church then possessed all that she required for her faith and her practice in the form of the full *special revelation* comprised in Scripture.

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