

No. 8, Special Revelation – God’s Final Word in Christ

Throughout this study emphasis has been laid on the fact that the *miracle in Scripture* was one of the modes by which the Lord revealed Himself to men. Consequently, since Scripture is complete and God is no longer giving supernatural revelation, the Biblical miracle has therefore ceased a very important and basic fact in dealing with this subject of *the miracle*. Due to the fact that special revelation is no longer being given, then the modes of its being given are no longer in operation – thus, the miracle as seen in Scripture has ceased.

I pointed out last week that any claim that miracles continue is essentially a denial of the sufficiency of Scripture, and of course, in various circles where it is claimed that the Biblical miracle continues there is a denial in a variety of ways of the sufficiency of Scripture. However, since it can be shown that Scripture attests itself to be sufficient then God is telling us that all supernatural revelation has ceased along with the modes of it, including the miracle.

SCRIPTURE PRESENTS ITS OWN SUFFICIENCY

The fact is that Scripture in various passages very clearly presents its own sufficiency. Our Protestant forefathers in their creeds and confessions presented the truth of the sufficiency of Scripture immediately and directly from the N.T. Scriptures. In the closing part of last week’s study we considered Hebrews 1: 1, 2 and noted the remarkable way in which the Spirit of God bears testimony there to the completion of special revelation. V.2 declares that God “*hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.*” The “last days” had already arrived when this statement was made and is a description of the whole N.T. period between the two advents of Christ. But the point of the words is that what God has said through Christ, which is comprised in the N.T. Scriptures, is God’s final word. It is in the N.T. Scriptures that God has finally spoken and that through Christ. Consequently, Heb 1: 2 is teaching that nothing more is to be expected by way of special revelation beyond what was revealed through Christ. Thus, what was given was final and sufficient, meaning that not only is revelation complete but that the modes of its deliverance have ceased to operate also, including the Biblical miracle.

CHRIST IS GOD’S FINAL WORD

In essence, Christ Himself is God’s final word to men, a truth that pervades many N.T. passages. It is in His person and His work that Christ is presented as the epitome of divine revelation. I mentioned this point in the close of last week’s study but wish to come back to it today and deal with it in more detail.

(a) In Christ’s person is the perfect revelation of the being of God.

See again Heb 1: 2 and note the literal rendering of the words – “*hath spoken in Son.*” The point is that the Spirit is underlining what characterises the N.T. Scriptures: it is “in Son” – it is not merely that Christ delivered God’s revelation, but he is God’s message. All that God has to say to us is in His Son. Christ *is* the revelation that God has given, thus there can be nothing beyond it, nothing greater than it. Note then Heb 1: 3 and observe the words that tell us that in relation to God the Father, Christ is “*the brightness of His glory.*” A metaphor is in view here – the sun and its rays. The glory of the sun is not only revealed by its rays – that glory is essentially in those rays. Thus, the excellencies of the being of God are in Christ and are therefore revealed in His person.

Take the next words – “*and the express image of His person.*” Literally this means, “*the impress of His substance.*” The word “substance” means, *essential being*. The word for “express image” or “impress” comes from a root verb that means *to engrave*; signifying that which is engraved like a stamp on a coin or the mark made by a seal. Nothing could be more like the original than the image made, the one bearing the very features of the other. The point made is clear: all that God is in His essential being, in His nature or character is manifested perfectly by the Son because the Son is Himself God.

See other Scriptures – John 1: 1 where Christ is named *the Word*. This title signifies the concept of revelation. Used as a title of Christ it indicates that Christ is the fullest & most exhaustive expression of God, the complete truth of God, see v.v. 14, 18. This title, therefore, signifies that Christ is the only one qualified to tell men all the truth they can receive about God, all the truth necessary for them to know about God, and all that is sufficient by way of knowledge of God. Rev 1: 8, 11; 21: 6 – three times Christ says – “*I am Alpha and Omega.*” These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. By describing Himself in this fashion Christ is teaching that all that God has revealed is in Him, i.e., in Christ. God has nothing more to say beyond what He has spoken in & through His own Son.

(b) In Christ’s work is the perfect revelation of the mercy of God.

By the work of Christ is meant His redemptive work, comprising all of His earthly life of perfect obedience and His full atonement for sin.

I refer to Christ’s work as the revelation of the mercy of God for the reason that it was God’s purpose to reveal to sinners that He shows mercy toward them in their sin. This revelation of mercy had always been given to men, but its climax was in the work that Christ actually and historically performed when He came into the world. Moreover, this revelation of mercy is what comprises the covenant of grace, but since Christ is Head of that covenant, then all the mercy that it promises is made good by the work that He performed as the Mediator of it.

Interestingly, right here in Heb 1 and in v.3 Christ’s work is in view – “*when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*” It is easily seen that His redemptive work is in view – the work that deals with sin, which is a revelation of the mercy of God. Moreover, it should not be missed that the Spirit points out in a very real way that the revelation of the mercy of God in Christ’s work is complete in what Christ did in that the verse refers to His sitting down on God’s right hand in heaven. This language not only signifies that the work itself is finished, but that the revelation of God’s mercy is complete also.

It is therefore in the very message of the finished work of Christ and the delivery of it that it is seen that Christ is God’s final word to men & that revelation is therefore complete. See 2 Cor 4: 6 – the words “*to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God...*” speak of the revelation of God’s mercy & grace in the Gospel. The glory of God is seen in all its fullness is the Gospel message – the message of grace & mercy toward men. In that message God’s glory is seen in that there is in the whole plan and provision of the Gospel a presentation of the mingling of all the great attributes of God – holiness, justice, goodness, wisdom, power etc. But it is all revealed in who Christ is and what Christ has done. Thus, note the closing words of this verse – “*in the face of Jesus Christ.*” The words signify that it is in Christ that God is revealed: in His person as the Godman who came to do the Father’s will and finish His work.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is obvious – since Christ in His person & work is God’s final word or revelation, then we need expect nothing more in the form of revelation. What the Spirit of God has given us is sufficient, again affirming that the Biblical miracle has ceased.