

So Great A Salvation

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which having at the first been spoken through the Lord was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them both by signs and wonders, by manifold powers and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will" (Heb. 2:3f).

Having shown that while God did in past times speak to the fathers in the prophets in divers portions and manners (one of which was through angels who gave the law to Moses); he has now spoken unto us through his son. Having shown that Christ is superior to angels and the word spoken through angels was steadfast and certain, how much more so word spoken through the son?

So great a salvation was spoken by the Son to the apostles and the multitudes who thronged around him. He told them that God so loved the whole world that He gave his only Son; that the thief came to kill, steal and destroy but He came to give the more abundant life; that He was the good shepherd who laid down His life for His sheep (Jn. 3:16; 10:10; 11). He reminded them His blood was poured out for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28). He told them He was going to prepare a place for them, a house not made with hands (Jn. 14:1-3). He taught them He was the resurrection and life and that just as He lived; they also would live (Jn. 11:25). Truly wondrous thoughts and promises are these! And, these are not fanciful, wistful but unattainable promises! He confirmed, established, proved, these promises through His apostles, who not only echoed the promises He made but proved them themselves by the miracles God gave them to work!

The writer uses three words to describe the powerful deeds done by the apostles: signs, wonders, manifold powers. Peter used these same words in Acts two when he declared that Jesus *"was a man approved of God by might works, and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know ..."* (Acts 2:22). These three words describe the different attributes of the miraculous works done by Jesus and His apostles.

Bearing witness by *"signs."* Sometimes natural things were signs to men. The names of Gomer's three children were a sign to idolatrous Israel. Isaiah's son was named as a sign of impending captivity to Israel. However, signs in the passages in Hebrew 2 and Acts 2 were supernatural; designed to establish the truth of God's words. Prophesying was a *"sign"* to the believer; *"tongues"* were a sign to the unbeliever (1 Cor. 14:22). John assured us in his gospel that *"many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of his*

disciples which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe ..." (Jn. 20:30f).

Bearing witness by wonders. This word tells us the awe and astonishment Jesus' miracles produced. If Jesus' word caused men to say, "*Never man spake like this man spake,*" how much more the miraculous signs He wrought (Jn. 7:46)! When Jesus stilled the trouble sea, His disciples were astonished saying, "*What manner of man is that this even the winds obey his voice*" (Matthew 8:27)? "*He hath done all things well; he maketh even the deaf to hear; and the dumb to speak*" (Mk. 7:37).

Bearing witness by "*mighty deeds;*" "*manifold powers.*" This means that Jesus' works were contrary to natural law: turning water to wine, raising the dead, giving sight to those born blind. Surely seeing one raised from the dead should be sign enough to anyone that He who wrought such could be believed in what He said or wrote.

The writer adds a fourth means of confirmation: "*gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.*" Very likely the writer refers to the nine spiritual gifts, itemized in 1 Corinthians 14, which the apostles bestowed by their laying on of hands (Acts 8:18). These gifts help to continue to confirm the believer of the great salvation God's Son had spoken to them!

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