

The Revelation of God

Hebrews 1:1-2a

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son”

INTRODUCTION:

CIT: How Did God Unveil His Plan of Salvation?

I. In Times Past He Unveiled It Partially -- *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets”*

A. God Spoke

1. Man’s Inability to Know God

a. Man’s Foolishness

i. Thinks he can know God

- Man thinks that what he conceives in the natural realm unveils who God is
- He looks at his experiences—and thinks he

- can conceive who God is by these experiences
- He follows his emotions and feelings and makes judgment upon the character and nature of God

NOTE: Man cannot conceive Who God is at all. God is not in the mind of man. Man thinks of God completely opposite of who he is.

ii. Deceives himself

- If he follows what he thinks God is—because of what he has conceived through natural means—then he becomes guilty of idolatry
- He has created a god that is not God at all
- He has broken the second commandment of God—to make no graven image of God—to not recreate God after your own ideas

iii. The supernatural and the natural

- God is supernatural—which means He exists apart from the natural realm

- Man lives in the natural—
not supernatural realm
 - Man lives in a realm
that is apart from God
 - Man lives in a box
separated from the
supernatural realm of
God

- To know and understand
God is an impossibility

NOTE: The impossibility to know and understand God is like expecting a bug that we have in our hand to know and understand us. It's an impossibility.

**b. Reasons Why Man Cannot Know
God**

i. Man is not God

- Man is finite
- God is infinite
- Man is limited
- God is unlimited
- Man is created
- God is the creator

ii. Man is sinful

- Man was created sinless

- Man believed Satan's lies
over God's truth—taking
the fruit that was forbidden
- Man was separated even
further from God—by sin
- Now man stands apart from
God even more

2. God's Ability to Connect With Man

- a.** God has to connect with man—
because man cannot connect to God
- b.** God's connection to man can only be
done out of a motivation of love

i. Man is God's enemy—because
of His sin

ii. God has every right to be
withdrawn from creation—and
even more with man—who has
sinned against Him

iii. God could just destroy man

iv. God chooses to love man

- His love outweighs His
wrath for man
- His love has caused Him to
unveil Himself to man

B. How God Spoke—*“God, who at sundry times
and in divers manners spake in time past ... by the
prophets”*

1. By the Prophets

a. The two people with God's authority

i. The priest

ii. The prophet

iii. Their job

- The priest's job was to connect men to God—by means of sacrifice and worship
- The prophet's job was to speak for God to man

NOTE: Throughout the book of Hebrews, Paul continually emphasizes the importance of the priesthood—and specifically the priesthood of Jesus Christ. But before you can have a priest, you must have a prophet. The priesthood was not known except that the prophet unveiled that it was needed.

b. The prophet is God's means of speaking to man—God spoke through the prophets

i. The prophets of God

- Writing Prophets
 - Moses
 - Samuel
 - David
 - Solomon

- Daniel
- Ezra
- Isaiah
- Ezekiel
- Jeremiah
- Habbakuk
- Zechariah
- Etc.

NOTE: All writers of the Old Testament were attributed as the prophets of God.

• Speaking Prophets

- Some spoke and we have no written document of their speaking that has been preserved
- But God spoke through them as well

2. Through Various Means—“*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past*”

a. The word play

- i. Sundry times—*Polumeros*
- ii. Divers manners—*Polutropos*

b. Meaning of the words

- i.** Sundry times—many times
- ii.** Divers manners—many ways
- iii.** God has spoken at variously

- He has spoken through several different prophets who existed hundreds of years apart
- He has spoken various personalities—no personality is the same
 - Some were wealthy—some were poor
 - Some were in high authority—some were nobodies
 - Some were educated—some weren't
 - Some were bold and courageous—some were emotional and timid
- He has spoken through various genres
 - Legal writing
 - Poetry
 - Reason
 - Vision
 - Apocalyptic

- Historical Narratives
- Didactic

- He has spoken through several different forms
 - Through prophecy
 - Through imagery
 - Through people
 - Through types and shadows
 - Through ceremonies
 - Through examples

C. What God Spoke About

1. Christ

- a.** God spoke of His plan of redemption through Christ

- i.** The whole Old Testament Scripture points directly to Christ

John 5:39—“*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*”

- ii.** What the Old Testament Spoke of

- It spoke of man's sin problem

- The fall of man in the Garden of Eden
- The continuation of man's sinfulness
- It spoke of man's need to be made right before God
 - Introduction of the Law of God
 - Introduction of the priesthood and sacrificial system
- It spoke of sin's penalty
 - All throughout the law God gave penalty after penalty for various sins
 - He even spoke of facing God's wrath after death
- It spoke of the need for God's righteousness
 - The sacrificial system was not enough to meet the soul's need
 - God did not truly desire the sacrifice of

animals—that did not satisfy His wrath

- It gave promise after promise of the One who would come to deal with man's sin and God's wrath
 - By specific prophecy
 - By the types and shadows of the Law
- It pointed to an everlasting Kingdom—where righteousness dwells and sin cannot exist
 - Man's sin problem would be resolved once and for all
 - Man would live eternally in the presence of God
- All these things are fulfilled in Christ

Matthew 5:17-18—“*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*”

Luke 24:13-32— “And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, **What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?**

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, **What things?**

And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20 and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. 22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23 and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. 24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, **O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?** 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he

expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. 29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. 30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, **Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?**”

D. God Spoke Partially

1. The Old Testament did not fully unveil Christ

- a. It was given bit by bit
- b. No one prophet was given the full revelation of Christ
- c. Some were given greater amounts of revelation than others
- d. Some were given clearer revelation than others

2. The Law was given like a child’s instruction book

Isaiah 28:9-13— “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

12 To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

13 But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little”

NOTE: Isaiah was telling the people of how God has spoken and revealed Himself. He has spoken as a teacher revealing truth to little children—giving bit by bit of knowledge—speaking with a child’s tongue (stammering lips).

Paul’s rebuke to his audience:

Hebrews 5:12-14—“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be **the first principles of the oracles of God**; and are become such as have **need of milk**, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is **unskilful in the word of righteousness**: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

Hebrews 6:1-2—“Therefore leaving **the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection**; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, and of

laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”

NOTE: Paul is pointing to the fact that several of the people in his audience to whom he is writing have not moved past the elementary principles of the word of God. They have missed the purposes for the Old Testament. They are still holding on to the pictures and neglecting the substance.

- † Holding on the sacrificial system while you have Christ’s sacrifice
- † Holding on to the ceremonies when Christ has already fulfilled what each ceremonies was pointing to
- † Holding on to ceremonial cleansings while Christ has already provided final cleansing

- a. It was given with pictures
- b. It was given with simple truths
- c. It was given bit by bit

NOTE: No matter how amazing the Old Testament is—it is incomplete.

Just as a child’s elementary book is lacking in advancement of knowledge—so is the Old Testament.

- 3. The Old Testament became known as the promise
 - a. It was the promise of Christ

Paul’s Reference to the Promise

Hebrews 11:39—“*And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise*”

I Peter 1:10-12—“*Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*”

E. To Whom God Spoke—“*God...spake in time past unto the fathers*”

1. The Fathers

- a. The Fathers referred to here were the Jewish fathers
- b. Israel was unique in that it was the recipient of the Law of God

Romans 3:1-2—“*What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*”

- c. Over a period of 1500 years through over 40 different prophets—God

unveiled the Old Testament to the Fathers of Ancient Israel
d. They were given this revelation for 2 reasons

- i. So that when Christ appeared they would know him
- ii. So they could testify to the rest of the world to the fact they had God’s truth

Exodus 19:5-6—“*ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.*”

Matthew 5:13-16—“*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*”

2. The World

- a. The world was to be the recipient of the revelation of God—given through the Jews
- b. The Jews hid it from the world
 - i. Being arrogant

ii. Being sinful

- c. When Christ would come on the scene He would take up that role that the Jews dropped of spreading the revelation of God to the whole world

Isaiah 42:6-7—“*I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;*

7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.”

Isaiah 49:6-7—“*And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.*

7 Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee”

II. In the Last Days He Unveiled It Plainly—“*hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son”*

A. The Perfect Revelation

1. Jesus was the full and perfect revelation of God

- a. God had spoken for several years through several different voices
b. Now—he has spoken through one voice—His Son the Lord Jesus Christ
c. Jesus is the voice of the New Testament

i. The whole of the New Testament centers around the Person and work of Christ

- The Gospels tell His story
- The Epistles apply it to the believer
- Acts points to it continuation through the work of the churches
- Revelation points to the culmination of Christ

B. The Perfect Time—“*hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son”*

1. This phrase has a Messianic reference to it

- a. The average Jew would have understood that phrase to be talking about the time of the Messiah

Jeremiah 33:14-16—“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. 15 In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.”

b. The Jews knew that when the Messiah would come (Last days) that He would unveil all things unto them

John 4:25—“The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.”

C. The Final Revelation

- 1.** Christ is the Final Revelation
- 2.** The New Testament is the Final Revelation of God

a. To add or take away from it is blasphemous
b. It is to usurp all of the Word of God—because all of it points to Christ

- i.** Points to his work
- ii.** Points to his person
- iii.** Points to his preeminence

- His preeminence above the message of the Old Testament
- His preeminence above the methods of the Old Testament
- His preeminence above the messengers of the Old Testament

NOTE: This is where Paul takes the text to follow.

“hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”

CONCLUSION:

- **If Christ is the final revelation of God—How do you treat Christ?**
 - **Have you given your life to Christ?**
 - **Do you serve Christ?**
 - **Do you love Christ?**