

The Bible

How We Got The Bible - Divine Revelation

Introduction

Many hundreds of years ago two questions were asked: “Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?” (Job 11:7). When man was left to his own devising of God, he responds in one of several ways:

- a) He denies the existence of God.
- b) He mocks the Person of God.
- c) He devises in his own mind a god who is ultimately void of moral attributes, power, or glory.
- d) He declares his lack of knowledge and in blindness lives life.

Contrary to man’s depraved imaginations, all creation declares the fact that there must be a Superior Being who is the Originator and in control of the universe, microscopically and infinitesimally. We see a moving universe which moves with a preciseness unequalled by anything man makes. For instance, consider the following:

- a) The earth rotates on it’s axis every 23 hours, 56 minutes and 4.1 seconds precisely!
- b) It orbits the sun once every 365.256 days.
- c) Mercury, which is nearest to the sun, rotates on it’s axis once every 58.6467 days, and it’s orbit is exactly 87.970 days.
- d) Pluto, which is so very distant, has a rotation period of 6 days, 9 hours and 17.6 minutes; and it’s orbit takes 90,465 days!
- e) Furthermore, the tilt of the planets never varies. Jupiter is 3 degrees, earth is 23.5 degrees, Pluto is 118 degrees, and none ever vary. Each individual must face the decision:

“Are we all pawns in a universe of inconceivable chance, or there is a Superior Being controlling every aspect of its movings, and we are part of His plan?”

If only this Superior would, apart from the universe, reveal Himself:

- a) Giving us the understanding of what He is like, what His characteristics are.
- b) Answering our queries whither He involves Himself in the world of us as individuals:
 - i) How did we come to be?
 - ii) Is there a plan He is working to?
 - iii) Why is there disease, deformity and death?
 - iv) What happens after death?
 - v) When does life begin?

We are not shut up to the mere knowledge that there is a Superior Being. He has revealed Himself, His attributes, decrees, abilities, and characteristics in multi avenues for our understanding and response. He has revealed Himself as the Communicating God by His names, creation, and by His Son who is His co-eternal, and co-equal in every level and aspect.

- a) God’s desire to communicate with us is revealed by His Names. He is called:
 - i) The Word:
 1. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (Jn. 1:1)
 2. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14)
 - ii) The Voice:
 1. “And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden” (Gen. 3:8)
- b) God does communicate with man:
 - i) “For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?” (Deut. 5:26)

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- ii) “Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.” (Deut. 15:5)
- c) God communicates and reveals Himself with man through creation.
 - i) “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psa. 19:1)
 - ii) “He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.” (Jer. 10:12)
 - iii) “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20)
- d) God communicates and revealed Himself through Christ.
 - i) An actor may be very convincing in their portrayal of a person but they could never fully reveal the person. To reveal an individual there must be perfect identicalness. This is much more than outward likeness or inward characteristics. To wholly reveal another individual requires an unbroken, unhindered oneness with them in thought, word, deed, attitude, response, etc. For Christ to fully reveal God, which He did, it required Him being absolute deity without any infringement or defect. The Lord said: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (Jn. 14:9). If this was not a truth then Christ is a deceiver of the worst kind, as when the religious leaders called Him, “that deceiver” (Matt. 27:63). They were men of truth, or He was telling the truth and they were all liars like their father the devil: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (Jn. 8:44). By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit John wrote: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14). Being perfectly and essential deity He is rightly called: “The Son of God” (Jn. 10:36); “The Son of the Father” (2 Jn. 1:3); “The Image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). God has revealed Himself in His Son.
- e) God has authentically and authoritatively revealed Himself and communicated with us in the scriptures.
 - i) The men who were used of God were designated:
 - 1. Holy Prophets
 - (a) “As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.” (Lk. 1:70)
 - (b) “Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:21)
 - (c) “That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.” (2 Pet. 3:2)
 - (d) “And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.” (Rev. 22:6)
 - 2. Holy men
 - (a) “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Pet. 1:21)
 - ii) These were men to whom was entrusted the writings and declarations of the Living God. Therefore, when they wrote such statements as in the following table, it was a very serious affirmation.

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Statement	Verses	First Reference
The Word of the LORD	236	Gen. 15:1
The LORD said	219	Gen. 4:6
Thus saith the LORD	413	Ex. 4:22
The word of God	48	1 Sam. 9:27
The commandments of the LORD	24	Lev. 4:2
God said	46	Gen. 1:3
The Lord spake	144	Ex. 6:10

Thankfulness For Divine Communication and Revelation

How thankful we ought to be for divine communication and revelation, for without either we could know nothing about God, or among other things, the purpose for our existence! Our definition of God would be taken from nature, like Thor or Isis, and moral absolutes would be foreign to us. Gods would be made which would not convict of wrongs, but indeed permission to indulge in whatever we fancied. Not only did God communicate and reveal to us, but to those who are His, He is constantly revealing Himself and enabling them to communicate with Him!

The revelation from God comes on three avenues:

- a) That which is spiritual, such as the truths of Ephesians (ch. 3:3-6), or Colossians (ch. 1:25-27), or the illustrative pictures of spiritual lessons from the types of the Old Testament. Furthermore, Job would never have known that he was being used by God to display his loyalty to God despite the activity and affliction of the evil one (Job 1:6-12). Neither would Daniel have known of the spirit conflict had the angel of God not revealed it to him (Dan. 10:13, 20, 21).
- b) That which is material things concerning matters of which men would otherwise be ignorant. Examples of this are found in the description of the creation which no human spectator was present. Man, in his foolishness, seeks to deny the fact of creation by God, but try as he will to find “life in other planets”, “the missing link”, etc., he always comes up short. All he can do is make conjectures based on a limited knowledge, and a bias against God and creation. The reason for the bias against God, Christ, and the resurrection is because all these are bigger than he, and frightening to him. In them he faces the reality of his own sinfulness.
- c) That which God reveals as man, consciously or unconsciously, works with Him. God reveals truths about His creation, which man calls “discoveries”. They are discoveries to man, but the material he discovered was there all the time. For instance, we speak of Columbus discovering America, but it was there all the time, or man discovering the atom or DNA, but they were there all the time. At the appropriate time God opened man’s eyes to see these things.

Divine revelation is an activity of divine prerogatives when God unveils material as He pleases. It is not the result of man compelling God to reveal, for God can never be brought under obligation to anyone or anything! Communicating and revealing is an activity of grace and love.

Why Was It Written?

There are at least two reasons why God had the revelation of divine truth written.

- a) It saved from human distortion:
 - i) It was God's purpose that the truths He revealed should be available for future generations. Had this been left to oral tradition, we would have been left with a massive collection of recollections and traditions which would have an ever increasing accumulation of error as time passed. A permanent written record was necessary.
 - ii) There is an archenemy of God and man who has blinded the minds of men who blindly accept irrational reasoning rather than the word of God. It is a ploy Satan used in the Garden of Eden when he said: "Hath God said" (Gen. 3:1) and sought to cast a query on the revelation and divine communication of God. He sought to employ human rationale instead of the revealed will, and the result was sin coming into the world. Human rationale, imagination, religious supremacy, cherished traditions, nor emotional experiences, real or otherwise, must never rise above the scriptures in authority and finality.

Our Assumption So Far

To a great extent our assumption so far has been based on the fact that there is a God who reveals Himself and His truth, which leads to the question, "Is there such a thing as Divine revelation?"

Before the Lord left earth He made several promises concerning the Holy Spirit, whom He called the "Comforter" (Jn. 16:7), whom we are told "is the Holy Ghost" (Jn. 14:26), and is identical to the Lord as is seen in the Greek word translated "another" (Jn. 14:16). This Holy Person could not come until there were two happenings, the Lord had to go away (Jn. 16:7) and the Lord glorified (Jn. 7:39). He was "sent" (Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:7); He was "given" (Jn. 14:16), and He "proceedeth from the Father" (Jn. 15:26).

Why Did He Come Among Us?

It was:

- a) To abide with us for ever (Jn. 14:16)
- b) Teach you all things (Jn. 14:26)
- c) Bring all things to remembrance of the things the Lord had said to the disciples (Jn. 14:26)
- d) To testify of Christ (Jn. 15:26)
- e) Guide into all truth (Jn. 16:13)
- f) To indwell the believer (Jn. 14:17)
- g) To seal the believer (Eph. 1:13)
- h) To be the earnest of our inheritance (Eph. 1:14)

When these scriptures are considered, it is evident from "b" and "e" the purpose was that of revelation. It is important to observe that revelation did not come by the activities or experiences of man, but by the Holy Spirit! (1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)

The Boundaries of Revelation

It is very important to recognize that God's revelation never went further than its recipient. That is, it never, like the Aaronic priesthood, went from father to son. The privilege of being given revelation never passed from generation to generation, it always stopped with the individual. Amos was a herdsman, Moses was a prince and a shepherd, in neither case were either of their fathers prophets, and Moses had at least two sons and neither of them were prophets.

Revelation finished when the scriptures were complete, and there is no such a thing today as fresh revelation. Had fresh revelation been given in 100, 300 A D, then those who had lived before the completed canon could not have developed to spiritual maturity. To be thoroughly furnished, or brought to spiritual maturity, one must have completeness of revelation.

Those who profess to have divine revelations are putting themselves in the same category as the prophets and apostles. If a single “revelation” is contrary to the scripture of truth (Dan. 10:21), then they are false prophets, the same as those who troubled Israel with false hopes. Of course if every prophecy and “revelation” is true, then they must be counted as Holy men and women, for it was by Holy men the Holy Spirit moved (2 Pet.1:20-21). This being so, any professed new revelation is blasphemy. There are those who have made such “revelations”, such as:

- a) There is not three persons in the God head but nine. This is blasphemous, but it was presented a fresh revelation.
- b) When the Lord said, “It is finished”, it was not, and that he had to go into hell to be kicked by the demons for three days and nights is not fresh revelation but blasphemy.

Any teaching which promotes activity, while ignoring divine revelation, but all the time professing to come from God, is wrong.

Numerous Instances in Scripture of Divine Revelation. The following are a few:

1) Prophecies concerning Christ:

- a) Perhaps the greatest evidences of prophecy is not the overruling of God in causing circumstances, but by man unwittingly fulfilling the prophecies. For instance:
 - i) When our Lord hung on the cross there were the Roman soldiers at its base. It was theirs to take the clothes of the crucified individual and divide them between each other. Some 700 years before, David had been caused to write the words: “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture” (Psa. 22:18).
 - ii) Matthew, Luke, and John all inform us of the soldiers casting lots (Matt. 27:35; Lk. 23:34; Jn. 19:23-24).

The soldiers divided His garments and cast lots for His vesture. These men were totally ignorant that they were fulfilling the ancient prophecy (Jn. 19:24).

2) Prophecies concerning individuals:

- a) Among the many prophecies that were given to a person still alive and who would see it fulfilled was that of Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed and saw a great tree. It was cut odd but a stump was left which was bound by iron bands. Being troubled, he sent for Daniel who warned him that if he did not change his ways God would judge him. A year later Nebuchadnezzar walked on the walls of Babylon, and in a moment, his mind went from him and he became like an animal (Dan. 4:23, 26, 28-29, 30-33). Years later when Belshazzar was having a great feast, he saw the finger writing on the wall but no one could tell the meaning. They all knew it was an ominous message, and again Daniel, by divine revelation, gave the interpretation (Dan. 5:22-30).

3) Prophecies concerning nations, their fall and desolations:

- a) Tyre (Isa. 23:15, 17); Babylon (Isa. 13:13-22); Egypt (Isa.19:1-19); Moab (Isa. 15:1-9); Samaria (Mic. 1:6-9).

4) Prophecies concerning present day characteristics:

- a) The increase in demonic doctrines and activity, a people void of a conscience, etc. (1 Tim. 4:1-3; Lk. 17:28; Matt. 24:37-38)

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- 5) The unveiling of who Christ is:
- a) When the Lord asked the disciples: “Whom do men say that I, the Son of man am?” (Matt. 16:13). After they had answered, He specifically asked them: “Whom say ye that I am?” (Matt. 16:15). The response from Peter was: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”, to which the Lord replied: “Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven” (Matt. 16:16-17). This was divine revelation.
- 6) The unveiling of that which is past, and unknowable by human intelligence:
- a) Daniel, who told King Nebuchadnezzar that which he had dreamt the night before. The human impossibility of the task. During the night Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which greatly concerned him, and wanted to know the true meaning of it. He told his soothsayers to tell him the interpretation but would not tell them the dream. It was a brilliant ploy for to get the truth. His argument being, if you cannot tell what happened in the past without external data, how can I believe that which you tell concerning the future, for there is no external data for it? It is, “Tell me the thoughts of my mind in my unconscious state”. There is no bluffing here, and they knew it could not be done by a mere human. It must come from the gods! They were, in effect, saying the only way such data could come is by divine revelation. Daniel comes before the king and boldly proclaims: “There is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets”. He went home and with his brethren they prayed to the God of heaven and then went to sleep. Then, in his sleep, the Lord revealed to Daniel not only the dream, but its interpretation. God revealed it to him, it was divine revelation! (Dan. 2:1-47)
 - b) Today man mocks those who believe in the creation by God as recorded in Genesis 1. Bill Nye, Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, all mocked and mock the God of the Bible and His work in creation. In their fear of the truth they resort to mockery by name calling. Sadly, Hitches and Madelyn Murray O Hare have not learnt the reality that there is a God to whom they are accountable. In the history of fault finding no one has ever been able to nullify any statement made. There are at least twenty-five statements made which can never be discerned by the human mind or even imagined, yet every one is perfectly accurate. Clearly, Adam was given it by divine revelation, who passed it on to succeeding generations.
- 7) The unveiling of that which is future:
- a) Joseph who revealed to the baker and butler the precise meanings of their dreams (Gen. 40:1-22).
- 8) How He wants His habitation to be:
- a) Moses was to lead the children of Israel in building a dwelling place for God, His sanctuary. But, despite being brought up in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, how would Moses know what sort of dwelling place God would want? The Pharaoh's had magnificent palaces and they were only earthly human men. God revealed to Moses each aspect of His sanctuary. The plans were given by divine revelation. The evidence that not only were they given by divine revelation, but built according to that revelation, was when the glory of the Lord filled the place.
 - i) “And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount” (Ex. 25:40).
 - ii) “And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick” (Num. 8:4).

The Preciousness of Divine Revelation

Every gift of God is precious and good, and divine revelation is one that breathes comfort. God has spoken and we can rest in the comfort of Genesis and the creation narrative (Gen. 1:1-2:3). There need never be any fear of man finding a missing link, or science proving the scriptures wrong. The author of science and the scriptures is the God of truth and both will forever be united. When science is right it accords with the scriptures, and when it

is contradictory to the scriptures it is wrong. Thank God for His gracious consideration in deigning to communicate with fallen creatures and His redeemed.

Concluding Thoughts

Why does God communicate? It is a manifestation of infinite grace when, only after man sinned, we read of God as the “Voice” calling to Him. Communication is an expression of friendship. It can be an expression of the desire for restored fellowship, or clarification as when one says, “Lets talk about it”. Communication indicates the maintaining or desire for a deeper fellowship. There is the danger of not seeing the scriptures as a divine communicate, the counter balance of my communication to Him in prayer.

Such is the importance of divine revelation in its completion in the scriptures without any false fresh revelations. It is a matter of “either”, or “or”:

- a) Either parts of the scriptures are by divine revelation or they are the imaginations of man.
- b) Either the creation narratives are fact or fancy?
- c) Either the revelations given to Paul were God given or fleshy creativeness.
- d) Either Revelation is an unveiling of the Lord by God or a lonely mans vain hopes.

This is not a trivial nicety for discussion over afternoon tea.

- a) If there is no divine revelation concerning creation, then how do you know evolution is not a fact?
- b) If there is no divine revelation about the fall of Satan, then how do I know that the temptations I face are satanically originated?
- c) If there is no divine revelation concerning the order of the church, then all we are doing is following some ancient sages thoughts, and are no different than those who follow the writing of Buddha or Confucius.

In the following studies we will show that the Scriptures are not just another “holy book”, but as originally given were the inspired Word of God, and that which we have today is in a number of translations as close to those as it is possible to get. Thus we can speak very emphatically of having the inspired Word of God.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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