

III. The Revealed Word of God.

A. General Revelation.

All that God has created reveals much about God. The creation shows us God's great power. This is an extremely large universe. God created it all. The universe is also very complex. With great wisdom God made material things, life and living creatures. And He made man in His own image. Psalm 19:1,2 **"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge."**

Only a very wise and powerful God could have made such a great world. We are reminded that this world is not ours. We didn't make it. And we are not our own. God made us, too. We learn a lot from seeing the created world. The Word tells us that we learn of God's power and deity from it. Romans 1:19,20 **"Because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."** Seeing this world, we should know much about God. And if we don't, we have no excuse. Do we understand about God? NO!

Because we are all sinners. Sin has blinded our eyes and hardened our hearts. We see the wonderful things---like people, and like DNA, but we are not impressed. We don't even think about God. We should be amazed, and we should praise God for all that He has made. We should worship Him, but we just think how we can use the things we see. We cannot really know God until our Lord Jesus gives us a new heart—gives us forgiveness and a new life. We must be born again. For that we need a new revelation—the Word of God, and the gracious work of the Holy Spirit.

B. Special Revelation.

So God in His mercy gave us a special revelation of Himself, His Son Jesus, by the Holy Spirit. This is sufficient for all the spiritual needs we have. Hebrews 1:1-3 **"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

God spoke at various times and in various ways. He spoke directly to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Job, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others.

God spoke through dreams and visions to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, Joseph and Mary, Peter, Paul, John and many others.

God the Holy Spirit inspired messages to all of the writers of Scripture. The Holy Spirit working in their hearts told them what to write. Some wrote much and some little. Under His guidance they wrote down God's Words and we may read them in the Bible.

God spoke through the prophets and the apostles, but Jesus Christ Himself was the greatest and clearest message of all. He gave the greatest revelation. He was the embodiment of truth. We are thankful that all this revelation is given to us in the Bible.

C. Inspiration of the Scriptures.

How did God give His word to the prophets and apostles?

1. Some have said it was *mechanical inspiration*. In other words, God had these men write and like recording machines the prophets and apostles recorded it. But this is a great mistake. The people who received the revealed Word were thinking, investigating, and choosing appropriate words. But the Holy Spirit was guiding all this so that they wrote the Word of God without mistakes.

2. *Dynamical inspiration view*. Other people have believed that the recipients of the Word were especially blessed and gifted people so that not only when they received the Word, but always in every way their words and manner of life was perfect. This is also a mistake. Such perfect people never did exist. Abraham, Moses, David, Peter and even Paul committed sins., Also, several times God spoke to unbelievers like Baalam, Nebucadnezzar, Belshazar and Caiphas.

3. *Organic inspiration*. (Berkhof p.42) God did not employ the writers mechanically, but acted on them in an organic way, in harmony with the laws of their own inner being, He used them just as they were, with their character and temperament, their gifts and talents, their education and culture, their vocabulary, diction and style; illuminated their minds, prompted them to write, repressed the influence of sin on their literary

activity and guided them in the choice of their words and in the expression of their thoughts.” This is the correct view.

God spoke to imperfect people. By dreams, visions and by angels He sent His Word. But the Holy Spirit sustained, led and caused them to remember so that they did not write errors. They did not write the general meaning of the Word, rather every word truly revealed the meaning God intended. The translated scriptures are not so perfect, so it is necessary for pastors to be able to read them in the original language.

4. The extent of inspiration.

Some false teachers say that the spiritual parts of Scripture are inspired. But they say that historical records and scientific things are erroneous, and they are not inspired. Some even say that only the Sermon on the Mount or other special passages are inspired. But they can't agree what is inspired and what isn't. This is false and leads to doubt about the inspiration of the whole Bible.

Others say that God let the writers choose their own words, so we cannot say that all and every word is inspired by the Spirit. This is not what the Bible teaches. These people do not believe we have the Word of God. It is partly the Word of God. The Scriptural teaching is called Juuzen Reikan.

5. Plenary Inspiration.

Some say that there are errors in history and science. The Bible teaches that the whole Bible is the inspired Word of God. All of the history and all of the science in the Bible is inspired, so we can say it is all the Word of God. To be more accurate we may call it Verbal Inspiration. The Spirit of God guided the thoughts so that they wrote the exact words which God wanted to reveal. (Illumination is a word which is sometimes used for inspiration or revelation, but illumination is the work of the Spirit enabling us to understand the Word.) Let us now see some Scripture passages about the Word of God.

II Corinthians 4:6 “For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” This is not revelation or inspiration. It is enlightenment by the Spirit enabling people to understand about Christ, understand the Word of God and believe. Some writers of good Christian books may be enlightened, but they are not inspired. Their books are also not revelations. The Spirit may have illuminated their hearts

so they could write good books. But He did not cause them to write a new revelation.

Revelation is a word often used concerning the Word of God.

See

Galatians 1:12 “For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Paul clearly says this word is not from man, but from Christ. Revelations are perfect and are from God.

Ephesians 3:3 “How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery...” Revelation is the word which is supernaturally given by God. The whole book of Revelation was given to John by God. No human writer or teacher helped John.

Inspiration is another word often used in the Scriptures.

See

II Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” The whole Bible is inspired by God. Not just part of it, but all of it is inspired by God. Therefore, it is perfectly appropriate for teaching, reproof, discipline, and instruction in righteousness. This very verse is inspired by God. God tells us that the whole Bible is inspired by God.

II Peter 1:19-21 “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” God is clearly stating that the Scriptures did not come from the will of man. It is not a human book. The Holy Spirit moved men to write the words which God wanted to reveal to us. It is God’s Word. “The Holy Spirit moved men” means that the Holy Spirit carried them along. Therefore, they could know and write the words of God. The whole Bible is God’s Book.

Some of the chapters of the Bible are amazingly beautiful. It is wonderful for us and our children to memorize. There are also chapters which are mostly names, genealogies. We may wonder why they are there. But God shows His concern for every person and for the history of His people. Though many men sinned grievously, He forgave them and led them through the years. The Word of God is excellent to instruct us in every situation. He gives us wisdom about this world, about ourselves, and about the future after we leave this world. He gives us the message of salvation for

all nations. It is a great light for the world. And it gives us hope where there is no other hope.

D. The Infallible Word.

Everybody in this world faces a lot of difficult questions. It is not easy to find the right answers to them. But to live without answers is perplexing. In the long run it is also dangerous.

We wonder where everything came from. Did matter come into being spontaneously? Is the material world eternal. What about evolution? Did everything evolve from some original substance? There are many people who think that way? But isn't there a God? Does the world reveal that an intelligent being has been at work in the universe?

The answer to these questions is in the Bible. It is God's answer.

Many young people wonder why they are here in this world. What am I and what is my purpose in being here? Many animals seem to be here to serve people. Are we also here to serve people? If so, whom are we to serve? Some people don't want to serve people. If so, whom should we serve? Should we just serve ourselves? That is a selfish way of living. Is there someone greater than we are whom we should serve? The Bible tells us about Him.

There is also the problem of morals. What is good and what is bad? Actually, is there good and bad? Is there a good life which we should live? Or is it not wrong to lie, steal, hate, and kill? If we do wrong will we sometime reap what we have sown? Is one kind of life happier than another? Or should we just say that every person is entitled to his own kind of happiness? Are there no absolute rules about right and wrong?

There are many kinds of religions? Are they all wrong? Are some religions right and some wrong? Are they all right? How can we know whether a religion is true, or whether it is a false religion? Do we have to try each one? Can we believe the good things people say about their religion? The Bible gives us what God says about religions.

And when our life is over what will become of us? (Nobody knows when his life will end.) Will we just evaporate or rot into nothing? Will we enter nirvana and be dissolved into some unknown substance in Nirvana? Maybe we will go to heaven or to hell. If so, we should try to find out which? Are we worthy to go to heaven? If not, how can we become worthy? Is Jesus the only Savior of people? Can He make us fit for heaven, and eventually take us there? The Word of God gives us God's answer to all of these difficult questions. If we don't study it we will someday regret it. That is for sure.