

# HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE

## LESSON 2 REVELATION

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### FORMS OF REVELATION

There are different ways of classifying or categorizing the ways in which God has revealed Himself to man. One way is by four general forms of revelation, proceeding from least detailed to most detailed.

1. Observed revelation
2. Oral revelation
3. Written revelation
4. Incarnate revelation

Another, more common way of classifying God's revelation follows a two-fold division between general revelation and special revelation.

### GENERAL REVELATION

General revelation is God's unwritten and unspoken communication to man. It is how God reveals Himself to us indirectly. In fact, God gives His general revelation to all people without distinction, which is not true of His special revelation. Primarily general revelation comes through nature or the creation.

- Look up Psalm 19:1-6. What does it teach about general revelation?
  - o See also Psalm 8:1-4; Job 12:7-9
- Romans 1:18-21

General revelation is not limited to nature alone however, but also comes in the form of providence and man's conscience. The hand of God can be seen guiding human history and providing the means for life on earth.

Further, God programs all people with a conscience, which although it can be distorted, contains God's sense of right and wrong. God writes His law on man's heart thereby revealing to man that which is acceptable or unacceptable.

- What attributes of God are revealed through general revelation?
  - o Matthew 5:45- benevolence
  - o Acts 14:15-17- provides food, life
  - o Daniel 2:21- sovereignty
- Romans 2:14-15
  - o Voice of god to the soul on right and wrong

### **SPECIAL REVELATION**

Special revelation is God's direct communication with man. Although most of the time we associate special revelation with the Bible itself, special revelation can also come in the form of dreams, visions, theophanies, and direct address. The highest form of special revelation is in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is God's ultimate message to man; He is the pinnacle of God's revelation. Hebrews 1:1 says that God spoke to the prophets in many portions and in many ways. Here are some examples of God's special revelation to the prophets.

- Direct address- Exodus 33:11
- Audible voice- 1 Samuel 3:4
- Inaudible voice- "The word of the Lord came to me"
- Written tablet- Exodus 31:18
- Urim and Thummim- Exodus 28:30
- Theophany- Genesis 18:1
- Angels- Luke 2:8-14
- Dreams- Daniel 7:1
- Visions- Ezekiel 1:1; Isaiah 6:1-7
- Miracles- Exodus 3:2; 5:1-2
- Providence- Ezekiel 11:9-10
- Incarnate- Hebrews 1:2

<b>TYPES OF DIVINE REVELATION<sup>1</sup></b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>Manifestation</b>	<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Significance</b>
General Revelation	In Nature	Ps. 19:1-6	Reveals God exists.  Reveals God's glory.
		Rom. 1:18-21	Reveals God is omnipotent.  Reveals God will judge.
	In Providence	Matt. 5:45	Reveals God is benevolent to all people.
		Acts 14:15-17	Reveals God provides food for all people.
		Dan. 2:21	Reveals God raises up and removes rulers.
	In Conscience	Rom. 2:14-15	Reveals God has placed His law within the hearts of all people.
	Special Revelation	In Christ	John 1:18
John 5:36-37			Reveals the Father's compassion.
John 6:36; 14:10			Reveals that the Father gives life to those who believe in the Son.
In Scripture		2 Tim. 3:16, 17	Reveals all the doctrine, rebuke, correction, and guidance that the Christian needs for good living.
		2 Pet. 1:21	Reveals all that God has chosen to disclose through human authors directed by the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1997, c1989), 157.