

## Doctrine of Bible

### Special Revelation

1. Theologians make a distinction between General Revelation, and Special Revelation.
2. A further distinction is to be made between Mediate General Revelation, and Immediate General Revelation.
3. This type of revelation involves something that stands between two points.
4. God, who is in heaven, is viewed as being transcendent to His creation. Man is on earth. One instrument which God uses to convey Himself to mankind is nature.
  - *Romans 1:20 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:*
5. The revelation which comes through something other than God is the medium.

#### ***Special Note.***

The media is a particular medium. The TV, radio, or newspaper is the media, or means through which announcements are made.

6. Mediate revelation refers to knowledge God gives about Himself, other than direct revelation.
7. In addition to mediate revelation, there is another way God reveals Himself, and that is through the conscience.
8. There is a sense of the divine that God has planted in the soul. It manifests itself in our conscience, and in our knowledge of right and wrong.
  - *Romans 2:11 For there is no respect of persons with God. 12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; 13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*
9. The conscience is not a medium revelation, but an immediate, or direct revelation from God to the soul.

10. With that distinction being made, there is special revelation.
11. Special revelation differs from general revelation. In general revelation, God gives Himself to all people, everywhere.
12. In special revelation, God gives Himself to select individuals. God gives special revelation to individuals through sacred Scripture, which is only understood by the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit.
- *1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*
13. The Bible tells us of truths that cannot be understood, or gathered from nature. The Bible tells of the incarnation, God's plan of redemption, the substitutionary death of Christ, and His work of atonement for sin.
- *The Incarnation. Matthew 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*
  - *God's Plan of Redemption. Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*
  - *The Substitutionary Death of Christ. Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*
  - *The Work of Atonement. Romans 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*
14. These truths cannot be found in the natural realm.
15. The primary way God gives distinct information through special revelation is in the person of Jesus Christ.
- *Hebrews 1:1 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, 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.*

16. In the world of philosophy there is a subdivision field called epistemology, which deals with the science of knowing. It delves into the way a human being is able to acquire knowledge. It evolves into a person's worldview.
17. A primary debate in epistemology is whether knowledge comes through the mind, and rational deduction, or through the five senses of hearing, touch, taste, sight, and smell. This is the empirical approach to the external world.
18. In the church, debate continues over what role reason plays, and what role revelation plays in the Christian's epistemology.
19. What all Christians should agree upon ultimately, is that knowledge comes to us from God Himself.
20. That becomes very important in the quest for truth. If God reveals knowledge about Himself, about the creation, about man, that knowledge will be far superior to anything that can be deduced from man's own introspection, and observation.
21. The author of Hebrews tell how God revealed Himself in various ways.
- God spoke to some directly. Exodus 33:11
  - God revealed Himself through dreams. Genesis 28:12
  - God revealed Himself through signs, like He did with Gideon. Judges 6:37-40
  - God revealed Himself through the casting of lots. Leviticus 16:8
  - God revealed Himself through the Urim and Thummim. Numbers 27:21
  - God revealed Himself through the prophets and priests. Amos 3:7
  - God revealed Himself through the sacrifices and festivals. Hebrews 10:1-18
  - God revealed Himself through the Law. Galatians 3:24
  - God revealed Himself through angels. Genesis 16:7
22. God revealed Himself through a theophany. A theophany, by definition, means, God manifested.
- There was the burning bush. Exodus 3:1-3.
  - There was the Angel of the Lord. Genesis 16:7-13.
  - There was the pillar of cloud, and pillar of fire. Exodus 13:21.
23. The prophets were the agents of revelation. They functioned as vessels, or conduits of revelation, and began their message with, "Thus saith the Lord."
- Moses. *Exodus 11:4 And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:*

- Joshua. *Joshua 7:13 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow: for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.*
- Samuel. *1 Samuel 15:2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.*

24. The words of the prophets were written down, and preserved as Scripture.

25. Unfortunately, there were also false prophets within the camp, or the gates of the city. These false prophets taught what the people wanted to hear, not what they should hear.

- *Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

26. There were three tests to determine a false prophet from a true prophet.

- The call. *Jeremiah 1:4 Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. 6 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. 7 But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. 8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. 9 Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. 10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*

***Special Note.***

In the New Testament, the counterpart to the prophet was the apostle. They too had to be called. *1 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,* An apostle was one who was sent. Christ sent forth His apostles to preach the gospel. The apostles represent Him. To hear an apostle, was to hear Christ. To reject an apostle, to reject the message of an apostle, was to reject Christ.

- The presence of miracles. The prophetic ministry was surrounded by miracles, beginning with Moses, and later, Elijah. In that line, the other prophets ministered. In the New Testament, miracles authenticated apostolic authority. That is why it is important to distinguish between lying wonders, and magic, and an authentic miracle.
- The fulfillment. What was said in the name of the Lord had to come to pass. *Deuteronomy 18:22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.* What false prophets say fails to come to pass.

27. In addition to the forms of revelation mentioned, there is the revelation of the Word of God Incarnate, Jesus Himself.

- *Hebrews 1:1 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, 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.*

28. The Chief of all apostles, the Prophet above all prophets, the fullest expression of the Father, is Christ.