



Hebrews 1:1

God has Spoken

God has spoken and He did not stutter. He has made Himself clear.

This is a basic conviction of the Christian faith. Through special revelation God made Himself known through the prophets. He revealed to them His plan of the ages.

“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways” (Hebrews 1:1). (Unless otherwise noted all Scriptures are from NASB95).

God revealed His will to the ancient Jewish fathers, the Israelites through the prophets, from the time of Moses to the time of Malachi. The divine origin of Jewish revelation is from God; the Scriptures did not evolve. There is no evolution of true religion. It is a divine self revelation of the one true God. God spoke to His chosen people. In so doing, He revealed His will. The "Fathers" and the "prophets" stood in a special relationship to God. God spoke to the prophets and through them to the fathers. The apostle Peter wrote: "for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:21). "All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God," wrote the apostle Paul. It is God-breathed. The Scriptures are an infallible statement of the will of God.

God in His sovereign grace has reached down to mankind and revealed Himself and His eternal purpose for all to know Him. He did this by revealing Himself to the prophets in the Old Testament, and by sending His own son, Jesus Christ as recorded in the New Testament. There is a progressive self revelation of God as we begin in the book of Genesis a journey to the fulfillment of all the promises in person and work of Jesus Christ. God does not give a full complete revelation of everything about Himself and His purpose for mankind in one quick brief presentation. The will of God was gradually revealed. An infinite God cannot reveal more than finite men can understand. God is patient. He progressively reveals truths about Himself and His purpose for mankind. Here a little, there some more, like bringing all the pieces of a great puzzle together until we see the complete picture. Each revelation of Himself to men in the Old Testament was true and accurate.

He used different methods of revelation. Sometimes He revealed Himself through dreams, at other times by visions, at other times by voices or plain explicit language, sometimes by internal sense that God was leading and guiding, some times by angels, etc. God used narratives, prediction, lengthy arguments, logic discourse, prose, symbols, types, and poetry. God spoke in His creation of the world, Adam and Eve, judgment against Cain and acceptance of Able, deliverance of Noah and his family in the flood, the call of Abraham and His descendents to be God's chosen people, His mercy shown to David, deliverance of the slaves in Egypt and judgment upon Egyptians gods. He spoke to Elijah in a still quiet voice, and the thunder to Moses, the daily sacrifice of the priests, and the Day of Atonement, the sweet singer of Israel in the Psalms, the promise of one greater than king David, the wisdom of Solomon, prophecies of the coming of the Messiah, the judgment of the exile in Assyria and Babylon, the deliverance by the Persians, etc. Through it all there is the sovereign hand of the LORD God directing all of history.

God's final word came when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus Christ is God's ultimate and final Word. In Him all the promises of God are fulfilled. He is the final word; we do not have to turn somewhere else or to another book. There is no progression of the revelation of God beyond Christ. There is nothing else to be said. He is the final word from God.

We have two great needs. We need a clear revelation of who God is and what He demands of lost sinners. We also need to be reconciled to Him according to his standard of righteousness. God has fulfilled those two needs by revealing Himself and providing a right standing with Him by means of the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

God spoke to the patriarchs in the Old Testament through His prophets in many different ways on many different occasions. God revealed everything we need to know in order to have a personal relationship with Him.

God Communed with Adam and Eve

Imagine what it must have been like in the Garden of Eden after God created the heavens and the earth, the animals and Adam and Eve. How beautiful must have been His creation, pristine and perfect in all of its glory. At that point nothing was contaminated, polluted or deformed.

Genesis 1:26-27 tells us: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

"God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day" (Genesis 1:31 (NASB95)).

The sovereign Creator took man and put him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. He instructed Adam to cultivate the land, be productive, and bear children. Out of love He warned him not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The boundaries were set ahead of time. He even told Adam of the consequences if he disobeyed. "In the day you eat from it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17).

That is love. Loving parents admonish their children, "Don't play with fire. Don't put your hand on the hot stove because you will get burnt." A loving God says, "Don't disobey my commandments because there are eternal consequences."

There was perfect communion between God and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. There was no sense of guilt. We love that kind of communion with God in our day. God spoke to Adam, but they chose not to obey His word.

Even after Adam and Eve disobeyed God spoke to them again. Genesis 3:8-10. "They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?'

He said, 'I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself'" (NASB95). That is the love of God reaching down to a fallen sinner. God in His grace and mercy reached down to Adam to restore him and bring reconciliation. Yes, there were consequences to disobedience, but there was also the exercise of God's grace.

Adam and Even listened in on the judgment God declared on Satan. "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel" (Genesis 3:15, NASB95).

Here is the first promise of hope. Here is the first promise that God will in a time in the future provide the only solution to man's depravity and restore lost mankind to a perfect relationship with Him. The rest of the Old Testament is a revelation of how God accomplished that restoration through a chosen people and the Lamb of God.

God spoke in times past to His chosen people in many ways. With Adam and Even it was direct, verbal communication. God did not stutter when He spoke to Adam and Eve. They understood what He said to them. They were without excuse.

Enoch walked with God

When Enoch was born to Seth "men began to call upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4:26, NASB95). The Hebrew term for "call" means to "call in the name." The idea of worshipping the LORD through prayer and sacrifice is in mind (cf. Gen 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25). The idea could also be "proclaimed" the name of Yahweh. For the first time the name of the LORD is used in worship.

Enoch "walked with God" is a beautiful description of intimate relationship Enoch enjoyed with the LORD God. The word "walked" denotes the most confidential, intercourse, the close communion with the personal God. He walked side by side with God. Intimacy, fellowship, habitual stroll day by day is the idea. "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" Genesis 5:24). "He was not" gives us the idea that Enoch was translated, meaning he did not die, but he was glorified as believers in Christ are at once when they die. "By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God" (Hebrews 11:5, NASB95).

Everyone else in Enoch's day lived and died, lived and died. Lived and died. Genesis five repeats the expression, "and he died," "and he died," "and he died," until it comes to Enoch, "and he was not for God took him." Enoch heard God speak and he enjoyed fellowship and obedience with God.

God told Noah to build a giant cargo ship

By the time of Noah, the preacher of righteousness, the wickedness of mankind had reached depths of depravity. "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5, NASB95). I don't think you can find stronger statement of the wickedness of humanity. It is a picture of radical depravity of mankind. God saw their wicked hearts in rebellion and grieved in His heart (Gen. 6:6). "The earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence" (v. 11). God saw that mankind was corrupt, depraved, putrid, degenerate, debased. It is not a pretty picture. Sin is never a pretty picture in the eyes of a holy God.

However, God in love spoke to Noah and was determined to save a family by his grace and preserve the human race from destruction. The ark he built was a picture and symbol of a future day when the LORD God would save mankind through the provision of His grace at Calvary. In love and mercy God promised that He would provide eternal salvation of lost mankind. In times past God spoke and Noah listened and obeyed.

God spoke to Abraham

"Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed'" (Genesis 12:1-3, NASB95).

The story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is that of the LORD God renewing His covenant with His chosen people. Each restatement reveals more detail of God's eternal purpose for Israel, and the coming of her deliverer. God spoke in visions in the night as in Genesis 15:1 saying, "Do not fear Abram, I am a shield to you; your reward shall be very great." Then Abraham "believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). That is one of the greatest statements in the Old Testament. It is a repeated declaration in the New Testament of God's way of declaring sinful man just in His sight based upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

God spoke face to face, He spoke in visions, and He spoke to Abraham through His special messenger. The angel of the LORD is a special messenger in the Old Testament. He is the manifestation of God Himself. He refers to God as His sender and speaks for God. Yet, He is divine. He is also seen a walking, eating, talking, assumes visible form in the pillar of cloud by day and fire in the cloud at night over the children of Israel. He is the Shekinah glory of God. Yes, God spoke long ago to the great patriarchs in the Old Testament. God entered into an everlasting covenant with Abraham and his descendents.

"I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you" (Genesis 17:7, NASB95). Israel owns all of the land, not the Arabs. All of the land of Palestine belongs to Israel. It still remains for Israel to go and possess all the land. The day will come when she shall possess the land that belongs to her. Why? Because the LORD God said so. If you have doubts go back and read Genesis 15, 16, 17. I will put my confidence in the LORD God rather than bankrupt immoral politicians of the world.

We cannot pass over God telling Abraham to go and offer up Isaac as a burnt sacrifice offering. God said to Abraham, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you" (Genesis 22:2, NASB95). In obedience to two headed up the mountain. They were both obedient to the LORD'S leading. When Isaac asked about the lamb for the burnt offering Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." Then the two of them walked on together (Genesis 22:8, NASB95). God spoke, and here were a father and a son who were obedient to His instruction.

Abraham built the altar, arranged the wood, bound his son, laid him on the altar on top of the wood, stretched out his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. "But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me'" (Genesis 22:11-12, NASB95). Abraham offered up the ram for a burnt offering in place of his son. God was teaching Abraham and Isaac to trust Him for a substitutionary atonement for sin. The LORD God provided the lamb that died in Isaac's place on Mount Moriah. God spoke, and Abraham and Isaac obeyed Him.

In that sacrificial offering God spoke clearly. "The LORD will provide. . . In the mount of the LORD it will be provided. . . . And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice (Genesis 22:14, 18, NASB).

God did just that when on Mount Moriah the LORD God offered up the perfect Lamb of God who lifted up and took away our sins, and the sins all who will call upon His name.

God spoke to Abraham and Abraham "considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back a type" (Hebrews 11:19, NASB).

God spoke to the ancient Hebrew fathers through visions, symbols, types, pictures of the coming of the savior of sinful mankind.

Each of these revelations of God to mankind revealed more and more of His saving grace and eternal purpose of redemption through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that began in the Garden of Eden.

God spoke through the Passover Sacrifice

The LORD God spoke in the ten plagues against Egypt. The plagues gave public manifestation of the power of the LORD over the pagan gods of Egypt. They were demonstrations of the wrath of a holy God in divine visitation against Pharaoh. They demonstrated for everyone to see that Yahweh is above all the pagan gods of the world. One by one the gods of Egypt were defeated until the worship of Pharaoh himself was destroyed.

Exodus chapter 12 was the last of the ten plagues. It was against all first born males. Ultimately it was against the worship of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. The only means of deliverance from the plague was the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb.

"Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs" (Exodus 12:5-8, NASB95).

Why was the LORD'S Passover so important? "For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will

execute judgments—I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:12-13, NASB95). Moreover, "For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you" (Exodus 12:23, NASB95).

The apostle Paul saw the clear fulfillment of this great picture of salvation in the Old Testament when he wrote: "Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Corinthians 5:7-8, NASB95). Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, our Passover Lamb has been slain for us. Therefore, we too, celebrate because He has redeemed us by the shedding of His own blood.

All of the sacrifices in the books of Exodus and Leviticus are pictures, symbols and types of God teaching His people pointing to the coming of that one perfect sacrifice of His own Son who died to save His people from their sins. God was speaking in those sacrifices. He is still speaking to us instructing us about the only means whereby we can be saved.

Many, many more passages could be cited in the Old Testament about how God has spoken to His people.

God spoke through the Prophets

God spoke to King David through Nathan the prophet giving him the promise of one greater than David. "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. . . Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever" (2 Samuel 7:12-13, 16, NASB95).

God spoke and His word was fulfilled when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. The messenger of God named Gabriel said to Mary, "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:31-35, NASB95). God spoke and Mary was faithful and obeyed Him.

God spoke to King David in songs and visions, and we sing those songs of adoration and praise to the Messiah to this day. All of the Messianic Psalms speak of the coming of Jesus. God was faithful in giving His chosen people a faithful and true revelation of His eternal purposes.

The Hebrew prophet Isaiah heard the voice of the LORD speaking and the prophet wrote clearly. "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14, NASB95). God spoke in time past and He fulfilled every one of His prophecies. "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him" (Isaiah 53:5-6, NASB95).

Every one of these prophecies is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6, NASB95). The apostle Peter declared, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12, NASB95).

God gave many revelations of Himself and His eternal purpose throughout the many periods of world history. They are recorded for us in the Old Testament. He spoke by various means and various ways. He spoke through visions, dreams, face-to-face conversations, supernatural encounters, as well as storms, plagues, natural phenomena, etc. God spoke and He made Himself clear for all to understand. Man was and is without excuse.

God has spoken His final word through His Son

"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son . . ." (Hebrews 1:1-2, NASB95).

God has spoken His final word through His Son, Jesus Christ. There are a lot of strident voices crying in this world saying they have a word from God. Cults come knocking on our doors saying they have the latest word from God. Don't be deceived. God has spoken His final word in and through Jesus Christ. The culminating character of God's revelation is in Jesus Christ.

The way the writer of Hebrews writes in Hebrews 1:1-2 states clearly the cessation of revelation in the apostolic age, or the first century of Christianity. Anyone who comes peddling you a book saying they have the latest revelation of God is a false prophet, the spirit of the antichrist.

God took the initiative to reveal Himself and He did so clearly in the Scriptures and in His Son, Jesus Christ. He spoke clearly and He did not stutter. The problem is not in the revelation from God. The problem is what we will do with the message we have received. There are only two options. One is to reject it, and the other is to believe and obey His word.

Paul and Silas told the Philippian jailor, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31, NASB95). That is the only way to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

SOME ABIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

1. Because God spoke through his prophets we have His message recorded in the Old Testament. God spoke to the Jewish patriarchs, and by the prophets. He did not speak just once, but over and over again by means of promises, types, symbols, commandments, precepts, warnings, judgments, exhortations, etc.
2. Because God has clearly revealed Himself and His eternal purposes for His creation we are held accountable to Him. We are responsible for the message recorded in the Word of God. Therefore, it is to our advantage to read, study the Bible and obey its message.
3. Because God has revealed His will we proclaim there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved (Acts 4:12; John 14:6).
4. Because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God in the flesh He has fully revealed to us what God is like. God has no further revelation to make.
5. Because Jesus Christ alone brings mankind the full revelation of God He alone enables them to enter into the presence of a holy God.
6. Because Jesus Christ had high regard for the Old Testament and appealed to it as the infallible Word of God we too must have a high view of the Scriptures.

Therefore, I plead with you today to place your full confidence and trust in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Jesus died for your sins and rose from the dead to give you God's free gift of eternal life.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NASB95).

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