

Lecture 4 – What is Revelation? (cont.)

“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.” Hebrews 1:1-2

Key Terms

Revelation, *revelatio, apocalypsis, sensus divinitatis, vestigia, semen religionis*

Objectives

- *Compare and contrast the nature and function of general revelation and special revelation.
- *Discuss the nature and function of revelation, especially as it impacts our life and ministry.
- *Describe Calvin’s view of natural religion.

What is Revelation? (cont.)**VII. Historical Revelation**

A. Comparison of general and particular revelation

B. Hebrews 1:1-2

1. God has revealed Himself throughout biblical history in a variety of times and ways.
 - a. Theophanies (Exodus 3:1-6; 13:32; Isaiah 6:1-5)
 - b. Visions (Ezekiel 1:1; Daniel 10:4-9), trances (Acts 10:9-16), and dreams (Genesis 28:10-17)
 - c. Urim and Thummim
 - d. Lots (Esther 3:7; 9:24 ff; 1 Chronicles 24:1-19; Leviticus 16:8-22; Proverbs 16:33; Acts 1:15-26)
 - e. Miracles
 - f. Angelic messengers (Matthew 2:13; 28:2-10)
 - g. Audible speech from God (Exodus 19:3-7; 1 Samuel 3:1-9; Acts 9:1-7)
 - h. Prophetic oracle: the “thus says the Lord” proclamations of the prophets
 - i. Events (e.g., the Exodus)
 - j. The list above includes speech.
 - 1) A spoken word is an event.
 - 2) A deed is an enacted word.
2. While there is a diversity within God’s historical, particular revelation, it is a unified revelation.
3. God’s particular revelation is historical and progressive.

VIII. Revelation through Inspired Speech

A. Balaam in Numbers 23 and 24

B. Amos 3:8

C. Jeremiah 20:9

IX. The Revelation of Christ

A. Jesus as the prophet

B. Jesus as Messiah, fulfillment of promised Messiah

C. Jesus as God incarnate, the authoritative revealer of who God is

X. Scripture: The Word of God Written

God’s particular revelation is instrumental in leading us to Christ.

A. Man’s need

1. God must republish His will for fallen man to return us to the knowledge of God as

Creator.

2. God must address our lack, the broken part within us, to bring us to the knowledge of God the Redeemer.

B. The accommodation of God's creational revelation to fallen man

1. Accommodation to our creatureliness

2. Accommodation to our sinful corruption

a. Calvin's image of spectacles

C. Scripture as a redemptive Word

D. Scripture as the authoritative locus of particular revelation

E. Jesus is the center of all revelation, general or particular.

XI. Word and Spirit

A. Trinitarian revelation

Herman Bavinck. The essence of the Christian religion: _____

B. The authority of Scripture and the ministry of the Spirit

C. Calvin's goal in the first 5 chapters of the *Institutes*

1. There is no way for fallen man to offer an excuse before God.

2. There is no way for fallen man to know God apart from Scripture.