REVELATION AND INSPIRATION



Lesson 5 for October 31, 2026

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw" (Revelation 1:1-2)



Revelation 1:1-2 contains an example of how God reveals his message to us through the prophet:

God reveals his message to Jesus → Jesus reveals the message to an angel → The angel reveals the message to John, the prophet → John puts the received message into writing



But this is not the only way God has revealed himself to the prophets, nor the only way the divine message was conveyed through them. We will study the various ways God revealed himself to the prophets and inspired them.



Revelation and inspiration:

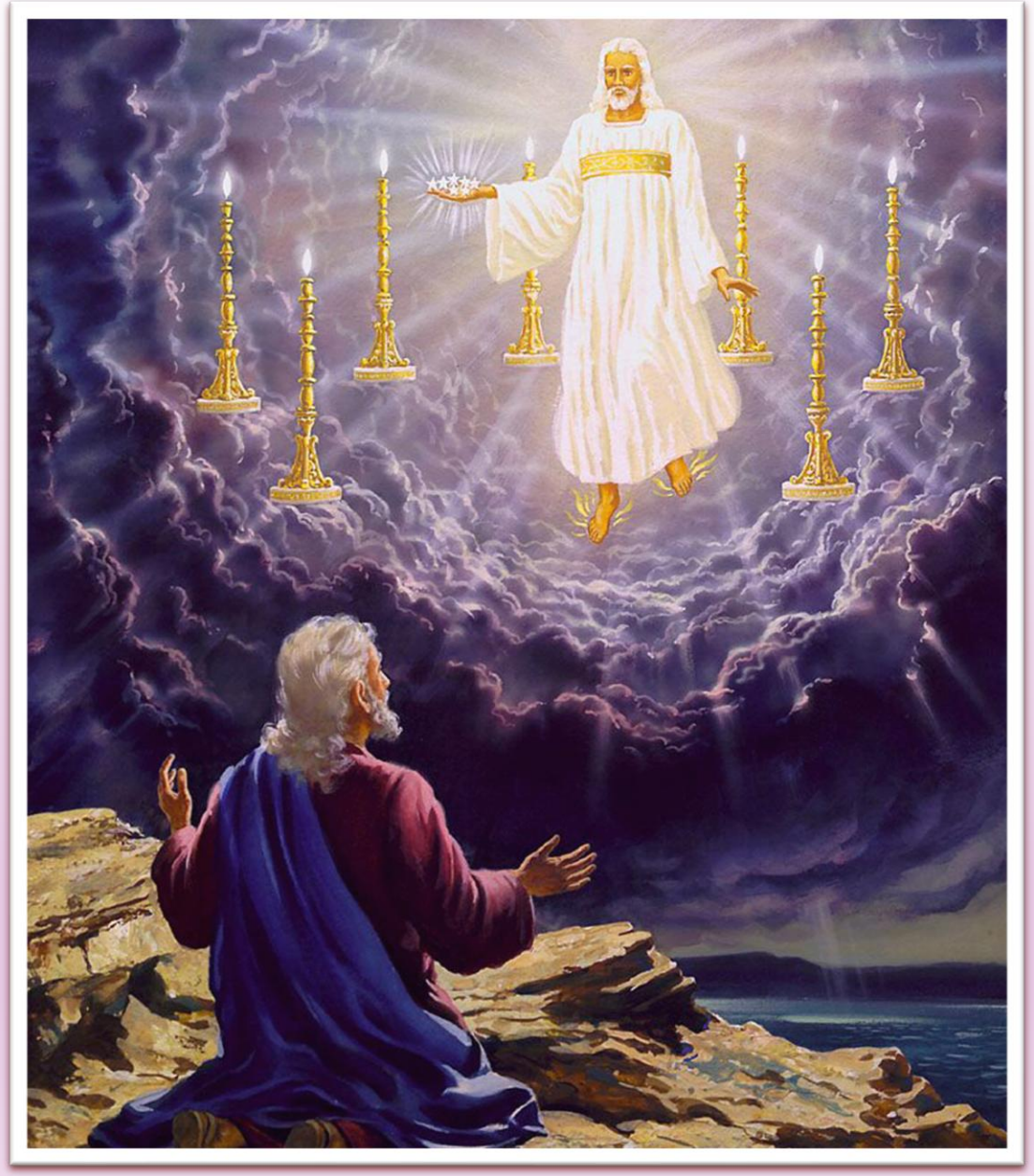
- General and special revelation
- The process of inspiration

Types of prophetic communication:

- Oral messages
- Written messages
- Drama, symbols, parables



REVELATION AND INSPIRATION



GENERAL AND SPECIAL REVELATION

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Psalm 19:1 NVI)

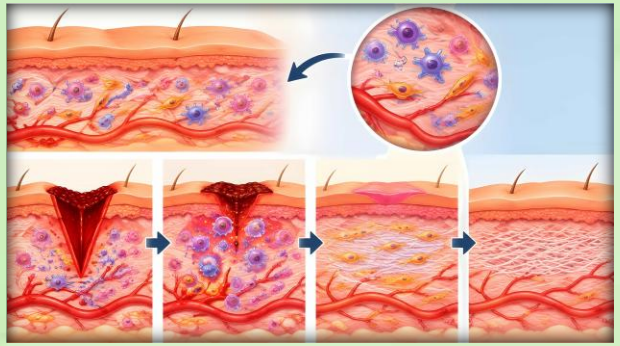
"When there is a prophet among you, I the Lord, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams" (Numbers 12:6 NVI)



Paul says that those who deny the existence of God "are without excuse," for nature reveals "His invisible attributes are clearly seen, [...] even His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20; Ps. 19:1).

We can see how God foresaw the entrance of sin in the regenerative power He implemented in living beings. When we are injured, mechanisms are set in motion that close the wound and regenerate the tissue. And those mechanisms were already there before the injury occurred!

But nature, since the fall of Adam and Eve, also has consequences of sin (predation, earthquakes, ...)



For this reason, God has used more direct methods to make himself known: special revelation through the prophets and Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Bible, the Word of God (Heb. 1:1-2).



THE PROCESS OF INSPIRATION

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16 NVI)



For centuries, God's works and messages were transmitted orally, until God inspired Moses to record these deeds and sayings in writing.



From that moment on, the messages that God wanted to preserve were written by "inspired" people, that is, guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). This makes the Bible a unique book, containing the complete divine revelation.

What was this inspiration process like?



Through visions and dreams (Numbers 12:6)



Through personal experiences (1 John 1:3)



Through historical research (Lk . 1:3)



Through divine impressions (2P. 1:21)





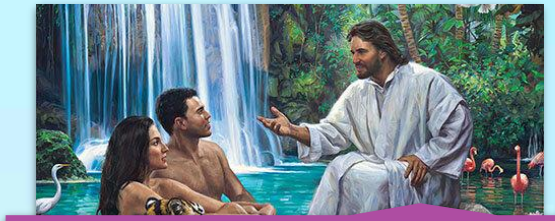


TYPES OF PROPHETIC COMMUNICATION

ORAL MESSAGES

"He stationed the Levites in the temple of the LORD with cymbals, harps and lyres in the way prescribed by David and Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet; this was commanded by the LORD through his prophets. So the Levites stood ready with David's instruments, and the priests with their trumpets."
(2 Chronicles 29:25)

God has spoken directly to men on four occasions:



To Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:16-17)



When giving the 10 commandments (Deut . 4:12)

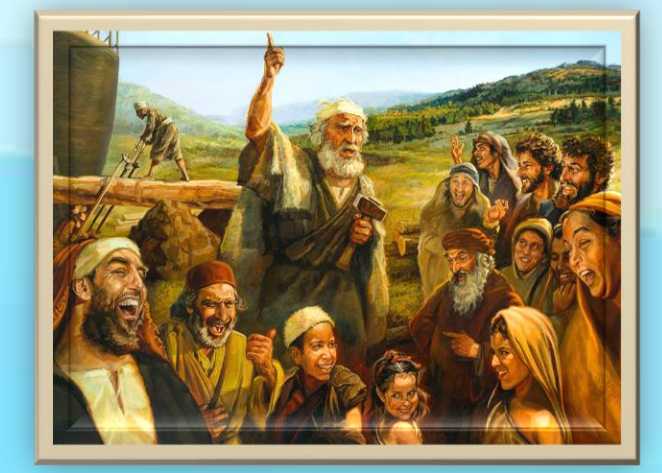


At the baptism of Jesus (Mt. 3:17)



In the transfiguration (Mark 9:7)

For their part, the prophets orally transmitted the words conveyed by God, clearly stating: "Thus says Jehovah" (Jg. 6:8). These messages—as in the case of Noah—were not always recorded in writing.



We only know the words of many prophets through the writings of others, yet they held the same authority as those who left their messages in written form. Among them are Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, and John the Baptist.





WRITTEN MESSAGES

"Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Write this for a memorial in the book' " (Exodus 17:14a)

What were some of the reasons why God decided to leave His message in writing?

- To remember the events (Ex. 17:14)
- To instruct us (Eccl. 12:10)
- To invite us to repentance (Jer. 36:2-3)
- To give us examples to imitate or reject (1 Cor. 10:11)
- So that we may know the future (Rev. 1:19)



In the Bible, the prophets expressed their own human reactions, as well as those of other people. It contains poetry, historical accounts, and written sermons. Sometimes it includes quotations from non-biblical authors or decrees from pagan kings.

However, there are no degrees of inspiration within the Bible. Whether it records sermons, events, or prophecies, it was all inspired by God and faithfully transmits His messages to us throughout time (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

DRAMA, SYMBOLS, PARABLES

"I have also spoken by the prophets, and have multiplied visions; I have given symbols through the witness of the prophets" (Hosea 12:10)



DRAMA



In addition to historical accounts, proverbial sayings, poems, or speeches, the Bible contains many messages conveyed through drama, symbols, and parables.

Ezekiel 4:1-8. God asked Ezekiel to make a model of Jerusalem to represent the siege and fall of the city.

Hosea 1:2-9. God commanded Hosea to marry an adulterous woman to represent the unfaithfulness of Israel.

1 Kings 20:37-42. A prophet asks another to strike him and pretends to be wounded in battle to rebuke Ahab's sin.

Jeremiah 13:1-11. At God's command, Jeremiah bought a belt and hid it. Later, God told him to return for it to show the moral condition of Jerusalem.









DRAMA, SYMBOLS, PARABLES

SYMBOLS

Exodus 25:8. The priests, the sanctuary, and its services are symbols to explain in detail the Plan of Redemption.

Revelation 13:2. Daniel and Revelation use symbols (such as beasts, horns, ...) to represent historical realities.

John 15:1. Jesus used symbols to explain his own mission, such as the light, the vine, the good shepherd...











PARABLES

Isaiah 5:1-7. The prophets used parables to call the people to reflect on their spiritual condition.

Matthew 13:5. Jesus made abundant use of parables to teach spiritual truths.

“The Bible unfolds truth with a simplicity and a perfect adaptation to the needs and longings of the human heart, that has astonished and charmed the most highly cultivated minds, while it enables the humblest and uncultured to discern the way of salvation. [...] Thus the plan of redemption is laid open to us, so that every soul may see the steps he is to take in repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be saved in God's appointed way. [...] The more [p. 108] he searches the Bible, the deeper is his conviction that it is the word of the living God, and human reason bows before the majesty of divine revelation.”

EGW (Steps to Christ, p. 107)

APPENDIX: REVELATION AND INSPIRATION IN ELLEN G. WHITE



Ellen White was divinely inspired. Her writings, her life, and her ministry are those of a true prophet. She possessed the same inspiration as the prophets of the Bible, although she never considered her writings to be equal to those of Scripture. She always regarded the Bible as the authoritative and infallible revelation of God.

She recognized that the process of inspiration involved an interaction between the divine and the human. God communicated his messages, but then the prophet conveyed the divine instruction using his own words. She understood the divine inspiration of human thoughts as a union between divine revelation and human experience.



She pointed out that not all of the human experiences and communications she conveyed were inspired. It is important to keep this distinction in mind when reading and engaging with her writings and experiences, especially her correspondence and diaries.

