

The Simple Truth Series # 6

# *Spiritual Revelation*



*Flesh and blood hath not **revealed** it unto thee, but **My Father** which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My Church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:17-18).*

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*'And expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.' Acts 18:26.*

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# 1.

## What is Spiritual Revelation?

A Spiritual Revelation is something which was previously unknown to us, but we now clearly understand it, even though we have not consciously learned anything about it. The great scholar Watchman Nee termed it 'intuition,' which is defined as, 'The ability to understand something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning.' Watchman Nee was right of course, but this definition of it makes 'intuition' sound like a general ability to understand things, whereas Spiritual Revelation is selective.

I would define Spiritual Revelation as, 'Knowing it without learning it.' It's something the Lord reveals to us, without us having studied, or learned, about it. This can happen spontaneously, when the Lord wants us to understand something we have never considered before, as the case was with Peter. Or, it can happen in response to a week, a month, or even several years of prayer, when there is something in the Bible which we cannot understand, but which we want to understand; so, we pray for the understanding of it. I know of one instance in my own life, where I prayed daily for two years about something I just couldn't understand. Then, I awoke one morning, and I could see it clearly. "Is it really that simple?" I asked myself incredulously. Yes, it was, after it was revealed. But, before that, it was as hidden from me, as the nut inside a walnut shell.

# 2.

## Why do we need Spiritual Revelation?

Revelation takes several forms. The most important one being, the Revelation of God, where God reveals His existence to an individual. None of us said, "Good morning God," on the day we were born, because the Spiritual Realm is veiled from us. It's another dimension right here, that our physical senses of sight, taste, touch, smell, and hearing, can neither discern, nor interact with. That's why the Lord Jesus assured Nicodemus, "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" (John 3:3). Meaning, he is blind to it. It takes a huge step, for anyone to even know there is a God. Because, to go from being blind to Spiritual things, to knowing there is a God, takes a personal Revelation of that, from the Lord Himself.

The second most important Revelation we have, is the Revelation of the Word of God to us personally. This is a progressive Revelation, because, in the wisdom of God, He

decided we should be drip-fed it, as we are able to receive it. We can read a verse in the Bible over and over, even for many years; but the next time we read it, it takes on a whole new meaning, and what was previously hidden in plain sight for all those years, is now clearly visible to us.

When Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden after Creation, both the physical and Spiritual worlds were one composite reality, visible before them. They could see the trees, flowers, and animals; and they could also see the Lord and Angels within the same glance. But, after they sinned, they were driven away, out of Eden and the Presence of God, by an Angel, and separated completely from the Spiritual Realm. A Seraphim with a flaming sword guarded the entrance, so they could never return.

Outside of Eden, they could see the Physical World, but gone was the Heavenly music that filled the air in the Garden, the fragrant flowers, and the singing of the Heavenly choirs they had so enjoyed. In Eden, the fruit had grown, luscious and ripe on the trees, only needing to be plucked, before eating. But outside, they had to fend for themselves, and wrest the fruit from the soil, by the sweat of their brows.

The Spiritual world was now veiled from them, and they had inherited for their posterity, a world void of God, and anything Spiritual. They were completely alone now, both the sin and the sinners separated from the God who created them. From now on the only way mankind could ever know the Presence of God, or even know there really was a Spiritual realm beyond their mortal sight, touch, and hearing, would be if the Lord Himself chose to draw back the veil slightly, and reveal it. Other than that, as we were all born blind to Spiritual things after this, we could live out our lives to their mortal end, and die, never knowing it, or even He, existed. This was the awful punishment for sin; in that day we died Spiritually.

The Lord did reveal Himself to select men and women, down through the ages. When He chose to draw back the veil, and reveal Himself to an individual, it truly was a revelation, to that man, or woman. But, to others who had not seen, it was an unfathomable mystery. In their world of day and night, toil and labour, life and death, they saw no 'God,' and lived out their time here in doubt. To them He truly was a mystery, veiled from them; and as a statue is veiled within a shroud, before its unveiling, they could only guess at what lay behind that veil.

### 3.

## How do we receive a Spiritual Revelation?

Watchman Nee only authored one book himself, which was titled, 'The Spiritual Man.' His one regret concerning the book, was that he had gone into too much minute detail

about the Spiritual life in it. Anyone reading the book, would think that they could learn how to live a Spiritual life from the teachings in the book, without needing a personal revelation of it from the Lord. But he knew differently, because people can be taught how to act the part very convincingly, and fool everyone, including themselves, until the Lord reveals otherwise to them.

The Lord alone can give a Revelation. And when He gives a Revelation to someone, it is for that person alone, not for anyone else. They can tell others about it, but, if it isn't revealed to them, they will never see it. You can't **teach** a Revelation to anyone.

A good example of this was Noah. The Lord revealed Himself, and His Will to a farmer named Noah, saying, *"The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with it. Make thee an ark...And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under Heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die."* (Genesis 6:13,17).

The Creator Himself had revealed to Noah that water was going to fall from the sky, and drown everyone on earth. So, what did Noah do? Of course, he tried to teach everyone else what had been revealed to him alone. For the next 120 years, while the Ark was being built, Noah constantly told everyone about this coming disaster. But how many believed him? Zilch, except for his immediate family. And, they may have only believed him, because he *was* family?

Water had never fallen from the sky before, because, *'A mist went up from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.'* (Genesis 2:6). And no-one believed it would happen now. How could it? Why would it? Noah could see it clearly himself, and for this 120-years, he sincerely tried to teach everyone else about this truth, that was still hidden behind a veil to them.

Then one morning, as on every other day since Creation, babies were born, young couples were married, and men bought land, to begin farming it, and build an inheritance for their posterity. But, on that afternoon, water began to fall from the sky. Small warm droplets at first, that adults and children alike raised their faces to, revelling in the novelty of it. Then, it got heavier, and heavier, and it continued unabated for forty days, until they were all drowned, because they would not believe him. Unless we receive the Revelation personally, we will never see it, nor believe it.

## 4.

# Spiritual Revelation to Israel

Many years later, a child named Abram was born, in Ur of Chaldea. He was 75 years

old, married to his childhood sweetheart, but childless, when his visitation occurred at Haran. The Lord promised him, *"I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."* (Genesis 12:3).

Abram journeyed from Haran to the plain of Moreh, in Canaan, and, *'The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.'* (Genesis 12:7). He journeyed further, and again, the Lord appeared to Abram, and *'He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward Heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them:'* and this One who revealed Himself, pointed to the limitless stars in the night sky, and promised, *"so shall thy seed be."* (Genesis 15:5). What was Abram's response to this promise? The Bible records it as, *'And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness.'* Abram believed he would have children by Sarai, if the Lord promised he would, even though Sarai was barren.

Some-time later, in a moment of doubt, as Abram and Sarai waited for the promise to be fulfilled, Sarai advised Abram to 'go in' unto Hagar, her Egyptian servant, and have a child by her. But the child Ishmael, the son of this union, was the son of unbelief, not the son of promise, and not the Will of God.

After this, when Abram was 99 years old, a 'dry tree' past being able to father children; and Sarai 90, and well past menopause, the Lord slipped out through the veil, and met with Abram once again. This time He elaborated on His promises, changing Abram's name to Abraham, Father of Nations; and Sarai's name to Sarah, Princess. And promised, *"Sarai thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."* (Genesis 17:19). And so, *'according to the time of life,'* Abraham's son and heir, Isaac, was born to them.

Abraham was a Son of God. But even though Isaac was the child of a Divine promise of God, he was still a son of Abraham. And as God does not have grandchildren, Isaac had to have his own encounter with God, to meet God personally, and have his sonship revealed to him. This occurred at Gerar, in Phylistia. *'And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of Heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.'* (Genesis 26:2-4).

Isaac's son Jacob, had his own Revelation of God, found in Genesis chapter 28, when he dreamed of a ladder reaching to Heaven, with Angels ascending and descending, between Heaven and earth on it. *'And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south:*

*and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'* When Jacob awoke, he exclaimed, *"This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven,"* naming the place Beth-el. It was on this spot, that the town grew, later to be known as Bethlehem, meaning, 'the House of God's Bread.' Nearly one thousand years later, in a stable, near this spot, the One drew His first mortal breath, who at thirty years of age, declared to the world, *"I am the Bread of Life, he that comes to Me shall never hunger, and he that believes on Me shall never thirst."* (John 6:35).

Jacob's son Joseph, had his own personal Revelation, when he dreamed that his father, mother, and brethren, were bowing and worshipping him. His jealous brothers sold him to a company of traders going to Egypt, who in turn sold him to Potiphar, the Captain of Pharaoh's Guard. After becoming Pharaoh's right-hand man, and very wealthy, Joseph died in Egypt. But, on his death bed, he said to his brethren, *"I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which He sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence."* (Genesis 50:24-25). Joseph had a Revelation that Israel would one day return to their own promised land, and he wanted to return with them.

Four hundred years later, a baby named Moses was born, during the reign of a Pharaoh so heartless, that he made a decree demanding that all Hebrew boys must be thrown into the river Nile at birth. But Moses' mother saw he was a *'proper child,'* and instead, she set Moses adrift on the Nile in a small crib of rushes, bathed with tears and prayers. The babe was saved by Pharaoh's daughter, and raised in his palace, to be a future leader. But when, as an adult, Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave, he killed the Egyptian, and had to flee from the wrath of Pharaoh. Alone in the land of Midian some years later, while tending his father-in-law's sheep, he saw a bush that burned, without being consumed. And when the Lord revealed Himself to Moses from the bush, He told him He had come to deliver Israel from slavery, by the hand of Moses. (Exodus 3:1-6). This was the time of 'God's visit,' which Joseph had spoken about, when he foretold of Israel's deliverance, and the return of his bones to his homeland, 400 years earlier.

King David had his Revelation as a shepherd boy. And this boy castigated the Army of Israel, after Goliath had challenged them, with the reproach, *"Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the Armies of the Living God?"* David was fearless, knowing the Lord was with him, because he always *'enquired of the Lord,'* before he acted; and acted according to the Lord's Will.

## 5.

# The Revelation of God

Then the Lord Himself came personally to earth. God in Christ, to reconcile His separated Creation back into fellowship with Himself. *'And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.'* (1 Timothy 3:16).

He walked among His Creation as One who serves, veiled within a robe of skin. Did they recognise Him? He did ask His disciples one day, as they strolled along the coast at Caesarea Philippi. *"Who do men say that I, the Son of Man am?"* he quizzed. The disciples replied, *"Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some Elias, and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets."* How could anyone possibly guess at something that comes from the mind of God alone, and get it right? The people saw the supernatural in His Ministry, and rightly discerned the Hand of God among them, but beyond that they could only guess at what lay veiled within.

So, He asked His disciples themselves, *"But whom say ye that I am?"* Simon Peter replied with those immortal words, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Jesus complimented him, saying, *"Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* (Matthew 16:13-18).

Peter hadn't learned this from another man, or merely guessed what lay hidden behind the veil. But it had been revealed to him by, *"My Father which is in Heaven."* It was a Spiritual Revelation to him, and the Lord promised, *"Upon this rock (Spiritual Revelation) I will build My Church."*

Spiritual Revelation was absolutely necessary to His Church. After all, how could anyone possibly follow Him without a personal Revelation of who He was? Many did flock to His side, without a Revelation, after they saw the miracles, and had their fill of the loaves and fishes. But, when He declared, *"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you."* The Bible records, *'Many followed Him no more.'* They had been following this Man, without the Revelation Peter had, that He was the Christ. And when they heard these Words, without the Revelation of what He meant, it was too much for them. Jesus turned to His disciples and asked, *"Will you go also?"* Peter once again spoke for them all. *"To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."* (John 6:68).

In John 17:3, the Lord assured us, *"This is eternal life that they might know Thee, the*



*only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.*” Without that Revelation, and meeting Him personally, as Moses did at the burning bush, and as St Paul did on the road to Damascus, we only know *about* Him; which is something anyone can learn, Believer or unbeliever, from a book, or even from a friend who doesn't know Him personally. But knowing *about* Him, and only glimpsing Him from the physical viewpoint, will not give anyone Eternal Life, or make them a New Creation, because, *“This is Eternal Life that they might know Thee.”* Personally.

## 6.

# Spiritual Revelation in the New Testament

The New Testament reveals much about Spiritual Revelation, both in the Gospels, and in the Epistles. Spiritual Revelation is a mystery revealed, as in the earlier example of a statue hidden beneath a veil. We can see the broad shape of it, looking much like a man standing, with something carried in his arms. But what of his clothing, identity, and even his expression? Everyone guesses at it, making bold assumptions, but, when the veil is finally lifted, we find that all our guesswork was partly right, but also very wrong too. We see his face now, with an expression of pure joy. For in his arm's, he cradles a new born child, the first ever born in that locality.

Likewise, all Scripture is a mystery, until the Lord reveals it to us personally. Of course, many guess at it, as they always have, and there is merit in what they assume; but as the Lord Jesus told us, *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* (John 8:32).

I could guess a river to be one metre deep, but when I jump in and find it to be five metres deep, I find that my guess does me more harm than good, particularly because I cannot swim. If I had known the truth of the depth, I never would have jumped. But because I made a terrible error in judgement, I now learn that the rather large breath I drew before I jumped, was the last one I will ever draw. The truth revealed to us personally, sets us free from the errors of man's guesswork, to follow the pure Word, and Will, of God.

In the preface to the book of Revelation, in the 1909 edition of the Scofield Study Bible, it reads, ‘Doubtless much which is designedly obscure to us, will be clear for those to whom it is written, as the time approaches.’ There is much between chapters 8, and 22, of Revelation, which did not concern Mr Scofield and friends in 1909, because none of it was taking place then, so he did not elaborate on it. But, because it has begun to be fulfilled in our lifetime, and is even now snowballing toward the consummation of

the events in these chapters, the Lord has been revealing much to His faithful servants, so these events won't catch us unawares.

The reason *why* the Lord gives His Church a Revelation at any time, is because it is necessary for us to know it. And, an understanding of any events in the Bible which will affect us in our day, will be given to us, in our day. He does not fill our minds with needless trivia, the way we ourselves do. All is revealed to us on a need-to-know basis only.

Revelation began in the New Testament before the Lord's birth. Angels appeared to Zacharias and Elizabeth, and to Joseph and Mary. When the baby Jesus was taken to the Temple in Jerusalem, to *'present Him to the Lord,'* a *'just and devout man,'* Simeon, took Him up in his arms, because it had been revealed to him *'by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.'* (Luke 2:26).

John the Baptist had his Revelation, that, *"There cometh One mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptised you with water: but He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost."* (Mark 1:7-8). John knew by Revelation he was preparing the way for this One, and when Jesus was baptised, John testified, *"He that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost."* (John 1:33). It had been revealed to John, how he would recognise the Messiah.

## 7.

# Spiritual Revelation to the Church

While wine is fermenting, it bubbles because it contains life. But, when the yeast has finished its work, the life goes out of it, and it dies. The sterile yeast now settles on the bottom as sediment, and the wine is *'settled on its lees.'* The Lord warned us we cannot put new wine into old wineskins, because the new wine is bubbling with Spiritual Revelation, and it will burst the old skins.

After the third century, Catholicism overran the Spiritual Church, and extended its grip over the known world, controlling all religious expression, and forcing all who would worship, to conform with its own teachings, or be exterminated. Between then and the nineteenth century, 68 million Christians paid for their deviancy with their lives. Catholicism settled on its traditions, and its dogmas were pronounced as law.

The life was almost extinguished, during the persecutions mounted by Catholicism, but over the centuries, as Revelations were given to faithful servants of God, life sprang

up, into the darkness of the Dark Ages. Bold Messengers of God, including John Huss, John Wycliffe, and William Tyndale, among others, all bubbling with true life, fearlessly declared the Word of God to the world, although, most were mown down by the relentless persecution.

Then, a voice named Martin Luther sprang up, full of life and vitality, declaring to the world, the truth that, *"The just shall live by faith."* And, the Church began bubbling with life once again, as the Revelation spread across Europe. The old Catholic wine skins couldn't hold the Revelation, being settled on their sterile sediment, left from when they did contain some life, more than a thousand years earlier, and rejected it. But that didn't faze Martin, because the new Revelation needed new wineskins to contain it; so, Martin and his followers went on with the Lord, bubbling in the vigour of the Spirit of God.

But, over the next century, the vigour and vitality left the 'Lutherans' as they were known, as even they began to settle, and form their own traditions; and the daughter began to grow into the mother she had fled from.

Once again, life bubbled from dry ground, when an Anglican named John Wesley was given the Revelation of 'Sanctification' being the second definite work of grace, in the life of the Christian. When this new Revelation was presented to the Lutheran 'Church,' some individuals accepted it. But, once again, the old wineskin couldn't contain the new wine, and it was rejected by the organisation, which had settled happily on its sterile old teachings.

A baby boy is born, and he grows continuously. Into a child at first, then into a teenager, then to an adult. He lives out his adult life, still eating the same food he has always eaten, but now, he finds he is not growing any longer, and that same food is only maintaining him. Then, he finds to his dismay, that he is degenerating, even though he is eating the same food he has always eaten. The signs of aging are written all over his body, and now they are even invading his mind. "What was your name again?...Oh, of course!"

This was our Lutheran 'Church.' All afire with the Revelation given by the Lord, to Martin Luther, it flourished all over the continent. Then, over the next century, that same Revelation wasn't producing the same vitality in its adherents any longer, it was only maintaining them. Then they began to degenerate. They still believed, 'The just shall live by faith,' but now they were aging. Gone was the missionary zeal that had catapulted Martin Luther's Message all over Europe. Instead, they cloaked themselves in the name of 'Lutheran,' and when the new Revelation came, they were safely protected within their organization, rejecting anything that wasn't from 'them,' even if it was from the God who inspired Martin Luther. The life of God was now living within the old Message of 'Justification,' plus the new Message of 'Sanctification,' in the new wineskins.

Whenever the Lord sends someone to a generation, it is always in response to the prayers and needs of that time. Noah was sent in response to the wrath of God, which was to be poured out on his generation. His response was to warn them to repent, and get into the Ark to be saved. Moses was sent in response to the needs of Israel, who were being held captive in Egypt. As the Lord told Moses at the burning bush, *“I have heard the cries of My people, and I am come down to deliver them.”* When Israel were about to be exterminated in Babylon, after Haman had plotted against them, Mordecai admonished Queen Esther (one of their own), *“Who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?”* (Esther 4:14). The Lord used Esther to save Israel, after Haman’s plot was revealed to King Artaxerxes by her.

Each one of the prophets was sent in response to the particular needs of their time alone. There was no one-size-fits-all Message for every generation. It was always a Message and Messenger tailored for that particular time.

In the last 2000 years, every Messenger sent to the Church, was sent in response to the particular needs of their time. Whenever someone comes preaching the same-old, same-old, that has been heard for the past century, or two, you can be sure that person was taught it somewhere, most probably in a ‘Bible School,’ the same way they learned to write and count, without the Lord. But, when the Lord sends someone for us, it is always different than what the previous generation was sent, because our needs, and challenges, are unique to our time.

Those who are the Lord’s in any age, will have a Revelation, confirming the Message for that age comes from Him. But those who are still trying to live by the Message from the previous age, which is now nothing but sterile sediment, will reject it. The Pharisees protested, *“We have Abraham as our father;”* when the Lord rebuked them; believing the Revelation Abraham had in his day, was also good for them in their day. But here was their Creator, the One Who gave Abraham his Revelation, standing before them, and they didn’t recognise Him. Instead, they rejected Him, calling Him Beelzebub (the prince of devils), and plotted how they might kill Him, which they did accomplish, to their satisfaction. Yet the demons recognised Him, for who He was. *“What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?”* (Matthew 8:29).

The Lord admonished the people, and especially the religious leaders of the time to, *“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life: and they are they which testify of Me.”* (John 5:39). And again, *“If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though you believe not Me, believe the works.”* (John 10:37-38). Even without a Revelation, they should have recognised who He was, because He was fulfilling Scripture.

He did speak openly of Spiritual Revelation. And, we also read of it in the Epistles. e.g. *“I thank Thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things*

from the wise and prudent, and hast **revealed** them unto babes.” (Matthew 11:25).

“All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will **reveal** Him.” (Matthew 11:27).

“My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His Will, he shall **know** of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.” (John 7:16-17).

After the Lord’s resurrection, two of His disciples were walking to Emmaus, and He joined them, as they were talking about the events of the past few days. ‘But their eyes were **holden** that they should not know (recognise) Him.’ (Luke 24:16). And after He had explained the Scriptures concerning Himself to them, and shared a meal with them, we are told, ‘And their eyes were **opened** and they knew Him.’ (Luke 24:31).

After this, the Lord appeared to His disciples in person, and as He spoke to them, we are told, ‘Then **opened** He their understanding, that they might **understand** the Scriptures.’ (Luke 24:45).

‘But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath **revealed** them unto us by His Spirit.’ (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

‘But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the **revelation** of Jesus Christ.’ (Galatians 1:11-12).

In Ephesians 3:3, Paul relates, ‘How that by **revelation** He made known unto me the mystery.’

## 8.

# Spiritual Revelation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Life in the Church only comes through Spiritual Revelation, because Spiritual Revelation is the ‘Rock’ the Church is built upon, whereas dogmatic teaching takes place without the Holy Spirit’s Presence. There are ‘Churches’ today, who live by their ‘Traditions,’ as if the Lord stopped moving in the affairs of mankind at a certain point in time, and hasn’t been heard of since. Wandering forever in the wilderness will never get anyone into the Promised Land.

Every generation of Believers needs Spiritual Revelation. This is especially true in our generation, because we were warned by St Paul in 2 Timothy 3, that in the last days, ‘Perilous times shall come,’ and men would be, ‘Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of

*God. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,' and 'Ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.'* And he warned us, *'Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.'*

In chapter 4, he prophesies, *'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine: but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.'*

What are fables? Fiction. When someone tells you Calvary isn't enough to save you, and you need to keep the Law as well, as Ellen White, Herbert Armstrong, and several other 'wolves in sheep's clothing' did; that's fiction, because, *'By the works of the Law shall no flesh be saved,'* as St Paul warned us.

## 9.

### Trying the Spirits

It is a shame to the Leadership of Pentecostal Churches today, that there is much which is false in them, that is neither discerned, nor challenged, by the Spiritual among them, because it looks as though something Supernatural is taking place, when in truth, it is something carnal, and false. A good example of this, is what is known as a 'Word of knowledge,' which is much used and abused among them.

One Denomination teaches that all 'Christians' have every Spiritual gift. This is in direct contrast to the Word of God, which states in 1 Corinthians 12, *'But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.'* And at the end of the chapter we are asked, *'Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?'* The short answer is, no.

The worst problem with telling someone they have a 'gift' which they do not have, is that they have to manufacture the fruits of it themselves. When people are taught that they can lay their hands on anyone, and the first thing that comes into their mind is a 'Word of knowledge' from the Holy Spirit, that is fine, as long as the Holy Spirit did put it there. But if not, it is just a counterfeit copy of a Spiritual gift, and it gives glory to no-one, except the Devil, when the 'Word of knowledge' proves to be false, as it is in ninety-nine percent of such cases.

At a Church I attended, a visiting Pastor from overseas, spoke a 'Word of Knowledge' for each member of the Congregation. To a friend next to me, he said, "You've been off work sick for two weeks, but you will go back to work tomorrow, healed in the Name of Jesus." Unfortunately, my friend had been off work for several years, and had no occupation to go back to tomorrow. Needless to say, he did not go back to work. To myself he said, "Count down the days, in 30 days *this* will happen." I dutifully counted down the days, not wanting to contradict him, but it did not happen either.

Saying the first thing that comes into your mind is good, if the Holy Spirit has put it there, but if not, it is either just imagination, or a 'lying spirit' as was the case with Ahab's 400 prophets, in 2 Chronicles 18:21. We should be honest, and say what the Lord has given us to say, if He has given us something; but if not, we should keep silent. *'As for God, His way is perfect,'* (2 Samuel 22:31), and He doesn't need us manufacturing anything false, and pretending it was Him. That's called lying.

Another problem which plagues Pentecostal Churches is, 'being slain in the Spirit.' It does happen in reality, caused by the Spirit of God. But it also happens by hypnotism, as is the case in Benny Hinn's 'show,' and in the false Revivals at Toronto, Brownsville, and other places, and in many individual Pentecostal Churches.

To anyone who understands hypnotism, it is based on a trigger word, or action, which is suggested to an individual, or audience beforehand. In 'Churches,' it is usually touching someone on the forehead, and pushing them backwards; or waving something across in front of them, such as Benny Hinn's jacket. Of course, this will only work if the person has been pre-conditioned to it. I have had friends who were called out into a line in a Church they were visiting, and when the Pastor touched the forehead of everyone in the line, they all fell unconscious to the floor, except for my friends. The Pastor asked what was wrong with them, that they didn't fall over, suggesting they weren't Spiritual enough. But the problem was, they had not been pre-conditioned to the trigger. We don't need pseudo-spiritual games like this in Churches, if the Holy Spirit is present. But, if not, I suppose they need all they can manufacture, such as 'Angels feathers,' 'gold dust,' etc, to fill the void.

Then, there are 'Gifts' of Discernment, and prophecies. The greatest example of a Gift of discernment, was undoubtedly in the Ministry of William Branham. It was all recorded for anyone to hear. He could tell a complete stranger before him, "Your name is Martha Smith...You live at 2324 East Fifty Second Street...But you're not here for yourself...It's for your mother...She lives in another country...There are many lakes there...It's Alberta in Canada...She's dying with cancer...That's Thus Saith the Lord."

But what do we get today as supposed discernment? "The Lord tells me there's someone in here with a back problem?" You can't get ten people together, without someone having a back problem among them. This is called 'fishing.' It's what 'Psychics' do, only the 'Psychic' starts with, "I see an elderly woman before me." Then they go on from there, asking loaded questions, and keeping one step ahead of you. When it's

done to the public, it's a 'con.' When it's done in a 'Church,' it's a disgrace. Afterwards, the victim in both cases says the same thing. "Yes, some of it was right, but some of it was wrong." If it's from the Lord, it's always right, because He knows everything about us. He knows how many breaths we have taken, how many times our hearts have beaten, how many footsteps we've taken in life. He doesn't have to guess at anything. A real Gift of Discernment will never fail, and there are some in the Body of Christ, even now.

*"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."* (Acts 2:17). There will always be Prophets among us, as long as the Body of Christ is still on this earth, because Prophets are part of the five-fold Ministry of Ephesians 4:11, and we can no more dispense with them, than we can with Apostles (Missionaries), Evangelists, Pastors, or Teachers.

The Lord promised, *"If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream."* (Numbers 12:6). We are also warned, *"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."* (Deuteronomy 18:22). The sentence for that person was death, but today, we would have to content ourselves with banning that person from ever speaking prophetically again, because they are leaving themselves open to being used by a wrong spirit.

Too many 'Churches' are full of this; supposed prophecies which never come to pass. And what is done about it? Absolutely nothing. The visiting Pastor who spoke a 'Word of Knowledge' in our Church was a classic example. I was only the Assistant Pastor there, luckily for him. Because, if I was the Pastor, I would have called him out and rebuked him. Why do we tolerate it? Because talk is cheap. And because it looks, and sounds, supernatural. John warned us about this. *'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.'* (1 John 4:1). It doesn't matter if they've gone out into the world, but when they invade the Church, it does matter, and we should 'cleanse the Temple,' and see it stays clean.

So, what should we do? Live close to the Lord, spending much time daily in prayer with Him. Like King David, always *'enquire of the Lord,'* then wait on Him in His Presence, for an answer, before you act. He will reveal His Will to us, if we wait on Him, because He does not want us stumbling in darkness. He wants to lead each one of us personally, as St Paul revealed to us in Romans 8:14, *'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons (and daughters) of God.'* And that leading comes either by Him speaking to us personally, by opening a door before us, or by Spiritual Revelation, when you 'know' you should do a certain thing.



As Charles Dickens wrote, these are the best of times, and the worst of times. Perilous times now, and even worse ahead, before the Lord comes to take us Home. In Isaiah 59:19, we are told, *'When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.'* What is that standard? God's people, representing Him, and standing for righteousness, fearlessly believing, and proclaiming, His holy Word. Where do they come from? They answer the call which goes forth, *"Who is on the Lord's side?"*

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Ed.D.