

## Revelation

The term "revelation" signifies a meaningful unveiling or unfolding or disclosing of truth. When a person reveals himself, he communicates something meaningful and true about himself. A person may tell us something about himself by actions or by words. When we consider the question of the knowledge of God, we discover that He has done both: He has revealed Himself in His works and in His words. We call God's self-disclosure in his *works* of creation and providence "General Revelation." We call God's self-disclosure in various supernatural modes "Special Revelation." This latter kind of revelation -- Special Revelation -- always includes God's *words*: i.e., events of revelation are always accompanied by statements of interpretation.

Special Revelation has both an objective and a subjective side -- or, to put it another way, Special Revelation is both historical and personal. And it has occurred in two distinct phases. Phase one includes God's special self-disclosure to men before and during the process of the writing of Scripture. During this phase, God's objective revelation of Himself and His Will to men was both direct and indirect: direct, through various supernatural modes (including the incarnation of our Lord), and indirect, through His written Word, as it grew book by book. During phase one God's subjective revelation of Himself and His will to men was both direct and indirect: direct, through the life-giving and transforming work of His Spirit: and indirect, through His Spirit's illumination of men's minds to understand His written Word.

Phase two of the occurrence of special revelation involves God's special self-disclosure to human beings *after* the process of the writing of Scripture was completed. During this phase God's objective revelation of Himself and His will to human beings has been only indirect, through His written Word. However, during this second phase God's subjective revelation of Himself and His will to human beings has continued to be both direct and indirect: direct, through the life-giving and transforming word of His Spirit: and indirect, through His Spirit's illumination of men's minds to understand His written Word.

Although not everything found in Scripture is a record of a previously-occurring objective event of revelation in some supernatural mode (for example, Scripture records the sinful words and deeds of wicked men), yet