

How is God speaking to man?



Several questions:

- How has God spoken to men in times past?
- How did God speak to men at Christ's birth?
- How is God speaking to men and women today?



Heb. 1:1 God, after
He spoke long ago
to the fathers in the
prophets in many
portions and in
many ways,

- God spoke long ago
 - having spoken
(a factual event)
 - long ago or in time past
- lit: God spoke to the fathers by means of the prophets
- Godly men who spoke His word
- This message was in many portions [lit: bit by bit]
- In many ways: dreams, visions and face to face

God has spoken in times past via prophets

- The prophets that foretold **Jesus Christ's birth** did so more than 700 years prior to it happening
- Isaiah 9:6 For **a child will be born to us**, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
- Micah 5:2 But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *too* little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.

How did God speak to men at Christ's birth?

God's message to men and women via angels:

- God's Message to Zacharias
- God's Message to Mary
- God's Message to Joseph

God's message to groups of people via angels:

- God's Message to the Shepherds and the Magi

- Heb. 2:2a For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable



- For in view of the fact that the word spoken by angels was steadfast (Wuest)
- steadfast - authentic *and* proved sure
- at the birth of Christ God used angels to communicate His plan – face to face and in dreams

- Message to Zacharias

Background

¹¹ And an angel of the Lord **appeared to him**, standing to the right of the altar of incense.

¹² Zacharias was troubled when he saw *the angel*, and fear gripped him.



Angel of the Lord [Gabriel]

¹³ "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard,

- and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son,
- and **you will give him the name John** [Baptist]."
- ¹⁵ "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor,
- and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb."

- Message to Zacharias



Angel of the Lord

- ¹⁶ "And **he [John]** will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God.
- ¹⁷ "It is **he [John]** who will go *as a forerunner* before Him [Jesus Christ] in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous."

Zacharias

- ¹⁸ "**How will I know this for certain?** For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years."

- Message to Zacharias



Angel of the Lord

- "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.
- ²⁰ "And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time."

Elizabeth

- ²⁴ After these days Elizabeth became pregnant and said ---
²⁵ "This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked *with favor* upon *me*, to take away my disgrace among men."

- ## Message to Mary

Background

²⁶ --- the **angel Gabriel** was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,
²⁷ to **a virgin** engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.



Angel Gabriel

²⁸ **And coming in**, he said to her “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.”

Mary

²⁹ But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was.

Angel Gabriel

³⁰ “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.

³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and **you shall name Him Jesus**.

³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High;

- ## Message to Mary



Angel Gabriel (conti)

and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;

³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”

Mary

³⁴ “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”

Angel Gabriel

³⁵ “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.”

Mary

³⁸ “Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.”

- ## Message to Joseph

Background

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

Joseph

²⁰ But when he had considered this,

Angel of the Lord (in a dream)

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife;

for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

²¹ She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

- Message to Joseph



Angel of the Lord (in a dream)

²² this took place to fulfill what was spoken --- ²³ “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name “Immanuel,” which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

Joseph

²⁴ --- awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife, ²⁵ but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

The Angel of the Lord's message to each was unique

Zacharias

- Elizabeth will bear you a son and name him John [Baptist].
- For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.
- John will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God.
- John, who will go as a forerunner before Him [Jesus Christ].

Mary

- You will conceive in your womb [virgin birth] and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.
- He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.
- The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever.

The Angel of the Lord message to each was unique

Mary (cont.)

- 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 [God with us].

Joseph

- Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.
- She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.
- The prophecy that was spoken will be fulfilled: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, [GOD WITH US].”

How is God speaking
to man today?



Heb. 1:2 In these
last days has
spoken to us
in *His Son*, whom
He appointed heir
of all things,
through whom also
He made the world.

- What are last days?
- The period from Christ's birth to the end of this present heaven and earth
- [God] has spoken to us in *His Son* – lit: "in Son"
- this is stressing the character or essence of Jesus Christ - God the Son

Heb. 1:2 In these last days has spoken to us in *His* Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

- Jesus Christ's glorious character is detailed in verses 2 and 3
- whom He appointed heir of all things (all things will fall under His authority)
- through whom also He made the world (All things came into being through Him John 1:3)

- Heb. 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

- And He is the radiance of His glory
- and the exact representation of His nature
- and upholds all things by the word of His power.
- When He had made purification of sins
- He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

But Christ made a startling statement prior to the cross:

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper [the Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

- While Christ was here on earth He spoke to man face to face
- but now He says:
 - it is to your advantage that I go away
 - for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you
 - but if I go, I will send Him to you

But today! God the Holy Spirit is at work in our world

The Holy Spirit's ministry is twofold today since Christ has returned to the Father

1st to the believer or the saved

2nd to the unbeliever or sometimes called the world

So what does the Bible say about a believer

What does it mean to be a believer?

- Who or what am I to be believing in?
- The Bible is very specific
- We are to believe in a person [not a religion]
- Jesus Christ, God's own Son
- Why?
- For all [men] **sinned** and **are falling short** of the glory of God Rom 3:23
- But God loved us so much that--

What does it mean to be a believer?

- In eternity past Jesus said He would lay down His life for the sins of all mankind and God the Father said He would raise Jesus up again!
- So by Jesus's death for our sins [and its nature]
- Sin is no longer a barrier between God and man
- **We are to believe** that we are sinners by nature and deed
- And accept Jesus's payment for our sin

- But what is God's method to show the unbelieving world that they are sinners and need to believe that Jesus has paid for their sins?

- A. John 16:8 And He [the Holy Spirit], when He comes, will convict [lit: convince] the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.
- The Holy Spirit brings the fact of our sin to light by use of proof. McCalley
- The Holy Spirit is the source of conviction. The Word of God is the means of conviction. The human messenger is the agent of conviction. McCalley

B. So then, faith is out of the source of that which is heard, and that which is heard is through the agency of the Word concerning Christ. Rom 10:17 Wuest

- So faith or belief comes from the message heard from God
- So faith is based on the **content of the message** not just hearing it
- Once you have heard this message, faith is possible
- The message heard is the "word" which preaches Christ
- The message heard is to be responded to by faith

C. So what is this message that needs to be heard about Jesus Christ?

- This message is the gospel
- Paul tells us in Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.
- When you believe the gospel, salvation can occur
- The gospel is given to us 1 Cor 15:3-5

15:1 Now I [Paul] make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand:

- For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received
- that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures
- and that He was buried
- and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures
- and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Final Thoughts – The believer's life is as follows:



- I have passed out of death/separation from God into eternal life with God
- All my sins have been paid for past, present and future
- I am now separated from my sin nature [source of my sins]
- As I walk by the Spirit, I will not carry out the desire of the flesh [sinful nature]
- I now live in this living union with the Lord Jesus Christ
- It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me [Christ is my life]
- We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
- God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

