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1) God revealed His specific will through Lots.

The casting of lots was something that Israel considered to be a very effective way to determine the will of God. It was viewed as a legitimate means of having God reveal or disclose His specific will to His people (Prov. 16:33) from the time of the O.T. to the beginning of the Church Age. Once the Holy Spirit comes into N.T. believers, there is no longer a need to cast lots.

The O.T. word for "lot" (לִּילָה, gōral) is one that refers to a little rough stone (Gesenius, p. 179). The N.T. word for "lot" (κλᾶρος, klāros) is one that refers to that which is chosen or drawn by casting a lot (Smith, p.249).

From these words we may assume that a lot was some type of small stone or stones that were cast in order to ascertain God's will. Although it is not known exactly what determined the matter, we may logically assume that there was some type of mark on the lot. Perhaps a smooth versus a rough side or some type of color mark on one side of the lot which was used.

Now the casting of lots was used to determine many things:

- 1) It was used to determine which goat to sacrifice. Lev.16:7-10
- 2) It was used to determine which land went to a specific tribe. Num.26:55; Josh.18:10
- 3) It was used to determine the guilt of Jonah. Jonah 1:7
- 4) It was used to determine the first king of Israel. I Sam.10:20
- 5) It was used to determine the service in the temple. I Chron.24:5
- 6) It was used to determine who got our Lord's clothing. Mt.27:35
- 7) It was used to determine who replaced Judas as an apostle. Acts 1:25-26

Dr. Nelson Baker, in his discussion of this subject, makes an important observation when he writes concerning Acts 1:26: "The disciples used lots to decide upon Judas's successor, and the choice fell to Matthias (Acts 1:26). There is no record of any further use of lots in the N.T. Apparently after Pentecost the church relied upon the Holy Spirit to lead them through other means." (Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia, p.1053)

Once the believer had God's Spirit living in him and once God's complete revelation was put into writing, there was no further need for any more revelation. God's word contains all necessary information for determining God's will in any decision and God's Spirit will lead one to a perfect fulfillment of that will.

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(Specific Revelation #2)- God revealed His specific will through Urim and Thummim.

The Urim and Thummim were sacred lots, carried in the breastplate of the high priest, used for making serious judgments and decisions (Ex.28:30). The priestly garment contained a breastplate comprised of twelve stones, each representing one tribe of Israel (Ex.28:15-21). The Urim and Thummim seem to be two additional stones, which were considered very sacred to God, which were used for making sacred decisions (Ex.28:28-30). Joshua was commissioned by this method (Num.27: 15-23, note verse 21). Saul used it as a means of determining God's will, but God refused to answer him (I Sam.28:6). These stones apparently gave some type of "yes", "no" answer concerning major questions pertaining to O.T. Israel.

As with all other matters, the Biblical record of the Urim and Thummim is totally different than the view of the LDS religion (Mormonism). B.H. Roberts, a Mormon historian, claims that the Urim and Thummim was a stone that enabled Joseph Smith to translate the book of Mormon (B.H. Roberts, Comprehensive History of the Church, Vol.1, p.129). Waiter Whipple, in his master's thesis, Textual Changes in the Pearl of Great Price, which he wrote for Brigham Young University, cites "evidence" that the Urim and Thummim was a seer stone and that every man on earth was entitled to have one and if he was good enough, he would find his own stone. But if wickedness was in his life, he would be prevented from finding his Urim and Thummim (Ibid., p.9). It is very obvious that these views of the Urim and Thummim are not even close to the truth found in the Bible. (For a comprehensive look at some of the bizarre LDS views concerning the Urim and Thummim, read- Jerald & Sandra Tanner, Mormonism Shadow or Reality?, pp.39-49)

There is absolutely no Biblical evidence of any N.T. use of the Urim and Thummim and since God has completed His revelation- the Bible, there is no need of any additional messages. Serious judgment is promised to one who adds anything to God's completed word (Rev.22:18).

(Specific Revelation #3)- God revealed His specific will through dreams.

During the O.T. age, God revealed His will on many occasions through dreams (Gen.20:3-6; 31:11-13,24; Gen.40-41; Dan.7:1). It is very important to observe that dreams were clearly connected to things pertaining to Israel. Oft times dreams took on a form of a prophetic warning (Mt.27:19; cp.Gen.20:3-6; Num.12:6). This point is very significant, for it is prophetically predicted that the Tribulation period, just after the second coming of Jesus Christ, God will once again show He is working with Israel through dreams (i.e. Joel 2:28; 1:1; 2:1,26-29). As Dr. Ryrie writes: "God apparently used dreams to communicate many times during the Old Testament period, and He will do so again at the time of the second coming of Christ." (Charles Ryrie, Basic Theology, p.63)

(Specific Revelation #4)- God revealed His specific will through visions.

Various key people in the Bible received information from God by way of a vision. This was true

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of the prophet Isaiah (Is.1:1; 6:1); of the prophet Ezekiel (Ez.1:3); of the Apostle Peter (Acts 12:7-9,11); of the Apostle John (Rev.1:10; 4:1-2) and of the Apostle Paul (II Cor. 12:1). Clearly visions were used by God to reveal His truth and His word.

(Specific Revelation #5)- God reveals His specific will through Providence.

Over and over again the Bible testifies that God is sovereignly controlling all things and all events in the Universe. What this very practically means is that God continually reveals Himself and His will through what is taking place. As Dr. Chafer writes: "History is 'His Story', and on the pages of Scripture He has so related Himself to future events, both by covenants and prediction, that assurance is given that there will be a perfect consummation of all things and the end will justify the means used to secure it." (Vol.1, p.55)

In every age, God is perfectly and providentially working out His program. Only as we examine the Bible will we recognize just precisely what He is doing and how He is working. "Chance, luck" are words that should **never** be found in the thinking of a believer, for the believer knows God controls all things (Deut.30:1-10; Dan.2:31-45; 7:1-28; 9:24-27; Hos.3:4-5; Mt.23:37-25:46; Rom.8:28; 11:13-29; 13:1; II Thess.2:1-12).

(Specific Revelation #6)- God reveals His specific will through Miracles.

Miracles are things which occur over and over again in the Bible and the primary purpose of them is, as Dr. Chafer observed: "...to reveal God to man" (Ibid., p.56) In both the O.T. and the N.T., miracles were supernatural acts in which God demonstrated Himself and His power, beyond the realm of anything human.

For example, when Jesus Christ was here on earth and did miracles, He did them to manifest to Israel that He was in fact God so that many would believe on Him (i.e. Jn.2:11; Mt.11:2-6). When the Apostles did miraculous things, they were also doing them to demonstrate that they were setting forth the truth of God so people would believe (i.e. Acts 2:42-44; 15:11-12).

Miracles were a form of revelation from God. Although God can and often does the miraculous, ever since His written revelation has been completed, God does not do miraculous things, such as He did with the Apostles, when He specifically worked a miracle through a man.

Any man today who claims he has the power to do miracles is either a liar, a trickster or Satanic (Mt.7:21-23; II Cor.11:13-15). However regardless of which of the above he is, he is heading to very serious judgment because he is convincing people that he has extra-revelatory, miraculous power which is beyond the boundary limits of God's written word (Rev.22:18).

(Specific Revelation #7)- God reveals His specific will through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is God revealing Himself to man in the form of a Person.

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There is absolutely no doubt that Jesus Christ Personally revealed God to man:

- 1) John 1:14 - Jesus Christ revealed the Glory of the Father.
- 2) John 1:14 - Jesus Christ revealed the Word of God.
- 3) John 3:2 - Jesus Christ revealed the Power of God.
- 4) John 14:9 - Jesus Christ revealed the Character of God.
- 5) Col. 2:9 - Jesus Christ revealed the Deity of God.
- 6) I John 1:1-3 - Jesus Christ revealed the Life of God.

Jesus Christ is God the Father's full manifestation of Himself. Jesus Christ is God revealing Himself to man. Jesus Christ is, in human form, a complete, non-lacking revelation and demonstration of everything God is. Jesus Christ is God revealed.

(Specific Revelation #8)- God reveals His specific will through the Scriptures.

Of all of the ways God has chosen to reveal Himself to man, the Bible - God's written Word is by far the most complete and comprehensive method of revelation. Truth is, without the Bible, we would not even know that God revealed Himself in these other ways.

It is a tragedy that many seem to think that the greatest form of revelation would be a dream or a miracle. By far, true doctrine realizes that the greatest form of revelation is the Bible. Truth is, it is in the Bible where we learn that God did reveal Himself in times past through visions, dreams and miracles.

God obviously knew that the greatest method for Him to communicate His revelation to man would be through writing. In this way, texts and contexts may be carefully studied objectively rather than subjectively. God's word in written form communicates His truth to man in specific ways that are concrete and defensible rather than in ways that are abstract and mystical. The Bible reveals far more information about God and His will and program than any other method of revelation. As Dr. Chafer said: "It may be concluded then that the Bible is a specific and essential feature of all divine revelation." (Ibid., p.60)

Revelation can be accurately understood as God disclosing to man His truth through His Divine writing, the Bible, which truth man would not otherwise know.

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QUESTION #10 - What is meant by the term "Inspiration"?

The doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible is one that most people would be willing to admit in the arena of theology, but it is a doctrine that very few truly understand. Dr. Charles Ryrie observed: "While many theological viewpoints would be willing to say the Bible is inspired, one finds little uniformity as to what is meant by inspiration." (Ryrie, Basic Theology, p.67)

The inspiration of the Bible is one of the key doctrines of the Bible and one that has of late come under great attack. For example, years ago most doctrinal statements would affirm: "We believe in the inspiration of the Bible." Certain individuals surfaced who undermined this doctrine by saying they did not believe the Bible was inspired to the very words. So sound theologians developed a new doctrinal statement which "We believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible." Then other individuals surfaced who said they did not believe all portions of the Bible were inspired. Some of it was and some of it wasn't. Again, sound theologians developed another doctrinal statement which affirmed- "We believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible." Other individuals surfaced shortly thereafter and challenged this position by saying they did not believe that all of the Bible could be written without containing some errors. As may be suggested, another doctrinal statement concerning the Bible was formed which said: "We believe in the verbal, plenary, infallible and inerrant inspiration of the Bible." Then another group surfaced who started to question the degree of Biblical infallibility (not capable of error) and Biblical inerrancy (containing no error). This naturally led to another statement which affirmed: "We believe in the verbal, plenary, infinite, unlimited, infallible and inerrant inspiration of the Bible."

On the positive side, these attacks against the inspiration of the Bible forced serious students of the Bible to carefully study to determine a correct doctrine of inspiration. On the negative side, most believers in the church have been lost in a maze of theological terms and definitions and remain in total darkness as to what inspiration really means.

The primary purpose of this section is to give a clear, concise, precise understanding of the true Biblical doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible. The concept of the inspiration of the Bible was not a doctrine invented by men, it is a doctrine clearly revealed by God.

God is the One who gives us clear data concerning the inspiration of His Word. He is the One who states: "All Scripture is inspired by God" (II Tim.3:16). Even though there has been somewhat of a denial of the doctrine of inspiration, what cannot be denied is that the Bible claims that it is inspired. Dr. Chafer said: "That doctrine of inspiration, which the church has held in all her generations, abides, not because its defenders are able to shout louder than their opponents, nor by virtue of any human defense, but because of the fact that it is embedded within the Divine Oracles themselves." (Vol.1, p.64) As we already observed in previous studies (p.13 of these notes), the word "inspiration" literally means all Scripture is "God-breathed." This claim permits us to an interpretation which believes- all Scripture has the very life and breath and perfections of God.