

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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God's Communications

By Dan Trygg

“Many-portionedly (in many parts, bit-by-bit) and many-methodly (in many and various ways) formerly God was-speaking (at points of time) to the fathers with the prophets. In the last of these days He spoke to us with a Son, whom He placed allotted-heir of all things, through whom also He made the ages.”

Hebrews 1:1,2

It is not often that you see a sentence begin with three adverbs! Not even Biblical Greek does that, very often. But that is what the writer to the Hebrews was led to use to begin his letter. It kind of has the effect of stopping you in your tracks. It is a bit awkward, because you don't know the verb that these adverbs apply to until the fifth word in the sentence. It also has the effect of really getting your attention. These words are purposely placed where they are for emphasis, so they are especially important to note and consider.

“Many-portionedly” – A compound word from the word for “many” and the word for “part, piece, bit, portion”. When this is turned into an adverb, **it describes action that is happening bit-by-bit, or by multiple pieces. *God spoke that way!*** Of course, we know that the Scriptures are a progressive revelation. God laid down information bit-by-bit over centuries to convey to us who He is, what His plan is, and to prepare the way for the Christ. **On a practical level, however, this is also an important insight into how God speaks: *He communicates piece-by-piece.*** He does not often lay out the whole picture, rather ***He leads us step-by-step.*** He will tell or show us one thing, and then He waits for our response. It is important for us to realize that. **God's leading is more like a trail of bread crumbs than a map.** God will tell us to “go here” or “go there”, or “do this” or “do that”, but He often does not tell us what the destination or outcome is. Think of the communication to Abraham, “...go to the land which I will show you” (Gen. 12:1), or the directions to Philip, “Get up and go south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to desert Gaza” (Act 8:25), or even the word to Gideon, “Go ...and deliver Israel from Midian” (Jdg. 6:14). In each of these communications from God, He gave the recipient only one piece of information. He did not tell them much more, ...and He certainly did not let them in on how it was all going to take place, or what the plan was. This is an important realization, because it seems to be characteristic of how God chooses to communicate with people, ...bit-by-bit, step-by-step, bread crumb by bread crumb. **If we are praying for, looking for and expecting God's communication with us, it will likely come to us in this way, ...just one piece, one fragment that requires us to take a risk, take a step in obedience, to find out what is next.**

“Many-methodly” – This is a compound word, from “many” and the word for “the way or manner in which something is done”. When this is turned into an adverb, **it describes action that happens in a wide variety of ways. *God communicates to people like this, too!*** There is no standard, “one-size-fits-all”, way in which God communicates. **If there is one thing that is clear about God's nature, and His view of things, it is that He loves diversity and creativity. *So we should not be surprised to find that He is diverse in how He communicates with people.*** He communicated with an audible voice (both in thunder [Ex. 20:1-19; Jn. 12:18,19], normal speech, and a whisper [1 Kg. 19:12,13]), through dreams (Gen. 41:15-40; Matt. 2:22) and visions (Gen. 15:1-17; Acts 10:9-14), through angelic visitations (in face-to-face, physical encounters [2 Kg. 1:3,4; Acts 27:23,24], within dreams [Gen. 31:11-13; Matt. 2:13] and visions [Acts 10:3-6]), through the inner voice of the Holy Spirit (Acts 14:9), and through the ordering of providential circumstances (Gen. 24:12-19; Judg. 6:35-40; 7:10-15).

“Formerly” – This word is a simple adverb, meaning **“in the past period of time”**. Here in Hebrews 1, it sets up the comparison with the even greater revelation which came when God “spoke” through His Son. **Note the contrast, “in these last days”. *We are in the “last days”.*** We have been ever since Jesus came and broke the power of Satan, established a new covenant, and initiated the incursion of the Kingdom of God in a new, powerful way on planet earth. People in the days before Christ had a more limited access to God, and generally did not expect much personal interaction with Him. **Under the new and better covenant that Jesus purchased, we are recipients of many more privileges that those others from “former times” did not commonly enjoy. We have been born from above, and we have the life of the Kingdom-Age-to-come given to us now. We have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside each one of us, something that was *not* true in those “former times”.**

One of the premier benefits of being born from above into Christ's Kingdom is that we have been called into fellowship with the Son (1 Cor. 1:3). Not only is He the source of our life, ...He *is* our life. We have been crucified with Christ, and **our lives are no longer to be lived for ourselves. We are dedicated to live for Him.** In fact, Christ Himself lives in us (Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:14,15). We are to abide in Him, and He in us. In order to abide in Christ, and to have fellowship with Him, *we have to have communication with Him.* **Jesus Himself said that the Spirit is to be our teacher and His job is to reveal to us the things of Jesus** (Jn. 14:26; 16:13,14). We are to *walk in the Spirit*, and be *led by the Spirit* (Gal. 5:16; 6:25; Rom. 8:14). **A key part of the discipleship process of the NT church was to help each person come to an experiential knowledge of Christ** (Eph. 4:13). If that has not been your experience, there is nothing *wrong* with you. It just means that there is more for you to discover about Jesus, and about how to walk in His Spirit. **We all are growing and learning. We all have more to experience of what God can do in our lives.** *Much* more. So, don't let the enemy make you feel "less than" in some way. You have as much of Jesus as any other Christian. This is just one area that needs some discovery and development. God is undoubtedly working in your life right now, but you don't recognize what He is doing. He wants to open up more of Himself with you. Be praying and asking for more insight and clarity. Expect God to be active in your life. Be watchful for Him.

God will communicate things to you in bit-by-bit pieces. If you notice them, you need to look further by acting on that insight, in some way, ...even to say, "Lord, is that You?" If it seems clear enough to act on, and it is consistent with God's character, take that risk, and move in that direction to join with what you see or sense is God's leading. **God will also communicate things to you in a variety of ways.** We saw how, in John 5:19,20, that Jesus did not initiate the things of His ministry. Rather, He responded to what He saw the Father doing. He said, "For the Father loves (*phileō*) the Son and shows Him all things that He is doing." The word for "love" here is significant. It means "to delight in, enjoy". **Did you know that the Father delights in you? ...that He enjoys you?** That's what the scriptures say. John 16:27 says, "For the Father Himself loves (*phileō*) you, because you have loved (*phileō*) Me, and have believed that I came from God." It just makes sense. You have responded to Him, and He made you His child. Furthermore, to strengthen our understanding of the delight and value He has placed upon us, not only did He *birth* us, but He also *adopted* us (Rom. 8:15,23; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5). He *chose* us to be heirs, ...joint-heirs with Jesus. This adoption thing may seem a little strange to us, because in our day we adopt children who are *not* our physical offspring. In ancient Rome, however, a father would adopt or choose certain ones of his children, ...usually ones he especially favored..., to become full heirs of his estate. So, not only did God physically bring us into this world, and spiritually beget us as His sons and daughters, but He also chose us to adopt us to become heirs and sharers of all that is given to Jesus, *because He delights in us.* So, **the Father loves and delights to watch you grow and discover all that He makes available to you. And, because He loves (*phileō*) you, He will show you what He is doing.** As we have seen in previous studies, the word for "shows" here is even more broad than the list of ways God communicated with people in the past. **It can mean "to cause to notice, draw attention to, point out, or reveal".** It can even be as simple as recognizing that you are in the right place at the right time to meet a need that comes into your life. We see Jesus being moved to action by inner compassion (Matt. 14:14). **So, God can communicate to us in a wide variety of ways, some which seem very direct, some indirect, some circumstantial, some from within us, some from external things.**

Expect God to communicate with you. This is part of your spiritual inheritance (Isa. 54:13-17). The scriptures say that God is intimate with the upright (Prov. 3:32), and the intimate counsel of God is for those who reverence Him (Psa. 25:14). **God is a living, active, personal Being who desires to share His counsel with you, and invite you into a deeper intimacy with Him. He desires to partner with you in His work in this world. That cannot happen effectively if we are oblivious to His invitations and promptings to join Him.**

God is not a respecter of persons, meaning He treats us equitably, and does not have favorites. So, if this is a growth area, do not be discouraged. **Don't think, that for some reason, God is keeping you at arm's length. No. He delights in you as His child.** Rather, see this as a challenge to go deeper, and expect to learn from the One who has already helped so many others along this pathway. **Hopefully, having a better, more realistic perception of how God communicates with people will equip you to notice things you had not noticed before. As you move to respond to those new insights, you will begin to discover more of God's personal communications with you.**