

The Gospel Concealed: The Old Testament

Week 5: God Speaks - Prophecy

The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed. -St. Augustine

Review

Who ruled/had authority in the people of God (Israel)?

1. Kings → Covenant ruler of the people of God. (1 Samuel 8)
2. Priests → Covenant mediators/regulators of the religious life of the people of God.
3. **Prophets → Covenant enforcers/communicators – speaking truth (foretelling and forthtelling) to the people of God. (Exodus 4:10-16)**

What is biblical prophecy?

- A word spoken on behalf of God – divine speech given by God for a specific purpose.
 - This word can come via theophany, visions, dreams, etc...
- Prophecy in Scripture can be forthtelling AND foretelling...
 - *Foretelling* – a divine utterance concerning an event(s) that has not yet come to pass.
 - *Forthtelling* – a divine utterance that pastorally guides the people of God.
 - E.g., rebuke of disobedience, promise of deliverance, re-telling of the covenant, etc.
 - Prophecy in Scripture is primarily *forthtelling*.
 - < 5% → speaks to the New Covenant age
 - < 2% → speaks of the Messiah
 - < 1% → speaks of events yet to come
- **Ultimately all prophecy finds its end in Jesus Christ.**
 - “Long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his son...” (Heb 1:1-2)
- Prophecy as a genre of Scripture:
 - The Major Prophets (4): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
 - The Minor Prophets (12): Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
 - Major/Minor refers to length – not importance!!

Why should we read prophecy?

- Prophecy shows us the heart and character of God.
 - Hosea → God as a betrayed wife who is patient and long-suffering.
- Prophecy shows us the heart and character of man.
 - Jeremiah 17:9
- Prophecy shows us the need of a redeemer.
 - Ezekiel 37:1-14
- Prophecy proclaims and validates the Gospel.
 - *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!*
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9 → Matthew 21:1-11)

The Gospel Concealed – Case Study #4

Where do we see the Gospel “winking at us” in the psalms and oracles of God?

Psalm 22:1, 16-18

¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

[...]

¹⁶For dogs encompass me;

a company of evildoers encircles me;

they have pierced my hands and feet—

¹⁷I can count all my bones—

they stare and gloat over me;

¹⁸they divide my garments among them,

and for my clothing they cast lots.

Zechariah 11:7-14

⁷ So I became the shepherd of the flock doomed to be slaughtered by the sheep traders. And I took two staves, one I named Favor, the other I named Union. And I tended the sheep. ⁸ In one month I destroyed the three shepherds. But I became impatient with them, and they also detested me. ⁹ So I said, “I will not be your shepherd. What is to die, let it die. What is to be destroyed, let it be destroyed. And let those who are left devour the flesh of one another.” ¹⁰ And I took my staff Favor, and I broke it, annulling the covenant that I had made with all the peoples. ¹¹ So it was annulled on that day, and the sheep traders, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the LORD. ¹² Then I said to them, “If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.” And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. ¹³ Then the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD, to the potter. ¹⁴ Then I broke my second staff Union, annulling the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

Discussion:

- What unique features do both prophetic passages of Scripture contain?
 - What is the immediate context of the prophecy?
 - How does the text “wink” at the Gospel story?