

**2 Peter 1:16 ESV (Pg. 590)** For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. **17** For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” **18** we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. **19** And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, **20** knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. **21** For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- I. We're beginning a new series, examining the prophet, priest and king in the Bible; what purpose they served. We will also see how Jesus Christ fulfills each of these roles as our Redeemer. Then we'll show the church serving in these roles for the world today. Today we'll begin by looking at the prophets of the Old Testament.
  - A. Before there was what we know as the Bible, God spoke to his creatures directly and sometimes audibly. This began in the garden. Though the Bible never calls Adam a prophet per se, he received God's Word, expressing his will.
    1. Adam and Eve received clear revelation about their purpose and destiny: **Genesis 1:28b ESV** “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion...”
    2. There was a prohibition and a warning associated with it: **Genesis 2:17b ESV** “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”
  - B. But they mishandled God's Word when they were deceived, and rejected God's authority. They abandoned their reverence for what he'd said. But even so, God ensured he would always have someone to hear and proclaim his Word.
    1. He spoke to Noah, whom Peter called “a preacher of righteousness”. God spoke, he obeyed, reverencing the Word, sparing the lives of his family.
    2. Then God sovereignly chose Abraham out of the desert and gave him his Word; in this case, a promise of epic proportions! Beginning with Abraham, Old Testament were characterized by the Word and prayer.
  - C. The Word: Abraham believed God's promise: **Genesis 12:2 ESV** “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”
  - D. Prayer: Abraham was in constant communication with God. He also interceded with his God on behalf of others, for their benefit: his children, his nephew Lot living in unrighteous Sodom. Abimelech, King of the Philistines, took Sarah, Abraham's wife, as his own. Abraham had told him Sarah was his sister in order to save his neck. He thought someone might kill him to have her for themselves! God confronted Abimelech, and he pleaded his innocence in the matter, since he hadn't laid a finger on her. But Abraham and Sarah were holy to God, so he told the King: **Genesis 20:7a ESV** “Now then, return the man's wife, for **he is a prophet**, so that **he will pray for you**, and you shall live.”

- E. Moses was the man God selected to lead Abraham's descendants out of slavery in Egypt after 400 years. He led them to Mt. Sinai, where he received God's law (his Word) that showed them how to live acceptably before God.
  - 1. The law revealed God's unequalled holiness. It showed the Jews how to approach him. The Law set them apart as God's people.
  - 2. Moses proclaimed God's will without any filters. Like Abraham, He prayed for the people when stumbled. They deserved wrath, but received mercy.
    - a) The weight of Moses' role was heavy. When Moses failed to follow God's instructions exactly, God judged him; not allowing him to enter the promised land. Instead, he died outside the land, looking in from afar.
    - b) With this judgement, God defined how the prophets were to handle his Word. **Numbers 20:12b ESV** "Because *you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people* of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."
- F. Proclaiming God's Word, the prophets were to demonstrate their belief in God's holiness and uniqueness by their own obedience. They were not above the expectations placed on the rest of the people. Failing to obey was to make a full assault on his majesty of God before the eyes of people they were to lead.
- II. Therefore the Law lays out clear expectations and definitions for people claiming to be prophets. It is not a light thing to claim to be speaking the Word of God!
  - A. **Deuteronomy 18:20 ESV** "But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die." What if presuming to speak for God still carried the death penalty? How many churches would be bloodbaths?
    - 1. Kenneth Copeland can claim to curse the coronavirus away, blowing into the wind, and yet nothing happened because he wasn't speaking with God's authority, but from his own imagination. When God speaks, things happen!
    - 2. **Psalms 29:4 ESV** The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. Daniel prophesied the rise and fall of 4 successive world empires, and it came to pass. Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews would be taken captive into Babylon, and they were. Elijah prophesied it wouldn't rain until he said so, and it didn't (for 3 years!). Isaiah prophesied the coming of the Messiah in 600 years before his birth. We know how that turned out!
    - 3. All these men had false counterparts. The wise men in Nebuchadnezzar's court couldn't interpret the king's dream, but Daniel could! So-called prophets in day Jeremiah's kept telling the Jews they would never be exiled, but they were! Elijah challenged a group of false prophets of Baal to get him to rain fire from heaven, but only Elijah's God, the true God, answered by fire! Isaiah was sawn in half, but the Messiah appeared exactly as he predicted.
  - B. Determining the genuineness of a prophet was simple. Moses said if what they predicted didn't come to pass, **they weren't** speaking for God. They mocked God's Word by speaking falsely for him, or by blindly supporting those who do.
- III. But none of these men we've mentioned (Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah) wanted to be the focal point of their prophetic ministry. They were prophesying something greater, a coming reality. **Matthew 13:17 ESV** For truly, I

say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. Though God had faithful, inspired men to keep his Word before his people, the Prophets themselves were just cracked human vessels. Something better was yet to come.

- A. Moses prophesied: **Deuteronomy 18:18 ESV** I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. **19** And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.
1. Moses said a prophet “like him” was coming. Moses was unique. God spoke to him, not in dreams and visions, but face to face as God’s friend. Anything he shared, he’d received first-hand, straight from the mouth of God himself.
    - a) Jesus was that prophet. He too had a face to face relationship with God.
    - b) **John 5:19b ESV** “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.”
  2. Jesus, being one with God, didn’t have a separate agenda. **John 12:49 ESV** For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.
    - a) Moses prophesied that God would put his very Word in the mouth of his coming prophet. There would be no miscommunication about God’s will. The coming prophet would speak in the fullness of God’s authority.
    - b) Because of this, everything this prophet said would demand a response. You couldn’t “take him or leave him”. Obedience to him was required. Failure to obey his words meant destruction. **Matthew 7:26 ESV** “And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.” Just as Moses had said.
- B. In the words we read earlier from Peter’s letter, he is looking back at one of the most impactful moments he had with Jesus during his earthly ministry; the events that transpired on the mount of transfiguration.
1. Jesus had taken Peter, James, and John high up a mountain to pray. The Bible says suddenly Jesus’ face “shone like the sun”, and his clothes became “radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them”.
  2. Moses and Elijah, Old Testament prophets, both of whom had been in heaven for hundreds of years, appeared with him on the mountain and spoke to him “of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”
- C. The disciples with him were terrified by this spectacle. Peter, not knowing what to say, spoke anyway, and said to Jesus, “Master, **it is good** that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”.
1. At that very moment, a cloud enveloped them all, and the voice of the Father thundered, saying, “**This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!**”.
  2. The cloud dissipated, and Jesus was there with the three trembling disciples alone, instructing them not to tell anyone what happened until he’d risen.
- D. Many years later, Peter looks back on this event and says, “**we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of**

our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.” His testimony of who Jesus was wasn’t hearsay or something they made up. They saw his glory on the mountain as the veil was lifted, and heaven merged with earth.

1. He says that being there on the mountain with him, seeing his glory, and hearing God’s voice, was to them **“the prophetic word more fully confirmed”**.
    - a) Throughout the Old Testament, prophets across many generations had proclaimed, “the Messiah is coming!” Now, one who was forecast so many times in their writings stood in their midst and was now residing in their hearts. The centerpiece of history had appeared for all to know.
    - b) **“you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.”**
  2. When Jesus appeared, it confirmed the ministry of all the Old Testament prophets. They weren’t simply sages or wise men. They were mouthpieces for God himself. Peter declares the other-worldly nature of their predictions:
    - a) **“knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”** Not from one’s own thoughts, but from the Spirit of God.
    - b) Through the Old Testament prophets, God faithfully protected his Word from one generation to the next. He made this clear to Jeremiah when he called him to be a prophet in his youth: **Jeremiah 1:12b ESV “I am watching over my word to perform it.”** God does not leave his word to the whims of men, but oversees it until its purpose is completed.
- IV. In the final analysis, the prophets of the Old Testament not only proclaimed God’s Word, but their ministries were a foreshadowing of the one who would embody God’s Word. He would be the the “Logos” of God; the living Word. We will examine Jesus’ role of perfectly fulfilling the prophetic ministry in greater detail next week.
- A. Because in him we have “the prophetic word more fully confirmed”, Jesus necessarily changes the way we look at the prophecies of the Old Testament.
    1. We don’t look at passages in Daniel, Ezekiel or the minor prophets and try to understand what mysterious or foreboding event they are predicting; rather, we look at them to learn more about what Christ has done/is doing for us.
    2. We don’t interpret ancient prophecies with their promises of land with borders and earthly kingdoms and temples, but we look to how all of the promises are fulfilled in Christ alone through a new and better covenant. **2 Corinthians 1:20 ESV For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.**
  - B. God isn’t passing revelation from prophet to prophet anymore, building to a grand climax in the story. Jesus is the climax of all of history!
    1. All authority in heaven and earth have been given to him. The kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. What God wanted to say, he said through Jesus!
    2. **Hebrews 1:1 ESV Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.**

- V. **1 Corinthians 11:23 ESV** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, **24** and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
- VI. **Benediction: Numbers 6:24 ESV** The Lord bless you and keep you; **25** the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; **26** the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.