

Bible Study Lecture Notes: Week II (5/13/26)

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Recapping from Week I:

Elements of Prophecy (see breakdown of *Isaiah 7:14*): Prophecy begins with God and leads back to God. Prophecy is miraculous. Prophecy refers to our world. Prophecy ends in God in us, and we in God, which is to say, in *theosis* (man becoming *like God*).

Elements of Prophecy mirror how God creates in *Genesis 1:1-2:4*. Creation comes out from God (the First Day) and leads back to God (the Seventh Day). Creation is miraculous (God says that it is good, for He sees Himself in it, and the miracle is God *seeing Himself* in that which is *not God*, which is to say, a created order rather than an eternal order). Notice that creation is miraculous in the same way that the Incarnation is miraculous. Creation refers to our world (God is bringing order to what had been disordered in the world that *we experience* with our human reason, our human senses, and in chronological time). Creation ends in *theosis* (further explained in *Genesis 2:4-25* when God is with Adam in Eden – *God in us* - and Adam will be able to mature into God's likeness and under God's tutelage – *we in God*).

Seeing the Elements of Prophecy in *Genesis 1:1-2:4*, which is expanded upon in *Genesis 2:4-25*, we see that God's Creation/Salvation/Revelation (all the same phenomenon from God's divine perspective) is *an act of prophecy*. God creates/saves/reveals through the Logos, which is to say the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, so Prophecy begins with the Logos and ends with Christ Jesus (begins with God and leads back to God). From this we see that any prophecy that comes after Christ Jesus, or points to someone other than Christ Jesus as the fulfillment of God's will, is false and can come only from the devil (see *Revelation 22:18-19: For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And so if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*).

The Elements of Prophecy mirror the Phenomenological Conception of Intellection:

Prophecy begins with God and leads back to God: Prophecy is the act of the Prophet *reaching out* to what is different (*Prophecy begins with God*) in order to bring what is different into sync with what is (*Prophecy leads back to God*). This is the same as the Phenomenological *Dasein* – Being is that which *reaches out* to what is different from itself in order to bring it into sync with itself. Where Descartes said, I think, therefore I am, Heidegger would say, I reach out to what is not me, therefore I am.

Prophecy is miraculous: God *sees Himself* in that which is *not God*. This is a conundrum, and so the fact that this happens is miraculous. Analogously, with the Phenomenological *Dasein*, *Being* that is unique is by definition *Being-In-The-World* (or in relation to what is different than itself). The conundrum is in being unique from the world *because it is in the world*.

Prophecy refers to our world: The miracle of creation/salvation/revelation refers to the world that we experience. Analogously, the miracle of the Phenomenological *Dasein* refers to who we are (ontology) and how we know the world around us (epistemology).

Prophecy ends in *theosis*: The end point of prophecy is for us to be in God as God is in us, which is to say, for us to be *like God*. Analogously, with the Phenomenological *Dasein*, *Being* is what is *reaching out to* and *incorporating back into itself* an ever expanding world. Note that the *Dasein* analogy ultimately will break down, for the *Dasein* is limited to the created world (it is *Being-In-The-World*, not *Being-In-God*), whereas the end point of being in Christ Jesus is *Being-In-God*.

Prophecy Sets the Stage for God Himself to be the Messiah

From this, we see that Messiah must be God Himself. If we define here the Messiah as the Anointed One of God, the deliverer of the Jews from bondage, but also the One who fulfills all of God's promise to mankind, then who else but God can be the Messiah? God's promise unto

mankind is in the context of a covenantal relationship meant to restore the relationship which Adam had squandered. It is meant to restore a relationship that God alone originates, that God alone redeems, and that God alone restores. Stated another way, either God is the Messiah, which is to say, that God acts in such a way as to fulfill the messianic ministry, or there is not going to be a Messiah. From the Christian perspective, we would say that either God becomes Man in Christ Jesus to fulfill the messianic ministry, or there is no Messiah. There is no figure in between God Incarnate, on the one end of the spectrum, and “No Messiah,” on the other end of the spectrum, that will be able to fulfill that role to that extent. God rights the ship, or no one rights the ship. This is because the ship is God, the wind in the sails is God, the sea is God, and the destination is God. No man apart from the God-Man will be able to right that ship.

Jeremiah 23:6: “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is [the Messiah’s] name whereby he shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.”

In Midrash Tehillim [Interpreting Jeremiah 23:6]: “God calls the Messiah by his name. And what is his name? The Lord of Hosts. And the Messiah we shall call, The Lord Our Righteousness.” God will call him The Lord of Hosts, which is to say, the Name of God. We shall call him, The Lord Our Righteousness since we cannot say aloud the Name of God.

Prophecy Demands Total Obedience in Response

The Messiah is the Anointed One who fulfills God’s promise to Israel. He is set aside (anointed, which is to say, ordained) for that purpose. When he is pursuing that purpose, he can be said to *be going about His Father’s business*. For in the context of the relationship between the Father and man, *the Father’s business* is to bring man back into a proper relationship with Him. Thus, fulfilling God’s promise is the same as bringing man back into a proper relationship with God – the work of the Messiah is intrinsically salvific.

As discussed before, from the perspective of God, it is correct to say that Creation = Salvation = Revelation. Therefore, if the work of the Messiah is salvific, and if God Himself alone can do the

work of the Messiah *in total*, as we discussed the last time, then the work of the Messiah is not only salvific. It is also creative and revelatory. The Messiah saves man (salvation), the Messiah allows for a new creation in Him (creation), and the Messiah is the revelation of God to man and, just as importantly, the revelation of, which is to say, the face of a justified man before God. Because Creation = Salvation = Revelation, it is just as accurate then to state that a man cannot be saved unless he is also a new creation and wears on his face the face of Jesus, the one man justified before God. That is to say, Creation = Salvation = Revelation is not just true regarding God's relationship to man but also man's relationship to God, so if God must become man to be the Messiah *in total*, then man must become like God to be saved *in total*. Theosis, which is to say, the process by which man is transformed by grace into a new creature who is like unto God, is not a *fringe benefit* of being saved in Christ Jesus. It is a necessary part of what it means *to be saved*. Either we become by grace *like God*, or we are condemned. For we are either *like God*, or we are sinners still, and the wages of sin is death (meaning not just physical death but spiritual defeat in Hell). There is no middle ground. It is all or nothing. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

The idea that we can be in Heaven and be fundamentally unchanged from what we are now is wrong. We cannot be in Heaven and carry even an ounce of sin with us. Indeed, we cannot be in Heaven and carry even an ounce of the disease or the wretchedness that had been wrought in our souls from past sin. The reason is that Heaven is the state of being in sync with God. It is the Seventh Day of Creation, our rest in Christ Jesus, but we cannot be in sync with God unless we are *like God*. We cannot be *like God* if we still hold onto sin or the residue from sin. Now, as we know, Heaven and Earth will pass away, but the New Jerusalem that descends from God at the end of time will be the abode of God's Saints with God into eternity. We must be as sinless there as in Heaven. The Tree of Life is restored to us in the New Jerusalem. There is no longer a Cherubim with a flaming sword setting the Tree of Life away from us. Thus, living with God and the Saints in the New Jerusalem necessitates being restored at least to the innocence of Adam prior to his fall. Indeed, our *theosis* will be even greater than what Adam had known before his fall into sin, for we shall be a new creation living in and through Christ Jesus. We shall be living

in God in a way that even Adam had not been living at the time, though we may presume that if Adam had not fallen into sin, God in due time would have afforded unto Adam the opportunity to mature in grace into a creature as alive in God as we shall be alive in the Father, by the Son, and through the Holy Spirit. We may presume this because God before Adam's sin had started to teach Adam in Eden (tilling the soil in Eden, naming the creatures in Eden, exercising human dominion over God's creation in Eden, etc.). For what higher purpose would God have in being Adam's teacher than to teach Adam to be *like God* in every manner?

From this we see then that the Messiah must not only be God. He must be also a man who is in total sync with God. For fulfilling God's promise to Israel is fulfilling the covenantal relationship between God and Israel. The promise is in the context of this covenantal relationship, not apart from it. As we discussed when reviewing Isaiah 2:2-4, the fulfillment of Israel is in Israel being in herself the medium by which the rest of mankind comes into a covenantal relationship too with God. Thus, God's promise to Israel is fulfilled in establishing a covenantal relationship between God and mankind. The rainbow, the sign of God's covenant with the world after the cessation of the flood, is not just the first indication of a covenantal relationship that will become in time more intimate (from a covenant with all mankind, to one with Abraham and all his legacy, to one with Israel, and finally to Christ Jesus Himself). It is also the end of God's several covenantal relationships. God begins by making a promise to the world, a promise made in the context of a covenantal sign (the rainbow), and God ends by fulfilling that promise to the world, a fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ. Preserving us from the possibility of a future worldwide flood (the salvific sign) is done at the same time as inaugurating a new creation, the world that emerges in time out from beneath the waters (the creative sign). And this is all done at the same time God reveals Himself anew through the rainbow sign and through Noah's altar sacrifice to God when the waters recede (the revelatory sign). Analogously, in the Second Coming of Christ Jesus, the possibility of future calamity from sin will be wiped away (the salvific sign). This will be done at the same time He inaugurates a new creation, the descent of New Jerusalem from on high (the creative sign). And this is all done at the same time God reveals Himself anew unto His Saints in this New Jerusalem with the rainbow and the Tree of Life restored (the revelatory sign). Man is

integral to this. God is not creating a new world after Heaven and Earth pass away for Himself, just as He did not create a new world out from the receding flood for Himself. Therefore, if the Messiah is fulfilling God's promise unto Israel, if that promise is in the context of a covenantal relationship, first with Israel, but then through Israel unto all humanity, and if that covenantal relationship involves a new creation where the Saints live in and with God (and God in and with them) in the New Jerusalem, then man has to uphold his side of the covenant. It is not enough for God to act. Man must act, too, and he must act perfectly. What man can act perfectly in the work of upholding the covenantal relationship but the God-Man, the One Man who is divine in Himself, and the One Man who can take all of humanity into Himself?

From this we see then that the endpoint of all Old Testament Prophecy is the God-Man who is alone capable of total obedience to the Father. Therefore, the true Prophet of God is a type or a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ, and the right interpretation of the Prophetic Word happens only from the perspective of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of that Prophetic Word. We cannot know the Prophetic Word, which is to say, to hear it, to respond to it, and to obey it, unless we are *in Christ* as Christ is *in us*. Apart from Jesus Christ, the Prophetic Word will be neither meaningful nor powerful. Before the coming of Jesus Christ, the Prophetic Word can be known and obeyed only partially and, even then, by the prevenient grace of God. The history of Israel is the history of rejecting that prevenient grace for the allure of the world and suffering accordingly from not hearing nor obeying the Prophetic Word that God had provided them through His chosen ones.

Solomon's Wisdom

The Dilemma

1 Kings 3:16-22: Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto the king, and stood before him. And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night;

because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king.

Notice that the dilemma is the fruit of trickery meant to steal God's blessing for oneself. This is the pattern we have seen before: Cain uses trickery to persuade Abel to go out with him to that hidden place where Cain can kill him. Jacob uses trickery to obtain the blessing meant for Esau. The wrongdoer's presumption is that he can get what God had intended for someone else and that God will be bound to bestow the benefit of that stolen blessing to the person who stole it. For unless God is so bound, there would be no value in the stolen blessing in the first place. The real author of the blessing then is man himself, for in this scenario man is able to bind God and, therefore, is God's master at least with respect to the grace that comes from a blessing. There is also the presumption that God can be as blind to the trickery as the immediate victim, thus in these stories the trickery happens in a hidden place, or where the person being tricked is blind, or where the person being tricked is asleep. The connotation is that darkness is more powerful than light, not only with respect to other people but also with respect to God. Finally, since we are called upon to discern from the perspective of Jesus Christ, the fact that the second harlot delivers her baby "the third day" after the first harlot is important. From the perspective of Our Lord, every "third day" reference in the Holy Bible is a reference to Death/Resurrection. There are two babies born, one will die, the other will be stolen. When viewed from the perspective of Death/Resurrection, we see then that the world's reaction to the Resurrection will be to kill grace through inattentiveness and to steal what is good and holy for perverse ends.

The Solution

1 Kings 3:23-28: Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king

said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment.

Notice that the solution here is draconian on the surface but meant to inspire a response born out of genuine love for the child. For the true mother is willing to give up the child for the sake of preserving the child's life, while the false mother flatters the king by agreeing to his solution. The solution is love over strategic advantage and flattery even when that means that the true mother may lose the object of her deepest affection to the false mother. The only solution for apparently intractable dilemmas is absolute and unhesitant love.

Also, notice the parallel with the Prophetic Word mentioned earlier. The King is the originator of this solution in pronouncing the idea of dividing the child in two. He will be the resolution of this solution as well in conferring the child to the rightful mother. What he pronounces, namely dividing the child in two, on its face is draconian and unworkable. For the child will literally die if this is done, and the death of the child on the surface would seem to be the opposite of a viable solution. That which seems on the surface to be unviable, and yet turns out to be the only real solution, is *miraculous*, for the solution defies our logic and our expectations based upon how the world works. This miracle refers to a practical problem *in the world*, namely, in this case, in ascertaining who the rightful mother is. The endpoint is *theosis*, for not only does the rightful mother get the child (the rightful person receives the intended grace from the blessing), but in acting from a position of absolute and unhesitant love, the rightful mother acts as God would act under the same circumstances. Thus, Solomon's Wisdom is parallel to the Prophetic Word.

God's Spirit Descending on the First Temple

2 Chronicles 7:1-3: Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever.

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary: God gave a gracious answer to Solomon's prayer. The mercies of God to sinners are made known in a manner well suited to impress all who receive them, with his majesty and holiness. The people worshipped and praised God. When he manifests himself as a consuming Fire to sinners, his people can rejoice in him as their Light. Nay, they had reason to say, that God was good in this. It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, but the sacrifice in our stead, for which we should be very thankful. And whoever beholds with true faith, the Saviour agonizing and dying for man's sin, will, by that view, find his godly sorrow enlarged, his hatred of sin increased, his soul made more watchful, and his life more holy. Solomon prosperously effected all he designed, for adorning both God's house and his own. Those who begin with the service of God, are likely to go on successfully in their own affairs. It was Solomon's praise, that what he undertook, he went through with; it was by the grace of God that he prospered in it.

Notice again the parallel with the Prophetic Word: The descent of God's Spirit upon the First Temple comes out from God and returns those changed by that Spirit back to God. The fact of returning back to God is indicated by the people worshipping God in response and saying that God is good. This is the same as God said about creation. So, as God said about creation before sin enters the picture, namely, that it is good, so now creation, when transformed by the Spirit, can see and say that God is good. What comes out from God goes back to God. There is a divine miracle in God's fire consuming the sacrifices. The miracle has a practical end, namely, that the

witnesses are inspired to see God's work and to rely on Him. The practical end is *theosis*. On the surface, this seems incongruent. How can a practical or worldly end also be *theosis*? Only if man becoming like God means the redemption of the world, not its erasure for a pure spirituality as the Gnostics have theorized, but its rebirth into a creation that is like God ("Heaven and Earth" passing away for a New Creation). Finally, notice that the priests cannot enter the holy place at this time. Only the God-Man Priest will be able to do that. God Himself redeems, and we must be like Him as is Jesus Christ if we too are to be in His holiness. There is no middle ground here.

The Ascension of Elijah

2 Kings 2:11: *And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*

Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary: *The ascension of Elijah has been compared to the death of Moses. "As God Himself buried Moses, and his grave has not been found to this day, so did He fetch Elias to heaven in a still more glorious manner in a fiery chariot with fiery horses, so that fifty men, who searched for him, did not find him on the earth" (Ziegler). This parallel has a real foundation in the appearance of Moses and Elijah with Christ on the mountain of transfiguration, only we must not overlook the difference in the departure from this life of these two witnesses of God. For Moses died and was to die in the wilderness because of his sin (Deuteronomy 32:49.), and was only buried by the hand of the Lord, so that no one has seen his grave, not so much for the purpose of concealing it from men as to withdraw his body from corruption, and preserve and glorify it for the eternal life (see the Comm. on Deuteronomy 34:5-6). Elijah did not die, but was received into heaven by being "changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:15.). This difference is in perfect harmony with the character and position of these two men in the earthly kingdom of God. Moses the lawgiver departed from the earthly life by the way of the law, which worketh death as the wages of sin (Romans 6:23; Romans 7:13); Elijah the prophet, who was appointed to admonish for future times (ὁ καταγραφείς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιροῦς), to pacify the wrath before the judgment, to turn the heart of the father*

to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob (Ecclus. 48:10), was taken to heaven as the forerunner of Christ (Malachi 4:5-6; Matthew 11:10-11) without tasting of death, to predict the ascension of our Lord, and to set it forth in Old Testament mode; for as a servant, as the servant of the law, who with his fiery zeal preached both by word and deed the fire of the wrath of divine justice to the rebellious generation of his own time, Elijah was carried by the Lord to heaven in a fiery storm, the symbol of the judicial righteousness of God. "As he was an unparalleled champion for the honour of the Lord, a fiery war-chariot was the symbol of his triumphal procession into heaven" (O. v. Gerlach). But Christ, as the Son, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, after having taken away from death its sting and from hell its victory, by His resurrection from the grave (1 Corinthians 15:55), returned to the Father in the power of His eternal deity, and ascended to heaven in His glorified body before the eyes of His disciples as the victor over death and hell, until a cloud received Him and concealed His figure from their sight (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9).

As the Spirit of God descended upon the First Temple, the situs of the Law, which forms the basis of God's Covenant with Israel, so Elijah as a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ ascends unto God by the same Spirit. What the fire consumes by the Law, the same fire lifts up unto Heaven by grace. Thus, *theosis* cannot be effectuated by the Law alone but by the grace born out from the covenantal relationship established by the Law. Grace is not bound by that relationship. As said elsewhere, we can say where the Holy Spirit is, but not where the Holy Spirit is not. At the same time, Elijah, though a manifestation of grace, is not acting outside of the Law but always in fidelity to it, just as Jesus Christ remains faithful to the Law (see Matthew 5:18: *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled*). Thus, *theosis* is the endpoint of faithfulness to God's Law even while changing the faithful into new creatures who can and will transcend the limitations of life in this world.