



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Christology, Deuteronomy 18:9-22

“The Prophetic Ministry of Christ”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Tonight is the first of a series of just several studies in the prophetic ministry, or office, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next week, the Lord willing, we will be expounding in a little more detail the passage in Deuteronomy chapter 18, verse 9 through verse 22, and so, I would like to read that passage for our Scripture reading tonight. The study tonight will be something of an introduction to the study of the next couple of times, and let's turn to Deuteronomy chapter 18, and will you listen as I read verse 9 through the end of the chapter? You'll recognize that in this particular chapter Moses has a great deal to say about prophecy.

“When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you. You shall be blameless before

the LORD your God. For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so. The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. (Will you notice particularly that verse because next week we'll deal with it in a little detail) This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (Will you notice particularly the phrase which we will refer to later in the message tonight, 'My words in his mouth?') It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. 'But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' You may say in your heart, 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.”

The Prophetic Office of Christ. It has been common among theologians to say that Jesus Christ preformed his mediatorial work by functioning in three offices and these offices are the office of prophet, the office of priest, and the office of king. Calvin was the first to recognize, and stress, the important distinction between prophet, priest, and king. But all branches of the reformation and even beyond that have, since that time, acknowledged that in the presentation of the mediatorial work of Christ, it is helpful to mark it out as the work of the prophet, the work of the priest, and the work of the king.

The Lutherans and the Calvinists have followed this particular division of the mediatorial work of our Lord.

Now just by way of review, I know that most of you know this, but by way of review, the prophet was an individual who represented God with men. He was a person who, anointed by God and called by God to his office, represented God with men. The priest, on the other hand, who also had to be appointed by God, for no man can of himself assume the office of priesthood, so we are told in both the Old and New Testaments, the priest represents men before God. So the prophet represents God with men and the priest, men with God. And the king, we all know rules over men for God. In the Old Testament the prophets were anointed by oil. The priests were anointed by oil. And the kings were anointed by oil. That is we have illustrations of each of these three offices by the anointing oil.

Now the oil is symbolic, of course, of the Holy Spirit, but the significant thing is that in the anointing of the prophet, the anointing of the priest, and the anointing of the king, we have recognition of the fact that the prophet, the priest and the king were, therefore, Messianic figures. That is, they were typical men who looked forward to the coming of someone who would fulfill in the spiritual sphere the things they were carrying out in a more temporal and secular sphere.

The importance of the subject of prophecy, for us, is not simply related to Christ's work, of course because it certainly touches the contemporary life of the church. We have today a great deal of confusion over the subject of prophecy, not only our Lord's mediatorial work as prophet, but also the life of the prophet in the Old Testament and the New Testament prophets in the New Testament church. The problems are connected, for example, with the Charismatic movement which has sought, generally speaking, to claim that there are prophets today, just as there were prophets in the Old Testament and prophets in the time of our Lord. And the Mormons, who also claim for some of their leaders the gift of prophecy, such as Joseph Smith, are a confusing influence in

connection with the contemporary life of the local church. I dare say that if a person were straight on what the Bible teaches concerning the prophet, he would not be disturbed by those aberrations of the Charismatics, and he certainly would not be disturbed by the aberrations regarding Joseph Smith.

Just the other afternoon I had two young men, two nice looking young men, who visited my house on Dartcrest and we had an interesting hour, hour and fifteen minute theological discussion out in front of my house. And I want you to know that they were the ones that finally retreated from the battle [Laughter] because we kept going and I enjoyed it thoroughly [Laughter] until finally they said, “Well we’ve got to go,” but traversed the territory of the prophets and various other types of things, and of course, the knowledge that they had of the word of God was really dismal. It is sad that two fine looking young men, and really fine men judged by worldly standards, knew so little about holy Scripture, and yet claimed to be giving out so much that had to do with God. But one of the things that we discussed was this office of prophecy, and I tried to point out to them something of what the Bible teaches about prophets because according to holy Scripture, the prophet as an office does not exist today by the nature of the gift itself.

Well we turn now to a consideration of Christ’s mediatorial work as the prophet of God. And Roman one, “The Scriptural Idea of a Prophet.” Our age, incidentally, is characterized by a great interest in the future, and by a very unusual failure to predict it. One of the great vogues of the last five or ten years is futurology. Many of our largest corporations, as you know, have departments in which the study of the future is part of their business. Futurology is the name that businessmen have given to this interest in the future. Now they’re not interested, of course, in the spiritual things that the future may hold, but they’re interested in the things that might affect their economic future, and so often in our largest corporations, departments are devoted to studying the future, not simply planning ahead as corporations have always done, but in a special sense

attempting to predict what is going to come to pass, futurology. But unfortunately, they are men, and they cannot predict.

Some of the most interesting prophesies are those that are read about ten years after they have been made. To me one of the greatest failures in prophecy was made by one of our Admirals just before the atomic bomb was exploded. Admiral William Leahy, in nineteen hundred and forty-five said, "This is the biggest fool thing we have ever done. The atomic bomb will never go off, and I speak as an expert in explosives." And it was just later, a few months after that that it did go off. That was probably one of the greatest bombs in history. That is his prophecy [Laughter] that it would not go off.

But we say we want to talk about the terms for prophet now and, first of all, the Old Testament terms for prophet. The one class of men, who were accepted from the general failure to predict the future were the prophets of God. They were able to predict the future. What is, if there is such, a prophet? Now you noticed, of course, that the way in which you tell a true prophet from a false prophet is to look at the results of his prophecy. Moses said a long time ago when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about, or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. So you can see that in order to be a prophet one must have a rating of one hundred percent in prophesies. If he fails, he's not really a true prophet. These men were men who, when they prophesied, they prophesied things that were sure to come to pass and they did.

The most common terms that were used in the Old Testament for the work of the prophet were the words, let's see if I put them here, I think I did, I did not try to do this technically and I know that some of you in the audience who may know Hebrew may be surprised at this kind of transliteration, but *nabiy* is one of the words for "prophet," *roeb* is a word that means "a seer," s-e-e-r, "a seer," and *chozeb*, is also a word that means "a seer." The most common word is the word *nabiy*. Now if I had transliterated that as it's technically done you wouldn't be able to read it. So I've done it very simply. This word,

“nabiy,” which is the word for “prophet,” is of uncertain etymology, unfortunately. That is, if you’ll study the etymology of that Hebrew word, you discover there’s a great deal of debate over it, and four different etymologies have been suggested. So, it won’t be helpful for us to enter into it since there is so much uncertainty about the meaning of the term that is commonly translated prophet in the Old Testament. Let’s just say this, and I think we can be generally accurate; the term “prophet” has the general sense of one who acts or speaks for God. In other words, the term itself probably means something like the one who acts or speaks for God.

Fortunately for us, there is a passage in the Old Testament which in its context and in its content tells us a good deal more about what a prophet is than study in the etymology, the uncertain etymology of the Hebrew word, and I’d like for you to turn to this passage in Exodus chapter 7 because it is extremely important in understanding exactly what a prophet is. It is Exodus chapter 7 verse 1 and verse 2.

I think, incidentally, that this is among the first uses of the term prophet in the Old Testament. I forgot to check my concordance before I came to ascertain that, and so I’m going on memory. It may not be the first, but it’s one of the first mentions of the term prophet in the Old Testament. There’s an interesting hermeneutical observation that many have made incidentally. And that is that first mentions of words in the Bible often have great significance for the later meaning of those words. Regardless of the truthfulness of the application of that rule to this particular subject, this two verse section tells us a great deal about what a prophet is.

Listen to what we read here in Exodus chapter 7, verse 1 and 2. “Then the LORD said to Moses, See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land.” Now there are two or three things that are important about this. In the first place, I want you to notice the particular expression in verse 1, “And Jehovah said unto Moses, See, I have made thee as God to

Pharaoh.” Now notice Moses is as God to Pharaoh, that’s important. Moses is as God to Pharaoh.

Now the second thing that Moses writes is “And Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet,” “Thy prophet.” Moses is as God to Pharaoh, Aaron is Moses’ prophet. Now then look at what follows, “Thou shall speak all that I command thee and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh.” So here we have a pattern. Moses is as God; Aaron is Moses’ prophet, and it is Aaron who speaks to Pharaoh. So, in other words, Aaron is the one who brings the word of God to Pharaoh. Aaron is a prophet, and so he takes the word of Moses who is God, and brings it to Pharaoh.

Now you can see from this that the work of a prophet is to bring the word of God to men. Now that is very important because it lets us know right at the beginning that a prophet is a person who brings us new revelation. A prophet is not a person who takes the Bible and teaches us what it contains. That’s the work of a teacher. A prophet is a person who brings new revelation from God.

Consequently if, for example, we were to believe in Believers Chapel falsely that we did have prophets today and occasionally they stand up in our meeting and speak, we should expect them not to give us some word concerning the Bible which is our revelation as already written, but to give us new revelation, something that has not been known up to this present time. That’s what a prophet does. He gives new revelation.

Now, that means, of course, that we can test the words of the prophets by the kind of information that they convey. Now if you’ll talk with people who believe that they have prophets in their meeting, they never give out anything significant. I have a good friend that I asked once, he was in an assembly that believed in prophecy as a gift today, I said, “Well just give me an illustration of a prophecy. What is a prophecy?” Well, he said, “We had one last Sunday.” “What was it?” “Well a man stood up in our meeting and said there’s going to be great blessing next Sunday in the meeting.” Well now I want you to know that’s not a very deep prophecy.

As a matter of fact that prophecy could be understood in any way, as I've often said, it could be understood as applying if the building burned down next Sunday because that would be good for us, wouldn't it, to go through a few trials, tribulations? That kind of prophecy is totally worthless. It's not new revelation in the biblical sense at all. It's not edifying. It's not moral. It doesn't communicate anything. That kind of prophecy is not prophecy at all. A prophet is a spokesman for God, and the characteristics of his prophecy will always be divine. That is, they will have about them the character of God's words. So a prophet then brings us new revelation.

When the Old Testament translators translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek, the version that we call the Septuagint, they used a Greek word, "prophetes," which came from two Greek words, *pro* and *phemi* which means simply, "to speak for another." So the prophet was a person who spoke for another. He spoke for God. And those translators understood that Hebrew word then correctly.

When we come to the New Testament terms, we have the term "prophetes" which means "a prophet" this is the Greek word, "prophetes." "Prophetes" that is the term used in the New Testament for prophet. This New Testament word means "to speak forth," or it refers to "one who speaks forth." The verb form means "to speak forth." The preposition is not temporal. It does not mean "to speak before a certain time" but simply "to speak forth." So the prophet is a person who receives divine revelation from God directly, and he gives it to men. Now he may receive his divine revelation in different ways. He may receive it by vision. He may receive it by word. He may receive it by dream, as for example Daniel did. But it must be something that is received from God directly and given back to men. Incidentally, it must be given back to men too because Nebuchadnezzar received a vision of this great image, but that was worthless until it was given back to men by Daniel the prophet. So, prophecy then is something received directly from God, and given to men by one commissioned by the Lord.

Well now, what then can we say just from this opening part of our study? Well we could conclude, I think clearly from just the study of the meaning of these terms that there are no prophets today. There are no prophets today. Revelation has ceased. Therefore we do not have prophets today. Occasionally you will hear people say, "My, our age really needs a prophet." No we don't. We don't need a prophet. If we needed prophets, God would give us prophets. We don't need prophets. We have the divine revelation.

Now we do need teaching from the human side. We need evangelization from the human side. And we need from the divine side illumination to understand the written revelation, but we do not need further revelation. We do not need prophets. All such use of the term is scripturally inaccurate. No seminary today trains prophets. Some of them advertise that they do. But no seminaries train prophets. Seminaries train teachers, evangelists, pastor-teachers, gifted men, but they don't train prophets. The gift of prophecy has ceased, therefore Mormonism is built upon an unscriptural foundation. The Charismatic's, in so far as they contend for the gift of prophecy today, are contradicted by the study of the term prophet, or prophecy. It is new revelation from God. Do not forget that. If that really comes home to you, you won't be troubled by the Charismatic's, the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and others.

Let's come now to the teaching of the term prophecy. The prophet is then a mouth piece of God. His utterances are divine revelation, and they have a two-fold stress. First of all, prophecy is predictive revelation. Now prophecy is revelation. It's new truth from God, but that new truth from God will have two different emphases, two different contents, if you wish to put it that way. Prophecy is, first of all, predictive revelation. And I want you now to turn to a couple of passages in the New Testament. Let's turn first to Acts chapter 11 and verse 27 and verse 28. You know, of course, that we do have prophets in the New Testament, as well as in the Old Testament. In Acts chapter 11 and verse 27 and verse 28, Luke, the historian, the author of the Acts says in verse 27, "Now at

this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.” Now don't look at verse 28 if you have not already looked at it. If what I have said is true that prophets give new revelation, and here are prophets in New Testament times, the times of the apostles, what should we expect should be true of their prophecy? Well, number one, it should be new revelation. And number two, it should, of course, come to pass.

Now notice the 28th verse. These prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch, and “One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world.” That was new information. Now he predicted specifically what would come to pass and the extent of it. He said, “There would be a great famine all over the world.” He didn't say there will be some bad times in the future. He said there would be a particular kind of bad time, a famine which would come all over the world, and then we read, “And this took place in the reign of Claudius.” He was a genuine prophet. He gave new revelation. He was the mouth piece of God. You won't find that information anywhere in the revelation up to this point. It was new truth, and it came to pass.

Now let's turn over to chapter 21. That's a perfect illustration of what I'm saying, and this next one is not quite perfect, but it's almost. And it's not a contradictory one at all. This same man prophesies again. His batting average is still one hundred percent. Prophets always bat one hundred percent. That's one thing Jean Dixon has never been able to do. She's made a number of false prophesies. They're recorded. She happened to hit on one or two that were accurate. Some of us predicted that the Cowboys would win their last game too. But that doesn't make us very good prophets because we have erred in the past, and the chances are we shall err in the future.

But Acts chapter 21 and verse 10 and 11, we read, “As we were staying there for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, ‘This is what the Holy Spirit says.’” You'll notice, by the way, he's now speaking his prophecy by way of acting out

the content of his prophecy. This incidentally, was the way some of the prophets in the Old Testament prophesied. Ezekiel liked to do this. Ezekiel liked to prophecy by certain acts. And he says, “In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” Now these people had had a great deal of contact with Agabus evidently, and they knew that when he prophesied things came to pass, and so, “When we had heard this, we as well as the local residents began begging him not to go up to Jerusalem.” They believed the thing that Agabus said was going to come to pass. And evidently Paul thought it was going to come to pass too because notice how he responds. “Then Paul answered,” well it’s not really going to come to pass Agabus just has said this, it’s like Joseph Smith. No, he says, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound,” in other words, if it comes to pass as Agabus has said, I’m ready for it. “But even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, (as all good believers in the sovereignty of God do) ‘The will of the Lord be done!’”

So you can see that he gave new revelation, and while there is no evidence from the context here that it came to pass, what does the rest of the Book of Acts tell us? Why it came to pass. That is exactly what happened to Paul when he went. He was put in prison. He was bound, as Agabus has said, and the prophecy came to pass. So prophets give us new revelation and it comes to pass. And this is predicted. Agabus, by the Holy Spirit speaks, regarding the future, and things come to pass.

It’s often said, incidentally, that prophecy is simply history written before hand. That’s not really true for the actual history is almost always; there are some exceptions, fuller than the prophecy. If you look at the Old Testament prophesies and then look at the New Testament fulfillment of them, you will usually find that not only is the Old Testament prophecy specifically fulfilled, but often it is expanded. It is fuller. Now there are some exceptions. For example, in Micah chapter 5 verse 1, it is said that our Lord

would be born in Bethlehem. That's precisely what took place. Now some of the other details are added by the New Testament, but nevertheless it was precisely fulfilled. In Psalm 22 in that typical Psalm, it is stated that the Messiah would cry out on the cross and say, "My God. My God. Why hast Thou forsaken me?" We know, of course, that that came to pass and those very words were uttered by our Lord. But prophecy is not simply history written before hand. But it is often accompanied by even fuller fulfillment of the Old Testament.

Edersheim who has written a book on prophecy and history has said, "This is the unfolding," this will remind you of one of the things that Augustine said, "This is the unfolding in the New Testament of what was infolded in the Old Testament." In other words, it is the spelling out in greater detail of what was really found in the Old Testament all along. It's very much like an acorn which ultimately becomes an oak tree. Now, everything that the oak tree is is ultimately to be traced back to the acorn, but there is a whole lot more than simply the acorn in the fulfillment. So there is often elaboration, fulfillment in a broader sphere in the New Testament.

Ten years ago, I was a reader of peanuts. And ten years later I still am. But I have before me one of the strips that I thought was pretty good, and Linus is sitting before the TV set, must be the Christmas holidays and Lucy comes up behind him and says, "I have a message for you." And she says, "Mom says get your stupid self in there and clean up your stupid room." So Linus walks off saying, "I'm sure she didn't say it quite like that." "So I elaborated a little," Lucy adds in the last panel as she takes his seat and looks at the TV. Well the prophecies of the New Testament do elaborate a little often over the Old Testament prophecies, but they do fulfill them precisely. They just add something extra.

So prophecy then is predictive revelation. Now I haven't stressed that because all of you think that prophecy is predicative revelation. That's what you usually think about when you think about prophecy. You think that it is something that has to do with the

future. It's the prediction of what is going to come to pass. Sometimes however we overlook the other aspect of prophecy and that is that prophecy is moral revelation. That is, new truth may come from God that has to do not only with the future but also with the present. In other words, God may speak concerning the present as well as the future. When you read the Book of Isaiah or you read the Book of Zechariah, those prophecies are not altogether taken up with the future beyond the days of Isaiah, beyond the days of Zechariah. They are prophecies that were directed to the people of that time, and while they often looked into the future and gave predictions concerning the future Messianic age, particularly, they also spoke to the moral condition of the people, and by means of prophecy pointed out to them their sin and the necessity of repentance and confession and return to the Lord, or there would come judgment upon them, judgment by way of discipline and judgment, ultimately, by way of eternal wrath.

So, in other words, prophecy is new revelation. But, it's new revelation that may have to do with the future or it may have to do with the present. It's new revelation that is predictive or simply moral, or as we popularly put it, the prophet is both a foreteller and a fourth-teller. A foreteller in the sense that he tells what is going to come to pass, a fourth-teller in which he unfolds the mind of God directed toward our present spiritual condition. Or to put it in another way, he is both a predictor and a proclaimer.

“The great end of prophecy,” Robert Rendall has said, “Is not merely to supply information on prophetic programs, but to support the faith of believers and to inspire acclimation and worship.” So the prophet then possessed foresight. He could look into the future, but he also had, by the grace of God, insight into the spiritual condition of people today.

Now when we read the Book of Revelation for example, we tend, I think in evangelical circles, to read the Book of Revelation simply as a kind of chart of the future. And as evidence of that, it's often taught by accompanying charts. I know in my early days as a Christian I was taught the Book of Revelation that way. I think the first two or

three times I studied the Book of Revelation, the teacher unfolded a lengthy chart of the future and fitted the events of the Book of Revelation into that particular chart, which he had drawn up based on his study of the word.

There is great usefulness in that. I do not, in any way, denigrate it. It is useful. It is very helpful. And it's true to the word of God. But if we look at prophecy as only a prediction of the future, we might fail to receive the lessons from the prophecy that are designed to strengthen us in our spiritual life today, comfort, exhortation, words to convict us of our sin, and words to cause us to cling to the Lord more closely in the present time. But prophecy is for edification. It is for comfort, and it is for consolation. That's what Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 and verse 3. He says, “But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.”

Now that text, I need to turn to that, and I'd like for you to turn to it. It almost went by that without referring to it, but it does need to be referred to because occasionally people will say, if I say or if you say, “There is no such thing as prophecy today.” They will say, “But wait a minute, prophecy is for edification, exhortation, and consolation and should not God give us things for edification and exhortation and consolation?” Why, of course, but still in verse 3 of 1 Corinthians 14 where he says, “But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation,” he's still talking about new revelation. So the prophecy, new revelation is not only predictive, but it also was moral, designed to stir up our spiritual life and thus was for edification, exhortation, and consolation, but it was new revelation. Don't forget that.

Now I want you to turn with me, and we have just a few moments, I want you to turn with me to Isaiah chapter 2, and I want you to see before we look finally at the typical function of a prophet. I want you to see how prophecy in the Old Testament had both of these characteristics of predictive revelation and moral revelation. One of the great prophecies of the Book of Isaiah is the prophecy that begins in chapter 2 verse 1 and does not conclude until chapter 4 and verse 6. It's a prophecy of the last days. Now

if you’ve read the Bible at all, when you came to this chapter I’m sure you remembered it because of the unusual prophecy that is given for example, in those opening verses. Let me just read a few of them. Isaiah chapter 2,

“The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, (now he’s going to give new revelation) Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.’ For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

Now, notice the foresight of the prophet as he looked into the future and gave new revelation. But he doesn't stop with that. We gathered that from those last words, “Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.” In other words, the foresight of the prophet is designed to stir us to a holy walk in the light of what is going to come to pass. But when verse 6 begins we have even more than that for suddenly the prophet's thought turns to the condition of Judah and Israel, particularly Judah in the light of the conditions of the day of the prophet Isaiah, and he launches into a very significant analysis of the moral condition of the nation. Listen to what he says, if in verse 1 through 5 we have God’s truth overflowing to the world, here we have man’s heresies penetrating Zion itself.

"Thou hast abandoned Thy people, the house of Jacob, Because they are filled with influences from the east, (Babylonia) And they are soothsayers like the Philistines, And they strike bargains with the children of foreigners. (Like the kind of covenant that Ahaz wants to make with Assyria) Their land has also been filled with silver and gold And there is no end to their treasures; (they are materialists) Their land has also been filled with horses And there is no end to their chariots. (two chariots in every garage, and so on.)

And through this prophecy, you'll notice the things that he singles out, idolatry. In the next chapter he talks about how God is going to make mere lads their princes and capricious children will rule over them. He attacks the women, and particularly their ostentatious way of carrying on in verse 16 of chapter 3,

"Moreover, the LORD said, "Because the daughters of Zion are proud And walk with heads held high and seductive eyes, And go along with mincing steps And tinkle the bangles on their feet, (I wonder what in the world they are 'the bangles on their feet') Therefore the Lord will afflict the scalp of the daughters of Zion with scabs, And the LORD will make their foreheads bare. In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, headbands, crescent ornaments, dangling earrings, bracelets, veils, headdresses, ankle chains, sashes, (no more Jean Patou's Joy Fragrance either) perfume boxes, amulets, finger rings, nose rings, festal robes, (etcetera)."

Well you can see what the prophet is doing. He talked about the glorious future, but he looked now at Israel in the present, and there is a whole lot that he can be critical about. But then at the conclusion of the prophecy in verse 2 through verse 6 of the next chapter, he looks again into the future, and speaks of the "Day (when) the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel." So the prophet here, in foresight, looks into the

future, analyzes the moral condition of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah, and then concludes, after a scathing warning and denunciation of their life of the day, when the Messiah would come and God would bless them richly in the kingdom that is to come. So the prophet is a person who gave forth prediction, but he also gave forth moral revelation. It is all new truth.

Now I want to look finally at the typical function tonight. In typical Messianic prophecy, and this has particular reference with what we want to deal with next week, in typical Messianic prophecy, the Old Testament author writes of some Old Testament figures who held one of the three primary offices in Israel. The primary offices in Israel were prophet, priest, and king. These three primary offices were typical offices.

Now let me be careful to make this point. God did not, after the life of Israel had gone on for some time, look down from heaven and say, "Well, what do you know? They have prophets, and they have priests, and they have kings. That will make an excellent illustration of the ministry of Jesus Christ when he comes. And so I will use the offices which men have originated as illustrations of what I want to do." No, that is not the truth of the Old Testament teaching. The Old Testament teaching is this, that the office of prophet, the office of priest, and the office of king were originated by God in order that they might be the instrumentality, given by God, for the illustration, the anticipation of the ministry of the Lord Jesus who would come. So every prophet, every priest, every king is, in measure, illustrative of the Lord Jesus. Even priests who do not fully fulfill the nature of the office are nevertheless typical in that they hold the office. The office is typical.

Let me illustrate that. Aaron was a typical priest, but Aaron died. He could not illustrate our Lord in his eternal nature. Melchizedek serves to illustrate our Lord in his eternal nature. But even then he could not, as himself, do it. He could only do it in this way, that he suddenly comes into the Scripture record and no record is given of his genealogy like it is of the others in the Book of Genesis, and he passes out of the pages

of Scripture, and nothing is said about his death. It's as if, as if, he didn't have a birth and he didn't have a death. And in that sense our Lord is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. He's the reality. Melchizedek is the figure in the shadow. So, the prophets, the priests, and the kings of the Old Testament were all typical men, even the bad kings were typical because the office was typical, the ruling office, the priestly office, the prophetic office. The men who held them are incidental.

Now I want you to turn with me to one particular place which I think is extremely interesting. And we'll close with this. And I won't be able to explain it in great detail, but I think you'll get the point. Will you turn with me first to Hebrews chapter 2 verse 13 and verse 14, Hebrews 2:13 and 14? – Now, I hope I haven't, tonight, burdened your mind with too much during the holiday season. I know this has been a little heavy but I don't think anyone has fallen asleep, at least maybe my eyes are getting bad, but this is necessary for the foundation of what we want to talk about next week -- Now in Hebrews chapter 2 verse 12 and verse 13, the writer of this epistle is speaking about our Lord Jesus and in verse 12 and 13 he wants to support some things that he's just said, verse 10,

“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. (That's a reference to Christ, of course) For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He (Christ) is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying (Now he's going to support this from the Old Testament) saying, 'I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE.' (That's a quotation from Psalm 22) And again, 'I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM' and again, (And notice this last one) 'BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.’”

Now if you'll look at this in the New Testament, when he says, “BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME,” he means this, “BEHOLD, I (Christ) AND THE CHILDREN (The saints of the present day) WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.”

Well that would be very interesting, so you take your Bibles and you rush back to the Old Testament. You try to find Isaiah chapter 8 and verse 17 and 18 because that's the quotation, and you look for Christ in Isaiah chapter 8 verse 17 and 18. And you know many people look at it and just say, “Well Isaiah may have found him there, but it's just not there. If you'll look at this in the light of the context of Isaiah chapter 8, Isaiah's not talking about Jesus Christ. He's not talking about saints in the present age. “BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.”

Well, let's read verses 17 and 18, Isaiah chapter 8. “And I will wait for the LORD who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob; I will even look eagerly for Him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.” What's he referring to? Well Isaiah was a prophet. His name meant “salvation of the Lord.” He had two kids. He gave them strange names. One of them he gave the name *Maher-shalal-bash-baz*. What a name. *Maher-shalal-bash-baz*, you'll find it right up there in verse 3. “Name him,” now I want to say this it was not Isaiah's idea. It was really the Lord's idea, *Maher-shalal-bash-baz*, “swift is the booty, speedy is the prey.” Almost sounds like a name an Indian might give to his child.

Now the other child's name was *Shear-Yashub*. Well that wasn't so bad if you were a Hebrew because that means simply, “a remnant shall return.” So here we have one son named *Maher-shalal-bash-baz* and another son named *Shear-Yashub*. Isaiah says, “Behold, I and the children whom God has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.”

Now you see this is what had happened in Judah. Isaiah had thought that the judgment that God had pronounced upon Israel would not reach to Judah. He thought it's not going to come to Judah. And so he, evidently for a while, rested in some hope that it would not touch them. But as it became evident that Judah was just as disobedient, it seems, as Israel, and the Assyrian kept coming down toward the land. Finally it became pretty evident that the Assyrian was going to come into the land of Judah, and were it not for the fact that God said stop when the overflowing flood was right at the neck, Judah itself would have been swept away into captivity by the Assyrians. But due to Isaiah's hopes and due to the situation God had said, "Isaiah you have two sons *Shear-Yashub*, *Maher-shalal-bash-baz*, they are for signs and wonders. They are designed to give you a message and others a message too, first, judgment, *Maher-shalal-bash-baz*, 'Swift is the booty, speedy is the prey.' But Isaiah, *Shear-Yashub* means 'a remnant shall return.'" There is a remnant of obedient ones, and God will preserve them. And furthermore Isaiah's name itself means "the salvation of the Lord." So what has happened is this, the whole nation practically is swept away except now there's a little remnant, the prophet and his children and his wife.

Now the writer to Epistle to the Hebrews knew one important fact which it is necessary for a person to know if he's going to make sense out of the Bible, and that important fact is this, the prophets of the Old Testament are types by virtue of their office. Isaiah was a prophet. In that respect he was a type of Christ. Isaiah was rejected by the people, but there had gathered around him a little Messianic company. That Messianic company was made up of his children, a few friends, his wife, just a little company in the midst of an apostate time and an apostate people. In that respect they are illustrative of the day of the New Testament in which the Messiah has come and there has gathered around him a group of faithful people formed by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit brought by the new birth into relationship with the Lord Jesus and called the church. They are the children which the Lord God has given to the Messiah. And Isaiah, though

he didn't know about it, of course, in his day, Isaiah as typical of the Lord Jesus and his experience as typical of the present time, is in this very chapter telling the story of the New Testament and the New Testament revelation. But if you do not understand that the prophets were typical, Hebrews doesn't make any sense, but when you understand it and realize that it is God who controls history, Hebrews makes good sense. And what happened to Isaiah is illustrative of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ and the relationship of the saints to him.

Well we must stop. Our time is up. Let me close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the word of God and for the way in which Thou hast controlled history. And we thank Thee that, while men who come to the word of God without the illumination of the Holy Spirit often fail to find the key that unlocks its treasures, Thou hast given it to us in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Enable us to draw comfort from the fact that we are related to our Messianic prophet, the Lord Jesus as a group of his people. And we thank Thee for the care that has girded us about and for the revelation that has come to us as we have been taught by him to trust...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]