

HTPC Adult Sunday School
Prophetic Call Narratives – Week 8
The Prophets and the Church

“Biblical prophecy is not a process in which God dislodges the mind of man. Its true conception is that it lifts the human mind to the highest plain of intercourse with God. And it is of the very essence of Biblical religion that its exercise lies in the sphere of consciousness.”

– Geerhardus Vos

“The prophets were not wont to build their persuasion on the favour and love of God on their being prophets, and having revelations; but on their being sincere saints.” – Jonathan Edwards

I. Observations Concerning the Prophets and the Apostles

A. Spirit-Wrought Zeal for the Word of God

7 O LORD, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all the day; everyone mocks me. 8 For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, “Violence and destruction!” For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long.

*9 If I say, “I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,” **there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones**, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot. (Jeremiah 20:7-9)*

*15 But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting. 16 For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. **For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!** 17 For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship. 18 What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. (1 Corinthians 9:15-18)*

B. The Transcendent Concreteness of Gospel Ministry

15 *The word of the LORD came to me:* 16 *“Son of man, behold, I am about to take the delight of your eyes away from you at a stroke; yet you shall not mourn or weep, nor shall your tears run down. 17 Sigh, but not aloud; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your shoes on your feet; do not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men.” 18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. **And on the next morning I did as I was commanded.***

17 *Even if I am to be **poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith**, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me. (Philippians 2:17-18)*

C. Suffering and Patience for the Sake of the Gospel

1 *Now Shephatiah the son of Mattan, Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah heard the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the people:* 2 *“Thus says the LORD: He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out to the Chaldeans shall live. He shall have his life as a prize of war, and live. 3 Thus says the LORD: This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon and be taken.” 4 Then the officials said to the king, “Let this man be put to death, for he is weakening the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking such words to them. **For this man is not seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm.**” 5 King Zedekiah said, “Behold, he is in your hands, for the king can do nothing against you.” 6 *So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king’s son, which was in the court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. And there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and **Jeremiah sank in the mud.** (Jeremiah 38:1-6)**

9 For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. 11 To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, 12 and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; 13 when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.

14 I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (1 Corinthians 4:9-13)

II. Christian "Lineage"

32 And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel **and the prophets**— 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35 Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. 36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— 38 **of whom the world was not worthy**—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. (Hebrews 11:32-38)

13 And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. 14 For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, 15 **who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind** 16 by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last! (1 Thessalonians 2:13-16)

Holy God, We Praise Your Name

*1. Holy God, we praise your name;
Lord of all, we bow before you;
all on earth your scepter claim,
all in heav'n above adore you.
Infinite your vast domain,
everlasting is your reign.*

*2. Hark, the glad celestial hymn
angel choirs above are raising;
cherubim and seraphim
in unceasing chorus praising,
fill the heav'ns with sweet accord:
"Holy, holy, holy Lord."*

*3. Lo! the apostolic train
join your sacred name to hallow;
prophets swell the glad refrain,
and the white-robed martyrs follow;
and from morn to set of sun,
through the church the song goes on.*

*4. Holy Father, Holy Son,
Holy Spirit, Three we name you;
while in essence only One,
undivided God we claim you,
and adoring bend the knee,
while we sing this mystery.*