

"Faith, Hope... and the Prophets"

The Ministry of the Prophets

November 9, 2025

"Interpreting the prophets well is not an easy task. Yet it is an essential one. The prophets take up about as much space in the Bible as the New Testament does. To ignore them, therefore, is to cut ourselves off from a significant portion of God's revelation to his people." **Aaron Chalmers**, "Interpreting the Prophets", p. 2

...To do sound Bible interpretation and application—You need MORE THAN Expository Skills ...You need 2 critical structures that your "expository studies" always report back to: (1) Biblical Theology ... (2) Systematic Theology

"The good news of Jesus Christ—who he is and what he accomplished by his death, resurrection, and exaltation—is simply incoherent unless certain structures are already in place. You cannot make heads or tails of the real Jesus unless you have categories for the personal/transcendent God of the Bible; the nature of human beings made in the image of God; the sheer odium of rebellion against him; the curse that our rebellion has attracted; the spiritual, personal, familiar, and social effects of our transgression; the nature of salvation; the holiness and wrath and love of God. One cannot make sense of the Bible's plot line without such basic ingredients; one cannot make sense of the Bible's portrayal of Jesus without such blocks in place. We cannot possibly agree on the solution that Jesus provides if we cannot agree on the problem he confronts." ..."It is extraordinarily important to see that Paul has established the framework of the Biblical metanarrative before he introduces Jesus. ...This [metanarrative] is the big story in the Bible that frames and explains all the little stories. Without the big story, the accounts of Jesus will not make any sense." **D.A. Carson**, "Worldview Evangelism-Athens Revisited"

"...biblical theology is about reading the Bible, not as if it's sixty-six separate books, but a single book with a single plot—God's glory displayed through Jesus Christ. Biblical theology is therefore about discovering the unity of the Bible in the midst of its diversity. It's about understanding what we might call the Bible's metanarrative. ...here at the start, I want to make the point that the most practical thing we can do, the most important tool we need in ministry, is biblical theology." **Michael Lawrence**, "Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church", p. 15

TITLE: "Faith, Hope... and the Prophets"

1 **Cor 13:13** So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Heb 11:1-3, 6-7 ¹ Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²

For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

... ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. ⁷ By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

2 **Cor 5:6-7** ⁶ So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Heb 10:38-39 ³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

"...it is incredible what a difference it makes when you have something to look forward to. An exciting event on your horizon can change how you see everything else in your life. Adults are less bothered by annoying problems at work. Kids are less likely to bicker with siblings around the house. Even those facing terminal illness can draw inspiration and even some relief by thinking ahead to another Christmas with the people they love most. It's simply wonderful to have something to look forward to." **Matthew McCullough**, "Remember Heaven – Meditations on the World to Come for Life in the Meantime", p. 2

CONTEXT ...2 weeks ago - Isaiah 6 ...the Call & Sending of Isaiah. ...Isaiah 7 ...Isaiah brings the Ministry of the Word to Jerusalem & King Ahaz

Is. 7:1-9

v. 1-2 ... ~ 734BC ...the "mood" has changed from a Season of Prosperity--to a Season of Conflict, Chaos, and Imminent Threat

...ASSYRIA ... SYRIA + EPHRAIM (Israel)

v. 2 ... ***"the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind."***

v. 3 ...The Ministry of the Prophet—This is GOD's INITIATIVE! The "voice, tone, & content" of the Word of God is FROM GOD via a man!

v.9 ... ***"If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all."*** (1Cor 13 ... "So now faith, hope and love abide" ...Heb 10 ... "my righteous one shall live by faith")

...**Faith is Always an Agenda Item!!**

...***Learn Our Human/Fallen Reflexes!*** ...Darkness is Looming ...Threat is Coming ...WHO Will I Look to in That Moment?

?? - Where Does "Firmness of Faith" Come From?

Isaiah 40

- Context (Is. 36-39 ...the Assyrian Invasion!!) ...Is. 40ff ...God's Determined Act of Redemption!
- v. 1-9
 - v. 9 ... ***"Behold Your God!"*** ...THIS is the Object and Preoccupation of Our FAITH!
- v. 10-17 ... quick "comparative analysis"
- v. 18-25 ... "to whom shall you compare Him"

The "Firmness of Faith" in Scripture is not so much "Circumstantial" as it is "Personal". ...Is. 8:11-13

What Does God Say in Their Hour of Threat, Fear, and Dark Shadow?

Is. 7:10-19

...v. 14

...Is. 8:21 - 9:7

The Faith-Impacting Hope of Prophetic Promises

Is. 7:14 "the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Is. 9:6-7 ...Unto us a child is born...

...Wait! God meets them in "Their Moment" with some "Christmas Ornaments?" ...Some Christmas carols and stories?

...THIS is the original revelation of these words! (the Pervasive Idolatry of God's People ...&... the Imminent Threat of a Fallen World!)

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three" ...the God who loves us perfectly is going to prioritize their "Faith & Hope"! ...and He's going to "Touch Their Moment" in a way that accords with His Design for FAITH & HOPE!!

"God Gives Them a "BIBLICAL THEOLOGY" Answer!!" (He speaks of THEIR life in connection to HIS Plan)

- There's a Revelation of "CREATION" (God the Sovereign Creator) is Revealed in Is. 40!! ...and those terrible Assyrians—they're just "bees" that God whistled for!! (Is. 7:18)
- There's a Display of the "FALL" (the Idolatry of Israel, the Brutality/Evil of the Nations)
- There's a Revelation of "REDEMPTION" (Is. 7:14; Is. 9:6-7)

"...Even though it would be 700+ yrs before "a child is born and a son is given" and "Immanuel" comes ...the "HOPE" that they needed in that moment would come from the "FAITH" that they stood firm in about God and His Purpose!"

...THIS is Not an Unusual Angle of "Faith/Hope" that gets presented by the Prophets!

Joel 2:1-2

Joel 2:28-29

...THIS is going to get fulfilled at Pentecost! ...700-800 years in the future!

Jer 31:31-34

...Wait! Jeremiah's ministry is around 587BC as Nebuchadnezzar is devouring the land and burning down Jerusalem! ...This "Word" is about something 600+ years away!!

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three"

...When I'm in "Crisis Mode" ...I think my greatest need is a "circumstantial remedy, in the foreseeable future"!!
...What if That's Not Always the Case?

Rom 8:18-25

...I'm called to "walk & live by faith" ...What if a "promise" is more valuable to my faith, than a "practical solution"?

Rom 8:31-32, 35-39 ...This is NOT a guarantee of a smooth life or "practical solutions"—It is a "promise" for your faith to lay hold of—and THAT's more valuable than "sight"!

"The question is not whether your view of the future shapes your life today. The question is which view of the future is shaping your life today and what effect it is having.

Tim Keller often used a helpful thought experiment to capture this point. Imagine two women hired to do the same job, under the same conditions, and for the same amount of time. They both have to preform the same menial tasks, hour after hour, day after day. They both carry on through the same sweltering heat in summer and the same freezing cold in winter. But one of these women was told she would receive \$30,000 at the end of the year, while the other woman was promised \$30 million. ...Surely the one promised \$30,000 would struggle to keep going. She would deal with bitterness. Maybe she would feel underappreciated and misused. She'd be looking over her shoulder for other opportunities that might pay more or cost less. She'd be discouraged where she was and afraid of missing out on better options. ...But the one promised \$30 million

would put up with just about anything. She would work day in and day out with a smile on her face because every minute of every day would bring her closer to a payday she couldn't get anywhere else.

What view of your future has functional control over your present? Your mind is set on something still to come. Everything in your Christian life flows from whether that something is the future God has promised to you. ...The stakes could not be higher. To face up to life in this world as it is, you need a hope beyond this world that can survive anything." **Matthew McCullough**, "Remember Heaven – Meditations on the World to Come for Life in the Meantime", p. 6