

Prophecy9

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[0 : 00] We have some unfinished business to take care of and it's found in Judges chapter 6. So while you're turning there, just let me bring you up to date a little bit. We are committed to the principle that there is a very valid and important distinction between the manner in which God dealt with his select chosen people, referred to throughout the scriptures as the Jewish people or the Jewish nation, and under the law of Moses, which is referred to as the previous dispensation or the previous administration or the manner in which God revealed and related to his people, we are saying that it is radically different from the way he relates to us today in the body of Christ.

And these are valid distinctions, if not kept in mind, will certainly lead to confusion. And I speak as one with experience because it certainly contributed to a portion of confusion that I had, particularly early on in my Christian life before I was made aware of these truths that we're now sharing with you.

There is a very important difference in which God related to his chosen people. We've already pointed out that it was much more hands-on.

It was much more in your face. It was much more physical and material. And it provided all kinds of concepts and ideas that are not provided in the new under the dispensation of grace and the body of Christ.

Unfortunately, that leaves some Christians a little bit saddened because they are of the mindset that, wow, the Jewish people in the Mosaic demonstration and law, they got all the good stuff and the miracles and the physical things and all of that things to go with it.

[2 : 01] And we didn't get any of that. That's kind of left out for us. We got the short end of the stick. No, we didn't. What we did get was something elevated from that.

We have something richer and deeper and fuller than what those in the Old Testament under the Mosaic demonstration even imagined.

We walk not by sight but by faith. And we'll be looking a little bit at that concept this morning as well. But as we are pursuing the distinctions, the valid differences that exist between these two entities, Israel and the church, we have chosen the subject of prayer and we just kind of inserted it here. And I've done so because this is one of the more poignant examples of how things differ between those two administrations, the subject of prayer.

And failure to recognize that, I can promise you, will lead to a lot of confusion, a lot of maybe even depression, and wondering why prayer doesn't work for you the way it worked for people in the Bible.

[3 : 20] Well, it works for us the same way it works for people in the Bible who are under the administration of the grace of God in the body of Christ. It works the same for us as it did for them.

But it does not work the same for us as it did for Israel. This does not mean that one is wrong and the other is right. It means there is a progression.

There is a movement of doctrine. There is a developing that is taking place. There is a maturing, if you will, of revelation. And this is a concept that we find.

So we'll just give you one more example that we started with and we had to cut it off last week for time's sake. So here in Judges chapter 6, we are dealing with the issue of Gideon and his 300. And what is taking place here? This is a marvelous provision that God made for Gideon. He's just one of many judges that God raised up to deliver his people.

[4 : 19] And in each case, it was to deliver them from enemies that surrounded them on every hand. And by the way, nothing has changed.

Israel is still surrounded by enemies on every hand, just like they were in the Old Testament. And let us look, if we may, at verse 11. We'll just get started here and bring you up to speed with this.

Verse 11, Judges chapter 6. Now, of course, they were their enemy at the time. Now, this is quite striking as well. This angel of the Lord, to the best of my knowledge, does not make like appearances in the dispensation of the grace of God. But they are found numerous times in the Old Testament and the manner in which God related to his covenant people. The angel of the Lord, I would suggest, is none other than a Christophany. [5 : 39] A Christophany is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus, the Son of God. And he is here appearing as a messenger.

That's what the word angel means in both Testaments. Angel literally means messenger. He is appearing in an extraordinary way. And who this individual is, is a member of the triune Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I suspect it would be incorrect to call him Jesus because, as we pointed out, he will not have the name Jesus and will not have a body of flesh until he is delivered by Mary and thou shalt call his name Jesus.

Prior to that, he always existed as the Son of God. But his humanity is not derived until Bethlehem. That's where deity is married to humanity.

And he becomes what is known as the theanthropic person or the Son of God in the flesh.

[7 : 00] And I am satisfied that we have fleshly appearances of the Son of God, not as Jesus incarnated, but that's debatable, I suppose, as the angel of the Lord.

And we'll look at that in some other references, too. But anyway, let's go on. Verse 12, The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior. Then Gideon said to him, O my Lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us?

Now, there is something that you can carry over into this dispensation, can't you? Sometimes Christians go through experiences or things and they come out reasoning, Well, if God is on my side, why am I experiencing this?

Why am I going through this? Why isn't he? And verse 13 says, And where are all his miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?

But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian. And he's having a pity party that God isn't doing for us what he did for those people back then.

[8 : 11] Why not? And the Lord looked at him and said, Now, I want you to notice this here. In verse 14, the text simply says, And the Lord looked at him. And look at the way the word Lord is spelled.

All capital letters. This is the way deity is spelled. And it's the same as in verse 12, the angel of the Lord. And here is the Lord.

And look at the way the word Lord is spelled in verse 15. You see the difference? You see the capital L and the lowercase letters that follow?

That's significant. In the first case, with all capital letters, it is the tetragrammaton. In the Hebrew, it is the four letters that designate the name of deity.

And his name is Yahweh. Or Jehovah would be more an anglicized spelling of it. In the Hebrew, it's called the tetragrammaton because the name of God in the Hebrew is made up of four letters.

[9 : 18] That's why it's called the tetragrammaton. It literally means four words of grammar. And they are YHVH.

That's it. How in the world would you pronounce that? YHVH. Hebrew, the Hebrew language does not have any vowels.

It has only consonants. So to help us understand the word, we insert vowels there. And it comes out Y-E-H-O-H.

Yehovah. Yahweh. And there are different renderings of it. But it is the name of deity. When the term L is used or Elohim, like in the beginning, God, the word God is Elohim.

And it relates to what God is. His essence. His being. He is God. Well, what is the name of this God?

[10 : 33] His name is Jehovah or Elohim or however you choose to pronounce that Hebrew. So Lord or Jehovah is his personal name.

In other words, man is what I am. I am man. But my name is Marv.

And with the deity, God is what he is. But his name, his personal name is Jehovah or Yahweh.

And that's the way it is rendered in most places here. So let's move on. And verse 15. He said, O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest

in my father's house.

But the Lord said to him, and again, I am suggesting this is a pre-incarnate appearance of deity in the flesh. And, well, I'll save that for later.

[11 : 36] But surely I will be with you. You shall defeat Median. As one man, Gideon, said to him, now I have found favor in your sight. Show me a sign. Ah, here we are. Show me a sign that it is thou who speakest with me.

This is so reminiscent of Abraham going back many, many years prior to this. When God told Abraham, I'm going to make you a great nation.

I'm going to give you a son. You're going to be the father of many nations. And what did Abraham say? How shall I know that this is going to be true?

In other words, it's almost a slap in the face. It's almost tantamount to saying, well, prove it to me. Well, I'm not sure that I believe that.

Show me. So God went through the whole ritual of taking the animal and cutting in parts and having part here and part there and they passed between. That was the kind of evidence that Abraham needed.

[12 : 38] And you know something? That was just the kind of evidence that men use among themselves to establish a covenant or promise. And God accommodated Abraham in doing that rather than just say, what's the matter, Abraham?

Can't you believe me? Just because I told you, we've got the same thing here. And the Lord looked at him and said, go in your way and your strength. And he says in verse 15, how shall I deliver? How will I know? And the Lord said, you shall defeat Midian as one man. If now I found favor in your son, show me a sign that it is you who speak with me.

Do not depart from here until I come back to thee. And you see, this is what Paul was talking about in 1 Corinthians 1 when he says the Jews require a sign.

And a sign is a miracle. Demonstrate it for me. And we know this is what's going to take place here. And we've got the angel of the Lord all the way down through here, this text.

[13 : 42] And in verse 22, alas, O Lord, for now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face. And this is quite fascinating, quite fascinating. When Gideon saw, verse 22, when he came to realization that he was the angel of the Lord, Gideon said, alas, O Lord God, for now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face.

Now, what this means is he's terrified. He is scared to death about what he just saw because he knows what that entails.

And he is trembling. And the Lord said to him, peace to you, do not fear, you shall not die.

Now, what is that all about? Was he actually scared? Was he afraid that he was going to die? Well, yeah, he was. Keep your place here in Judges and come back to Exodus 33 for just a moment.

We've just got to tie this together rather than leave a loose end dangling, which I can be famous for. Exodus chapter 33.

[15 : 07] And let's look at, we'll just jump in verse 17. Verse 17. The Lord said to Moses, I will also do this thing of which you have spoken, for you have found favor in my sight, and I have known you by name.

Then Moses said, I pray thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I myself will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you.

And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion. But he said, you cannot see my face, for no man can see me and live.

I cannot explain that other than humanity being in the presence of reflected deity cannot survive the experience.

I don't know if he would fall over dead, disintegrate, or what, but he is in the company of the infinite, eternal God and is simply unable to witness that.

[16 : 40] The Lord said, behold, there is a place by me, and you shall stand there on the rock. And it will come about while my glory is passing by that I will put you in the cleft of the rock.

This was a huge rock that was split. And by the way, we saw that split rock. I have no reason to believe that it wasn't the same one.

It is simply a large vertical rock that is just sliced right into and split open. Just like a mighty cleaver came down upon this rock and split it right into and spread it open.

Well, that opening is the cleft of the rock that provided a refuge. And we saw that in that film that we witnessed quite some time ago about the passing, about Israel coming through there.

You will stand there in the rock. I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with my hand until I pass by. And then I will take my hand away, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.

[17:57] A lot of mystery surrounding this, but come back, if you will, to Judges because it ties in with this. And Gideon obviously knew something about that experience, and he is terrified because he has looked upon deity.

I don't know what kind of presentation this was that was given to him, and we cannot completely divorce from this, that incredible incident that happened in the Gospels when Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James, and John in the Mount of Transfiguration, and his face shone as the brightness of the noontday sun, and his garments were whiter than any fuller soap could whiten them.

And they beheld his glory. And this is what Peter is talking about when he writes in his epistle that we were with him in the mount, and we beheld his glory.

This is what John is talking about when he says, in chapter 1, we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only God and Father. And this is all tied together.

So Gideon built an altar there, and the Lord named it, and the Lord is peace. To this day it is in Ophir of the Abyssalites. Okay, now let's come over, if we may, to, well, we'll just have to jump around here.

[19:23] So verse 36. Verse 36, and this is where I think we left off last week. It has to do with prayer and signs and so on. Then Gideon said to God, if thou wilt deliver Israel through me as thou hast spoken.

Now, what is that? What is that again? But it's a question. It's a doubt. If you're really going to do this, it would be so nice if I had something definite to look at, to witness.

What's he asking for? He's asking for a sign. Give me a miracle. Can you provide some kind of, I'm looking for confirmation and assurance that what you are telling me is really going to come to pass. Now, let's see. How can we seal this deal? And how can I really, really be sure that you're going to deliver on this? I got an idea. Behold, verse 37, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor.

A fleece of wool is simply like an expanse of wool that has been shaven or shorn off of sheep.

[20:49] And it's made kind of like a rug, kind of like a rug made out of this sheep's wool. And he lays it on the ground. And he says, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor.

And if there is dew on the fleece only, in other words, I'm going to do this tonight, and everybody understands how overnight dew settles in, and the grass and the ground become moist with the dew.

That is predictable, and it always happens that way, every morning. But I'm looking for something different. I'll put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor.

For if there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know.

Isn't that something? Then I will know. In other words, again, he's saying, forgive me, but I'm just not able to believe you. You're telling me. I need some kind of confirmation.

[22:02] Then I will know that you will deliver Israel through me as you have spoken. This is incredible. This is incredible.

And it was so. When he arose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece, he drained the dew from the fleece, a bowl full of water.

Then Gideon said to God, that was pretty good. But I'm still not quite convinced.

Is this insulting or what? And you know something? Listen. This is a supreme example of the patience and the forbearance of God, the accommodation of God.

Gideon could really be thankful that Marv was not God because I would have said, forget it.

[23:10] Just forget it. You insult me by not believing what I'm telling you. The deal's off. I hope the Midianites cue you. But here God is so patient and so accommodating.

And let's read on. Then Joe's got a question or a comment. Look at this. Then Gideon said, do not let thine anger burn against me. In other words, he's kind of implying that he's got it coming.

He wouldn't be surprised. That I may speak once more. Please let me make a test once more with the fleece. Test.

Test. Does that bring anything to mind? How about, how about, if you will cast yourself down, it is written in the scriptures, that he will bear you up lest you dash your foot against the stone? And Satan took Jesus up to this pinnacle of the temple and said, why don't you give God an opportunity to make good on what he said?

[24 : 27] Because is it not written that he shall give his changels charge over you lest you dash your foot against the stone? Why don't you jump? Why don't you jump?

God will rescue you. He will deliver you. Remember what Jesus said in response? Thou shalt not test the Lord thy God.

And when you test somebody, you are questioning their integrity and you are making them prove what they say. And that's exactly what God, what Jesus would have been doing if he had accommodated Satan.

Let me make a test once more with the fleece. Let it now be dry only on the fleece and let there be dew on the ground. Boy, that would really convince me.

If you did that, then I would know for sure. This is infantile. It is demanding. It is so, what shall I say?

[25 : 34] So inappropriate. But God is going along with it and you know what he says? God says, okay, okay, we'll do it your way. And God did so that night for it was dry only on the fleece and dew was on all the ground.

What does God have to do to prove his love and his care for you? What miracle does he have to provide? For the believer in Christ, he doesn't have to do anything because he's already done it. How shall he who spared not his own son also with him freely give us all things? We don't have to put him to the test. We just, we just relax and we bask in his benevolence and his watch care and his love and his provision no matter what the circumstances.

Now, let me tell you something. That is a, an enormous gradation from what we're talking about here in the Old Testament. But do you know something?

Even most Christians would rather have the old than they would to embrace the, would, would rather walk by sight, give me something to look at than to just believe the Lord.

[26 : 54] Joe, what did you have? Well, you mean the point that it shows what God's, are you in the mic? Get in the mic. God's, you show, you're not on. It shows, you know, God's patient with man, you know, in this case.

But also, doesn't it show man's lack of faith and trust in God? Absolutely. Absolutely. On the opposite side, it shows man's lack of faith and trust and don't we show that today?

I mean, in this dispensation of the church, we show that lack of trust and faith that things are all going to work out for good to those that love him. Absolutely. We do.

Good point. Good point. It is exactly what it is. In fact, it's just a tad insulting of the Almighty in light of what he has done and in light of what he has said.

And sometimes we just find it really hard to believe that he means what he says. Other comments or questions? Are we squared away on the angel of the Lord thing?

[28 : 02] Do you have any questions regarding that? That's really important. Joshua is going to be confronted by the angel of the Lord and Abraham is in chapter 18.

The angel of the Lord is one of the three supposed angels that visit, you know, and two were the destroying angels and one was, one was, the Lord himself.

Okay. Any other areas that you'd like to talk about, especially regarding prayer? It doesn't have to be limited to that, but that's what we're, and this will probably be our last session which we'll be dealing with this, so if you have questions or observations you want to make regarding prayer, this would be a good time to do it.

Yes, David. Actually, I have the mic and I have a question. So, it always talks about God said that let me see your glory and then God says wait till I go past you before you can see my glory.

Okay, what is glory? Is that the bright light? I mean, glory to me is not a physical thing that I can see and that always has just kind of confused me.

[29 : 19] Well, I can understand and I share much the same question. You can give the microphone to him. The gentleman over here. Come over here with the mic. I don't know.

I don't know. We talk about the glory of God for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and then when John in writing his first chapter of John's gospel it says and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth and I think what John is referring to there again is what I mentioned earlier is that

transfiguration account because Peter refers to the same thing in his epistle.

I don't know exactly what it is that constitutes this full glory view of God it is a reflection of his character of his essence of his makeup that is that is beyond human description or comprehension and as you read the revelation and some of the descriptions that are given of the creatures who surround the Lord and are there in his presence we know we're talking about things that are otherworldly they just don't comport with what we are familiar with here I wish I had a better answer for you I'm sorry but all I know is the glory of God is an utterly awesome kind of thing and those who experienced it or came close to experience it thought that they were near death because of it Dave yes sir

I'm still trying to make the connection between this morning and last week and prayer your point before was we we tend to want to pray for an outcome which we shouldn't but we should just be thankful for what God either has planned for us and understand and believe that what will be is the way it should be so how do we pray and what's the connection between today and last week and how we pray okay okay thank you for your question I'm thinking in terms now of Hezekiah and first kings I don't know first kings or second kings that's

I don't know but anyway the Lord told King Hezekiah he was a king of Judah at the time and the Lord came to him and said set your house in order for you shall die and not live and it was just a gracious accommodation on the part of God to tell Hezekiah that he wasn't long for this world and make arrangements you know for everything because you're going to pass on and Hezekiah had a pity party and he went into his room and he turned his face laid on his bed and he turned his face toward the wall and just sobbed and carried on and had a pity party and he demanded that God not take his life and you know what God said okay Hezekiah okay okay I'm going to give you an extension

[33 : 19] I'm going to give you an extra 15 years and he did and Hezekiah lived another 15 years and by the way it was during those 15 years that Manasseh was born and he was a great age skunk he was one of the worst kings that ever sat on the throne of Judah and he came out of that extension of life that God gave to Hezekiah so is that an example for us today to pray that way to have our own pity party and when the doctor says I'm sorry to tell you this but the cancer is invasive and surgery is out of the question and you've had the chemo and you've had the radiation and there is nothing else we can do and then we say well how much time do I have and the doctor says well maybe three months or four months and we'll do all we can to make you as comfortable and pain free as possible so you read this passage in Hezekiah or in 1 Kings where Hezekiah got another 15 years and you decide that you're going to hold God to that and He did it for Hezekiah and God hasn't changed and He's as powerful now as He was then all I need is enough faith to believe that God will give me the extension

He gave to Hezekiah and I'm going to die and not live and I'm going to be healed and cured of this cancer or whatever you know there are those who believe that I had a lady one time when I was with the radio station and I was conducting a prayer period with WEC and taking prayer requests and this lady called in and she said my mother is expecting a report from recent tests that were taken to determine whether she has malignancy or not and I want you to pray that the tests will come back negative and I said well I don't know that I can really pray that way and I was just thinking it is what it is and I said how old is your mother she gave her age she was in her 80s or 90s and I said well you realize you realize that eventually the time is going to come when your mother is going to pass away that she is going to die oh I know that

I know that but I just want her to die healthy and so help me that's what she said I want her to die healthy and I I didn't want to laugh over the phone but I was like what is this where is this lady coming from but you know this is the way people and you know something I saw it in the Bible and isn't there a little song that goes every promise in the book is mine every word every line and if God doesn't change and he did that for Hezekiah why can't he do that for me oh he can but will he is it his will to do that can we bend God's will to conform to our will looks like that's what Hezekiah did he just threw a pity party and God as much as said oh Hezekiah good grief for heaven's sake okay I'll give you another 15 years it kind of reminds me of that woman that Jesus was talking about who goes to the judge and keeps begging him and keeps bothering him and she says and he says and after a while he gives in to the woman just to get rid of her and then some think that that's an example as to how we are supposed to be praying too but all that's an example of and all that is really is really illustrating is that God is not like that at all and that's a negative example that he's

giving there but people don't pick up on that they want to go and do likewise did somebody else have a comment or question

Gary yeah clarify just real quick for me if all capital letters L-O-R-D versus capital L with the rest of the small case letters what's the difference between those two in the scripture well the capital L and the smaller case letters in the Hebrew is rendered Adonai A-D-O-N-A-I Adonai and it's just a different name for the deity but it's not the same as as Jehovah it is one of the names of God and it is often evoked invoked it's just well there's there's a list I don't have it immediately available but there's a list of something like 30 different names by which

God is known in the Old and New Testament and it's quite an extensive list of names that are attributed to him John here comes the mic when Hezekiah was given the 15 years it also says that he was given a sign too by moving basically moving the earth back so that the shadow went backwards yeah yeah well there's a lot involved there's a lot involved that God utilized on behalf of the nation of Israel that is not under the purview of walking by faith walking in the grace of God in the body of Christ and yes Marie back to David's question Marie back to David's question I don't know if he was fully got the answer he was looking but I think for us today a lot of it goes back to [39 : 53] Philippians 4 that we're to be careful for nothing so on and so on we are to make our requests known but the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts I think that's the difference yeah that is the difference and that's that's the basic platform for the morning message that's coming after this yeah but it's you're right it's a contrast that is there and the Philippians 4 passage is just so key but Christians so misuse and misunderstand the subject of prayer and then we get depressed when it doesn't work out and we think what's wrong with me well I guess I don't have enough faith or I guess there's some sin in my life that God is not pleased with and he's not granting this thing and that completely misses the point and it's trying to take from a previous administration and make it work in this administration and it doesn't work because it's not supposed to we walk this is this is a tremendous concept we walk by faith not by sight and there is so much built into that simple statement and it literally means that we are not to have and demand the miracles and so on and and the here's another way that

Christians misuse the subject of prayer so in my office talking to this girl so you are really intent on marrying this man I know he loves me and I know I love him but don't you see what the scriptures say about an unbeliever being joined with a believer well I I don't know about that all I know is we really love each other and I have prayed about this and if God doesn't want me to marry him he can always block the marriage oh this sounds so familiar I could take you back 50 years to a similar kind of situation but and and we we are convinced that because God didn't intervene and because God didn't send some miracle to keep it from happening it was obviously okay and this is the way we reason and God if this is not your will don't let me go there or let this be canceled or let something listen

God is not operating that way in the dispensation of grace he expects us to walk in light of the principles that he set forth in his word and and just rest in that and that's that's the principle of the Philippians 4 thing that we'll be talking about in the morning service and it it affords so much peace so much comfort so much relaxation let me let me close with this because our time is almost gone if God has a will about any event or situation in your life if God has a will about it a preference a position about it about you what you do be or whatever is there something wrong with that would not that be the ultimate in your life if that's God's position for you would you want him to change that to something lesser or can you just relax and be at peace knowing that our heavenly father does all things well and he will perfect that which concerns you and that all things do work together because God works them together for your good even though they may hurt even though they may be difficult even though they may be something you would never choose if God has a will about anything in your life it cannot be improved upon why in the world would you be willing to settle for anything less well now does that include the passing of your mate yes does that include your passing yes does that include your health yes does that include the whole nine yards yes now the only question remains is can you believe that well if you can glory to

God you just put yourself in a win win position then what you do is you just relax and thank God for whatever in everything in everything give thanks he knows the way that I take and when I am tried I will come forth as pure gold sometimes from the fire and the crucible that purifies God God really does know what he's doing and he can be trusted wow what a God amazing absolutely amazing why in the world anybody would even think about settling for going back to give me a sign give me

this give me that and show me this show me that God has already done more than needs to be done so thank you for your kind attention we'll pursue other avenues next week as we continue this distinction between grace and the administration that preceded us soon