



Jeff Sweeten

Thus Saith the Lord

DIRECT AND DIVINE

By Jeff Sweeten

Lots of folks believe that they still receive revelation directly from God, and while we never get any indication as to what He sounds like (is he a bass or a tenor?), certainly the drivel that emanates from these latter-day prophets verifies the fact that they may be hearing voices, but it ain't God. God does not contradict His revelation as does modern day prophecies. I personally think we are blessed that God doesn't communicate with us directly, and for two reasons.

One, in nearly every instance in the Old Testament, when God spoke to humanity, it was a rather shocking, traumatic experience. Modern day augurs frequently refer to God's presence as a warm, fuzzy feeling of contentment and security. That's not the picture the Bible paints. Abram's first reaction to God's voice was to fall on his face (Genesis 17:3). When "*the glory of the Lord*" appeared before Ezekiel, he couldn't even get up until "*the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet*" (Ezekiel 3:24). Even second hand, God's glory was so brightly reflected on Moses face when he came down from the quarantined mountain that the children of Israel were scared to death and begged him to cover his face just so they could look at him (Exodus 34:29-33). And, these are all examples of good men who were trying their dead-level best to please God! Evidently, when people experienced communication with God, there was no casual "Yo God, Wha's up?" It was more like "Oh Lord, don't let me die!"

Two, if God's communication with humanity in with a good message was frightening, just imagine if He was mad! Perhaps we miss the impact of scriptures like "*Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord*" (Romans 12:19) and "*...our God is a consuming fire*" (Hebrews 12:29). This would not be the case if people read their Old Testament and understood the reaction of people upon whom God meted out His wrath. It was speedy, decisive, and final. Look at examples like Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2, consumed by fire at the Tabernacle door), Korah (Numbers 16:31-33, swallowed up by the earth), and Sennacherib's army (Isaiah 37:33-36, an angel slaughtered one-hundred and eighty-five thousand). Jeroboam's epitaph aptly describes God's wrath: "*and the LORD struck him, and he died*" (2 Chronicles 13:20); end of story!

If a Bible student is paying close attention here, the lesson is not that God's responsiveness has diminished with His sole use of the written word, but that He "*is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9). Don't mistake direct-divine silence for disregard; such an absence of Spirit on spirit revelation does not diminish from the power of His revealed Word, the Bible. One day, He will judge and if you're ignoring him right now, know this: "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*" (Hebrews 10:31).

Thus Saith the Lord
is presented by the

Park Heights Church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m. Bible Class
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

WEDNESDAY

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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