

# God Has Spoken

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God, who at sundry times [בְּעַלְ גְּדָלִים—"little by little"] and in diverse manners [בְּעַלְיָד בְּוָי—"in many ways"] spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2a; Newman, 146-147). The heading above this pericope from the Greek text provided by the United Bible Societies reads, "God Has Spoken By His Son." In times past God revealed his will to mankind "little by little" and through a variety of means or "in many ways," but "in these last days," by which is meant the Christian Age, God has communicated his will to mankind through his Son, Jesus Christ. His will is complete and final as is punctuated by the closing words of scripture (Rev. 22:18-19). Those privileged to live in the Christian Age are encouraged to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16a).

In ancient times when God was communicating to mankind through various means such as dreams and visions there emerged those who convinced themselves that God was communicating to them through this means when in reality he was not. One large barrier to presenting the gospel to the world today is the presence of so-called prophets and preachers claiming to have received revelation from God through dreams and visions. Invariably these dreams and visions take precedence over the revealed and written word of God in the minds of the untaught. February 4, 2007, on the Trinity Broadcasting Network female evangelist Jan Crouch asked Franklin Graham, son of the famous Billy Graham, to discuss the visions God gives him. The leading question was responded to by Graham to the effect that he does not receive actual visions in the classic sense but believes that God impresses his spirit with information—thoughts and ideas—that he communicates in his preaching. Clearly, these thoughts and ideas eventually take

the form of words. People like these take no umbrage before passages of scripture like "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:6).

In discussing the vision of Isaiah, the respected Edward J. Young wrote, "The word *hazon* indicates specific visions (e.g., Isa. 29:7; Hos. 12:10; Hab. 2:2; 1 Chron. 17:15, etc.) and also revelation in general (e.g., 1 Sam. 3:1; Ezek. 7:26; 12:22, 23; Prov. 29:18, etc.). Here it has a collective force, for it includes a number of visions or revelations. It is the equivalent of the phrase 'the words of,' found in other headings" (Young, I, 30). His footnote on this point adds, "In 1 Chron. 17:15 it stands as a parallel to 'words' (cf. Amos 1:1; Hab. 1:1). וְיָזַן introduces an entire collection of oracles...." So, the visions that Isaiah saw were related to Israel in words constituting "an entire collection of oracles."

Young went on in the next paragraph to distinguish the visions of Isaiah from intuition or some kind of mental perception, and his comments definitely serve to refute both the views expressed on TBN and at the same time the widespread practices of today in this regard. He said, "The word [vision] does not refer to inward sight or perception, nor is it a metaphorical name for the prophet's own insight, intuition or mental perception. It signifies rather the 'sight' of what God had placed in the prophet's mind or had revealed to him. It here denotes all that is given in writing in the book before us, and thus clearly attests the supernatural origin of the entire prophecy. It is not human opinions or reasonings or the cogitations of Isaiah's own mind which are here presented, but a special revelation of God to Isaiah which in some sense inexplicable to us was 'seen' by him" (Young, I, 30).

In ancient times when God spoke using various means or "in many ways," the challenge from those in error to the will of God was

answered with the word of God. The prophet Jeremiah spoke of their methodology and its results, "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal" (Jer. 23:25-27). As then, even so it is now, "they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart." As then, even so it is now, they need to be confronted and exposed. If false teachers have not gone away by their own implosion of error in thousands of years, they are not going away today without confrontation and exposure. Everyone who holds to the written word of God today should stand up against the objective of the "dreamers," "which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor."

The word of God as then, even so now, has the capability to answer every false way. Jeremiah went on to emphasize the power of the word of God, "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord. And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the Lord? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:28-33). The Lord promised to "punish that man and his house" that dared to "pervert

the words of the living God, of the Lord of hosts our God" (Jer. 23:34, 36).

God has spoken. "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully."