

so that somebody two thousand years later can look back and see what was said. The prophet is one who comes as God's messenger to his own generation but he also may be a messenger of God to generations subsequent to his own. So much for No. 1. Then No. 2. We will just briefly examine certain of the purposes of prophecy. What does declaration of the will of God involve? And I have a few statements which I have made indicating certain of the outstanding things which were done by prophets. Certain outstanding purposes of prophecy - things involved in the action of the prophet. So you will say that a primary purpose of prophecy is to reveal truths to God's people. The people do not know about the existence of the Holy Spirit. A prophet comes and tells them. The people do not know about the second person of the Trinity. The prophet comes and tells them. A prophet has as a primary purpose a prophecy not of the act of every prophet by any means but a primary purpose of prophecy is to reveal truth to God's people. Now a second purpose is to exhort people to do the known will of God and this is a purpose which we find coming over and over and over in the acts of the Old Testament prophets. The prophet brings a message from God which often doesn't present any new truth at all but which stresses the importance that the people should do that which they know they ought to do. You can find that the underlying purpose of statement after statement of the prophets all through the Bible. To exhort man to do the known will of God. Just take an example of Nathan when he came to David. David certainly knew that murder was wrong and he knew that adultery was wrong. Nathan didn't come to bring David new truth in telling him those matters, but he came exhorting David to do that which David knew was right. He didn't directly do this but this certainly was the underlying purpose of his act, to exhort to do the known will of God. A third purpose of prophecy which would equally be evident in the illustration of Nathan is to pronounce God's judgment upon wickedness and unbelief. That is the third purpose of a prophet and a very vital one. To pronounce God's judgment upon wickedness and unbelief. I don't think that needs elaboration but it does need emphasis, because we are apt to forget it. Take almost any one of the prophets of the Old Testament--at least of the pre-exilic prophets and go through their statements and mark those which have as their purpose the reminding the people