

A SENSE OF THE PROPHETIC

Under this topic I wish to make just 7 short points in furtherance of the understanding of the Books of Samuel as “former prophets”. Many of the LORD’S servants have been prophets. Moses desired that all God’s people should be prophetic. It is not that we view even First Samuel as a relay of great prophecies from Samuel himself. Let me illustrate what I mean.

- (1) The first prophetic statement of First Samuel is from the lips of Hannah and can be found in chapter 2 3-17. Hannah’s approach to understanding God (we might say her “theology”) contains a quiver of 5 “future” tenses that demonstrate that she has an ancient eschatological approach which looks form far away in Israel’s history to the coming of Shiloh or Messiah.
- (2) Then in 9.15-24 we have evidence of the quite amazing gifting of Samuel the seer. He announces an entire set of circumstances to follow the homeward journey of Saul. His words resemble modern day prophecy of small detail in human life rather than constituting great theological vistas or truths.
- (3) In 10.11 we are told that Saul himself prophesied or fell under the moving of the Holy Spirit and gave glory to the LORD as he issued praise and was given words.
- (4) Samuel as a prophet “reasoned” much like a preacher (12 7-15) and then he gave the people a prophetic sign of thunder and rain which followed that day so that the people profoundly impressed sought his intercessions. Thus prophecy figures as preaching or forth-telling but preaching not devoid of the power thereof -accompanied by signs following.
- (5) In 15 24-31 Samuel as a perceptive seer understands Saul’s sin as on a par with witchcraft and in a prophetic sign rends his mantle showing the rent nature of the monarchy. This action long years before the demise of Saul was followed by the Spirit of God conviction of the king whose jealous and disobedient heart ran to ruin that scripture calls “calamity”
- (6) In 23 2-13 David enquired of the LORD about his safety in Keilah and the LORD spelled out what he needed to know form the oracle of the priestly ephod which was yet another manner of prophetic awareness in Israel.
- (7) Saul finally in despair at the failure as far as he is concerned of the general means of guidance for the future turns to a witch. Such has never before or after been Israel’s means of guidance-rather an abomination and sign of apostasy. However the LORD determined to confound and astound witch and king and all as He sent Samuel to make the prophecy that Saul would die within the compass of the coming day.

For the above and other reasons apparent from reading the fuller text the judicious reader may gain a view of how immensely important it is to walk with the one who said “I will be what I will be” and not least for us upon whom the end of the ages has come.