

and original sense -- the inspired, nonderivative word of God, in which the future is sometimes predicted (although this is not the main focus of prophecy).

Dennis and Rita Bennett understand prophecy in the sense of a revelatory gift which brings to the church the words that the Lord gives directly to the believer or to the prophet -- utterances in which God sometimes tells what is going to happen (although this is not the main focus of the gift of prophecy).

Yet Gaffin holds that the gift of prophecy has ceased, and the Bennetts hold that the gift continues to the present day.

Could a partial resolution of this impasse (reflected also in many other writers on the subject) be found in the distinction made above between prophecy as revelatory utterances originating directly from God (including occasional predictions) and prophecy as non-revelatory setting forth of various aspects of Christian doctrine and practice? Could we say that prophecy in the former sense has ceased, and that prophecy in the latter sense continues today?

The author of these class notes proposes the following line of argumentation.

If prophecy as a supernatural sign gift (or simply as a supernatural gift) is understood as new revelation concerning things to come (i.e., predictive prophecy, rather than as prophetic forthtelling of divine truth previously revealed), then one of three alternatives appears to apply to each alleged instance of such prophecy:

(1) If a predictive prophecy is uttered which is in agreement with general or specific scriptural principles or truths governing belief and practice, it should be rejected as a genuine new revelation, since it is already enunciated in Scripture.

(2) If a predictive prophecy is uttered which is contrary to general or specific scriptural principles or truths governing belief and practice, it should be rejected as genuine new revelation, since it is in conflict with that which is enunciated in Scripture.

(3) If a predictive prophecy is uttered which is neither in agreement with or contrary to general or specific scriptural principles or truths governing belief and practice, two scriptural tests should be applied to it.

(a) Before a predictive prophecy can be accepted as genuine new revelation, it must either await its fulfillment or be verified by some other supernatural evidence that attests its divine origin.