

I. Introduction

- A. Aerial view over; now we've landed for a closer look.
- B. "Contact": Human history would never be the same.

1. Jodie Foster, looking for her Father through her telescope. Then listening to the sky as an adult for a word from elsewhere. Meets her father.  
Looking and listening for a word from her father.

*The world that comes back: Hitler @ 1936 Berlin physics is there no way out?*

II. Observing the Passage : *break down*

A. God speaks

*Ps 19*

- 1. "Special revelation"—God's words addressed to specific people
  - a. Bible
  - b. OT prophets—both written & unwritten
  - c. Jesus' own words not recorded in Scripture
- 2. "General revelation"—revelation to all people, generally: existence, character, moral law, through creation to all humanity. His fingerprint on our souls and in creation.
  - a. All bombarded by messages/speech; need right equipment to hear. Our souls are the right equipment to receive knowledge about God. We confront God in every fact.
- 3. He speaks before man seeks. *< Man does not cry out w/ God answering*
- 4. Emphasizes God's initiative in revelation
- 5. Emphasizes God's sovereignty in determining agenda; He speaks of what He wants to speak of; we don't set His agenda; Our ideas about what He needs to say aren't always the same as His!

B. Fathers

- 1. who are they? (1) Israel (2) sinful men (v. Son)
- 2. whose are they? Are they mine/ours?
  - a. Waltke's notion—next week: we're primary audience

C. Prophets

1. "Prophet" ≠ only men who foretold future. They also announce & proclaim truth, called by God as spokesmen. [Divisions of TNK]. Moses = a prophet
2. Contrast--They: (1) sinful; (2) messengers. Son = Sinless Message!
3. Continuity—God continues to speak

D. many portions & many ways

1. different ways (visions, dreams), amounts, levels of clarity
2. heavy during monarchy; kings subject to God's Word
3. Continuity—partial & imperfect, but continues

E. Significance for audience: continuity & discontinuity [don't prefer blossom over fruit]

III. What God Intends Us to Overhear in This Passage

A. The Most Important of Voices. If God has spoken, must be the most important speaker & subject matter ever. All history should be different. Shouldn't we listen? How much time do you spend listening? Jodie Foster

1. Back to Future 2 Sports Almanac: what will last, what will grow, what will be worthwhile.

B. <sup>out of His grace</sup> God speaks even though man does not seek.

1. Romans 3:11→none seeks after God
2. God freely initiates His speech, out of sheer grace. The Fathers did not seek Him. Neither they nor we deserve, or are entitled, to have God speak to reveal Himself.
3. NOT b/c He must to be God; He is independent of creation
4. Deut 7→God didn't choose Israel because it was lovelier or more numerous

C. <sup>The Fathers</sup> God speaks, out of His grace, for the purpose of establishing and nurturing a relationship with a particular people. God speaks for the sake of relationship: To assemble, protect, redeem & provide for them.

1. Note exclusive nature—just to Israel?  
❖ Israel was to be His letter to the world; world was to overhear!

- ❖ **2 Cor. 3**—church is to be His letter to the world. because same criticism is heard of Christians, the church. But it's all about His grace, not our brains. And He is so incredibly patient. He is willing to wait, but not indefinitely.

D. He kept speaking, in spite of the attitude of people toward the prophets

1. Manasseh → Jeremiah & Josiah
2. David & Absalom—this is how God acts toward us.
  - ❖ Don't be Joab: toward others & toward ourselves



3. **How does God act toward people who don't listen to Him?**  
So incredibly patient!!! But not indefinitely—don't refuse Him who is speaking!

E. Out of sheer grace, He sends the Greatest Prophet! In spite of the people, in fact because of the hardness of the people's hearts, He sent the greatest of all the Prophets, His own Son. When mankind least deserved it, He sent His best speech last; at the very moment when their track record was the worst; when their paper trail was the ugliest, when their determination not to listen was most hardened.

1. This mirrors the Gospel! God pursues a relationship with us which we don't deserve but which His love establishes and provides for. God pursues us in spite of our unloveliness.

2. Romans 5:8—at the darkest moment, He sends His sweetest and greatest speech.

3. John 2—He saves the very best wine for last! Because He is looking forward to His own wedding feast. He has come to claim His bride. He has continued to speak so that He might demonstrate His faithfulness in the face of her unfaithfulness, so that

F. **He's still speaking through the Son—this morning!**

1. John 10:16 & John 17 (those who will believe through their word)
2. Gospel offer: repentance and faith!  
 Those who hear His voice = know that He calls not the righteous,

Come, ye weary, heavy laden, bruised and broken by the fall,  
 If you tarry till you're better, you will never come at all;  
 Not the righteous (2x), sinners, Jesus came to call!

*Parable of vinegrowers  
 Hebrews*

*and which, when we're worst, we don't ask ourselves if left to ourselves God's grace never plays catch-up*

- I. Introduction: "Contact"
- II. Observing the Passage
  - A. God speaks
    - 1. special & general
  - B. Fathers
  - C. Prophets
  - D. Many portions & many ways
- III. What We Need to Overhear in This Passage
  - A. The Most Important of Voices
  - B. Out of His sheer grace, God speaks
  - C. Out of His sheer grace, God speaks for relationship
  - D. Out of His sheer grace, He kept speaking
  - E. Out of His sheer grace, He sends the Greatest Prophet!
  - F. Out of sheer grace, He's still speaking through the Son—this morning!