

THE NARRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE, PART 6

For he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:12c, NIV)

YOU WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE TOO IMPRESSED if I told you that, prophetically speaking, Lydia Ko will be the LPGA Player of the Year in 2015. Nor would you declare me clairvoyant if I named Rory McIlroy as the PGA Tour’s leading player this season. The reasons for your lack of enthusiasm about my prognostications would be as obvious as my choices. Pretty much any expert would select those same two players as odds-on favorites.

But what if I told you that I could identify the top male and female players in the world in 2045? Now you wouldn’t think me unimpressive; you’d call me nuts!

The prophets of old faced a similar reception when they spoke the words of God to the people. They were either dismissed as crazy or told that their prophecies made no sense. Truthfully, when a prophet saw far into the future, he too could not make sense of much that God revealed to him. He was called to speak it, not necessarily to understand it!

But the prophets’ words were recorded all the same. They were carefully copied and eventually canonized 200 years before the coming of Christ. Be sure you recognize that: the Old Testament (including the last writings of the prophets) was nearly complete and wholly unaltered no later than 200 B.C., with one last addition of the book of Daniel several decades later.

With this in mind, we can go back to the prophets and recognize the wonder of their words where they pointed to Jesus long before his life and death. These prophets saw—among many details—Jesus coming to a desperate people (Isaiah 9:1-2), being born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), called a Nazarene (Isaiah 11:1), suffering persecution and death (Psalm 22, Isaiah 53). The specifics were unique, allowing us to find no one else in history who, quite literally, fleshed them all out.

As easy as it is to get caught up in a fascination with these prophetic items, however, we do not want to miss the point of them all: the Messiah’s role was to bear our sins and provide a bridge (intercession) between the perfect Father and these fallen people. We are those people, the ones desperate in our darkness. We are on the back end of prophecy, privileged to know who the Savior is. Let us seize that advantage and believe!

Opening questions What four players do you expect to have exceptional seasons this year? How much time have you spent reading the prophetic books of Scripture? How do you connect with them?

READING 2 Peter 1:19-21, Isaiah 53:1-12, John 1:1-14

The nature of prophecy

What does the 2 Peter passage teach us about the nature of biblical prophecy?

The suffering Savior

When you read Isaiah 53, what prophetic indications point absolutely to Jesus as we match them with the accounts of his Passion Week?

The Word become flesh

How does John 1 help us understand the eternal nature of Jesus and his role in bringing us into the family of God?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2015 Links Players International. A 5-minute video accompanies today’s study at <http://youtu.be/LMH16NXQDT4>