

## Prophecy: A View through the Lenses of Faith Pt 4

### Where should Prophecy be on my Priority List?

- Many of us have heard the Bible described as the Old Testament being the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed, the reason for that definition is to dismiss any notion that either one of them contradicts but rather compliments each other. So all **39** books of the Old Testament and the **27** letters of the New Testament go hand in hand, and if there seems to be some confusion it comes from our lack of understanding or misinterpretation and not from something said or principled in scripture.
- An example of this comes in the statistics that I am about to read to you, according to a poll taken by some biblical scholars **73%** of all scripture is prophetic in nature, remember that could mean **foretelling** (future) or **forth telling** (speaking truth already written). This same Poll says only **2%** of almost **500** sermons contained any prophetic mentions at all, and when questioned about it the pastors overwhelmingly answered prophecy is not going to grow their church.
- So **98%** of said churches were intentionally marginalizing prophecy because they believed that people don't want to hear anything about the return of Christ, the Rapture of the Church, world events and how that plays into what the Bible has to say, instead tell them a manmade gospel of how everything is going to work out according to their plans and their desires. This led me to another poll which gave the statistics of believers and their end time beliefs > **36%** believed in pre trib rapture, **18%** in Post trib, **4%** mid trib, **4%** not sure, **25%** no rapture at all, and **13%** had other ideas that didn't include any rapture or tribulation, their making it up as they go along.
- With these statistics no wonder the church is lacking power and not impacting the culture for Jesus for in looking at these numbers it would seem we have absolutely no urgency concerning the return of our Lord which is central to the core of our beliefs right! So according to these polls we don't speak about the future return of Christ as its too alarming, and **42%** almost half are making up their own stories if the conversation happens to come up at all wow! This is why Jesus said in > **Lk 18:8**- when He returns, not an if but when, will He find faith on the earth!
- With these statistics Prophecy needs to be at the forefront of our priority list for without it we will become almost secular in our worldview scoffing at the mention of our Lord's return > **2 Pet 3:3-9**. Jesus made sure that His Disciples didn't become callous when it came to eschatology in fact He used one of the most important cultural events to ingrain into their thinking that He would one day return for them His church, and that is the event of a wedding. Jesus intentionally called us the church His bride and Himself the Groom, and not coincidentally He performed His very first miracle turning water into wine at the wedding in a place called Cana.

- Today we'll look at why weddings were so important during Jesus day and why He used it to illustrate the hope that should motivate the church into living for Christ, giving away Christ, and looking eagerly at Christ, as we wait for Him to return. In the ancient world weddings were the most important event for the entire town, for when a proposal and consequently a wedding occurred it was a big deal, so much so that unlike today when weddings happen you invited those who you know and like family and friends to attend, during this time not so much.
- Yes family and friends came but most importantly were the elders of the city being present. And it didn't matter whether they were friends or not, you needed them their as **witnesses** to ratify the agreement and then the Covenant. Before the marriage was the betrothal in which the bride and groom would come together at the city gates where important town business was done, and in front of the elders the father of the groom would read out the conditions of marriage for his son, afterward his son would pour a cup of wine and hand it to the perspective bride and if she takes it and drinks that meant the terms were accepted, and gifts would be exchanged.
- Afterward the groom would say "**you are now consecrated to me by the Laws of Moses and I will not drink of this cup until I drink it anew with you in my father's house**". Jesus said a similar thing before going to the cross to usher in the church age > **Math 26:29**- the Disciples being Galileans would have understood that this was a wedding saying Jesus just used for them.
- Here's where it gets interesting, we love predictability right, which is why most believers when it comes to the return of Jesus are most concerned with the when is it going to happen, rather than the what should I be doing in the meantime. **Lk 19:11-13** in the parable of the nobleman the disciples again being very familiar with this concept understood when Jesus said "occupy until I come" that it meant the event won't take place immediately, and again is a wedding term. The bride and Groom would separate for a whole year and the groom would prepare for the wedding by building an addition on his father's house, buying all the furniture, rugs, making sure the finances are in order, the bride also is getting prepared for the wedding.
- She's getting materials for the gown which could take months as she waits on the merchants to bring the right fabrics, also she's required to stay pure and always be ready for when the groom returns. That meant she would always have a lamp lit at night because he could come at night and she was to be ready at all times >**Math 25:1-10**. What's amazing about this is not the **timing** but the **preparation, Math 24:36-39**- no one knew when the wedding would take place not even the groom only the Father, the one who read the conditions aloud in front of the witnesses, who gave the dowry for the bride, He alone decides when it's time for His Son to come and get her.

- It's also like that for when Jesus comes for us His bride, we're not to be so concerned with the timing but the preparation, were to be ready as He could come at any time. But the enemy has us unconcerned about that, were focused on getting along with the world, being accepted by it, and so we take our eyes off of Christ and put our minds on the things of the world and that's what produces statistics like we just read earlier about what believers think about Jesus return.
- Typically we read **Jn 14:1-6** only when someone is about to die and go into eternity and rightfully so, but that wasn't just for someone who was dying then, it was for us who are living now as well, for when Thomas heard it he thought is that happening now and if so take me! The disciples like Christ saw the future as if it could happen in the present, we today ignore what's going on in the present and therefore don't look forward to the future, things need to change!