

The Prophetic Word

The Bible is unlike all other religious books in that it bases its “Authenticity,” “Authority,” and “Inspiration” on PROPHECY. All other religious books contain no predictions as to the future. If its authors had attempted to foretell future events, their unfulfillment would long ago have discredited their writings. Prophecy is, **HISTORY WRITTEN IN ADVANCE**, and proves the foreknowledge of God. This the Prophet Daniel opened to the heathen king, Nebuchadnezzar, in his interpretation of the king’s “Dream”

“The Great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass **HEREAFTER**: and the ‘Dream’ is certain, and the interpretation thereof **SURE**.” Dan. 2:45.

Prophecy is twofold, “**descriptive**” and “**predictive**.” The prophets were both “**forth-tellers**” and “**fore-tellers**.” They had both “**insight**” and “**foresight**.” Their prophetic utterances were not the deductions of reason, but were imparted to them by the Holy Ghost.

“For the ‘**Prophecy**’ came not in old time by the ‘will of man’: but Holy Men of God spake as they were **MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST**.” 2 Peter 1:21.

The importance of the study of the “Prophetic Scriptures” is seen when we recall that two-thirds of the Scriptures are prophetic, either in type, symbol, or direct statement, and that more than one-half of them are as yet unfulfilled; and as those that have been fulfilled were literally fulfilled, as the promises in reference to the “First Coming” of Christ, so those as yet unfulfilled, will be as literally fulfilled. If then we would know the “**MIND OF GOD**” as to the future we must study the “Prophetic Scriptures,” or remain in that class that the Apostle Peter speaks of as being- “**WILLINGLY IGNORANT**,” so as to claim “ignorance” as an excuse for conduct. 2 Peter 3:3-8. We are living in a “Dark World,” and we need the “**SURE WORD OF PROPHECY**” to **LIGHT** us over the stormy “Sea of Time.” 2 Peter 1:19. When men see that God has a “**Plan and Purpose in the Ages**” they will take heart and not be discouraged by the things that are taking place on the earth in these days.

But we must not forget that, “No prophecy of the Scriptures is of any **private interpretation**.” 2 Peter 1:20. That is, no prophecy is to be interpreted by itself, but in harmony with the whole body of prediction on any given subject. It is not to be interpreted to suit the theory of any “**cult**.” The “**Grasshopper Method**” of interpretation or exegesis must be avoided. There is no form of evil doctrine or practice that may not claim apparent Scriptural sanction and support from **isolated passages** taken out of their context, but no erroneous doctrine can ever find support in the Word of God when the whole united testimony of the Scriptures is weighed against it.

The prophecies are not to be “**allegorized**” or “**spiritualized**.” God expounds prophecy by **literally fulfilling it in every detail**.

For illustration, when God said to Abraham “Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them: and they shall afflict them **FOUR HUNDRED YEARS**: and also, that nation, whom they shall serve will I JUDGE (by Plagues): and afterward shall they come out with great substance,” (Ex. 12:35-36) Gen. 15:13-14, did He mean that Abraham’s seed should enter into some spiritual experience which would cause great mental disquietude and heart searching, out of which they would emerge richer in experience and spirituality, or did He mean exactly what the words literally imply? Let the history of their experience in Egypt, as recorded in the first twelve chapters of Exodus, answer. There was nothing allegorical in the whips of the Egyptian Taskmasters, nor spiritual in the double tale of bricks. The Divine law of prophetic interpretation is, that the prophecy will be literally and in exact detail fulfilled.

The requirements of a genuine prediction are five in number.

1. It must have been made known **PRIOR** to its fulfilment.
2. It must be beyond all **HUMAN FORESIGHT**.
3. It must give **DETAILS**.
4. **A SUFFICIENT TIME MUST ELAPSE BETWEEN ITS PUBLICATION AND FULFILMENT TO EXCLUDE THE PROPHET, OR ANY INTERESTED PARTY, FROM FULFILLING IT.**
5. There must be a **CLEAR AND DETAILED FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECY IN EVERY PARTICULAR.**

For illustration, there were 16 detailed prophecies in reference to Christ’s First Coming that were literally fulfilled during the last week of His life, as follows;

1. Sold for 30 pieces of silver. Zech. 11:12.
2. Betrayed by a friend. Psalms 41:9.
3. Forsaken by His Disciples. Zech. 13:7.
4. Accused by false witnesses, Psalms 35:11.
5. Dumb before His accusers. Isaiah 53:7.
6. Spit upon and scourged. Isaiah 53:5.
7. Hands and feet pierced. Psalms 22:16.
8. His garments divided by lot. Psalms 22:18.
9. Mocked by His enemies. Psalms 22:7-8.
10. Given gall and vinegar. Psalms 69:21.
11. Prayed for His murderers. Isaiah 53:12.
12. Not a bone broken. Psalms 34:20.

13. Crucified with thieves. Isa. 53:12.

14. His forsaken cry. Psa. 22:1.

15. His side pierced. Zech 12:10.

16. Buried as a rich man. Isa. 53:9.

Now according to the law of “Compound Probabilities” there was one chance in 65,536 that all these prophecies would head up, or be fulfilled, in the same individual. And when we consider that these prophecies were made by different prophets during a period of 600 years, and half of them about 1000 years before Jesus was born, and notice how they dovetail together with such marvelous accuracy to describe the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus, we cannot but admit that the men who foretold those incidents must have been indwelt by the “Spirit of God.”

The student of Prophecy must learn to “Rightly Divide the Word.” While all Scripture is profitable for **doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction** (2 Tim. 3:16-17), and was written for our **learning**, it is not all addressed to us. Part of it is addressed to the “**JEWS**,” part to the “**GENTILES**,” and part to the “**CHURCH**.” These three constitute the “**Three Classes**” into which humanity is divided. 1 Cor. 10:32. The “Jews” and “Gentiles” are distinct from each other, while the “Church” is composed of both, but as a “**NEW BODY**.” Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; Gal. 3:27-28; Col. 3:10-11. The Church is not a subject of prophecy but of Revelation. The burden of prophecy is the Jews, Palestine, Jerusalem, and the Messiah. Therefore, it is very important in studying the Scriptures not to give to the “Church” what belongs to the “Jews” or “Gentiles,” and vice versa. The “Church” is not seen in the Old Testament. It treats only of the “Jews” and “Gentiles.” The Old Testament chapter headings are misleading. They do not belong to the text but were put there by the publisher. For illustration, take the chapter headings of Isaiah 43 and 44, which read, “The Lord comforteth the ‘Church’ with His promises.” The very first verse of those chapters refutes the heading, distinctly saying that the chapter is addressed to “**ISRAEL**,” not the “Church.” If we want to know about the “Church” we must confine ourselves to the New Testament, and there to the Acts and the Epistles. The entire history of God’s chosen people “Israel” is given in the Scriptures. They are an earthly people. From their call in Abraham to the present time is history. Their regathering, repentance, and restoration to their own land, and their future earthly glory is the subject of prophecy. The prophetic history of the “Gentile Nations” is outlined in the Book of Daniel. This “Present Evil Age” and the manner of its ending is also the subject of prophecy. It behooves us therefore if we would know about the future events that are to come to pass on the earth that we should be students of prophecy. Men and women resort to fortunetellers, clairvoyants, and mediums to get information as to the future, when they have the “more sure word of prophecy.” Because of the neglect of the study of Prophecy the Scriptures have fallen into disrepute, and skepticism and infidelity have become widespread, and an unscriptural optimism as to the world growing better is heard on every side. The neglect of the “Prophetic Word” leaves man ignorant of “God’s Plan and Purpose as to the Ages,” and makes him the easy prey of all the lying inventions and delusive “Cults” of the day. The only cure for the rationalism of the day is the study of Prophecy. The book of Daniel is a “Prophetic Foreview” of the “Gentile Nations” and their last great ruler, **THE ANTICHRIST**.