

Prophecy of Jesus

Introduction to Prophets and Prophecy

Text: 2 Peter 1:19-21

Introduction:

1. It is important to understand the work of the prophets and of prophecy itself.
2. So many in the religious world misuse and abuse the Old Testament Prophets to support their fanciful and false doctrines—such as Premillennialism, etc.
3. Thus, God’s people need to understand how to handle His Word (including the prophets) correctly—rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15).

I. THE PEOPLE OF PROPHECY

- A. The word “prophet” comes from the Greek word *prophetes* (προφήτης).
 1. *Pro* means, “For.”
 2. *Phetes* means, “Speak.”
 3. Thus, a prophet is one who speaks for another (cf. Exodus 7:1).
 4. Bible prophets were spokesmen for God (cf. Deuteronomy 18:18).
- B. Sometimes they were “forth tellers” – speaking instructions from God.
 1. To a degree, this could be taught (i.e., school of the prophets).
 2. What had been revealed could be studied and taught to others.
 3. Of course, new revelation would come by inspiration – which could only be given by God, not taught by man (cf. Galatians 1:11-12).
- C. At other times they were foretellers – speaking of future events.
- D. Before being called prophets they were know as “seers” (1 Samuel 9:9; Hebrews 1:1).
- E. The first man to be designated as a prophet was Abraham (Gen. 20:7).

II. THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY

- A. It was to prepare the world for the Messiah (Revelation 19:10).
 1. Acts 3:12-26—*From Moses to Samuel and all those that follow after, Christ was the message of prophecy.*
 2. Matthew 13:16-17; Luke 22:44; John 1:45; 5:39; Acts 10:43; 26:22-23; 28:23; 1 Peter 1:9-12
 3. There are some 333 specific prophecies about Jesus, divided into 8 categories.
 - a. His bloodline or genealogy
 - b. His birth
 - c. His character
 - d. His life and work
 - e. His death and burial
 - f. His resurrection
 - g. His ascension
 - h. His exaltation
- B. It was to prepare the world for the spiritual nature of the Messiah’s kingdom (1 Peter 1:9-12).
- C. It was to encourage the repentance of God’s people. (Notice that prophecy was often of a conditional nature.)

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III. THE POWER OF PROPHECY

- A. It was of divine origin.
 - 1. The Old Testament prophets spoke God's message.
 - 2. 2 Peter 1:20-21
- B. It was miraculous.
 - 1. These men did not invent their own messages; instead, they were given to them directly by God (2 Peter 1:20-21).
 - 2. Often, these messages were even revealed to them in miraculous ways—visions, dreams, etc.
- C. It was more than prediction.
 - 1. It revealed future events that could not be guessed or assumed.
 - 2. It gave details that eliminated coincidence.
 - 3. It was separated by time to prevent the prophet's participation.
 - 4. It was proven true by historical events.
- D. Thus, since these prophecies came directly from God there is no such thing as a *postponed prophecy*! God does not make mistakes!

IV. THE PARTITION OF PROPHECY

- A. Old Testament Prophecy:
 - 1. The duration of Old Testament prophecy:
 - a. It was until John the Baptist.
 - i. Luke 16:16
 - ii. Just as we are not under the Old Law today, neither are we under the reign of those Old Testament prophecies.
 - b. They were fulfilled in Christ and His church (1 Cor. 2:7-13)
 - c. They ended in Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2).
 - 2. Implications relation to Old Testament prophecy:
 - a. Because Old Testament prophecy was of divine origin, there could have been no mistakes in it—no prophecy of the kingdom ***could have been postponed!*** {A false prophet was to be stoned (Deuteronomy 18:20-22).}
 - b. Because the purpose of Old Testament prophecy was to prepare the world for the Christ and His spiritual kingdom, man cannot look for another Christ or another kingdom (particularly a physical one)!
 - c. Because the duration of Old Testament prophecy was until Christ, man cannot expect fulfillment of those prophecies in “our generation.” They have been fulfilled in Christ! (Definition of “fulfilled”)
- B. New Testament Prophecy:
 - 1. New Testament prophets:
 - a. Prophets of the New Testament period are not exactly the same as Old Testament prophets.
 - b. New Testament prophets were spiritually gifted men who were assistants to the apostles in the establishment of the church.
 - i. The job of New Testament prophets seems to be more of a miraculous, inspired teaching than foretelling events in the distant future.

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- ii. The Apostles more closely correspond to the Old Testament prophets; yet, even the Apostles did not give dim visions into the distant future.
2. Characteristics of New Testament prophecy:
 - a. It was to cease with the completion of the apostolic, miraculous age (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).
 - b. Any futuristic prophecy was only for the near future (Acts 11:27ff; Acts 21:10ff).
 - c. This even holds true for the book of Revelation:
3. Implications of New Testament prophecy:
 - a. There are no future prophecies awaiting their fulfillment in our time.
 - b. The only things we await are the second coming and eternity in heaven; however, there are no prophetic signs predicting when these things will occur.
 - c. New Testament prophecy ended with the completion of God's Word.

Conclusion:

The things "written aforetime were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4).