

Why Study Prophecy?

In the last article, I mentioned a few reasons to study Bible prophecy, but let's delve into that a bit deeper and see more reasons to be studying prophecy today.

1. Prophecy is important to God

As stated in the previous article, Revelation is not the only book in the Bible that gives us prophecy. Remember that "law of proportions" from the last article? With nearly one-third of the Bible about prophecy, it must be pretty important to God. Of course, not all that prophecy is about the End Times, and, in fact, some of that has already been fulfilled. Just look at the prophecy of the rebirth and regathering of the Jewish people in Isaiah. There are many who say that was fulfilled when Israel became a nation in 1948 - several millennia after the prophecy was written! Further down in this article is another example of fulfilled prophecy about Cyrus.

2. God did not give us a spirit of fear.

For those that say they don't need to study the Tribulation, because we won't be here, they're right. As Christians, we won't be here to learn who is the AntiChrist, or see the four horsemen of the Apocalypse or any of all the other signs and events of the seven year Tribulation, because the Church will have been raptured. In my second book, *Go Set A Watchman*, we cover the Rapture and why I believe it is a pre-Tribulation event, so we won't get into that here. We know that there will be a one world government, a one world religion, and a single, most likely digital, currency. But, do you think all that is going to happen overnight? Do you think a one world government is going to congeal that quickly, a one world currency be put in place miraculously, and a one world religion spring up overnight? Actually, all of this has been in the development stages for years.

We are seeing the ground laid for those events right now – today - and on a near daily basis. We see the pieces of the puzzle lining up in the Middle East for the war prophesied in Ezekiel 38 and 39; we see Iran just days away from military-grade uranium; we see North Korea reactivating their nuclear sites; we see what is going on in Australia with the near-tyrannical levels of control; we see "quarantine" camps being built and readied all over the world now, and we will talk about the publicly stated plans of the United Nations for a "New World Order". We see the church being built for all faiths, including Judaism, Catholicism, Buddhism, and Islam and sponsored in part by Pope Francis. But, without an understanding of what those things portend, and what they are leading to, fear may take hold of God's children.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."
(2 Timothy 1:7, KJV)

We need to see what is going on in the world today through the lens that God has given us, so that we know what is coming and so that we may know the joy of that anticipation, instead of fear of the unknown.

3. We are not to be in darkness.

In his first letter to Thessalonica, Paul writes, *“⁴But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. ⁶Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6. KJV)

So we, who are followers and servants of God, are not to be in darkness, or unaware of what is happening in our world in these times. While Jesus did tell His disciples, *“³⁶But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”* (Matt 24:36, KJV). Yet, in Amos, the prophet tells us: *“⁷Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth his secret unto His servants the prophets.”* (Amos 3:7. KJV)

How do we reconcile these two seemingly contradictory verses? On one hand, we have the prophet Amos telling us that God reveals His secrets to His prophets, and on the other hand, we have Jesus telling us no one, not even Jesus himself, knows the day or the hour.

While we may not know the exact day or the hour, we are to know the times we are in and God has laid out a plethora of signs that point to where we are in Bible history, if someone just looks for them. Jesus publicly rebuked the Pharisees and the Sadducees for paying attention to every day events, but ignoring the signs of the times. Jesus was preaching in the Temple and the Pharisees and the Sadducees came to Him:

“¹The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?” (Matthew 16:1-3, KJV)

If we do not study the Word of God, how can we know what those signs of the times are?

Indeed, let us “watch and be sober” for the hour of our redemption draws nearer and nearer.

4. We should study the whole counsel of God.

Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, writes, *“¹⁶All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17, KJV).

So, every word of God’s Word to us is intentional and there for a reason: for us to learn doctrine, be corrected when we’ve gone off track, and for our instruction in righteousness, that we may be found perfect in Christ, our Redeemer. Paul didn’t say, “all scripture, except the words of prophecy”, nor did he say “all scripture, except those words of prophecy that have not yet occurred.” No, he said **“all scripture”** (emphasis added)

5. Prophecy proves the existence of God.

Another reason we may want to study Bible prophecy is because it proves the existence of God. Not that we need proof – it exists in the very air we breath – but for those who may question,

studying those prophecies in the Bible can leave no doubt it all happened by a Grand Design and not mere circumstance or a big bang.

I've already mentioned the fulfilled prophecy of the re-birth of Israel, but let's take a look at another example of prophecy fulfilled. Look at the prophecy in Isaiah about Cyrus. The prophecy was given two hundred years before Cyrus was even born and gave, in detail – even calling Cyrus by name – and stating exactly what Cyrus would do.

²⁴ *...I am the Lord that maketh all things; ...*

²⁷ *That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers.*²⁸ *That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”* (Isaiah 44:24, 27-28, KJV)

So, how does Cyrus invade Babylon? Babylon, at that time, was a great city – perhaps the greatest in the known world at that time. We know it was bordered by the Euphrates River on one side and by a moat that surrounded the rest of the city. It may have also had a great wall that protected it from invasion.

We know from Herodotus, the Greek historian, that part of the army went north of Babylon and dug a trench, effectively diverting the path of the Euphrates River from around Babylon. Herodotus writes that, “while the Babylonians were celebrating a feast, the strong river and moat protecting the city became very shallow, and the Medes and Persians were able to enter the city” (Herodotus 1.191). They captured the city without a battle, and ³¹ *And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.”* (Daniel 5:31, KJV).

The mere fact of these, and so many other, prophecies being fulfilled also tell us that these are not mere allegories, or parables, and they are to be taken quite literally. When Isaiah writes, ²⁷ *That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers”* (Isaiah 44:27, KJV), he isn't giving a parable, or talking about some allegorical example of how to behave. Cyrus enters Babylon by diverting the waters of the Euphrates River and enters with his troops along the riverbed. That plan was foretold years before Cyrus was even born.

When we begin to study the Bible, the whole Bible, we begin to see that this is truly one long history of events that have been laid out and planned by an Intelligent Being – our Heavenly Father. Nothing in the Bible contradicts anything else in the Bible and one event told about in the Bible can be connected to another event in the Bible, even if separated by thousands of years! There are no “coincidences” in the Bible; it has all been foretold and fore-planned.

6. The spirit of prophecy is Jesus and Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Prophecy is all about Jesus, our Saviour. Jesus told His disciples, ⁴⁴ *These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”* (Luke 24:44, KJV) and, in Revelation, we hear the angel of the Lord proclaiming to John, when he fell at the Angel's feet, ¹⁰ *See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of **Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.**”* (Rev 19:10, KJV, emphasis added)

Ok, so we have Jesus Himself telling us that He is prophecy – both fulfilled and yet to be fulfilled and an angel in Heaven confirming it. If we yearn to know more about Him, why would we ignore prophecy? Isn't that like wanting to learn more about math, but not wanting to learn the numbers?

So why now? Why is it so important to study prophecy now? We know God told Daniel to *"Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."* (Daniel 12:9, KJV), so the very fact that this question is arising so frequently today would indicate that those words are now unsealed. God goes on, in verse 10, to tell Daniel, ¹⁰*"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but **the wise shall understand.**"* (Daniel 12:10, KJV, emphasis added)

7. For those left behind.

There is another reason to study and discuss Bible prophecy today and it is for those who are still here after the Rapture. Let those who are left behind read and study, and know that the events coming were foretold and there is a way to save their soul, if not their life, during that period.

8. We are the Watchman on the Wall.

We are also called to be the watchman on the wall. There are multiple verses in Isaiah and in Ezekiel about how we are to be the watchman on the wall, but let's just look at this one:

²*"Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: ³ If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;"* (Ezekiel 33:2-3, KJV)

But there are penalties, too, both for those who hear the trumpet sound and do not pay attention and for those who are called to be watchman and do not sound the alarm:

⁴*"Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. ⁵ He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.*

⁶*But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand."* (Ezekiel 33:4-6, KJV)

So those who hear the warnings of the watchman and choose to ignore them, their blood shall be upon their own heads; but, if the watchman fails to sound the warning, then the blood of those he is protecting is on his, the watchman's, head. That verse, alone, is reason enough for us to be studying God's Word today, and not just the parts we like, but the full Counsel of God! This passage tells us that, not only are we to study and ask God for understanding and wisdom, but that there is a penalty if we do not sound the warning.

Out of all the books of the Bible, there is only one that gives the reader a blessing for reading and understanding – the book of Revelation.

“³ Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” (Revelation 1:3, KJV)

Indeed, we are that generation and the time is at hand for us to be studying God’s word, the signs of the times, and the prophecies that have been given. Let us ask God for wisdom in understanding and for His Guidance, for I believe the time is very close and we will need His strength, His grace, and His power for the times coming.

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