

Study of Prophecy Pt. 2

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In first Thessalonians 5:1-2 the apostle Paul says but of the times and of the seasons brother you have no need that I write unto you. You yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. Well how could they know that if they hadn't been told and then the wonderful ministry of comfort 1 Thessalonians 4:13 I would not have you to be ignorant brethren concerning them who are asleep that you sorrow not even as others who have no hope. And Paul's own example in Acts twenty two and twenty seven he said I shunned not.

I shrank not I didn't hold back I didn't refrain from preaching unto you the whole council of God. All of it and all of its parts [inaudible] to heed the charge to hearken to the prophetic scriptures as a light in a dark place. Second Peter one nineteen and as the world becomes increasingly darker and the shadows lengthen and the darkness becomes such that it may be felt as the darkness in Egypt in the day of the end time of the exodus the darker it gets on the outside where the brighter the prophetic word appears it gives more light. It shows us. The way out of this terrible. Terrible. Catastrophe. And calamity. And look at Luke 24:25. Here's a prime though not the only cause for Israel's rejection of Christ. You fools are slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken oh they didn't they didn't deny all of the prophets have spoken.

No and they didn't disregard all of it but they took only a portion of it and God our Lord Jesus said God the Son here on earth said you should have taken the prophetic testimony in totality not just a part of it not just those wonderful portions about Israel's glory and their pre-eminence on the world scene. No you should have taken the prophecies concerning Messiah's humiliation his death ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to have entered into his glory. Yes. God's prophetic light is sufficient to light our pathway home to glory. We need this light. We better not disregard the prophetic word, neglect prophecy because then we're disobedient to the Lord's will. And not only so but if we fail to study prophecy, we disregard what many of us consider if not the greatest proof one of the greatest proofs. Of the Bible's divine inspiration. How can you read passages such as I'm going to ask you to turn to now look at Isaiah 45 where the prophet is pouring out scorn and ridicule upon idolatry.

And idolaters idol worshippers. He says. In Isaiah 45:21 Tell ye and bring them near yea Let them take counsel together. These your carved images he's speaking of who hath declared this from ancient time who hath told it from that time? Hath not I the Lord and there is no God else beside me a just God and a savior. There is none beside me. You see God is the only one who can foretell because foretelling is not just a matter of saying something as we sometimes speak of it as just off of the top of our head. Oh no oh no when there is a true prophecy from Isaiah. He has God's word concerning what God not only says he will do but will also bring it to pass. There must be not only the power to foretell but the power to perform. In Isaiah forty one notice twenty one to twenty three produce your cause saith the Lord bring forth your strong reasons said the king of Jacob. Let them bring them forth.

Show us what will happen. Let's see these idols. Let's see if they can tell us what's gonna come. Do they know how to predict? Do they know how to prophesy? Let them show the former

things what they are that we may consider and know the latter end of them if they told us anything about events to come or declare things to come. Or have they seen something in the past that they foretold. And now we have the authentication of it by way of its fulfillment. No. Show the things that are to come. Isaiah 41 twenty three. Show the things that are to come hereafter that we may know that you're gods.

Yay. We won't even look at you in the moral realm. Do good or do evil. That we may be dismayed and behold together. Behold your of nothing. And your work of not. An abomination is he who chooses you. Oh my friends. Such passages as this show that God's word is true because God alone can prophesy and you can take this blessed word of prophecy and put it up against. Oh I don't know how many other prophecies of the ancient world the ethnic religions of the world and they didn't necessarily come about but look at God. Isaiah 46 verse 9 through 13. Remember the former things of old I'm God. There is none else I'm God and there is none like me. In what way.

Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times are things that are not yet done. Saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure calling a ravenous bird from the east in this case it was Cyrus. The great Persian. The man that executeth my counsel from a far country. Ye I've spoken it I will also bring it to pass. I purpose it. I will also do it. Well did God do it? Of course he did it was Cyrus who brought [inaudible] the great neo Babylonian Empire. Whose first ruler. Was Nebuchadnezzar oh the dynasty itself? The empire was founded by his father Nabopolassar I purposed it. I will also do it harken unto me stubborn in heart that are far from righteousness. I bring near my righteousness.

It shall not be far off and my salvation shall not tarry and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory. Yes God can tell again and again. Daniel 2:47 Second Peter one we've read at the beginning of this study 2 Peter 1:20-21 God tells us that prophecy is to be interpreted in the light of other prophecies and all these together are a marvelous proof of the Bible's divine inspiration for holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. I repeat. Prophecy. Is a miracle of utterance God alone can predict? It's a miracle of utterance. These texts. That we've been reading. In Isaiah. And the one in Daniel. Only God can reveal these things said Daniel [inaudible] don't start

Pouring honors out upon me as though I were the only one who could know these things. No the only way I have come to know it is through God and the the King Nebuchadnezzar was wise enough to see it because at the end of that chapter, in Daniel 2:47 that I've just given you the King answered. Unto Daniel. Instead of a truth it is that your God is the God of Gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets [inaudible] thou couldst reveal this secret. Prophecy my dear friends is a tremendous attestation to the power of our God. It serves as a tremendous. Confirmation in the area of. Theology. The kind of God we have. These texts settle for all time the truth that the Bible is inspired of God prophecies are confirmation of divine omniscience and omnipotence. Think of his word relative to Moab in the Bible Edom or Assyria or Egypt. The country of Syria North of Palestine Babylon Medo-Persia Greece Rome Nineveh. Sodom and Gomorrah. Tyre, Sidon, and Felicia.

Those concerning Christ or Israel or the church or the gentile. No movement. Of world importance. But what the word of God has predicted it long beforehand. World conflicts. Spiritual declension. Rise of dictatorships. Widespread fears calamities wars. Famines. All these things. Earthquakes. They have all been foretold so clearly in the Word of God. Now there is

peril then in neglecting the prophetic word because then we're disobeying God's Will we're disregarding this marvelous proof that God has put right in the middle of the bible of the Bible's divine inspiration. And then in. Other areas too there are peril in neglecting prophetic study. For one thing you may not have thought of it. But when a church neglects Prophecy it begins to change and alter its preaching. There is an alteration of the church's preaching. How does that work out? Well when the church neglects prophecy. She will invariably and you watch it. She will invariably fail to conform to God's revealed plan in her preaching. For instance you'll be hearing these catchphrases convert the world. Reform the social order. Bring in the kingdom.

Do away with war and all lawlessness. Give ourselves over to become involved in social projects in all manner of. Civil rights. Think of the effort expended to bring about world peace. And yet God's purpose is very clearly. Oh how he told us before. And it's right there at the beginning of the church's history on earth. They sat down and God, in the time of their councils at the first Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 was about the middle of that first century A.D... What did they find in Acts 15 verse 14? We read that Simeon Simon Peter hath declared how God first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. That was Cornelius in Acts 10.

In his home and to this agree the words of the prophets as it is written. After this I will return. And will build again the tabernacle of David which has fallen down. And I will build again its ruins and I will set it up that the residue of men might seek after the Lord and all the nations upon whom my name is called saith the Lord who doeth all these things known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the age and now notice that. God's purpose is found there to call out from among all the nations Jews and Gentiles of the world to call out. From among them a people for his name. Now what happens? When a young man gives his name. To a young

lady or a young lady. Takes. A gentleman's name. Why that's a marriage that's God's purpose. To find a bride for the son.

God's purpose is found here. But if the church neglects prophecy she's going to invariably change that. She's gonna to veer off from that objective the Lordship of Christ must be preached or man will try to be that Lord himself. Think of the scourge. Of Hitler. Of Nietzsche of Stalin of others. When Prophecy is neglected. The church. Invariably. Turns. To a solely. Entirely. Ethical interpretation of Christianity. She begins to stress morality. Is morality all right? It's not all right when it's put in place of regeneration. And when the church begins to stress morality instead of regeneration New Birth and conversion the church is all wrong. Never forget this too friends. Just the preaching of morals doesn't bring about morality. Oh what a demonstration of that we have had. In the last 40 to 50 years we've had that kind of message in this country. For some half century.

Just morality morality and the plane of morality today according even to our estimates. Secular estimates and authority is lower today. Than it was then. Christ coming and kingdom. Are neglected or rejected. The result is a social gospel. Men put their energies into communal and world reform as an end in themselves. Whereas a true preaching of the gospel will have results in the social realm. Just read the history of missions and you'll see that that has taken place around the world. Yes. But just to put energies into communal world reform. As a Primary objective as an end in itself. That won't do. Preaching. Then when the church's message is changed. It comes almost entirely. From the Sermon on the Mount blessed are the pure at heart. But they never go on. To preach how. That heart becomes pure our Lord Jesus in other passages told how we're not just to confine preaching from the Sermon on the Mount have you seen how many unsaved people like to come to that passage.

They don't like the passage. If you believe not that I am. You shall perish in your sins. Oh they don't like that. I'm not saying that the Sermon on the Mount isn't surprisingly gloriously beautiful. But when the preaching comes from the Sermon on the Mount. Stop there. Not on the fact and accomplishment of the cross there's something left out. And when the cross is breached. Don't you ever forget it society never fails to feel the effect of it. The impact of it. The pungent force of it. Dr. Walter Rauschenbusch, a Social Gospelizer made this amazing statement in one of his writings. Said he the worst thing that could happen to God. Notice the result of preaching a changed message because this man did not believe in the prophetic word at all.

Didn't believe in the truth of the cross and these things are all tied in together. The worst thing he said that could happen to God would be to remain an autocrat while the world is moving toward democracy. He would be dethroned. With the rest of the rulers now that's a pronouncement from one of the foremost social gospel guises. If the church it kept in view the authority and coming of Christ. We wouldn't be hearing a liberal theologian say democracy demands a god with whom men can cooperate. And not to whom they must submit. Think of that. Democracy demands a god with whom men can cooperate. They want to do the operating and they want God to do the co-ing. That's their idea of cooperating. Demands a god with whom men can cooperate and not to whom they must submit. You see friends. It's crystal clear. Tragic results are evident when the prophetic word is neglected you cannot do it. You cannot neglect the prophetic word without definite. And clear.

Results. And they are not good results. Then there's another. Thing that happens. Oh yes. Another very very serious thing that happens. When. Prophecy. The study of prophecy is neglected. There is a definite parallel how. There is lost. Missionary interest and zeal. When prophetic truth is soft pedal. The missions suffer. You say I don't see the connection. Oh there is.

There is a connection. When prophetic truth is bypassed. Missions invariably come out on the little end of the horn. Soon we hear about tense for World Conferences world amalgamations of what of all religions. Some of of us haven't forgotten the layman's inquiry. Their report rethinking missions. They are indicative of the habit. [Inaudible] A missionary in the Far East. Who has taken? This particular view. Of. The irrelevance. A prophecy. Listen to him. If he knew the prophetic word he would never have made this amazing statement. He said when the Western world was sunk in armaments and the church seemed a part of that war spirit God reached out and laid hold of Mahatma Gandhi. And through him let us see some of the meanings underlying the Sermon on the Mount.

Now how could a man like that? Have any missionary awareness. When he holds up before all the church. I grant you the church is not perfect. I grant you that she has made errors but the church isn't all wrong and the church is God's right agency to bring truth to the world. Think of it to take Mahatma Gandhi and say that through Him God. Took. A man. And let us see some of the meanings underlying the Sermon on the Mount. You see when the prophetic word is laid aside every straw is grasped at to. Spell out the coming of the kingdom of Christ. If the church does not sound the alarm. The unsaved elements in the visible Church. We warn you friends. If the church doesn't sound the alarm. In a clear fashion. If the trumpet doesn't give a clear sound the unsaved elements in the visible Church will sweep on to contribute their weight. To the establishment of an anti-Christian kingdom on earth. A native Christian leader of China. Visited this country some years ago and on one Sunday he spoke in a liberal church. In California.

At the end of the message a young college student very serious. Student. Asked him this question. Why should we export Christianity to your country of China? I can't understand that.

When you have Confucianism in your country that's a wonderful religion. Has many social implications. Actually Confucianism is more of a social order philosophy than anything else. Why should we export Christianity to China? When you have Confucianism in your country. The answer from this Christian leader of China came forth beautifully. He said my answer to your question as to why we should export Christianity to China is threefold. Three reasons. First of all Confucius was a teacher. And Christ. Is the savior. China needs a savior more than she needs a teacher. In the second place Confucius is dead.

And Christ is alive. China. Needs a living savior. And the third place. Confucius is someday going to stand before Christ. To be judged by him. China. Needs to know Christ as savior. Before she meet him. As Judge. Oh how true. And to have to be told it from someone from one of the so called pagan areas of the world. But he had it right. Absolutely right. We. Have to have this kind of a message. We have to have the prophetic truth given its weight its proper force else we shall find the church with lost. Departed. Missionary interest. And zeal. It will be turned. Into far too many other avenues. And channels. And then we like. To indicate again. Finally. That. If the study of prophecy is neglected. There is going to be a change not only. In the church's. Missionary vision.

Zeal not only be a change in the mission in the church's preaching but there's gonna be a change in the whole outlook and testimony of the church. How do we make that out? Well as a matter of sober history. When the church shut her mouth on prophecy in the 4th century. A.D... When the church shut her mouth on prophecy the church became wedded to a worldly system. A dead churchianity in the middle Ages is still with us. Emphasizing form and trappings. And paraphernalia. And externalities. And carnal ordinances to the detriment of the heart. And core and life blood of the matter. There it is. We have a historical attestation and we dare not close

our eyes to it we dare not be blind to it. Emphasizing form and all that. How did it happen? Well the church shut her mouth on prophecy. If the hope of the lord's coming had been kept bright the church would have achieved a greater degree of unity purity and power. Some folks say well if we're just quiet on that we can be vocal on other things. No the story is told of a man who was who knew seven languages. Seven languages seven foreign languages and was [inaudible] in them. And one day he was stricken dumb and he was stricken dumb in all seven.

Yes. If we soft pedal this area before very long we shall be soft pedaling a number of areas. I remember a pastor. In a first church in a state in the east of us. Who said one day a fine preacher he said you know I have been preaching on the coming of the Lord prophetic truths and all for many many years. But. I just made up my mind that unless my official board asks me to preach on it I shall not preach on it again. And my dear friends that man's ministry from that time on went down down down. The last time I saw him in what are the. Central States. He was. In a very very minor position. Not that it wasn't important but he had lost a great deal of his. Power in preaching. If the hope of the Lord's coming I insist. If that is not kept right. The Church. Will not achieve the degree of unity and purity and power that it could have.

Many more would realize if the prophetic word were given its place they would realize the truth and reliability of the whole world view in the marvel of fulfilled prophecies message to Israel would be much more effective would be able to set events concerning Israel in the proper scriptural light relative to our glorious past. Her sad present or even more glorious future. Yes this is still one of the best methods of winning Jews to Christ to say that telling them about fulfilled prophecy. How did the apostles do it? In the wonderful book of Acts. They pointed to the prophetic word fulfilled. And said. One to another they did. This is he of whom Moses in the law. And the prophets did speak. Jesus of Nazareth. We have found the Messiah. We have found

the Christ that very one of whom Moses in the law in the Pentateuch. And the very one whom all the prophets did speak. Sixteen writing prophets of the Old Testament did speak of this very one. One of the best methods I say on winning Jews to Christ as savior. Friends when the church is lulled to sleep in these matters. It's disastrous. It's a standing reproach to the truth of God. The incident is told of a French dramatist.

Who read his latest production? To an eminent circle. A circle of eminent critics. And while he was reading. Lo and behold one of the critics fell fast asleep. While that reader was quite taken aback. He felt he was humiliated. And so he stopped his reading long enough to say. Sir. How can you criticize my production when you are sound asleep? The other critic rubbing his eyes said I submit that sleep is a criticism. And so it is. So it is friends. If Christian truth is worth anything it means everything. And a Christian asleep on the vital glorious matter of prophecy is a perpetual argument. Against the truth. Prophecy will not put us to sleep. It will put us to work. As we ought to be. The church. Believe it friend. The church is suffering this very hour from neglect of prophetic truth. Let's believe it. Let's preach it. Let's teach it. Yes let's live it and let us go on in the light of it in the light of prophecy.

Unsaved Jew or Gentile. Dare not delay a decision. You and I must tell them what eternal issues are involved. Some say well I just believe in preaching John 3:16 and no prophecy did you ever stop to consider that John 3:16 has a lot of prophecy in it. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish perish. But have everlasting life. Why perdition or everlasting life. Those are prophetic truths. The Bible has a lot to say about the condition of the lost. Eternal punishment of the lost that's what perishing you should not perish but have everlasting life. Why all those marvelous chapters in the revelation. And in other portions 2 Corinthians 5 those concerns heaven beyond this life.

All those things relate to that. Oh friend. Don't say that prophecy. Can be bypassed and we still have even a gospel message to preach. No the Bible is like the robe that our Lord Jesus wore it's without seam wherever you touch it and tear it you do it harm. It is one glorious unit truth. As we often say it's cohesive. If a unit is homogeneous it's in accord is in harmony with itself. May God by his process son make us aware and alive on this matter? Of preaching and teaching and living. The word. Of God in its entirety and that will include the prophetic what our God and our father. Make the truth. Of the urgency of studying thy word in all of its parts including the tremendously important section on prophecy. Make the urgency of this real. To our hearts. We pray. With Thanksgiving in Jesus worthy blessed name. Amen.

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