



First and Second Peter Lesson 10 2Q 2017 Prophecy and Scripture

SABBATH

What is the primary purpose of Bible prophecy? Is it:

- to give us the ability to know the future before it happens?
- to map out future events and plan what to do?
- to demonstrate God has foreknowledge and nothing catches Him by surprise and thus increase our confidence in God?

If the last is the reason for Bible prophecy, when in the flow of time do we get to experience that confidence from the prophecy—before or after the events happen? After!

What is the Bible principle regarding how we understand prophecy?

If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him. Dt 18:22

“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. John 14:28,29

So, if you were to utilize these directions, when are you able to do so, when the prophecy is given, but before the events prophesied take place, or after the events prophecy take place?

The **primary** purpose of Bible prophecy is to be experienced **AFTER** events happen, then we can have increased confidence in God who foreknew and was not taken by surprise.

There is a secondary purpose for prophecy, which is what? To give us general warnings and safeguards but not a specific road map of exactly who, what, when and where.

Jesus’ prophecy about persecution of the saints, of the events prior to the second coming, about false Messiah’s going into the world, about not seeking to find Him in the secret meeting but as the sun shines from the east to west. Notice, these types of prophecies give measurable, testable, but non-specific points which keep us from going down wrong paths.

It is usually only after the events happen that we are able to fill in the specifics of who, what, when, and where.



Why is that? First because the prophecies themselves are not specific, but why are the prophecies not specific?

If God does know the future before it happens, why doesn't He provide detail prophecies, with persons, places, times, dates and exact events?

Have you ever considered how your life would be different if you knew with 100% certainty the following:

- The specific day, time and method of your death?
- The specific day and time of the Second Coming of Christ?

If you knew the specifics of either of these would it impact how you lived today? How?

If you knew the second coming wasn't for another 700 years, would that encourage or discourage you? Would you be tempted to become apathetic?

If you knew with 100% certainty that Christ would appear in the clouds with all His holy angels three days from now at 2:14 p.m. would you do anything different? Would you write the bills due at the end of the week, mow the lawn, go to work, etc?

If you knew you wouldn't die until 2034, would you be less or more cautious? Might you take some more risks? Might a person become less concerned about eternity thinking, "Oh, I've got time"?

Is there a reason God gives prophecy in general terms that give us guidance yet that we often don't understand specifically until after the events have transpired?

Even with the prophecies to Nebuchadnezzar, the specifics of when, who, and how were not told, only the large landscape of subsequent kingdoms.

How does this impact our lives today?

We should not get caught up into being overly concerned with every interpretation of Bible prophecy, particularly if they are about future events with overly detailed specifics. They are most likely going to have inaccuracies in them.

We should review Bible prophecies that have been fulfilled using them as evidences to build our confidence in God, and understand the general themes of prophecies yet to come.

Memory text: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." 2Pet 1:19



To what is Peter referring: primarily about prognostication or about the testimony of God's spokespersons?

Here is the same passage from the NIV:

And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

What have God's spokespersons been telling us? Primarily prophesying specific dates, times, places, events, or proclaiming a promise, proclaiming the truth about God, His character, methods, and the Remedy/Savior named Jesus who would come and fulfill all God's promises to heal and fix what sin has done to God's creation? And this is known as the mystery of God—the truth about God and His actions to heal and restore His creation!

Yes, it is true that the prophets spoke of unfolding truth about God in events yet to come, thus it was prognostic, but what the prophets spoke was so much more than merely predicting future events. The prophets proclaimed universal eternal truth; they proclaimed God's character, methods, and love all of which have their origin in God, were obscured by Satan's lies and would be revealed in Jesus.

Thus the sure word spoken by God's prophets has always been, and will always be, the truth about God, sometimes this also includes prognostication.

Could Satan trick people into miss the truth about God by getting them so focused on the prognostic details they don't even consider what the prophet is saying about God?

Could there be people, entire churches, who value Bible prophecy so much they make certain elements of Bible prophecy a test of fellowship and actually argue if you don't come to the same conclusion you will be lost—say something like finding in Bible prophecy a specific day of worship and arguing if you worship on a specific day you will get the mark of the beast?

What is wrong with such an approach? It misses the truth of God's character and actually misapplies the prophecy to misrepresent God.

And what is the result Peter points forward toward as a result of the sure word from the prophets? That the Day Star will arise in our hearts.

What is this? This is Jesus—this is being transformed in the inner person, this is partaking the divine nature, this is circumcision of the heart by the Spirit; this is the Spirit taking the perfect character of Jesus and reproducing it in us!

But the light, the truth about God, is shining into a dark place—where is that dark place?



The minds of human beings—and what has made that place dark? The lies about God Satan has told and we have believed.

John 1:1-13 from *The Remedy*:

¹In the beginning was Jesus—God's very thoughts made audible and visible—and Jesus was with God, and was God.

²He was with God before anything else existed.

³Through Jesus everything was created; without Jesus nothing was created that has been created.

⁴In Jesus was life—original, unborrowed, underived—and his life enlightens the mind about God: about his character, methods, and principles.

⁵The light of Jesus' life shines into the darkened minds of human beings—darkened by Satan's lies about God—but their darkened minds have not understood the light.

⁶There came a man called John who was empowered and directed by the Spirit of God.

⁷He came as a witness to testify that Jesus was the true light sent to dispel the darkness enshrouding the mind, so that everyone might believe the truth about God and be healed.

⁸John was not the light of truth; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true Light that enlightens everyone—God's very thoughts made visible and audible—was coming into the world.

¹⁰Jesus—the true Light—was in the world, and even though the world was created by him, the world was so blinded by Satan's lies that it didn't even recognize him.

¹¹Jesus came to his own people—whom he had especially chosen, instructed and blessed—but many refused to accept him because they preferred Satan's version of a savior.

¹²But all who recognized and accepted him—all who valued and accepted the character, methods and principles he revealed—he made them children of God, transforming them into like character, practicing God's methods and principles.

¹³They were made God's children not because of genetics or biological descent, or because of human procreation, but because of the transformation of mind, heart and character brought about by God.

Is this not what Peter is talking about when he describes the Day Star dawning in our hearts?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “All through his epistles...” First, do you notice the point the lesson makes, that Peter’s certainty is in the what and the who, not the specifics about times and places and specific human actors in some future scenario. His certainty is in the truth about God, the problem of sin and God’s solution for it—Jesus Christ!

But what do you think about the last sentence: “It was Peter’s trust in the Written Word that helped him know the Word ‘made flesh’ (John 1:14).”?



I wonder if this is backward—wasn't it Peter's trust, along with His personal experience and knowledge of Jesus the living Word, which enlightened his mind with correct understanding and subsequent increased confidence in the Written Word?

In fact, the way the lesson authors have put it is a major error for many people today—how?

Many Christians, and theologians in particular, have this approach: They go to the Bible study the Old Testament with all its symbols, metaphors, dark speech examples, form their interpretations, beliefs, doctrines about what they think it means, and then go to the New Testament and force Jesus to fit into their understanding of what it all means.

I have taken the other approach—Jesus must be studied first! Only after coming to know Jesus, and correctly understanding Him (the true light) and what He taught can we then properly understand the written word. Thoughts?

What did Jesus say to the religious leaders in His day?

You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life. Jn 5:39,40

Here are a few quotes from one of the founders of the SDA church, consider which approach this person takes—studying the Old Testament Scripture and then coming to understand Jesus, or coming to know Jesus and what He taught and then studying to know the truth of the OT Scripture?

- The **system of Jewish economy was the gospel in figure**, a presentation of Christianity which was to be developed as fast as the minds of the people could comprehend spiritual light. **Satan ever seeks to make obscure the truths that are plain**, and **Christ ever seeks to open the mind** to comprehend every essential truth concerning the salvation of fallen man. **To this day there are still aspects of truth which are dimly seen**, connections that are not understood, and **far-reaching depths in the law of God that are uncomprehended**. Fundamentals of Christian Education 238
 - **Could this be referring to the truth of design law being obscured by interpreting the symbols through imposed law lenses?**
- **Christ was the foundation of the Jewish economy**. The whole system of types and symbols was a compacted **prophecy of the gospel**, a presentation in which were bound up the promises of redemption. Acts of the Apostles 14
 - **What is the OT about? Jesus and the good news about God!**
- **The significance of the Jewish economy is not yet fully comprehended**. Truths vast and profound are **shadowed** forth in its rites and symbols. ***The gospel is the key that unlocks its mysteries***. Through a **knowledge of the plan of redemption**, its truths are opened to the understanding. **Far more than we do**, it is our privilege to understand these wonderful themes. We are to comprehend the deep things of God. Christ's Object Lessons 133



- What is the key? The gospel
- And who is the clearest revelation of the gospel? Jesus!

Many of the interpretations of the OT change when we seek to know Jesus before we study the OT. So, I would suggest it was Peter's personal knowledge of and trust in Jesus the living Word, that gave him right understand and subsequent confidence in the Written Word.

In fact, Paul the theology scholar who knew the OT Scriptures very well had a really hard time accepting Christ—why? Because he studied the OT Scriptures first, through their traditional views. After accepting Christ Paul had to spend 3 years in the desert being instructed by Christ in order to correct all his misunderstandings about the OT Scripture. Only then was he ready to be Jesus' ambassador and gospel messenger.

Read fourth paragraph, "Some of what the prophets..." What did the angels desire to know?

The lesson references 1Peter 1:12, let's read verses 11 and 12:

trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

What were they longing to understand? The coming of Christ, His sufferings, death, resurrection—why was it necessary, what would it accomplish, what would the angels learn?

Where did sin begin? In heaven, with whom? An angel, over what? Was it over money, land, sex, gambling? Over what? Whether God and Christ could be trusted. What weapon did Satan use—primarily lies. And what impact do lies have on minds? Confusion, undermining of trust, breaking of love, so what would the angels long to understand? The truth of the issues which Satan raised in their minds over God. Remember 2Cor 10:3-5?

Again from one of the founders of the SDA church, what do you think, does Scripture support this view?

By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to **reveal God both to men and to angels**. He was the Word of God,—God's thought made audible. In His prayer for His disciples He says, "I have declared unto them Thy name,"—"merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,"—"that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." But not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. **Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which "angels desire to look,"** and it will be their study throughout endless ages. **Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings** will find in the cross of



Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the **glory of self-sacrificing love**. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that ***the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven***; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto. DA 19, 20

That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. [What do you think that is? What restrains sin? Is it threats of punishment? Might and power, flaming swords? What is sin? Transgression of the law, what law? The law of love which is the foundation of God's government, so what can effectually keep people from violating love? What is the power of God we discussed last week? The power of truth and love, which was manifested most effectively where? At the cross, so what would you predict can effectually restrain sin?] **The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels.** Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The **angels** ascribe honor and glory to Christ, **for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven.** Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. **All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.**

The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides **an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds**, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. {5BC 1132.8}

For centuries God looked with patience and forbearance upon the cruel treatment given to his ambassadors, at his holy law prostrate, despised, trampled underfoot. He swept away the inhabitants of the Noachian world with a flood. But when the earth was again peopled, men drew away from God, and renewed their hostility to him, manifesting bold defiance. Those whom God rescued from Egyptian bondage followed in the footsteps of those who had preceded them. **Cause was followed by effect; the earth was being corrupted.** **What law is being described? The law of liberty, the law of sowing and reaping.**

A crisis had arrived in the government of God. The earth was filled with transgression. The voices of those who had been sacrificed to human envy and hatred were crying beneath the altar for retribution. **All heaven was prepared at the word of God to move to the help of his elect.** One word from him, and the bolts of heaven would have fallen upon the earth, filling it with fire and flame. God had but to speak, and there would have been thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes and destruction.

The heavenly intelligences were prepared for a fearful manifestation of Almighty power. Every move was watched with intense anxiety. The exercise of justice was expected. [What



was Satan's core lie about God? That God is arbitrary, meaning God's law is not design law but imposed rules which require God to inflict punishment. What does justice look like when based on design law of love? Seeking to heal and restore while leaving free those who refuse. What does justice look like when based on imposed laws? Infliction of punishment. If Satan's lie about God's law being imposed was being considered by the loyal angels in heaven, then what would they be expecting when God exercises justice? **The angels looked for God to punish the inhabitants of the earth.** [Why did they look for this? Because they were considering that Satan's view of law had some merit. Satan's lie had not been eradicated from the minds of loyal angels. What did God actually do?] **But "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."** "I will send my beloved Son," he said. "It may be they will reverence him." **Amazing grace! Christ came not to condemn the world, but to save the world.** "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

The heavenly universe was amazed at God's patience and love. To save fallen humanity the Son of God took humanity upon himself... {RH, July 17, 1900 par. 6} **What law is revealed in the coming of Jesus? Design law of love to fix what was broken and restore human beings back to love and trust. This is the Justice of God, which God revealed and which destroys Satan's lies about God for all who have ears to hear and eyes to see.**

Before Christ's first advent, the sin of refusing to conform to God's law had become widespread. Apparently Satan's power was growing; his warfare against heaven was becoming more and more determined. **A crisis had been reached. With intense interest God's movements were watched by the heavenly angels.** Would He come forth from His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity? Would He send fire or flood to destroy them? **All heaven waited the bidding of their Commander to pour out the vials of wrath upon a rebellious world. One word from Him, one sign, and the world would have been destroyed. The worlds unfallen would have said, "Amen. Thou art righteous, O God, because Thou hast exterminated rebellion."** {ST, August 27, 1902 par. 4}

Why would the loyal angels have said amen? Because they didn't fully understand God's design law, why? Because Satan's lie was so effective. Thus, as the Bible teaches, angels longed to look into these things and understand more accurately the reality of God's character and the lies of Satan. And it was at the Cross that the prince of this world was cast out—out of the affections, minds, hearts of the sinless beings in the universe and out into the open for all who love truth to see—Satan is exposed as a liar and fraud!

MONDAY

Read third paragraph, "Peter highlights..." Any concerns about this?



First, I believe these events are historic, accurate, and really happened. And they happened because Jesus is the Son of God and this is evidence, which is consistent with His divinity and purity that we would expect to see in our Creator God. So all of this is consistent with Jesus as the Son of God and our Savior.

But, and there is a but, what is the but?

This type of physical manifestation can be counterfeited; therefore such manifestations alone, i.e. without the historic life of purity and self-sacrificial love lived out by Jesus, cannot be relied upon.

Any Bible evidence to support my concerns?

- How did Satan manifest to Jesus in the wilderness? As an angel from heaven. Did that mean because Satan presented with supernatural light and miraculous signs he could be trusted?
- “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.” 2Cor 11:13,14
- “But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!” Gal 1:8

What is the point here?

That the true God will absolutely be powerful, and absolutely have miraculous revelations and demonstrations that accompany His true visible presence—no doubt. But miracles, signs, and wonders can all be counterfeited, thus we must rely upon something that cannot be counterfeited, and what is that?

The truth—the truth about God, His character and methods of love and the laws upon which He has constructed reality to operate upon.

Understanding these and how they operate, there are certain actions that God will never take—such as?

- God will never lie
- God will never say “love me or I will kill you” i.e. coerce, why? Because it violates the law of liberty and destroys love and incites rebellion
- God will not, and in fact, cannot, force people to love and trust Him
- So, when beings of immense power, manifesting what appears to be heavenly light, performing miracles attempt to impose a system of justice like our fallen world uses—coercion—“Worship me, I love you, I died for you. I only want your good. I don’t want to punish you. But if you refuse, justice requires I punish disobedience. I will first restrict your ability to buy and sell, and imprison, but if this doesn’t bring you to repentance, well holiness and justice requires that I execute you.” This is the beast—that many Christians are preparing to accept.



TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Here, as we can see...” Where is the darkness? In our hearts, but what causes the darkness?

See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the Lord rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.
³ Nations will come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Is 60:2,3

To what is this referring? Primarily the lies about God, and the darkness in the minds of humans about God and Jesus who is the light of truth about God and His methods of love which will draw the peoples of the world, not just Jews, but Gentiles as well.

The lesson mentions supernatural power—what power did Jesus wield when He confronted Satan in the wilderness?

Did Jesus overcome by having heavenly angels come and drive Satan away?

What power did Jesus wield in Gethsemane and crucifixion weekend?

It was the power of truth and love—Jesus clung to the truth and loved others more than self. This is the power, the divine power we are given to demolish strongholds, and only this power is to be used.

WEDNESDAY

Read last two paragraphs and then the pink section: “Then what did Peter...” Is this an absolute rule? Should a believer surrender their understanding and thinking to the church board, or the church as a whole?

What does Paul mean in Romans 14 that every person should be fully persuaded in their own mind?

Are the lesson authors suggesting when it comes to Biblical truth that church members should surrender their interpretations to the church leadership?

Hmmm...In OT times why did God send prophets to the people? Did God send them to the nation to get the prophet to submit their ideas to the people and if the people? Remember Jeremiah, his prophecy was rejected and he was put in a pit. Should Jeremiah have changed his understanding because the body of believers saw it differently?



What about this quotation from one of the founders of the SDA church?

As the light and life of men was rejected by the ecclesiastical authorities in the days of Christ, so it has been rejected in every succeeding generation. Again and again the history of Christ's withdrawal from Judea has been repeated. When the Reformers preached the word of God, they had no thought of separating themselves from the established church; **but the religious leaders would not tolerate the light, and those that bore it were forced to seek another class, who were longing for the truth. *In our day* few of the professed followers of the Reformers are actuated by their spirit.** Few are listening for the voice of God, and ready to accept truth in whatever guise it may be presented. **Often those who follow in the steps of the Reformers are forced to turn away from the churches they love, in order to declare the plain teaching of the word of God. And many times those who are seeking for light are by the same teaching obliged to leave the church of their fathers, that they may render obedience.** {DA 232.2}

Is it safe to surrender our thinking to people because they occupy positions of church administration?

What is a healthier approach to pursuing truth than seeking a consensus of human opinion?

What about the integrative evidence-based approach that seeks to understand truth in harmony with testable evidence?

What about the evidence of healing and transformation of lives? In other words, does your application of the truth you currently understand result in ever increasing mental, physical, spiritual and relational health and growth in Christlikeness?

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, "After warning Timothy..."

What is the problem with the translation of 2Tim 3:16 quoted here? They have the "is" in the wrong place. It should be, "All scripture given by God is profitable..." not "All Scripture is given by God..." Are all the scriptures in the world given by God, or are some scriptures made up by men or inspired by demons?

Read fourth paragraph, "Doctrine: Doctrines are the teachings..."

The lesson makes a critically important point here, the primary purpose of doctrines are what? To reveal God and connect us to Him.

What happens if we set up stand-alone doctrines, disconnected from the truth about God and use proof texts to support them and make them tests of fellowship?



Read fifth paragraph, “Guidance: Paul tells...”

What is the point? True godliness, true spirituality, is coming back into harmony with how reality is constructed by God to operate!

What does it mean “wise unto salvation?” What is salvation? It is healing, and who provides the Remedy? How is healing achieved? What is our role in the healing process?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1, 2, 4.



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

June 8-10, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC Event The Struggle is Real in Naperville, IL.

June 23,24, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be doing a seminar for the Samaritan Counseling Service in Sarasota FL. For more information www.samaritangulfcoast.com
(T) 941-926-2959 (F) 941-929-0849

July 14,15, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Lakeport SDA church, in Lakeport CA.

August 18,19, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Celebration SDA church in Celebration, Florida.

Sep 5, 2017: Dr. Jennings' new book *The God-Shaped Heart* will be released by Baker Books. Here is a brief description:

Love is more than emotion, more than compassion, more than positive regard for another; love is power—the power to live, heal and be free. Love is functional, operational, with specific design parameters built into the fabric of reality. Love is intelligent and as we intelligently choose to harmonize with how love functions we not only experience greater health, fulfillment and wellbeing, we are transformed to become forces for good in the world. In *The God-Shaped Heart* Christian psychiatrist Dr. Tim Jennings explores the healing power of love, exposes a belief system infecting Christianity that obstructs love, and identifies eternal truths that open the heart to God's transforming power of love.

September 15,16 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Church in the Valley, Aldergrove, British Columbia, Canada.

September 26-Oct 1, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC World Conference, Nashville TN, and our ministry will have a booth in the exhibit hall.

October 12-16, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Garden Grove SDA church in Garden Grove, CA. This will be a multi-speaker event focusing on the atonement. For more information contact:

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October 27, 28, 2017: Dr. Jennings will speaking at the Arlington SDA church in Arlington, TX. For more information contact: <http://www.arlingtonadventist.com/>