

An Attempt To Listen To God

Prophecy

What Is It, It's Relevance,  
Dangers, and Instruments

By

Rowan Jennings

## The Importance Of Prophecy

- 1) The scriptures emphatically record: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear . . . and keep those things which are written therein" (Rev. 1:3). While it is a delightful study to view the Revelation as a prophecy, which it is (Rev. 1:3), it is easy to get caught up with the happenings of the prophecy instead of the Person the prophecy is about. It is the Revelation, the unveiling which God is giving to Christ regarding His person, perfections, and prerogatives in the fulfillment of divine purposes. It is not a code or a book of hieroglyphics but a book revealing things to come, many of them so profound that only symbols and signs can convey to our minds the wonders of the truths presented.
- 2) Revelation, as with every prophecy, is given for a practical effect on our lives, and when this happens:
  - a) There will be an increased awareness of the shallowness and temporary character of the things of time.
  - b) There will be an increased awareness of the futility of man's ideas for education in the sciences relative to evolution, when life begins, what happens after death, and the purpose of our existence.
  - c) There will be an increased awareness that if the moral and spiritual conditions of this world are to get better, then such a change must come from God and not from men's legislation, and doing away with God and religion. All the programs for rehabilitation in the world will not change the heart of humanity.

## What Is Prophecy?

In summary, prophecy is God unveiling His purposes, man's attitudes and the ultimate end of things. Because it is from God, the prophetic scriptures is the only light there is in this dark place. No fortune tellers, higher masters, tarot cards or horoscopes can foretell the future, either personally, collectively, nationally, religiously or financially. As I write this the USA has only a few days left to avoid the fiscal cliff, yet not one fortune teller can predict what is going to happen. What a blessing?

## Why Does God Give Prophecy?

- 1) God gives prophecy to encourage evangelism, spiritual perception, and transformation (2 Cor. 5:11; 1 Jn. 3:3); to comfort in life's sorrows (1 Thess. 4:2; 2 Thess. 1:7); to prevent distorted ideas about what will happen on earth, heaven and in eternity (Rev. Chs. 6-29; chs. 4-5; chs. 20:1-8). Due to this, prophecy involves the activities and attitudes of Divine persons, celestial beings, infernal beings, and man. That which God has given includes, but is not comprehensive of:
  - a) When things will happen
  - b) How things will happen from the human, divine, and satanic perspectives.
- 2) Prophecy authenticates whether the messenger is from God or Satan, and when God gives the assurance of faith from prophecies and promises already fulfilled. They authentic Him as the speaker. We must never question the fact that God says what He means and means what He says, therefore no matter how "way out" God's prophetic word is, it will be fulfilled exactly as He said. For instance: prophecies concerning the birth of Christ; the miracles of Christ; the shame of Christ; the death of Christ; and the resurrection of Christ. They were all fulfilled exactly as He foretold.
- 3) Prophecy is a manifestation of God's "foreknowledge" for He says: "I will", and as they are fulfilled they display His sovereignty (Dan. 2:20-22), and controlled judgment (the 7 seals, trumpets, thunders, and vials, Rev. Chs. 6-16)
- 4) Perhaps there is a need to remind ourselves that the only knowledge we have of the future is restricted to the scriptures. All else not only has no biblical foundation, but is the "doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1: demons, since there is only one devil who is the deceiver, directing all other deceivers (2 Jn. 1:7). This is very relevant when one considers the following:
  - a) Religiously: Concerning the two major religions today, we know that Roman Catholicism and Islam also have prophetic teachings. For instance:

- i) The Roman Catholic hierarchy and Vatican believe that the next pope will be the last. This is based on the "vision" of St. Malachy in the 12th century. He taught that the vision revealed to him that there would be 266 popes, and Benedict is the 265th. The teaching is that after the next pope's reign there will be the tribulation??
  - ii) The Muslims are waiting for the "Mahdi" of whom President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad prayed before the United Nations General Assembly: "O mighty Lord, I pray you to hasten the emergence of your last repository, the promised one, that perfect and pure human being, the one that will fill this world with justice and peace". That was September 2005! He was echoing the words of the Muslim World League which in 1976 declared that belief in a coming Mahdi is universal for all Muslims. They are taught that the Mahdi will usher in the caliphate. The caliphate is an Islamic millennium led by a supreme religious political leader known as a caliph who is a successor to Mohammed. Of him it is stated: "If you see him, go and give him your allegiance for he is the vice regent of Allah". Does this not sound very much like Matt. 24:23-26?
- b) Intellectually: We are also aware that the only time in which the Lord could not come back in this era was while Peter was alive. This is because the Lord had told Peter that he would be an old man and die (Jn. 21:18-19). In this case there was a sign of when the Lord could not come back, but what of the apparent signs showing He is soon coming back? In considering the scriptures I find not a single shred of scripture that must be fulfilled before the Lord comes again. However, we do see the foreshadows of things to come. For instance:
- i) In Matthew 24, among the signs of the Lord and His coming, only one sign is mentioned four times, and it is deception (Matt. 24:4, 5, 11, 24).
  - ii) With the increase in the last 50 years of some of the men and women in tele-evangelism who have vast audiences and make blasphemous statements. Statements such as: "There are nine gods, not three"; "Jesus never claimed to be God"; "God is the biggest loser".
  - iii) Not only they, but scholastic intellectuals who propound the wickedness of evolution as facts, the denial of God as God. All these show deception. But this is only a foreshadow.
  - iv) Again, there is an increase of lawlessness, global diseases, global geographical catastrophes on an unprecedented scale.
  - v) Add to this, today 15th February 2013, the news is reporting of a meteor injuring a reported 1,100 people in the Chelyabinsk area and an asteroid passing within 18,000 miles from earth.

These are foreshadows of things to come, and since the full manifestation will be seen during the tribulation period after the church is gone. We do not look for signs or at signs, but our confidence is in the promises of God. Nevertheless, we cannot help but observe the shadows of things after His coming. (Incidentally, it is amazing that after the Russian prime minister Putin heard of the meteor and what had happened, he thanked God no big fragments had fallen in populated areas.)

- 5) I have no doubt we are living in the closing days of this era, but I also know that God is long-suffering not willing that any should perish. It is my perspective that the Lord is doing now that which He did to the Amorites. He waited until their iniquities had reached a zenith and then executed judgment on them by the Israelites. This time it will not be through humanity but using His own creation and ultimately Himself. He will destroy the enemy. This is not the words of a questionable vision but the unchangeable word of the living God.

### [Why Does Satan Give False Prophecies?](#)

The evil one is the mastermind of deception and one of the ways is by false predictions. All one has to do is to observe the horoscopes in daily papers which has the same gibberish, but in different words 365 days a year.

Some of these predictions have been:

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>500 CE</b>         | This was the first year-with-a-nice-round-number-panic. The antipope Hippolytus and an earlier Christian academic Sextus Julius Africanus had predicted Armageddon at about this year.   |
| <b>968 CE</b>         | An eclipse was interpreted as a prelude to the end of the world by the army of the German emperor Otto III.  |
| <b>1147</b>           | Gerard of Poehlde decided that the millennium had actually started in 306 CE during Constantine's reign. Thus, the world end was expected in 1306 CE.  |
| <b>1179</b>           | John of Toledo predicted the end of the world during 1186. This estimate was based on the alignment of many planets.   |
| <b>1856 or later</b>  | At Ellen White's last prediction, she said that she was shown in a vision the fate of believers who attended the 1856 SDA conference. She wrote: "I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: 'Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus.'" 11 That is, some of the attendees would die of normal diseases; some would die from plagues at the last days, others would still be alive when Jesus came. "By the early 1900s all those who attended the conference had passed away, leaving the Church with the dilemma of trying to figure out how to explain away such a prominent prophetic failure.  |
| <b>1881</b>           | Mother Shipton, (1488 - 1561), a 16th century mystic predicted the end of the world: "...The world to an end shall come; in eighteen hundred and eighty-one."  |
| <b>1891 or before</b> | On 1835-FEB-14, Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon church, attended a meeting of church leaders. He said that the meeting had been called because God had commanded it. He announced that Jesus would return within 56 years -- i.e. before 1891-FEB-15. (History of the Church 2:182)  |
| <b>1914</b>           | <p>Was one of the more important estimates of the start of the war of Armageddon by the Jehovah's Witnesses (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society). They based their prophecy of 1914 from prophecy in the book of Daniel, Chapter 4. The writings referred to "seven times". The WTS interpreted each "time" as equal to 360 days, giving a total of 2520 days. This was further interpreted as representing 2520 years, measured from the starting date of 607. This gave 1914 as the target date. When 1914 passed, they changed their prediction; 1914 became the year that Jesus invisibly began his rule.</p> <p>The Watchtower Society selected 1975 as its next main prediction. This was based on the estimate "according to reliable Bible chronology Adam was created in the year 4026 BCE, likely in the autumn of the year, at the end of the sixth day of creation." 8 They believed that the year 1975 a promising date for the end of the world, as it was the 6,000th anniversary of Adam's creation. Exactly 1,000 years was to pass for each day of the creation week. This prophecy also failed.</p> |

- a) When his prophecies fail then there is doubts cast on all prophecies and the true ones are mocked. Mr. Camping predicted the Lord would come in May 2010 and it failed, the Jehovah Witnesses said He would come in 1914 and it failed. This was an evidence their prophecies did not come from God. Furthermore, men then mocked the idea of the Lord's return and lived life in an increased spiritually darker state.

- b) There is a doubting of anything the Lord said or endorsed, such as:
  - i) When the Lord spoke of marriage
  - ii) The beginning that is mocked
  - iii) The flood
  - iv) God's judgment on Sodom
  - v) The resurrection of the Lord

### How Did God Give The Prophetic Message?

- a) He gave it by the Holy Spirit (2 Sam. 23:2; 2 Pet. 1:21)
- b) By Christ Himself (Matt. 16:21; 24:4-36; Jn. 21:18-19)
- c) "By the mouth of his holy prophets" (Lk. 1:70)
- d) Using holy men of God (Acts 3:21; 2 Pet. 1:21).

### Why Is Humanity Not Really Interested In Biblical Prophecy?

- 1) There can be no doubt that the unsaved will use Biblical prophecy to make a dollar with doomsday predictions, but it is only for the increase of sales, not out of a conviction of its truth. They are in fact scoffers who mock the matter of God's intervening in the affairs of His world. To believe in the supernatural interventions of God with men (i.e. the flood) means that ultimately man is accountable to God, and a man instead of believing the truth, and changing from his evil ways; he denies the truth and closes his mind to that which lies ahead.
- 2) Sadly, saints can be so far from God that the delights of God are passé, living for the present, speaking about heaven, and will be happy to take it when it comes. As another has said:

Heaven is my fatherland, and I have a little shop  
And just as long as profits last, its here I want to stop.

### The Dangers Of Intellectual Prophecy

- 1) When prophetic teaching is intellectual, ministry about the beast and false prophet without having a relevance to the individual, then prophecy is a danger for it builds the ego of the speaker and tickles the ears of the saints.
- 2) There are also two other dangers:
  - a) Give prophecy an emotional charge by foolish exaggerations. I have heard it taught that since there is going to be a cashless society (incipiently a piece of data no one has even been able to show me scripture for), New Zealand has already gone that way! This is nonsense.
  - b) Seeing everything that happens today as the fulfillment of prophecy. The next prophetic event is the coming of the Lord for His own. The wars and earthquakes we see today are not the fulfillment of prophecy, for those of which the Lord speaks cannot happen until after the church is raptured! We, the church, will not on this earth know who the beast is so there is no intelligence in assigning this descriptive term to Tony Blair, Kissinger, or Obama. These are fanciful. These men may have characteristics of him, but when he is manifested we will be gone, thank God.

---

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia