

Why Bible Prophecy Matters

By Britt Gillette

Why does bible prophecy matter? As a Christian, why should you spend any time studying it? It's sad to say, but many Christians (including many church leaders) say bible prophecy doesn't matter. And they say you shouldn't spend any time studying it. Why? Some of the stated reasons are "Study of bible prophecy is a waste of time" or "it's a distraction." Another common criticism is "Bible prophecy so negative!" Negative? How is the return of Jesus to establish everlasting peace on earth with no more death, crying, sorrow, or pain (Revelation 21:4) negative? It's not. In fact, it's our blessed hope (Titus 2:13)! No. There's something else going on here, and I think I know what it is. The real reason so many church leaders ignore bible prophecy is because they care more about what the world thinks than what God thinks.



They associate the study of bible prophecy with date setters and "kooks." And they don't want others to think they're like that. It's much easier (and a lot less controversial) to cover topics like "7 Ways to a Better Marriage" or "5 Ways to Live a Better Life Today" or "How to be Happy All the Time."

Now, I'm not saying these topics don't matter. They definitely do. God wants us all to live a full and blessed life here on earth. But to ignore bible prophecy is to ignore anywhere from 25% to 33% of the Bible. If God didn't want us to study it, why would He reveal it? The Bible says all of God's Word is useful for teaching and instruction (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and that includes prophecy.

The Power of Prophecy

The prophetic passages in the Bible are just as important as all the others. And God promises wherever He sends His Word, it will prosper (Isaiah 55:11). This includes all of His Word, not just those verses self-appointed Christian leaders deem "okay." If you have any doubt about the importance of bible prophecy when it comes to living the Christian life, here's what the Bible itself says about God's prophetic Word:

1) Prophecy Points to Jesus – All prophecy points to Jesus (Revelation 19:10). In fact, Jesus Himself said He came to fulfill the law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17). What if the magi (Matthew 2:1-2) had ignored bible prophecy? What if they thought the study of prophecy was "a waste of time?" Then they would have missed out on one of the greatest honors of all time – seeing the baby Jesus. What if Simeon (Luke 2:25-35) had the attitude bible prophecy is irrelevant? Then he would have missed out on the greatest blessing of his life. What if Anna (Luke 2:36-40) had ignored bible prophecy? Then she too would have missed out on Jesus.

2) Jesus Demands We Watch – Still think study of bible prophecy is "a distraction" from God's work? Then how come Jesus demands it? That's right. Jesus doesn't simply suggest the study of prophecy. He commands us to study it. He commands us to "stay alert" and to "keep watch" (Mark 13:33,35). That begs the question – watch for what? The answer is clear. Watch for His return. Otherwise, He'll find us sleeping when He arrives without warning (Mark 13:36). If you don't study bible prophecy and the signs of His coming, how will you ever know what to watch for? And if you don't know what to watch for, how can you obey Jesus?

3) Prophecy Proves the Bible is God's Word – Long ago, God issued a challenge. He said, "Who else can tell the beginning from the end" (Isaiah 41:21-24)? God proclaims He alone can do so. Only God can reveal what is going to happen before it happens (Isaiah 46:10). The hundreds and hundreds of specific and detailed prophecies found in the Bible prove its divine authority. What other book on earth can match the Bible in predictive power? None. But if you fail to study bible prophecy, that fact will pass you by.

4) Prophecy is a Powerful Tool for Evangelism – In the first century, bible prophecy was the primary tool for spreading the Gospel. Peter cited the Messianic prophecies as clear proof Jesus was the long awaited Messiah (Acts 2:14-42). His speech led three thousand people to give their lives to Jesus. He also said the life of Jesus fulfilled what the prophets had written about the Messiah (Acts 3:18-24). Philip used a fulfilled prophecy to

explain the Gospel to an Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39). And Paul's primary method of spreading the Gospel was to reason from the scriptures (Acts 17:2-3). He explained how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah. And he explained all that the prophets said about Him (Acts 13:27-31). If you don't study bible prophecy, you're missing one of the greatest tools for spreading the Gospel. What better way to respond to those who demand evidence Jesus is the Messiah than to tell them about fulfilled bible prophecy?

5) Prophecy Encourages Holy Living – If you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, you know He could return at any moment. And if you know He can return at any moment, it encourages holy living. In the story of the evil servant, Jesus warned us about a danger. What danger? The danger of thinking He'll delay His return. Jesus said the evil servant thinks, "My master won't be back for a while," and he goes on sinning (Matthew 24:48-49). Instead, you should live your life as if He could come at any moment. This mindset leads to patience (James 5:8), disciplined prayers (1 Peter 4:7), love (1 Peter 4:8), and an eagerness to use your gifts for the glory of God (1 Peter 4:10-11). While we wait for the return of Jesus, we should live peaceful, pure, and blameless lives (2 Peter 3:11-14).

6) Prophecy Gives Specific Blessings – Some Christians avoid reading the Book of Revelation. They might find it frightening or difficult to understand. Book remember, it's the revelation of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:1). It's not the revelation of John. It's not the creation of ancient men. It's a message from Jesus. It's so important, God says He'll bless anyone who reads it to the church! And He'll bless anyone who listens to it and obeys what it says (Revelation 1:3). In heaven, some will wear "a crown of righteousness." And who gets this crown? All who eagerly await the return of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 4:8).

7) Prophecy Reveals the Season of the Lord's Return – Jesus says the world will be caught unaware when He suddenly returns (Luke 12:40). It will be like in the days of Noah and Lot. People will go on living their daily lives as normal right up until the moment of their destruction (Luke 17:30). But those who study bible prophecy won't be surprised by His return (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6). Why? Because they'll understand the signs. While we can't know the day or the hour of His return (Matthew 24:36), we can know the season of His return. Jesus, Moses, and the prophets told us what signs to look for. And Jesus says when see all those signs coming together you can know His return is very near (Matthew 24:33).

Conclusion

Don't ignore bible prophecy. Don't poke fun of it or laugh at it (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22). Prophecy is behind almost every promise Christians hold near and dear. The promise of heaven... The hope of salvation... The joy of eternity with Jesus.

Each is a promise from God guaranteeing our future. And what is prophecy if not a guarantee of future events? So don't let what others think discourage you from studying bible prophecy.

Remember, the world mocked and ridiculed Jesus. If you follow Him, He says you will be mocked and ridiculed as well (Matthew 10:22-25). Bible prophecy is the message of Jesus. And if you're a Christian, you must be willing to endure persecution for it. Jesus said if anyone is ashamed of Him and His message, He will be ashamed of that person when He returns (Luke 9:23-26). Don't be ashamed. Study bible prophecy. Let it enrich your life. For the whole purpose of prophecy is to glorify Jesus (Revelation 19:10).

About The Author

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