

Prophecy – Part 1

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I. Introduction.

A. Prophecy is important because...

1. It reaffirms the relevancy of the Word of God to our lives today.
2. It comforts those who know Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 4:18)
3. It encourages us to be holy and godly. (2 Peter 3:11)
4. It motivates us to evangelize.

B. The foundation for prophecy is the sovereignty of God.

1. God is a God of law and order. (Isaiah 14:24, 27)
2. God is sovereign as far as nations are concerned. (Acts 17:26; Job 12:24)
3. God is all powerful. (Daniel 4:35; Psalm 115:3; Matthew 28:18; Jeremiah 32:17)
4. God is sovereign in the individual lives of those who choose to obey him. (Job 23:13-14)
5. God is sovereign in history. (Ephesians 1:9-10)

II. Prophecy and probability.

A. Either God rigged it up and it is running according to his plan or everything is running according to chance.

B. Prophecy meant foretelling the future in the Old Testament, and all of it had to come true to prove a prophet. (Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 18:22)

C. Old Testament prophecies that have come true.

1. The time of Christ's birth. (Daniel 9:25)
2. Jesus' birthplace. (Micah 5:2)
3. The manner of Jesus' birth. (Isaiah 14:7)
4. Jesus' ancestry. (2 Samuel 7:12-14)

5. Jesus' forerunner. (Malachi 3:1)

6. Jesus' death. (Isaiah)

D. There are over three hundred prophecies that were fulfilled.

E. According to the law of probability, the chance of these prophecies being fulfilled randomly is nearly nothing.

III. God is calling out a people for his name for an eternal possession for his glory. This is God's eternal purpose.

IV. Major dispensations of time.

A. The age of innocence from Creation to the Fall.

B. The age of conscience from the Fall to the Flood.

C. The age of human government from the Flood to the confusion of languages.

D. The age of promise from the call of Abraham to the exodus of the Jews from Egypt.

E. The age of law from the time the Jews came out of Egypt to Christ.

F. The age of grace from the advent of Christ to the Rapture of the church.

G. The age of kingdom age which will be characterized by the gathering of the Jews and the set up of an eternal government, the release of Satan and then the institution of the eternal state.

(2 Peter 3:9; Revelation 21)

V. Lessons from the dispensations.

A. Innocence.

1. Satan always mixes the truth with a lie.

2. Humanity has been infected by sin. (Romans 5:12)

B. Conscience. (Genesis 6:5)

1. Conscience is not a reliable guide.

2. God has always provided an alternative to his judgment because of his great love.

3. Only God can keep a man safe. (Romans 8)

C. Human government.

1. It is futile to fight God.
2. Government will not solve our problems.
3. God knows everything that is going on. (Proverbs 15:11)
4. God disciplines us for our good. (Hebrews 6:12; Psalm 30:11)

D. Promise.

E. Law.

1. We cannot keep the Ten Commandments in and of ourselves. (Galatians 6:7; Hebrews 9:27)

F. Grace.

1. Christ changes lives. (2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 2:3-4)
2. The next event in God's plan of history is the Rapture. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

VII The judgments.

A. The judgment of sin that happened for Christians on the cross of Calvary. (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 10:10; Romans 5:1)

B. The judgment of believers' sins. (Isaiah 59:1-2; Psalm 66:18)

1. God wants us to be in fellowship with him.
2. We need to keep short accounts with God.

C. The judgment of the believers' works. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

1. This is not a judgment of condemnation. (Romans 8:1)
2. It will be a judgment of rewards based on works. (1 Corinthians 3)
3. Judges sat on the *bema* seat in athletic events to give rewards.

D. The judgment of wicked dead angels. (Revelation 20:11-15)

Application questions:

1. How does prophecy establish the sovereignty of God?

2. What is the sovereignty of God? What implications does it have for our lives?

3. What dispensation are Christians in now? How is this dispensation different than other dispensations?
