

“Why Study Prophecy??”

2 Peter 1:16-21; 1 John 2:28-3:3; 2 Peter 3:10-14

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- Funny predictions for the year 2020
- No one predicted the big story of 2020—the world-wide pandemic
- Man’s predictions are different than God’s prophesies.
 - Man predicts things over which he has little control, whereas God makes predictions over things He has absolute control.
 - Man predicts events on limited knowledge and data, whereas God’s predictions are based on ultimate knowledge about everything.
 - Isaiah 46:9-10-- *“Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.’”*

Why Study Prophecy?

A. We have “the prophetic word confirmed”

- 2 Peter 1:19 -- *“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart.”*
1. Meaning of the word “confirmed” or “sure” — We have an “insured” word that is fail-proof.
 2. What or who insures the prophetic word?
 - a. The prophetic word is failproof because Jesus Christ who fulfilled the prophesies predicting his first coming will fulfill those predicting His second.
 - 2 Peter 1:16-18 -- *“For we did not follow cunningly devised fables we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”*
 - b. The prophetic word is failproof because the Holy Spirit insures the accuracy of these prophesies.
 - 2 Peter 1:20-21 -- *“knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretations, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”*

B. We are commanded that “we had better take heed”—2 Peter 1:19 But WHY? What are the compelling reasons to study prophecy?

1. **So that we are not IGNORANT concerning God’s plan for the ages.**
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-- *“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.”*
 - 2 Peter 3:8 -- *“Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”*
 - a. How much do you know about God’s plan for the Ages?
 - b. Different views of Pre-millennialism and the timing of the rapture of the church
 - 1) Premillennialism is the belief that Jesus Christ will return for the church prior to setting up His literal kingdom and reigning for 1,000 years.

- 2) Premillennial, Pretribulation Rapture—Jesus Christ returns for the church prior to the beginning of the seven years of tribulation, taking us to heaven, and thus escaping God’s wrath here on earth.
 - 3) Premillennial, Mid-Tribulation Rapture—the rapture occurs after 3 ½ years of tribulation before the start of the Great Tribulation.
 - 4) Premillennial, Pre-wrath Rapture—is the belief that Jesus will return for His church prior to the last series of judgments
 - 5) Premillennial, Post Tribulation Rapture—is the belief that Jesus Christ will come back at the end of the tribulation for His church thus we would go through the tribulation, but protected by God.
- c. View of A-millennialism is that Jesus Christ is now reigning in heaven over His kingdom. There is no literal, future, 1,000 year kingdom upon the earth. But the world will become progressively worse and evil until Jesus Christ returns, judges the earth, destroys it, and creates a new heavens and a new earth. Also known today as “Replacement Theology”
 - d. View of Post-millennialism is that the church will usher in the kingdom. The world is going to get better and better, and once the church has made this world a better place, Jesus Christ will return.
 - e. There is a lot of confusion and disagreement today. But we cannot afford to adopt the “pan-millennial” view, which is, don’t worry about it because it will all “pan out” in the end.

2. **So that we are READY and PREPARED for Christ’s return.**

- 1 John 2:28-32 -- *“And now little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him. Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”*
- a. The soon return of Jesus Christ should have a purifying effect upon us. We should want to live holy, godly lives in light of the imminent return of Jesus.
 - b. The severity of the judgments that follow should be sobering to us and have a purifying effect on us as well.
 - 2 Peter 3:10-14 -- *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless.”*
 - 1) God hates sin, and will one day destroy this world like He did in the days of Noah.
 - 2) God’s hatred of sin should cause us to pursue *“holy conduct and godliness”*

3. **So that we have the COURAGE to live and work for Jesus Christ in the present.** It is our MOTIVATION or HOPE

- 2 Peter 1:19 -- *“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart.”*

4. **So that we might EXALT the LORD JESUS CHRIST** who is the focus of all the prophetic events that will occur.

- Revelation 1:1 — *“The revelation of Jesus Christ”*