

The New Testament Church
Last Things #3 – The Nature of Prophecy
 Pastor Paul Jehle – October 10, 2021

I The Doctrine of Last Things – Eschatology

- A. *The Last Days began with Jesus' ascension*
 - 1. We cannot discern passages without the context of Christ's judgment in 70 AD
 - 2. *Last Things* involve the preparation of the Church in maturity – not a rescue mission
- B. Two extremes to avoid throughout history:
 - 1. An obsession with the Return of Christ and its "signs" – *avoiding responsibility on earth*
 - 2. An avoidance of the accountability of Christ's Return – *no eternal accountability*
- C. Our Church position – focus on occupying until He comes, not taking a position on how
 - 1. *He will return in bodily form; be prepared if He comes today or occupy until He returns*
 - 2. *The Return of Christ is not a rescue mission; it is the culmination of the maturity of the Church in birthing a measure of the Kingdom on earth*

II The Nature of Prophecy and the Word of God

- A. Prophecy – "*one who speaks forth by the inspiration of God.*"
 - 1. Webster's 1828: *Preaching; public interpretation of Scripture; exhortation or instruction.*
 - 2. *Forthtelling* is the root of prophecy; proclaiming the Word with its application to what is going on in our lives today. It is often *literary*, using both *literal* and *symbolic* terminology.
 - 3. Forthtelling – literal and symbolic, is demonstrated in prophecies fulfilled in Christ.
- B. Foretelling – Webster also delineates another aspect of prophecy that is important
 - 1. *A foretelling; prediction; a declaration of something to come. As God only knows future events with certainty, no being but God or some person informed by him, can utter a real prophecy. The prophecies recorded in Scripture, when fulfilled, afford most convincing evidence of the divine original of the Scriptures, as those who uttered the prophecies could not have foreknown the events predicted without supernatural instruction. 2 Peter 1:19*
 - 2. Foretelling rests within how Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled by the New (forthtelling)
 - 3. It is also a study of how future prophecy *may* be fulfilled at the return of Christ...
- C. Thus, in conclusion...
 - 1. Forthtelling rests on the First Coming – how prophecy was fulfilled in Christ through 70 AD
 - 2. Foretelling submits to forthtelling – *Rhema* (spontaneous) must dwell within *Logos* (written)
 - 3. Our focus is what Christ accomplished at the first coming; with accountability at His return

III Example – 70 AD

- A. Prophecies of Matthew 24 and Luke 21 – the Olivet Discourse
 - 1. Jesus stated "*these things will take place before this generation passes*" – 70 AD
 - 2. However, though to the Jew first, in principle, the same is true for the future (Gentiles)
 - 3. Miracles of warning preceded the destruction of Jerusalem
- B. Signs predicted by Jesus...
 - 1. *False Christ's; Wars and rumors of wars; famine, pestilence, earthquakes; persecution by Anti-Christ; Gospel witness to all nations; Abomination of Desolation; Great Tribulation; Signs in the Heavens...*
 - 2. In each case, a fulfillment was seen, intensely, around 70 AD with the Jews, but also foreshadows future fulfillments in principle among the Gentiles
 - 3. God still intends to fulfill His promises to the Jewish people (don't mistakenly think that the State of Israel is identical with this) – Romans 11
- C. Thus, *since Jesus' words were fulfilled, we can trust Him to fulfill His promises today!*