

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 31 (July 30-August 5, 2017)

For the next few weeks, I want to consider the importance of **prophecy** in the Bible. No other book in history has been able to tell the past, present and future with perfect accuracy. If you can trust the Bible to tell about the ministry of Jesus, then you can trust His Word to reveal what the future holds.

Sunday, July 30 (read Isaiah 41:21-29; reprinted from March 12, 2015)

Bring in your idols to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. (Isaiah 41:22-23a)

Many, if not most, preachers ignore **prophecy** because they do not trust God's Word enough to present what the Bible says is going to happen. They choose to teach the Bible as though it is only a lesson in history instead of the Living Word of God. Personally, since I trust prophecy, I can live at peace because I know what the **future** holds for believers and unbelievers. I try to persuade men and women to trust God's written Word so that they can have tranquility in this fallen world. God challenges the nations that worship idols to present their evidence that they are worthwhile. Let **them** tell what the future holds (v. 22-23). From chapter 41, we know that God controls all the nations, their leaders and their activities (v. 1-4). We also know that He is the Protector of Israel (v. 8-20). Can't we trust Him to protect those of us who have given our lives to Jesus?

Monday, July 31 (reread Isaiah 41:21-29; reprinted from March 13, 2015)

"Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know, or beforehand, so we could say, 'He was right'? No one told of this, no one foretold it, no one heard any words from you." (Isaiah 41:26)

God's questions demand an answer. Do you know any other religion that has a book that can be trusted to tell the past and foretell the future with perfect accuracy? **It does not exist!** Prophecy separates the Word of God from all other books. Can we afford to ignore it in our witness? Since I began ministering, I have often focused on the second coming of Christ. In the early days, many scoffed when I told them from Revelation 20:4 about the beheadings that would take place after Jesus returned for His Church. In light of current events, is anyone laughing now? Please study this text carefully and understand the perfect accuracy of all of God's Word. You can have peace in the midst of the storms around you!

Tuesday, August 1 (reread Isaiah 41:21-29; reprinted from March 14, 2015)

I look but there is no one—no one among them to give counsel, no one to give answer when I ask them. See, they are all false! (Isaiah 41:28-29a)

Become very familiar with this text that you have read for three consecutive days. Use it to answer all those who place the Koran or the Book of Mormon or the Watchtower Magazine on equal footing with the Bible. "See, they are all false!" Jesus is the only way to salvation and the Bible is the only Word of God. Reject the politically correct crowd and learn to trust in His Word alone. You will find that your faith grows stronger as you acknowledge the absolute truth and accuracy of His Word for the past, the present, and the future.

Wednesday, August 2 (read Isaiah 7:14)

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

I am amazed at the ways Jesus appears in the middle of an otherwise mundane situation. The 7th chapter of Isaiah is not as exciting as some others in the Bible, but right in the middle of it, God proclaims that His Son will enter the world from the womb of a virgin and He will be called Immanuel (God with us). Isaiah wrote these words more than 700 years prior to the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. He must have wondered why God told him to write such an unbelievable verse in the midst of his encouraging words to the king of Judah. Many **professing** Christians reject the virgin birth, but it is one of the most important events ever recorded. In order to be fully God as well as fully man, Jesus had to be born in the way described in the Scriptures. You can believe every word in the Word of God!

Thursday, August 3 (read Micah 5:2)

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me One who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. (Micah 5:2)

Following a chapter describing the Millennial reign of Jesus (4:1-13), God tells us that His Son will be born in Bethlehem! I know the Bible would be easier to understand if God had written it chronologically, but the marvelous truth is that He used 40 different authors on three different continents using three different languages, over a span of 1500 years. I want you to be amazed, not only at the accuracy of past, present and future events, but also to be deeply in love with the One who offers you a way back to Him, even after your many sins. The people of Micah's day, and even Micah himself, had no idea how these words would someday be fulfilled. We are fortunate enough to understand the past; now let's be trustful enough to believe the future!

Friday, August 4 (read Isaiah 40:3-8)

"The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever." (Isaiah 40:8)

In this text, God speaks to the citizens of Jerusalem as though they have already experienced the fulfillment of the prophecy. More than 700 years after Isaiah penned these words, John the Baptist comes to prepare the way for the arrival of the Messiah. John describes his ministry using the words from v. 3 (see Matthew 3:3). His message is a call to repentance (Matthew 3:1), and his water baptism prepares the way for the baptism of the Spirit (see Matthew 3:11). His message and his ministry prove that the Word of God can be trusted, even though more than 700 years separate the writing and the fulfillment (v. 8). Stand on His Word! Everything else is sinking sand!

Saturday, August 5 (read Isaiah 42:1-4)

A bruised reed He will not break and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out. (Isaiah 42:3a)

John the Baptist is a fiery preacher, confronting sin and sinners (see Matthew 3:7-10). Jesus, on the other hand, comes gently and humbly, offering salvation to anyone who will believe in Him (see Matthew 11:25-30). The Lord can get tough with the religious leaders (see Matthew 23), but He never organizes a protest or throws bricks to destroy the possessions of others. As Isaiah prophesies more than 700 years before the Lord comes to earth, He does not need to shout or cry out or raise His voice (v. 2). His message is so pure and clear that He does not need to shout; instead, He whispers in His still, quiet voice so that only those closest to Him will hear. The most fragile of plants, a bruised reed, or the weakest of flames, a smoldering wick, will not be broken or snuffed out by the Lord (v. 3a) until His work on earth is completed. Of course, God is not referring to actual reeds and wicks, but to us, His chosen people. Hallelujah!