

Bible Prophecy

Examining Fulfilled Prophecy – Part II

Introduction

- By examining *how* the Bible interprets its own fulfilled prophecies we may find how to interpret unfulfilled prophecy.
- Review from last week:
 - **Principle #1** – Prophecy should be interpreted literally as much as possible.
 - **Principle #2** – Some prophecies may linger for long periods of time before seeing fulfillment.
 - **Principle #3** – Some prophecies are fulfilled very quickly.
 - **Principle #4** – Prophecy may appear in unlikely places and from unlikely sources in Scripture.
 - **Principle #5** – Scripture may have a primary application that is not prophetic and a secondary application that is.

Isaiah 61:1-2

- Summary – Descriptive of the work of the Messiah.
- Partial Fulfillment – Luke 4:16-21
 - A.C. Gaebelien on Isaiah 61: “But our Lord did not quote the whole of verse 2. He only read up to ‘the acceptable year of the Lord’. This sentence marks the work He did in His first advent. The day of vengeance is introduced by His second advent. The results of His second coming are described in the verses which follow.”
- **Principle #6** – *Prophecy may jump from one object to a second, related object with a possible gap of thousands of years.*
 - This is often illustrated as the “mountain peaks of prophecy”.
 - Those “peaks” can include the Birth of Christ, Christ’s Sacrifice on Calvary, The Tribulation, Armageddon, the Millennial Kingdom, and the Eternal State.

Daniel 2

- Summary – God uses a dream of a great statue to reveal a progression of world empires. Details are further expanded in chapters 7 and 8.
- Partial Fulfillment – Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians were the head of gold, fulfilled in the present in 2:38. The next kingdom was Medo-Persia and their entrance is recorded in Daniel 5:31. History bears witness to the rise of both Greece and Rome. 2:44-45 are yet unfulfilled.

- **Principle #7** – *Prophecy may contain descriptive typology or symbolism to enhance our understanding.*
 - Daniel’s prophecy was not that a literal head of gold or legs of iron will rule upon the earth. The great image and its sections merely illustrate the procession of world powers.
 - One clue to spot this is anthropomorphism (“ascribing human characteristics to nonhuman things”) or unnatural descriptions. Good examples are the beasts of Daniel 7 and 8.
 - A few other examples include *heads* or *horns* representing rulers (Daniel 7:6, Daniel 8:1-14) and *brass* representing judgment (see the Brazen Altar or the Brazen Serpent).
- **Principle #8** – *We may find the fulfillment of Bible prophecy outside of Scripture.*
 - The histories of these empires affected the world of the Bible but much of that history is not contained in the Bible.

Exodus 12:46, Psalm 34:20

- Summary – Christ would not have any broken bones in His death.
- Fulfillment – John 19:33-36
- Typical Fulfillment - the *type* of the Passover Lamb is fulfilled in the *antitype* of Christ.
- **Principle #9** – *Multiple prophecies may speak of the same event or object, sometimes from varied perspectives.*
- **Principle #10** – *All prophecy works together to reveal a grander view of God’s plan and power.*
 - In our example, Psalm 34 points to the fact of Christ having no bones broken but Exodus 12 reveals the importance of having a perfect and acceptable sacrifice. To these we may add the description of the Suffering Savior in Isaiah 53 and more complete picture of Christ’s sacrifice becomes visible.