

# IN THE TIME OF HARVEST

## **The Everlasting Gospel in Prophecy**

*Throughout the entire history of this old world since the fall of man, the Everlasting Gospel has been inseparably linked with Prophecy. Those who are trying to present a Gospel Message that is not woven through and through with the Golden Thread of Prophecy, will find their preaching degenerate into sentimental foolishness. God Himself states His claim to Godhood is based on the fact that He alone can tell the End from the Beginning. Here we wish to echo the very first words that Jesus preached when He began His ministry: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel!"*

**The Moral Purpose of Prophecy**  
**#07 in Time of Harvest Series**  
**Jamal Sankey**

I invite you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Ezekiel 37:1, and while we are turning there, I want to read a couple of statements.

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. 1SM 121.

The first work for us to do is to seek revival. Now what is a revival? What does revival mean?

“Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death.” 1SM 128.

Brethren, if we are to seek for a revival, that means that you and I today, are dead spiritually. That's our condition and until we accept the fact that we are indeed in spiritual lethargy, or spiritually lethargic condition, there is no way that we would seek to wake up from that condition because we don't know it.

But today, if we say, “ok, we are told to seek for it, we are told what it is, therefore, I must not have this revival, I must not have this experience. If you have that mind-set then God can do something in your life, and this is indeed what God showed Ezekiel:

- Ezekiel 37:1 “The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, 2

And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.”

If you and I were to walk outside this room and there in the street was just a street and valley full of bones. And these bones were there and you examine these bones and they were dry, it gives you an understanding that whatever is here is dead, and it's been dead for a long time. So he has come and he sees this valley and it's full of bones and it says:

- 3 “And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. 4 Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. 5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.”
- Ezekiel 37:8 “And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. 9 Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. 11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.”
- Ezekiel 37:12 “Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 13 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, 14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.”

Israel was the whole valley of bones. Every single one in Israel was dead. And the prophet of God was told to do something specific to these bones that would bring life. He was told time and time again to prophesy unto the bones. Now some would say that this term ‘prophesy’ really only means to speak to the bones. But you see, God uses different words, and as you read through the book of Ezekiel, there are times when He says ‘speak’ and then He uses the term, ‘Prophecy’. Two different thoughts were in God’s mind, prophesying to the bones was specific, and only when he prophesied unto them, did they come alive.

I want you to understand something, the dead deplorable condition of the church and our individual stance with God, will only change through prophecy. I

want you to understand this because some of us believe if all we do is focus on the cross, that somehow a change will take place. The cross, the life of Jesus, gives us a pattern, and this pattern is what we are to judge and to measure everything by. Notice the Bible in the book of Revelation 11:1. We talked about the Rod, and how the Rod was Jesus. We showed in the Bible point by point how the Rod represents Christ.

- Revelation 11:1 “And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.”

The Rod was given to John; John represents us at the end of the world and the way that we measure our stance before God is to use the Rod and that's Christ. Christ lays a firm foundation; a firm platform, His life. But if we don't understand it in its prophetic connotation, you and I will be dead until Jesus comes; Dead in our trespasses and sins, and thinking that we are alive to God.

We'll come to church; we'll sing beautiful songs, but the sad thing is that many of our beautiful voices will not be there when they sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, because we fail to understand the prophetic role.

“Let us give more time to the study of the Bible. We do not understand the word as we should. The book of Revelation opens with an injunction to us to understand the instruction that it contains. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy," God declares, "and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival. We do not understand fully the lessons that it teaches, notwithstanding the injunction given us to search and study it.” TM 113.

When we understand what the book of Revelation means for us as a people, there will be seen among us a great revival. It is estimated that probably 70% of the words of the book of Revelation are taken from the Old Testament. We are told in the Spirit of Prophecy that in the Revelation all the Bible meets and ends. Therefore when we understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival. And what shows us this importance, are the prophetic lines of prophecy.

If I were to ask which books of the Bible were prophetic, we would truthfully say, from the beginning to the end. Every book in the Bible is prophetic. Therefore everything in the Bible is built on a platform of prophesy, and if we can't see that and understand that, we will stay dead.

Prophecy brings the life into the church. Prophecy is what makes us a special people. So when prophesy is being taught—no wonder there are so many different understandings—because Satan well knows that if you get off of this firm platform, you are lost.

The very thing that God is bringing to light now at the end of the world, is the most hated, the most fought against, portions of Bible prophesy that ever has

been—and yet we claim to be the people of the Book. Yet we claim to be in Present Truth and we don't even know what Present Truth is.

God wants us to understand the reason He gave the Prophetic Word is to wake you up out of your spiritual lethargic condition. To give you life! Life is found in the Prophetic Word and nowhere else. How is your religious experience today? How do you stand before God? At the bar of judgment, how do you stand?

“When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart.” FLB 345.

When you understand what God is opening to us here at the end of the world, character comes into play. You understand why the health message is important; you understand why dress reform is important. The reason why many of us don't understand why women shouldn't wear trousers is because they don't understand the Prophetic Word. If they understood where they stand before God—it would be clear, there'd be no fighting.

If we would understand, we would recognize why we should be living in the country. We would recognize why we should be home-schooling our children. We would recognize certain things, but because we don't see it—we've gone on the broad road for so long, we begin to make excuses for why we don't do what the Bible says do.

“The Lord will bless all who will seek humbly and meekly to understand that which is revealed in the Revelation. This book contains so much that is large with immortality and full of glory that all who read and search it earnestly receive the blessing to those "that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation--that the connection between God and His people is close and decided.” FLB 345.

But we can't see Jesus there—many of us don't understand that Daniel and Revelation reveal Christ more than any other books in the Bible. We don't understand that, we don't see—because all we see are numbers and dates and beasts and prophetic lines and histories and kingdoms—and that's what we really think Prophecy is. We really think that is what Prophecy is about.

That's not what Prophecy is about; those are just the things setting up the pattern of Christ. The pattern of Jesus that has been from the beginning; This pattern repeats over and over again. That's why the Bible says:

- 1 Corinthians 10:11 “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

Now that word, 'ensamples', means types, in other words, the things that transpired in the past are nothing but the shadow of that which is the true. Everything in the Bible, all the historic things written down, were written for us because all of it is a shadow and tells you what is really going on today.

These stories are not just things that we should read our children at bedtime. These are not just beautiful historical applications that we can pull character building themes from. These things are to repeat and are repeating over and over again. But we don't recognize it, and we read that statement that when the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is come, many of us won't discern it nor receive it.

We don't understand that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and His dealings with His people are the same yesterday, today and forever. And the things that happened yesterday are happening today and they will always be that way.

We don't understand that; we think that things are different—we have some people that say, "Well this is cultural in the Bible. This was applicable to that time." No! The Bible is relevant—every page, every line, every word, is relevant. Brethren, we are repeating—we are repeating the time of Moses; we are repeating the time of Ancient Israel; we are repeating the time of Christ; we are repeating the time of the Millerites; we are repeating it over and over again.

When these realities begin to crystallize on our mind, you recognize that your story—has already been told; and depending on where you are in that story—you can read on and see its ending. That's what Prophecy is for. It was given to us so we can know our course; it was given to us that we can keep the Triumphant Life. Turn to Deuteronomy 29:29.

- Deuteronomy 29:29 "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever,"

Isn't that beautiful? But why is it given?

- "that we may do all the words of this law."

If you are keeping the Law, what are you not doing? What is sin? Sin is the transgression of the Law—so if you are keeping the Law, you are not sinning—therefore you are living the Triumphant Life. So the secret things have been given to us so that we can keep the Law. What are the secret things, that if we followed them, we would be on the road to the Triumphant Life?

- Amos 3:7 "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

The secret things of God are revealed to the prophets and the prophets break them down and reveal them to us—therefore the 'secret things' are the prophecies. So the prophecies belong unto God, but those things that are revealed belong unto us and our children forever that we may keep the law.

The moral purpose of prophecy is to keep us on the strait and narrow. The moral purpose of prophecy is to give us the ability to live the Triumphant Life. Without it—you can't do it. We have been talking about the Triumphant Life, but I want you to understand this point—without the understanding of the Prophetic Word, you can not; will not; won't be able to; keep the Triumphant Life. You won't be able to.

One of the reasons you won't be able to, is that you won't understand the cost that's involved. Jesus says in the book of Luke 14:25.

- Luke 14:25 “And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”
- 28 “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? 29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.”
- 31 “Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.”
- 33 “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”

Let me explain what I am saying; When God begins to open up things to you, things that might go against the established doctrine, and you see clearly the times in which we are living, you begin to see the character that God desires us to have; you begin to see how you are going against every foe and force of darkness.

When you begin to understand where we are, the road that God wants you to walk, down the strait and narrow as prophecy lays out before you the life of Christ in every facet. If you don't understand it, you can't really go over your books and count the cost. You'll think that you can do it, and you'll be the ones that come up at the end, knocking at the shut door to get in. “Lord, Lord, open unto us.” And God will look out that peephole and say, “Depart from Me ye that work iniquity for I never knew you.”

The only way that we can understand the infinite God is through the secrets that He reveals to us. John understood it. Notice Revelation 1:10. I want you to understand this maybe in a different light than you've understood it before.

- Revelation 1:10 “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:”

And he begins to lay out to John the Revelation. How did John understand what He was saying? He was in the Spirit. We looked in Ephesians 3:14. We talked about the only way that we can live the Triumphant Life is by the indwelling of Christ in the soul. The only way that can happen is by the Spirit. We saw that if the Spirit be in you and the Spirit comes through a diligent application of the Word, and it remains in us and we are born again, and we live this life of Triumphant living.

- Ephesians 3:14 “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”

The only reason that John was given the vision, the only reason he was given the privilege of opening unto us the things that are transpiring right now, is because the Holy Spirit was in him; therefore Christ was in him; therefore he was able to comprehend. So as Christ came to John and laid out the pattern of the time period of the Christian Church in Ephesus, to the end of the world, John was able to comprehend, and John represents us at the end of the world.

The prophets represent their people; John is to represent those who at the end of the world can comprehend these truths. Can you comprehend? Is the Spirit formed within you? Are you born again? If not—why not? There’s no excuse. The things that God has in His mind; the mysteries; the secrets of the Bible are revealed to keep you from falling.

When the Bible says that He is able to keep us from falling, how does He do it? Through His Word, through the understanding of the secrets, that’s what we just read. The secret things are given unto us—revealed unto us that we may do all the words of this law. In other words, the prophecies are given to keep you from falling.

Which is why Satan wants to snatch away every seed that he can; which is why he puts out spurious views and emphasizes points that are of no significance. If God in Daniel 2 gave us a skeleton sketch of Bible prophecy from the beginning of Babylon to the end of the kingdoms, and then He begins to expound by repeat and enlarge. Daniel 7; same kingdoms, but He gives you a little more. Daniel 8; same kingdoms but He gives you a little more—He’s on this crescendo plan like in music, He’s taking you a little higher.

Then He comes down to His final vision, Daniel 10-12, and all of a sudden He’s going to drop a note and think of something that’s not worldwide—something just local. Do you think God would do something like that? It doesn’t follow the plan. So when we get to this point where we start seeing the end of the world, in Daniel’s last vision, why would God, after dealing with kingdoms and world-wide events all of a sudden switch and focus on a church?

Some may not know what I am referring to; but why would God go from kingdom to kingdom, and then look at this 'Glorious Land' in Daniel 11 and all of a sudden say that this is the Seventh-day Adventist church and this is teaching that Jesuitism and Rome would enter into the church? Why would God waste time teaching something that's already well known? Why would God try to show you something that you should already know is going to happen? God is laying down the sequence of events and won't waste time teaching that foolishness.

But these are the things that many begin to spew from the pulpit. That's an error that will take you off the path and it doesn't matter who teaches it. It doesn't matter how many loud voices proclaim it. Don't get caught up in the idea if you teach differently you are a Jesuit yourself. That is the devil. The devil wants you to think that God is going to detour from the path and you begin to follow like lemmings, jumping right off the cliff with them.

God has His Word crystal clear and He builds on the same lines over and over again so that you and I cannot be lost, and if we would just follow it out and allow God to lay it down clear for us, we could not be ashamed.

We are talking about these secret things that God reveals to His children.

- Proverbs 3:32 "For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous."

The righteous are able to understand the secret things of God; that's who He gives them to. We can understand why they are righteous because righteousness is right doing; they're not falling because God is keeping them. It's a strait and narrow walk, but God keeps them and takes them by the hand if necessary. There is such a wonderful promise that says when our hand begins to slip, God's hand grabs tighter.

Brethren, if you would just put your hand in the hand of God, He would lead you and you won't be lost, and when you begin to get weaker, His grip is stronger. He won't let you go unless you say, "Father—cut it off. I don't want You any more." That is the only way He'll let you go is when you tell Him to let you go.

I was talking to a brother that said, "Well this just looks like it is impossible." The Triumphant Life may look very hard—with man it's impossible, but with God all things are possible. If He said it—you can do it and you can do it with the power of Christ!

We are seeking here to lay down the Moral Purpose of Prophecy.

- Psalm 25:14 "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."

It is all based on the covenant, all of it, but the secret things God reveals to those that fear Him.

- Ephesians 4:8 "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the

same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;”

Now what we are going to do today is focus on the prophets and as we read these words, notice the purpose for prophets in the church. The gift of prophecy is given for the following:

- 12 “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:”

Prophecy is given for the up building of the church, for the work of the ministry, that you and I individually can be perfect in the sight of a holy God. That we would not just be perfect, but it lays down how perfect—unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; you and I through the prophetic gift, lined up perfectly with Christ’s character. But prophecy is laid aside as unimportant.

The reason why it is not preached in the pulpits more often is because Satan has a studied effort to keep this from the people. We read this statement:

“The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.

“The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time.” 2SM 36.

That’s why it is so rampant in the church today. That’s why this type of worship style is so prevalent, because God at the same time is raising up a voice. There’s a truth that’s being revealed and Satan has to smother it out. How does it work? She says that those who come to these meetings where the Bedlam of noise is, that they would forget all the truths that they formerly knew!

“When the camp meeting is ended, the good which ought to have been done and which might have been done by the presentation of sacred truth is not accomplished. Those participating in the supposed revival receive impressions which lead them adrift. They cannot tell what they formerly knew regarding Bible principles.” 2SM 37.

You come here, you soak up the Word, you go back—and it's gone!! That's why it is so important to put yourself in an environment where only the truth is spoken; where the worship style is Godly. I believe God has people everywhere and there might be a church near you that hasn't gone that far. So on the next Sabbath that church should be so full because all of you should be there. That Pastor would wonder what's going on and then you would explain to him, "Listen, here is the message of the hour. We can't meet over there because we don't want it to be snatched from us; Pastor notice this;" and you begin to go through it with him. It just might happen that those leading brethren would join with you, so you pray.

Ephesians 4 shows us that prophecy's specific purpose is to build, uplift, and bring you to the perfection of Christ.

- 1 Timothy 1:18 "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"

We learned that when we come to Christ and we are born again, God has not called us to a nursery but to the battlefield. Babes in Christ are called to be soldiers, and the way you fight a good warfare is through prophecy. That's how you can wage the warfare against evil.

You see, Satan is a student, the Bible says that he knoweth that he hath but a short time. How does he know? He studies more than you do. Satan is there in his lab, and I can just imagine him sitting there with the Bible open and the Spirit of Prophecy and he is studying through to find out that which you should know. That's why his efforts are so calculated, because the prophets say this, the prophecy says this, and so he has to come with something that will go totally contrary. But the only way he knows is because he is a student, and we think that we can outsmart the devil.

The Bible shows us the way to life, and the way to life is through the Prophetic Word. This church would not be standing today if it wasn't for the Prophetic Word. None of us would be here today if it wasn't for the Prophetic Word, we'd be in all the other churches. The Prophetic Word is what makes us a Seventh-day Adventist.

Brethren, if we do not come to the help of the Lord, the curse of Meroz will rest upon our soul. None of us should want to have anyone take our crown; we should keep it and hold it with godly jealousy. God has it laid up for you, but which crown are you grabbing after? Remember the two crowns? Which one does your hand have a firm grasp on? Jesus said that no man can worship two masters; He never said you wouldn't try. He never said you wouldn't seek to do it—He said you can't do it, either you are going to serve the god of this world, mammon, or serve Him but your choice is to be made today. Repeating this text:

- 1 Timothy 1:18 "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good

warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"

Shipwrecks of faith—many of us have made shipwrecks of our faith because we've given up the very thing that grounds us and roots us in the love that is Jesus Christ and it is Prophecy.

"Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."" Ev 196.

That's the ground of our faith; that is what makes us who we are and it should be presented over and over again. None of us should get tired of Prophecy; the reason why we get tired of it is because there is no life in that which they teach. All we see is images and beasts and dates and we think we know prophecy so we don't go any more. Prophecy is life; prophecy gives us the strength to carry on in the narrow way.

"The Word of God, just as it reads, is the ground of our faith. That Word is the sure word of prophecy, and it demands implicit faith from all who claim to believe it. It is authoritative, containing in itself the proof of its divine origin. "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." {ST, June 2, 1898 par. 8}

The reason we know that this Bible was not written by man, is through Prophecy, there is no way a man can look hundreds and thousands of years into the future and lay down in exact lines how things are going to transpire. No man can do it. That's how we know that this Word is inspired.

That is why Seventh-day Adventists are now asking the question 'Is the Bible truly inspired?' you might ask, what do you mean? There is an article in the Review called 'The Ten Big Ones'. You can find it online. He is going through the ten major questions in Adventism from all over the world, not just a certain place. They are the ten biggest ones because more and more of our people are questioning these things. And number one is, 'Is the Bible Really Inspired?' then down the line is, 'Is the Sunday Law really a True Teaching'? One of the other questions is, 'Is Homosexuality really looked down upon in God's Eyes'?

We begin to question these things and we begin to ask ourselves why, and the reason why every one of those questions comes in, is because we can't believe the Word any more. So when the Word becomes relative, then everything else becomes relative too—what's good for you might not be good for me. I can interpret it any old way I want to.

You would wonder why we are even Seventh-day Adventists when one of the questions is, 'Is the Sabbath really the Seventh Day?' I heard it being taught from Loma Linda University, on the Television. I'm watching and here are the teachers and the students asking the questions about what we learned in school today. What we learned in our classes was that the Sabbath may or may not be Saturday. We're not sure. What happened to our evidence? What happened to it?

We become so 'wise' that we are foolish—so wise in our own conceit when the sure word of Prophecy is the ground for our faith. Desire of Ages, speaking of the story of the road to Emmaus, you remember after Jesus died, certain disciples went walking and they were going home. They were just broken and sad that Jesus had died and their faith was waning; was this really the Messiah?

So Jesus appears to them, the Bible says that their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. Jesus asked them why they were sad and they said, "Are you a stranger in Jerusalem and don't know what has happened?" And they began laying out before Jesus that which He had been telling them all along.

- Luke 24:27 "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

As He went through the scriptures they were enraptured with what He was showing them. Why didn't Jesus reveal Himself to them at first?

"Beginning at Moses, the very Alpha of Bible history, Christ expounded in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Had He first made Himself known to them, their hearts would have been satisfied. In the fullness of their joy they would have hungered for nothing more. But it was necessary for them to understand the witness borne to Him by the types and prophecies of the Old Testament. Upon these their faith must be established. Christ performed no miracle to convince them, but it was His first work to explain the Scriptures. They had looked upon His death as the destruction of all their hopes. Now He showed from the prophets that this was the very strongest evidence for their faith." DA 796.

Their faith was to be established on the Word of Prophecy, not on the physical manifestation of Jesus. The reason why they could know He was Christ is because the Prophecies were written. After the faith was grounded in the Word, he revealed Himself to them, but they were already firm in Prophecy.

Many of us are waiting for some manifestation; many of us are like the rich man in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. They both died and the rich man went to hell, and Lazarus was in the bosom of Abraham. It is a parable, and in this parable the rich man cries to Lazarus and asks him to reveal himself to his brothers. "Please, father Abraham, let him come back from the dead. Let him reveal himself to them so they will believe."

Abraham says, “Listen, they have the law and the prophets, they have the Bible, if they believe not that, they will not believe though one rose from the dead.”

Some of us are waiting for something to happen before we get on board. We are watching the news, so we can see something happen so we can jump on board and start getting our life together. Such people are going to be sadly disappointed. Character is not built in a crisis, it is only revealed.

When the Sunday Law hits, we can't jump from island to island trying to get away from it, it's going to cover the world. The final events will be rapid. If you know it, and your character is not settled in the pure word of prophecy, you are lost—simple and plain. You are lost if you don't accept the prophetic word as the foundation of your faith.

We know John as John the Revelator, we turn to the book of Revelation and we know it was written by John. But in every Bible, God made sure that we wouldn't misunderstand this point. So read the title in the book of Revelation:

- Revelation 1:1 “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”

It's the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John; the things that are written in the Revelation are a Revelation of Jesus Christ. He's the one that revealed it, and it's the Revelation of Jesus Christ, not *from*—the book of Revelation is about Him, it's about Jesus and if we can't see Jesus there, we are not seeing it aright. There's no way we are comprehending with John. There is no way we are understanding Prophecy if we can't see Jesus there. Paul put it this way:

- 2 Corinthians 4:3 “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:”

If we can't see it, we're not on the right road; but there is time; there is a little window of time where we can make our calling and election sure. You can back up that winding road you've been on for years and get on the strait and narrow. There's time, but it is a short time.

- 1 Peter 1:9 “Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”

The Prophecies of the Word of God, the angels desire to look into these things. The angels are so diligent, they desire to know what you know, but they can't understand it fully because they are not living through these histories.

They've seen it acted out; they've seen the mystery of iniquity work and the Mystery of Godliness work, but they can't understand like you and I can. They can't tell the story like you and I can.

But Jesus has come and He's lived and He's laid out a pattern—that Rod—and every single one of us should be measured by that Rod. Do our lives measure up?

Prophecy should be measured by the Rod. Does it measure up? I guarantee, if you start searching the Bible and studying the Prophecies in relation to Christ, there is no way that you will deviate and start teaching things like we talked about before.

“The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ.-- R. and H., 1890, No. 7.” HL 280.

When you look at Ancient Israel it is telling you a story. Do you want to know what is going on in your life? Read about Ancient Israel. What were their mind-sets before Jesus first came? Why did only the shepherds and some non-Israelites understand that Jesus was born? Why did they have an understanding?

You see those Magi were studying prophecy—did you know that? They were studying the prophecies of Balaam. They were studying those prophecies and when they saw the star, this was what the prophet talked about and they followed it.

The shepherds were there waiting and wanting for Jesus to come, and they were there in a Bible study sitting around the fire. The angels were able to come to them and manifest themselves physically before them. But the priests, the leaders, the regular old Israelites were at home and didn't have a clue that Jesus was born. Why not?

“While the Jews desired the advent of the Messiah, they had no true conception of His mission. They did not seek redemption from sin, but deliverance from the Romans. They looked for the Messiah to come as a conqueror, to break the oppressor's power, and exalt Israel to universal dominion. Thus the way was prepared for them to reject the Saviour.” DA 29.

“The people, in their darkness and oppression, and the rulers, thirsting for power, longed for the coming of One who would vanquish their enemies and restore the kingdom to Israel. They had studied the prophecies, but without spiritual insight. Thus they overlooked those scriptures that point to the humiliation of Christ's first advent, and misapplied those that speak of the glory of His second coming. Pride obscured their vision. They interpreted prophecy in accordance with their selfish desires.” DA 30.

“The Jewish leaders had studied the teachings of the prophets concerning the kingdom of the Messiah; but they had done this, not with a sincere desire to know the truth, but with the purpose of finding evidence to sustain their ambitious hopes. When Christ came in a manner contrary to their expectations, they would not receive Him; and in order to justify themselves, they tried to prove Him a deceiver. When once they had set their feet in this path, it was easy for Satan to strengthen their opposition to Christ. The very words that should have been received as evidence of His divinity were interpreted against Him. Thus they turned the truth of God into a lie, and the more directly the Saviour spoke to them in His works of mercy, the more determined they were in resisting the light.”

{DA 212.2}

They studied prophecy, but they studied it with an already made-up mind. The prophecy had to fit in with their preconceived ideas, and so they found things to make it work. That is what’s going on all over Adventism. Prophecy is laid out clear, but because we have a preconceived view we begin laying it out according to our ambitious hopes. What’s the result?

- Acts 13:27 “For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them [those prophecies] in condemning Him.”

What is Jerusalem for us today? It is the church. You and I might study prophecy, we might hear it rattled off every Sabbath Day, but because we don’t know Him, who it is about, we will fulfill the prophecies that we claim to believe. We will fulfill those who receive the Mark of the Beast. We will fulfill those who go against those who teach the straight truth. We will fulfill those who kick those ones out of the sanctuary. We’ll fulfill those because we know Him not.

Jesus Christ is revealed in the Bible in the prophetic page—do you know Him? Do you know Jesus like you should? Have you seen Him in Revelation 17? Have you seen Him in Daniel 7? Have you seen Him in Daniel 2? Have you seen Jesus there, or is it just good information?

“Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, “It is the third angel’s message in verity.””-- Review and Herald, April 1, 1890. Ev 190.

Is it really the Third Angel’s Message? How do we reconcile the two? How do we bring the Triumphant Life teachings together with prophecy? It is the third angel’s message in verity—truly, you can’t separate the two.

“This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the

commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." Ev 190.

Brethren; the Laodicean experience is to be an experience that we overcome. We know it is the last church, but those who wake up to the signs of the times, those who wake up to the message of the hour, those who apply it to their life, are no longer Laodicean; no longer lukewarm; no longer blind; and thinking they are better off than they are—they become Philadelphians. They begin the Millerite experience and brethren; it has been fast rolling for some time now.

You might have just heard that this history repeats. You might have just heard that Probation closes on Adventism at the Sunday Law. You might have just heard, but it has been truth from the beginning. The only reason you have not heard it, is because you, individually have not studied your Word with the agency of the Spirit. It's not because brother so and so didn't tell me. You can't come in the judgment and say, "Lord, but they didn't tell me."

God will say, "You had your Bible; your Spirit of Prophecy books were growing dust on the shelf, your Bible was dusted off every Friday so you could come to church with a nice clean Bible, the only reason that you didn't know is because you didn't take the time.

Jesus is about to come, and I want you to understand that prophecy is a moral issue. Prophecy is salvational; it is not just good information—if we don't understand—we're lost. If we desire the Triumphant Life, we can only find it by a firm application of the Word to our heart. An experience comes through a direct understanding of Present Truth.

The fallacy of what many consider to be Present Truth needs to be washed away. Those who have stood against the message of the hour need to get on board or step out of the way, and not let it be blocked from reaching the people. May none of us be found playing the agent of Satan.

We have the opportunity now to know what is Present Truth and have the Spirit and Christ formed within and enter into the experience of the Millerites—they were ready for Jesus to come—but are we?

May God help us to be ready.