

Scott's Thoughts

June 2, 2024



“When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.”
Deuteronomy 18:22, ESV)

What does the Bible say about a prophecy? How can we understand a prophecy? I believe in Bible prophecy, but I am not one who looks through all the books of prophecy trying to find every possible modern application and then go out and preach this is a fulfillment of that prophecy. Let me try to explain my understanding. First, we should ask, what did the prophecy mean to the people who were alive the day it was given and what was their understanding of that prophecy? Next, we need to ask, what was the time frame of the prophecy? There are many prophecies from the Bible that had almost instant fulfillment. Some were meant for future days, but most had a meaning for the people who were alive at the time the prophet spoke. Some prophecies had elements that happened soon after it was spoken, and in the future as well.

Determining which type of prophecy was given is something that should be approached with great care. If a prophet spoke and the prophecy was fulfilled instantly or within the time frame the prophet said, it is easy to understand and accept. When a passage written later in the Bible says this is the fulfillment of what that prophet said, then we know for certain that it was exactly what the prophet of old was speaking about. What about prophecies that were given, but had no specific time

frame for its fulfillment? What about prophecies that were meant for the future but are not clarified in later scriptures? For example, Daniel was told, *“Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.”* (Daniel 12:9, ESV) Daniel was a prophet, but did not understand the vision because it was given in very cryptic language. All he could do was to cry out, “I don’t understand.”

There are many things about the Bible I don’t understand but let me share some principles that have helped to make it easier to understand. (1.) The Bible will not contradict itself, so easy to understand passages will help us understand the more difficult passages. While we may not understand a difficult passage, a principle that is written in plain language can help us understand the difficult passages. We can eliminate some things a passage cannot mean because of the passages that are easy to understand. (2.) Study history so we can understand the Bible in its historical context. Bible events happened during different periods of history and the history in that specific time frame will give color and understanding to Bible events.

I’m not a prophet or the son of a prophet, but I am a student of the Bible. All of us as God’s children, can study and know the things that God wants us to know and understand.

“As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the Lord has truly sent the prophet.” (Jeremiah 28:9, ESV)

Thanks for listening and keep on shining.

—Scott