

A MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY

TEXT: II PETER 1:12-21

Introduction:

1. There is a two-fold witness to the Christian faith, and Peter refers to both of them here in his second epistle.
2. First, there is the eyewitness account given to us by Peter in verses 12-18.
3. Secondly, Peter says we have "a more sure word of prophecy" (1:19). He is referring to the Bible, the infallible Word of God.
4. Peter was in our Lord's inner circle. Peter walked with our Lord, ate with our Lord, heard Him preach every day, and saw many of His mighty miracles.
5. Peter was with our Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration (1:16-18). Peter heard the voice of God from heaven (1:17, 18).
6. And yet Peter says in verse 19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy."
7. The "more sure word of prophecy" is the testimony of the written Word of God.
8. *The Scofield Study Bible* says, "That is, made more sure by fulfilment in part. Fulfilled prophecy is a proof of inspiration because the Scripture predictions of future events were uttered so long before the events transpired that no merely human sagacity or foresight could have anticipated them, and these predictions are so detailed, minute, and specific, as to exclude the possibility that they were mere fortunate guesses. Hundreds of predictions concerning Israel, the land of Canaan, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, and numerous personages -- so ancient, so singular, so seemingly improbable, as well as so detailed and definite that no mortal could have anticipated them -- have been fulfilled by the elements, and by men who were ignorant of them, or who utterly disbelieved them, or who struggled with frantic desperation to avoid their fulfilment. It is certain, therefore, that the Scriptures which contain them are inspired. 'Prophecy came not in olden time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost' (II Peter 1:21)."
9. No other religious holy books (e.g., the Koran) contain fulfilled prophecies, but there are hundreds of fulfilled prophecies in the Bible.
10. I want to speak tonight on the importance of Scripture. The words "scripture" and "scriptures" are found 53 times (cf. 1:20; 3:16).

I. THE SCRIPTURES ARE SUPERNATURAL

II. THE SCRIPTURES ARE TRUSTWORTHY

III. THE SCRIPTURES ARE INSPIRED

I. THE SCRIPTURES ARE SUPERNATURAL

1. The word "scripture" means "sacred writings." When we use the word "Scripture," we are referring to every word in the Bible.
2. Second Timothy 3:16 and 17 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."
3. Now when we say the Bible is a supernatural book, we mean it is unlike any other book in this world. It is the very Word of God.
4. John Walvoord wrote, "It would be impossible to explain the origin of the Bible by any other means than to note that it claims to be a supernatural book guided by the Holy Spirit and supports its claim by the facts presented. Though human authors were used and the Bible has clear evidence of their human involvement in writing the Bible, they were so guided by the Holy Spirit that what they wrote was the truth as God wanted it to be said, and they were kept from the error of including anything that was extraneous or unnecessary. The contents of the Bible make clear that it has to be supernatural in its origin because the Bible includes revelation beyond the scope of people's knowledge. The Bible also presents God's point of view of human activity and history, which would be impossible to learn unless God Himself revealed it. The Bible is not only supernatural in its origin but also supernatural in its truth, dealing with subjects such as salvation, forgiveness, righteousness, spiritual restoration, and hope for eternity. The scope of the revelation extending from eternity past to eternity future obviously requires divine revelation."
5. Do you know that over one third of Scripture was prophetic when it was originally written?
6. There were at least 330 prophecies fulfilled at the first coming of Christ.
7. The Bible claims a supernatural origin in a way that is true of no other book. Over twenty-five hundred times in the Bible we see such expressions as, "Thus saith the Lord," and "The Word of the Lord came unto me, saying," etc.

8. I was recently chatting on line with a Filipino missionary serving in Cambodia. He said he was preparing a message on II Corinthians 8, which deals with Christian stewardship.
9. We agreed that these Biblical principles work in any culture, in any country, and in any language. The Word of God is unlike any other book, and it is effective in any language and any country because it is a supernatural book.
10. First Peter 1:16 says, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables..." The ancient Greek and Roman religions were based upon strange and fascinating myths and fables.
11. But despite what skeptics say, the Bible is not a collection of "cunningly devised fables" (1:16).

"Last eve I paused beside the blacksmith's door,
 And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
 Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,
 Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had,' said I,
 'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
 'Just one,' said he, and then with twinkling eye,
 'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'

"And so, I thought, the Anvil of God's Word
 For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
 Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
 The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone."

—Attributed to John Clifford

12. Greek mythology and Roman mythology is interesting, and profitable to read. However, it is make-believe, whereas the Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God.
13. First Thessalonians 2:13 says, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

II. THE SCRIPTURES ARE TRUSTWORTHY

1. The Old Testament prophets had predicted Christ's coming in great power and glory. The events up on "the holy mount" (1:18) were a preview of the second coming of Christ in power to reign over all the earth (cf. Matt. 16:28--17:9).

2. Peter (along with James and John) was up on the mount with our Lord. He saw our Lord transfigured right before his very eyes. He heard the voice of God from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (II Peter 1:17).
3. Peter saw and heard all this, and yet he says in verse 19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy."
4. The Word of God is like "a light that shineth in a dark place" (1:19).
5. Psalm 119:105 says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
6. Psalm 119:130 says, "The entrance of thy words giveth light."
7. The Gospel light is shining "in a dark place" (1:19). Despite the foolish optimism of worldly people, this world is getting darker and darker. We need to "send the light, the blessed Gospel light."
8. The Scriptures are trustworthy -- "a more sure word of prophecy" (1:19).

III. THE SCRIPTURES ARE INSPIRED

1. Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."
2. "Inspired" literally means, "God-breathed."
3. AW Pink said, "Surrender the dogma of verbal inspiration and you are left like a rudderless ship on a stormy sea-at the mercy of every wind that blows. Deny that the Bible is, without any qualifications, the very Word of God, and you are left without any ultimate standard of measurement and without any supreme authority. It is useless to discuss any doctrine taught by the Bible until you are prepared to acknowledge, unreservedly, that the Bible is the final court of appeal."
4. In his book, *The Battle for the Bible*, Harold Lindsell wrote, "It is the thesis of this book that biblical inerrancy is a theological watershed. Down the road, whether it takes five or fifty years, any institution that departs from belief in an inerrant Scripture will likewise depart from other fundamentals of the faith and at last cease to be

evangelical in the historic meaning of that term.
This is the verdict of history."

5. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (1:20). We need to carefully compare Scripture with Scripture.
6. We must be careful not to take Scripture out of context. For example, drunkards love to refer to I Timothy 5:23, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."
7. I heard about a crook who defended his wicked ways by quoting I Corinthians 10:23, "All things are lawful for me."
8. The cults are notorious for taking Scripture out of context.
9. The RCC takes II Peter 1:20 to mean nobody but their priests have the right to interpret Scripture.
10. A Catholic priest once said to William Tyndale, "We are better to be without God's laws than the Pope's." Tyndale replied, "I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause the boy that drives the plow to know more of the scriptures than you!"
11. Tyndale's wish was granted but the RCC had him burnt at the stake for translating the Scriptures into English.
12. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (1:21).
13. The idea here is they were "moved" the way a sail boat is moved along and guided by the wind.

CONCLUSION:

1. Our Lord said in John 5:39, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."
2. A policeman in Israel caught some smugglers because he knew the Scriptures. The smugglers used jackasses to escape. The police managed to capture some of the asses but the smugglers got away.

3. The policeman would not give the asses any food or water for several days, and then he turned them loose. He then quoted Isaiah 1:3 to his fellow police officers.
4. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib."
5. The policemen followed the hungry asses right to the smugglers' hide-out.