

A Sure Word

Key Verse: “ *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:* ” 2 Peter 1:19

When Peter wrote the words ‘more sure’ he selected a word meaning ‘stable, steadfast, certain or established’. Whether the prophecy is forthtelling of God’s offer of free salvation to all, or His foretelling of things to come, that proclamation is unwavering. It is true. In this series, we will examine something of what God has said about the past, about the future, and His word to us in this present moment of time.

We should always remember that the infinite God inhabits eternity. It is we who live in time. To God there is no past, or present or future. All are alike to Him. There are no surprises, and no emergencies and for those who trust Him, His providence is over all. He has an answer for all things. What we know of the future is only what He has chosen to reveal. In his wisdom He has enfolded the rest in mystery. In this series we are seeking only to understand that which God has revealed, and we will trust Him daily to take care of what is hidden.

First, know that God has always told His secrets to His people. Here are a selection of some things God has told His people concerning His intentions:

Noah. See Genesis 6.13-17. God told Noah that there would be a flood which would destroy the then world, and what he, Noah, was to do about it. Noah believed God’s word, acted on what He said, and saw it happen.

Abraham. See Genesis 15. God promised Abraham that he would give him a posterity to inhabit the land that He had promised him, but that first his descendants would be slaves in a foreign land for 400 years. The remaining chapters of Genesis tell the story of how it all happened. See also Genesis 18.17.

Isaiah. Chapter 46.9-13. The Lord told Isaiah that He declares the end from the beginning, and that what He says is sure.

Daniel. Chapter 2.28; 10.10-21. Daniel’s message is that God reveals mysteries from Heaven to men concerning the

things which have yet to happen.

Paul. 2 Thessalonians 2.3-12. Paul tells us what must occur before the coming of the Lord and our gathering around Him.

John. Revelation 1.19. John tells us that God told him the things that were subsequently to happen.

Amos. Chapter 3.4-8. Amos tells us that God will do nothing unless He first reveals it to His servants the prophets.

Psalms 25.14. “*The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.*”

Second, know that what God says is absolutely trustworthy.

In this series we will look at some notable examples. Here let it suffice to know why. What God says is trustworthy because He cannot lie. It is the nature of His being. He is immutable. He cannot change. He cannot deteriorate and He cannot improve. This is the declaration of Scripture. See Psalm 102.27; Malachi

3.6; James 1.17 and Hebrews 13.8. God does not just tell the truth. He is truth. Numbers 23.19; John 14.6. Verses such as Genesis 6.6 are not to be taken as God undergoing a process of change, but an expressing emotion, for the word has a range of meanings, including suffering grief, as the same verse affirms. The immutable God treats different people differently, just as the same sun melts wax, but hardens clay.

Third, know that only those who trust God will also trust His word.

2 Peter 3.3-7 tells us that men of this world have no time for God’s prophetic word. It has been so since Noah preached the righteousness of God in the face of the impending flood, but was rejected by the men of His day. See 2 Peter 2.5. Thus it is that the prophetic word will only fall on ears tuned to the voice of God. In Revelation chapters 2&3 John cries seven times, “He that has an ear, let him hear ...” See also Daniel 12.10. Foolish men say, Psalm 53.1, but God says, Isaiah 44.6.

Fourth, know that God’s revelation of the future makes most sense to those who are living through those times.

This is true even for those who are men and women of God.

Read and meditate on Daniel 12.5-13.

Daniel sought to understand the things that were to come on the earth in the last days. It was forbidden him. But,

this knowledge has been held over for those who are to live in those days. This is so, as you will find, because: First, there is an enigmatic element in all biblical prophecy, some more than others. This encoding is deliberate and requires that the seeker after truth must persistently seek..

Second, it is necessary to understand the specific political, cultural, scientific and ecological conditions of that day.

Third the student of biblical prophecy must be enlightened by the Spirit of God bringing God’s word in God’s time.

We may liken this phenomenon to someone viewing a scene. The things in the foreground are very clear. The things in the mid-ground are identifiable but lack detail. The things in the background are indistinct.

We may liken them to sailing into port on a ship. At first the land is a hazy, cloud-like line on the horizon. In time the hills and then the shoreline take shape. At last the traveller is able even to read the names on buildings, and see people walking about. When the ship is tied up to the wharf, every detail of the port and its routine and arrangements are very clear. The traveller is then part of the scene

Assignment: Read the book of Revelation in an easy English version.

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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