

K-520 Tv Show Part 4 Prophecy

by Art Katz

Biblical prophecy is a crucial aspect of God's word, with the whole veracity of the scripture at stake in its fulfillment.

Duration: 26:06

Scripture: Proverbs 4:23, Matthew 6:33, Luke 24:25-27, Luke 24:45, John 4:25-26, John 4:29, John 5:39

Topics: "Interview"

Description

In this video, Art Katz and Paul Gordon discuss the importance of biblical prophecy and the validity of the Word of God. They emphasize the need for Jews to recognize the Messiah and believe in the prophetic word. They encourage viewers to search the Scriptures and see the truth of Jesus as testified by the prophets. They also mention the encounter of Jesus with a Samaritan woman at a well, highlighting her spiritual understanding despite being only half Jewish.

Transcript

Ben Israel, with Art Katz and Paul Gordon. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

And all that is within me, bless His holy name. Hello. God bless you.

It's good to have you with us again. Welcome to Ben Israel. My name is Art Katz.

And I'm Paul Gordon. We've been happy for the response that we've received from these first weeks of telecasting. We've enjoyed hearing from our viewers and the letters which you've written and comments.

We notice, Paul, that some people are understandably a bit yet confused about the things which we represent as Jewish men who have this deep conviction in the Messiah of Israel, in the truth of the Scriptures, in their divine inspiration. And there's been some question raised, and I think it might be interesting for the viewers today, to discuss together the meaning of biblical prophecy. Before we begin that, I think that we ought to ask the Lord's blessing.

Let's do. Why don't you pray and God will speak and make something very clear and rich and deep to the people who are with us today. Wonderful.

Father, we come before you now in the name of the Messiah. And Lord, we ask you to bless this program today. We ask you to bring out your word, Lord, as you would have for it.

Direct us and lead us by the Holy Spirit. In the name of the Messiah, Jesus. Amen.

Praise God. I bet if somebody's turned on today for the first time, they're wondering about two men who are singing and holding hands and praying. Paul, there's a lot of interest today in last-day biblical events.

I suppose that as we approach these events, that even in the hearts and minds of people who have not a deep understanding of Scripture, an interest is being created about prophecy. And yet when you speak the word prophecy, what kind of understanding is ordinarily elicited? What do people think of when they hear prophecy? Well, most people, of course, believe that prophecy is some sort of gazing into a crystal ball and foretelling the future. Many people go to fortune-tellers and they go to palm readers and people will tell them various events that they think will happen in the future in their lives.

And people pass this off as prophecy. But of course our scriptural understanding of prophecy would be God, through his word, laying down in advance, events of a very explicit nature to various spokesmen and various writers at different periods of time. And these events, of course, especially in the area of messianic prophecy, could have only been fulfilled by one person.

I think we ought to run that through again because it's an enormously important concept. There are a few people, I think, who really deeply believe that the Bible is the word of God. Right.

I remember my own shattering experience, which I've already described in a previous telecast, about the first time that the Scriptures came into my hand. And in one utterance in the New Testament Scriptures, in the words spoken by Jesus, my consciousness and being was a revelation of God, a power surged through my mind, heart, and life. When that shockwave subsided, I knew with complete certitude, having been an atheist moments before, there's a living God, I'm reading his word, and therefore Jesus is who he claims to be.

Now I was a student of history and I was trained in the analysis of evidence, the things which are written. And frankly, I was perplexed how it is that a word could be passed on from generation to generation, be passed through the hands of many translators, and yet retain the indelible mark of God and the integrity of God and the substantive truth of God upon which men could bank their lives. Jesus said that we should live by every word which proceeds out of the mouth of God.

And really this is a fantastic question, can we really trust the things which are written? Because if God is describing some fearful events to come upon mankind in the last days, and we look upon this as allegory or a metaphor or poetry or whatever, and don't seriously heed the things which are spoken, I think that we neglect this at our peril. So let's again examine, what does biblical prophecy mean? You said God sets down certain facts. Explicit details.

Explicit details. Now through whom does he set these down? He sets these facts down through the writers in the Hebrew scriptures, the prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, all living in different ages. Different men separated by time and place and circumstance, given by the inspiration of the Spirit to express minute and detailed facts, yet to be fulfilled.

So that over the centuries a certain body of these facts have been deposited in the scripture. A prophetic sketch has been established, and what is the thing now which is going to bring this all together? Facts, details, given through men over an expanse of time. And fulfillment.

And then of course comes the fulfillment. Such a prophetic picture is described that can only be fulfilled by one. You know Paul, so much rests upon the validity of what we're trying to express now.

The fulfillment of these scriptures. What is hanging on the line about the truth or the failure of these things? I think the whole veracity of the scripture is at stake. That God himself, as he laid down his word, if the word comes true, if the prophetic utterances are fulfilled, then God is who he says he is.

If the prophetic utterances don't take place, if as God laid down things they didn't happen, then God himself would be at question. I think that in the Hebrew scriptures it's spoken about a prophet. That if a prophet's prophecy is not fulfilled, we know that he's therefore not a prophet of God.

What then shall we say of all prophecy if it fails to find fulfillment? We can no longer then have the confidence that this is God speaking through men. The whole reputation, the character and the honor, in fact the very reality and the existence of God himself is at stake in the prophetic word. That's a tremendous thing.

That he is at stake in the reliability of his own word. And also the fact that God, being an all-powerful, omnipotent God, has the power to bring these things about, to fulfill his own word. And even this power and this omnipotent God, this aspect is at stake also.

We hear such words, for example, as the omniscience of God, the knowledge of God. Well, that would be minutely expressed in the details of prophetic scripture. And then you're right, also the omnipotence of God, his power to fulfill his own word.

Despite the conditions of men, despite the vagaries of history and circumstance, God has got somehow to fulfill the very word which he has established. And you and I are meeting men every day who have been biblical illiterates, men who are contemptuous and indifferent to God, who have been shattered by the realizations that the prophecies of God have found and are finding fulfillment. What would you say is due as a recent fulfillment of the prophetic word which has really astounded the world and has brought Jewish people again onto the center stage of all history? I think the major event, of course, is the unification of the city of Jerusalem in 1967 during the Six-Day War.

This prophecy that Jerusalem would be destroyed and the children of Israel would be scattered, and this would be the condition, until the time of the Gentiles, Jerusalem would be trodden down. And at the culmination of that time, that Jerusalem would again be unified. Which prophet spoke that, Paul? I don't remember.

Well, it was the prophet Jesus. Of course it was. Who spoke about the destruction that was imminent for Jerusalem and that when Jerusalem is no longer trodden down by the Gentiles, that the age of the Gentiles would be fulfilled and we would look up for our salvation.

And of course the event took place in 1967 and enormous spiritual things have been working since those years. The Jews for Jesus movement and the great stirring among Jewish people toward the scriptures, toward a renaissance of their Jewishness, a fulfillment of the Word of God. But you know, when I raised the question, I thought of the far more basic event that made the possession of Jerusalem possible and that is the restoration of Israel itself in 1948.

Out of a wasteland, out of a land forsaken, we've been there several times and that evidence is everywhere. Rocks and desert shrubs and a destitute wasteland being raised again to life. A miracle and

fulfillment of the Word of God that He would bring again His people to their land.

You know, that we Jews, I suppose, should be more conscious of the validity of prophecy and know well the cost of disregarding the prophetic Word of God. We're the victims of disregarding prophecy. You might just take stock of the fact that whether we're in North Carolina, the Bronx, or Brooklyn, or California from where you come, or Leningrad where God has had me to visit, even Tokyo I found a congregation of Jewish people were dispersed to all the corners of the earth in fulfillment of God's prophetic Word spoken in Deuteronomy and Leviticus that we would be cast abroad to all the corners of the earth.

And so we're living, what can we say, verification that God's prophetic Word is enormously important, that it is fulfilled, and that one cannot disregard it without peril to himself. Exactly. Of all the areas of prophecy, Paul, which area would you say is the most loaded, the most controversial, the most profound, especially for the consideration of modern people today? Well, I think there's no doubt whatsoever that all of the prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah would be the most important prophecy in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The messianic prophecies, of course, have set up camps on two different sides. Some believe in the literal coming of the Messiah, some don't. Some believe he'll come as a suffering servant, some as a conquering king.

And I think that this one question of the messianic age, the coming of the Messiah, is by far the most important promise of the Scriptures. I think you're quite right. And I think that we owe our viewers at least the beginning of an investigation of this important area because so much centers in the prophetic Word about a Messiah to come, the circumstances that would accompany him, given in the most minute detail, that we should not miss him, because we know in Jewish history there's been a succession of false Mashiachs, those coming professing to be the Christ, by the way, which is the Greek word for the Hebrew Mashiach, meaning Messiah, the Anointed One, the Redeemer, Deliverer.

Not to miss the Messiah, God has really given over 300 prophecies concerning his coming, the time of his coming, the circumstances that would attend his birth, the character of his life, his suffering, his rejection, his death, his second coming. And we know, of course, this is really a point of great controversy and it really, in a sense, separates the two Judaisms. The Messianic biblical Judaism, which you and I espouse, which spoke of a Messiah coming first who would be rejected and despised of his people, a suffering servant who would give himself a ransom for his people, and a second coming in which he would come in power to establish his Messianic kingdom, at which time the lion would lie down with the lamb and an era of a Messianic peace and kingdom would be established.

Of course, conventional Judaism does not hold with that and believes that there's only one Advent which has not yet taken place. So really, it's a moot question. What do the Scriptures actually speak? How would you begin, then, to explore this question about Messianic prophecy? Well, in the book of Matthew, first chapter, verse 22, the angel speaking to Mary concerning the coming of the Messiah in the form of Jesus said, Now that all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child.

And they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Of course, that's the whole foundation for the Christmas which is celebrated. We're not happy for the character of that celebration, oftentimes.

It becomes a kind of pagan revelry and an orgy of buying and spending. And yet, in the sense that we're speaking of it now out of the Scriptures, Christmas is a Jewish holy day. It commemorates the birth of the Messiah which had been foretold.

You know that this was so little understood, even by the disciples of Jesus. The scriptural account, the confusion, and how the Scriptures have become intertwined with the traditions of men, and how our human hearts crave a Messiah who would come as a powerful deliverer, one who would reestablish the glory of Israel and remove from us our humiliation under the abject hand of Rome, that even the disciples failed to understand the scriptural conditions which had to be fulfilled before the glory of the Messianic kingdom could be established. And I don't think that this is more beautifully and more candidly revealed than in the Gospel of Luke, where after the events of the suffering and the trial of the Messiah Jesus, his crucifixion, death and burial, we find described at the very end of this fascinating Gospel two disciples on their return home to Emmaus, dejected, downcast, their countenances fallen, and in their return there's a stranger who draws up alongside them and says their eyes were beholden that they could not see him or identify him, and in the beautiful way in which Jesus always had with men, how he brings forth truth and understanding in the questions which he puts to them.

And he said to them, What manner of communication are these that you have one to another as you walk and are sad? And one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger to Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass them these days? And he said unto them, What things? Here is the one upon whom all of these things devolved, and upon whom the fury and the agitation, the anger and bitterness of men fell, their misunderstanding, their confusion, their taunting question. He saved others, now let him save himself. If he's the Mashiach, let him come down from that cross, and we will believe him.

Not understanding the Scriptures that the Messiah must suffer, must die, wanting only to see a Messiah who would redeem and save Israel from its present predicament, and losing sight of the prophetic plan of God which had to be fulfilled, upon which the whole redemptive scheme of God was to be worked. What things? They even called him a stranger when they first saw him on the road. Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass in these days? Just a stranger.

And they said unto him, The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet, mighty indeed in word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But alack and alas, here's this plaintive lament. We trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel, and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.

We'd hoped it had been he, but we're disappointed. He didn't fulfill our human expectations. He died and was buried, and all of our hopes were buried with him.

And alas and alack, Rome is still ruling over our nation. Our glory is still not revealed. Our temple is still a place of dejection rather than a place of joy.

He even said further, when he had contacted his disciples, he was breaking bread with them, eating with them, and he told them, These are the words which I speak unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me. Jesus could have only been speaking of one scripture, the Hebrew scriptures. And Jesus was telling his disciples that all of the things that were happening to him were foretold by all of the

prophets throughout the Hebrew scriptures up to that time.

Concerning him. Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures. It's in the understanding of the scriptures, and God's plan as it's laid down in the Hebrew scriptures, that we understand Jesus and why he had to suffer.

And he told them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. Thus it is written. Precious people, we don't know what to say or how to express ourselves.

We try to persuade those of you especially who have not given the scriptures the regard that they deserve. And we speak as men ourselves who have lightly regarded them. In fact, we would not open them until God himself began to quicken these things, our own understanding.

Have you heard people say, I know people have said to me, that Jesus never identified himself as a Messiah, that he himself was only a prophet, he was a teacher, but he never really identified himself as the Messiah. I'm going to come to that identification in just a moment. But I don't want to leave this Gospel of Luke without hearing another word that comes out of the mouth of Jesus, which is as pertinent for us today as it was 19 centuries ago when it was spoken.

Jesus said to these two downcast and dejected men, and we appeal to those of you who may be downcast and dejected, and perhaps you have every reason to be, until the reality of the Word of God and what it proclaims has been made manifest in your own life. He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, all that the prophets have spoken. Slow of heart, notice, this isn't any indictment against our intellect or our minds, because the real issue is not in the intellect, the real issue is out of the heart.

The book of Proverbs says that keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it proceed all the issues of life. He's speaking of the will, isn't he? This is where we really live. Slow of heart not to believe what the prophets have written.

Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. And as Paul said, which Scriptures was he expounding? The Hebrew Scriptures, the Old Testament Scriptures, there was no New Testament Scripture at that time. Jesus said, Search the Scriptures, they are they which testify of me.

And we want to encourage our viewers to become spiritually minded, to open the Scriptures, search them, and see if these things be not true. And Paul, you've spoken of an event that took place that's described in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John when Jesus encounters a woman at a well who was only half Jewish. And yet she had a greater sense of spiritual things than most of us who profess to be Jews.

She was one of the hated Samaritans. Right, kind of an outcast, a half-breed. And yet immediately she recognized Jesus as a Jewish man for when he asked her for a drink of water at the well, she said, How is it that you ask of me water to drink as a Samaritan when your Jews have no dealings with us? And as their conversation continued and he said, If you would ask of me to drink, I would have given you such water to drink as from which again you would never have thirsted.

And she began to suspect that this was a rather unusual Jew with whom she was engaged in conversation. And he said, Go get your husband. Oh, she said, I have not a husband.

Then he said, You speak truly, for the man you have is not your husband and you've had five husbands previously. Oh, she said, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Precious viewers, I wonder how many of you, whether you're Jewish or Gentile, have come to such identifications as these.

First, that Jesus truly is Jewish. Second, that he is not only a prophet sent of God, but that prophet which was spoken of by Moses, who would be greater than he, one from his brethren, in whose mouth God's words would be spoken, that all would not hearken to the words which he would speak, but it would be required of them. And then she said, Well, we Samaritans worship at this mountain and you Jews worship at Jerusalem.

And Jesus said, No, not so. The hour has come when neither at that mountain of convenience nor at the Jerusalem of perdition will men worship God, for God the Father is seeking those who will worship him in spirit and in truth. Amen.

She said, Oh, well, when the Messiah comes, he will teach us all things. Paul, I'd like you to read out of the scripture what the answer of Jesus was to that enormous comment. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

Believing the word of God is all. You know, we just want to, in these concluding moments, address ourselves to viewers who have had some respect and acknowledgment for the person of Jesus. You've acknowledged that he's a wonderful spokesman.

You've acknowledged that he's a great spiritual man, that he's spoken with a power and authority rarely seen in men, that a sermon on the mount is recognized the world over and celebrated as an enormous statement of spiritual magnitude. Have you seen him and recognized him to be the Jew, the greatest Jew? Have you recognized him to be that prophet sent of God? And do you believe him when he answered the woman at the well who said, When the Messiah comes, he will teach us all things. And he spoke, he who speaketh unto thee am he.

Praise God. Believing the prophetic word of God is all. It establishes the truth of God and it brings into the life of a person the reality that is imbued in these words.

I think, Paul, that it would be very fitting for us to end in the way we began in prayer, that many viewers might be encouraged to search the Scriptures where Jesus said, They are they which testify of me. Let's pray together to that end. So, precious God, in the wonderful name of the Messiah Jesus, we just ask that your Holy Spirit will quicken the things which you've chosen to speak through us today, that people will turn to their Bibles with a deepened sense of the reality that is imbued in these words, that they'll understand something of the meaning of prophecy, of the things which have been inserted, that we might understand the Messiah when he comes, that we might receive him and with him the Holy Living God.

May blessing go forth today into the lives of those who receive these things and search them. In the name of Jesus, we ask it. Amen.

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