

The Harmonious Unity of Biblical Prophecy

2 Peter 1.19-21

Is Jesus *really* coming again to reign? Today (and in Peter's day), many mock this teaching; they call it 'clever myths' and urge us to give up such crazy ideas (1.16; 3.3-4). In these verses, Peter declares that all prophecy in Scripture has *one Author*...and we should listen to what He said!

Context: Peter's message so far in Chapter 1

- God has given believers everything we need to live godly lives (1-4).
- Faithful believers will be rewarded in Christ's coming kingdom (5-11).
- Never doubt this coming kingdom – we saw it first-hand (12-18)!

“The prophetic word made more sure” (19)

- *Biblical prophecy is like ‘a lamp shining in a dark place’*
- *It points to the coming day when Christ returns.*

“No prophecy is of its own interpretation” (20)

- *Biblical prophecy doesn't have its own ‘isolated’ interpretation*
- *Biblical prophecies are all part of a ‘harmonious’ revelation*

“Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (21)

- *No biblical prophecy was made just from the prophet's viewpoint*
- *Bible prophecy is ‘from God’ – He ‘moved’ the prophets!*

Digging Deeper

1. Verses 19-21 form a paragraph, but they don't 'stand alone.' They only make sense in light of the previous context. A quick review: In vv5-10, Peter urges Christians to diligently apply themselves to grow spiritually; if they do, they will have an *abundant entrance* at what future event (v11)? In vv12-15, Peter states that as long as he lives, he will remind them of “these things”. To what future event is he referring? In vv16-18, Peter recounts the Transfiguration of Christ (read a first-hand account in Mark 9.1-8). What did Jesus say that event would show (Mark 9.1)? What *future time* did Jesus' Transfiguration point? *Now you have the context: Peter wants us to grow spiritually now in light of this awesome future time!*
2. In verse 19, Peter writes that *we have the prophetic word made more sure*. What 'prophetic word' (prophesied future event) does the Transfiguration make 'more sure' (confirm)? Why does Peter say that *we do well to pay attention* to it? How can focusing our minds on Christ's *future* coming kingdom affect our lives *today*?
3. Translations of v20 are confusing: *no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation* (NKJV)/*ever came from the prophet's own understanding* (NLT)/*is a matter of one's own interpretation* (NAS), etc. Time for a word study! Key Greek word is *idios*, which Peter uses *five other times* in this epistle (2.16, 22; 3.3, 16, 17). In every case it refers to the subject (*his own, its own, their own, your own*). What is the subject in v20? What does the phrase *no prophecy of Scripture is of its own interpretation* mean? [Hint: What did false teachers do with the prophecies of Jesus' coming kingdom?]
4. Now plug in v21. Peter has just indicated that the interpretations which false teachers give to prophecy – unique interpretations that 'explain away' Jesus' second coming – are invalid. They treated those prophecies like they were something the prophets themselves had thought up! Instead, where does Peter say biblical prophecies originate? How does this affect your view of prophecy in the Bible? How sure is that which God Himself has spoken?

