

Prophecy in Perspective

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THE COMING STORM

"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matthew 24:37)

Today, growing numbers of people are skeptical about Bible prophecy. In commenting on the prophecies of Luke on the return of Christ, J. C. Ryle stated concerning unfulfilled prophecy and people's negative reaction to it:

Our Lord speaks as if He foresaw the unbelief and incredulity of man on this mighty subject. He knew how ready people would be to say "Impossible! The world will always go on as it has done." Jesus arms His disciples against the infection of this skeptical spirit by a very solemn saying. "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

We shall do well to remember this saying, whenever we are thrown into the company of those who sneer at unfulfilled prophecy. The sneers of unbelievers must not be allowed to shake our faith. If God has said a thing He will certainly bring it to pass, and the probability or possibility of it are matters which need not trouble us for a moment. That Christ should come again in power to judge the world and reign, is not half so improbable as it was that Christ should come to suffer and die. If He came the first time, much more may we expect that He will come the second time. If He came to be nailed to the cross, much more may we expect that He will come in glory and wear the crown. He has said it, and He will do it. "His words shall not pass away."

Let us turn from the study of these verses with a deep conviction, that the second advent of Christ is one of the leading truths of Christianity. Let the Christ in whom we believe, be not only the Christ who suffered on Calvary, but the Christ who is coming again in person to judge the earth. (Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, St Luke - Part II, John Charles Ryle, pp. 378-379.)

The newest storm, the most powerful hurricane in recorded Atlantic Ocean history, Hurricane Irma, is approaching the U.S. mainland at this writing. Taking the words of Jesus' warning that the days just prior to His return will be like the days of Noah, we should note that the flood of Noah's time came with great violence upon the earth. No doubt, similar to hurricanes of today but on a global scale in Noah's day, the winds were fierce as the great torrents of water came up from within the earth and down from the skies.



Like the weather reports of today, the people of those days heard the warnings from Noah for at least one hundred years. Today, thousands in Florida are hearing and heeding the warnings about Hurricane Irma and tying down their boats, shuttering their windows, and evacuating the region even while they only see skies of blue and calm weather and water. Why? Because the weather experts 1) know that this is the "time" of the year for conditions to converge (to become just right) and hurricanes to form, and 2) they watch for "signs" of their formation and begin to track and foretell the coming storm. Yet, the people are depending on the word of those who claim the hurricane is coming without ever personally seeing the storm or even feeling the winds! They respond to the weather experts predictions as

though they were facts. They respond on the basis of faith! They are wise to hear and to heed the warnings of the coming hurricane!

How horrifying it would be to imagine if some of these "weather experts" were merely "good communicators" who avoid the real truth of the weather conditions and do not warn people of the coming storms in order to draw large crowds and just to make the people feel good about the weather. How many would perish in the storms if they were not told the truth!! Likewise horrifying is the reality of "religious experts" in pulpits who are "good communicators" but who avoid the real truths about sin and of the prophetic conditions of our times. They do not warn people of the danger of the "coming storms" predicted in the Bible and of the events surrounding the return of Jesus Christ. Their feel good theology predicts "fair weather ahead" for those who follow their smooth teaching! In the words of Isaiah: ***"Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits:" (Isaiah 30:10)***

We need to pray for the many people that have been and will be affected by Hurricane Irma, as we continue to pray for those who were impacted by Hurricane Harvey last week! Bible prophecy also gives warnings of coming storms that should be heard and heeded, but most pay little or no attention. Revelation 1:3 states, ***"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near."***

Jesus answered the Pharisees when they asked Him to prove Himself to them by giving them a sign. He knew they were skeptics, just like so many religious leaders in our own day! His answer to them was applicable to current attitudes toward Bible prophecy: ***"When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' 'And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?" (Matthew 16:3, NASB)***

What an awful reality we face today after a generation of humanism in public education and from the pulpits of American churches teaching millions not to trust the Bible, only trust man. From this we have many confused young people who cannot understand who they are supposed to be or what their purpose is. We see families breaking down and marriages breaking up. We see entire countries in turmoil because God has been diabolically denied and the Bible deceptively discredited. The Bible, as well as Jesus Himself, have given us insight into the sad culture of unbelief and apathy that we see today toward the warnings of prophecy. It is just as Jesus said, ***"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"(Matthew 24:37-39).*** Noah was a preacher and prophet, but most did not listen to him (2 Peter 2:5).

The Lord will never again destroy the earth by a flood of water (Genesis 9:11). Yet, we can be sure that Bible prophecy foretells many floods, earthquakes and climactic changes as well as strange phenomena in the skies in the latter days, and particularly in the period after the rapture in the Great Tribulation. I believe these events also confirm Jesus' prediction of the latter days as being like the ancient days of Noah.

Today we are seeing, North Korea's threats and the constant instigations of terror from radical Islam. We are witnessing devastating storms and earthquakes of biblical proportions. Many nations are also quaking through global economic, political and social instability. Neither can we deny the rising spiritual apostasy through false teaching and biblical compromise in Christianity today. These are truly like the days of Noah! These things and more combine to encourage the student of prophecy to warn the lost of the earth to come to faith in Jesus Christ, because **He is coming soon!**

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