

2 Peter 1:20-21

“Prophetic word confirmed part 2”

- I. Intro
- II. Vs. 21 Who is a prophet
- III. Vs. 20 How do I mature from it

I. Intro

We continue this morning with the conclusion of Peter’s words in his 2nd letter where **he defines for us three important points as it relates to a “prophecy” and a “prophet”**. Last Sunday we focused on the first part of Peter’s outline:

- A. Vs. 19 **What is prophecy**: *“A light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts”*.

Now we shall take up the last two parts:

- B. Vs. 21 **Who is a prophet**: *“Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”*.
- C. Vs. 20 **How do I mature from it**: *“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.”*

Peter gave his readers a fourfold in verse 19 answer as too, **“What is prophecy”**:

- **Prophecy is NOT synonymous with prediction**: A true prophet doesn’t just *“forecast events”* but instead *“proclaims principles”*.
- **Prophecy abiding characteristic is “illuminating”**: *True prophecy always exposes the unpleasantness of what it shines upon and most often the*

dirtiness that it exposes is due to our own poverty because of neglect!

- **Prophecy is for the** *“removal of the darkness that it exposes”*. It is **NOT** *biblical prophecy* if all that it does is *“reveal darkness”* if it doesn’t offer *“removal of darkness”*!
- **Prophecy is progressive!** It *“shines in a dark place”* until *“the day dawns”* and the *“morning star rises in your hearts”*. The progression can be personal over our own life or progressive in revelation over human history and God’s church.

II. Vs. 21 Who is a prophet

Vs. 21 We will now take up the question answered by Peter in verse 21 **Who is a prophet** and Peter mentions two specific aspects about the person God uses.

- A. The first thing we note is the phrase *“No prophecy came by the will of man”*. **Doesn’t originate with man:** Peter is *NOT warning against personal interpretation of prophecy* as the Roman Catholics teach that only the popes are allowed to interpret prophecy. Instead, Peter’s point is that *no person can obtain apostolic secession have their calling passed down neither can they, will themselves or educate themselves to their position.* *The prophets own will has nothing to do with their calling or mission.* A prophet’s calling is not something that anyone would prize to obtain through ambition. Their words are given to them by God and they themselves are often lacking their full implication but still are held accountable for their proclamation. The prophetic Word were not produced by human minds of the men who were used to write the words. The Prophets at times didn’t understand the very words they wrote down many times. The amazing truth about

divine inspiration is that it isn't necessary that the person God used to communicate His truth understand what they were communicating!

- B. Second, we are told that a prophets words come about as they are “*moved by the Holy Spirit*”. This is the only reference to the Holy Spirit in this letter and it comes in as the connection to the source of prophetic inspiration. “*The Holy Spirit is the agency rather than the agent*” The prophet speaks as the Holy Spirit impels them too. Many prophets were only aware of the contemporary political or moral implication of the principals they wrote about and often were ignorant of the full understanding of the meaning of their words over time which is why in verse 20 it wasn't up to their own private interpretation. The word “*moved*” in the book of Acts is translated “*drive*” when the ship Paul was on was let loosed to driven due to adverse weather conditions. Peter's words are that Prophets are “driven” like the wind suddenly, expectantly. Prophets are “*windswept*” servants driven by unseen currents that cannot be explained. It is why that many times the prophet has no idea where what he has spoken comes from and looks into their own message as any other would do even though it came from their own words. They speak from the original as a master plays through an instrument. The words born of God, driven by God and controlled by God! The King James version inserts that the men God used were “Holy men of God” but in the Greek word the word isn't there and was added by the translators as it was assumed that such agents of the Holy Spirit had to be “special people” but the truth of the matter is that it is the Holy Spirit who is special as only He can produce truth through such a flawed instrument. The cooperation that Peter writes of is one that is of nature as the Wind of the Holy Spirit blows through the sips sales moving it along as He wills. God in His wisdom has chosen to utilize men in production of His

word. They were not passive in the reception of the truth, but they were never the originators of the truth. Furthermore, the personalities of the prophets never violated the control of the Holy Spirit. As Paul says in 2 Tim 3:16 that the source and inspiration of scripture is the breath of God.

III. Vs. 20 How do I mature from it

Vs. 20 **How do I mature from it: “*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.*”** The last subject that Peter covers is actually found in verse 20 and that is how shall we receive and benefit from the prophet’s message.

- A. First, in the words “*knowing first*” the reader of this letter is lead back to the phrase in verse 19 “*which you do well to heed*”. The way to benefit from the prophet’s words Peter writes is that the reader of the word of God needs to give their attention to what **the prophet wrote before the text and after the text under consideration.** In other word’s Peter is giving his readers an important rule of interpretation: **CONTEXT!** If we are going to benefit from the prophet’s words, then as students of the word we need to read the word in context of what preceded the writing and what follows after words as they “frame” the meaning for the reader!
- B. The second guiding principle is found in the phrase “**no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation**”. By the use of the word “private” in the Greek we know that Peter is referring to “*unique, ones own*”. **We are to understand that we are not at liberty to take our own roads to interpretation. Private paths will never lead a person to biblical truth and personal transformation.** The word “**interpretation**” is a Greek word that means to “unloose or untie” and is used here to define explaining that what is

obscure and hard to understand. What is interesting is that Peter is not speaking about the student of the word but the writer of the word as verse 21 gives us the context of that of the prophet. The writer of the prophecy had no more right to interpret what they wrote than does the reader. The work of the prophet was not to interpret what the Holy Spirit had them write. No prophecy is of such a nature as to be capable of a particular interpretation. If you want to properly interpret the scripture born by the Spirit, then you will need the same spirit to interpret it correctly and the same Spirit to apply it appropriately. The student of the work can't take the private way and bend it around what they want it to say or not say. It can only be of use if we rely upon the same Holy Spirit to teach us what the Spirit has to say! That is what Jesus said in His letter to the church at Ephesus in Rev. 2:7 when he said, "***He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.***"