

Title: Fable, Fairytale, or Fact? (Part 3)

Passage: 2 Peter 1:19

Theme: It is certain that Christ will return; until then give yourselves to
the prophetic Word of God

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{{Read Passage}}

Where would we be w/o TWOG?

Think about that ? Where would you be w/o TWOG?

If there was absolutely no knowledge of God's Word, there would be no sufficient knowledge of God // Gospel // no eternal life.

Remember what we saw in Peter's 1st epistle? ==> 1:3-4 w/1:23-2:3.

I like what the old commentator Lenski said about the Bible ==>

As no man ever spoke like this man Jesus (John 7:46), so no book ever spoke like this Book. None was ever scrutinized down to its every particle like this one; none has had such intensive and extensive commentaries written about it, the last of which is not yet in sight. None has experienced such assaults and has after every surge of attack appeared only the more as "the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture" (Gladstone), a Gibraltar that only smiles at attack. [Lenski, 300]

We're told in our text (v. 19) that we do well to pay attention to the WOG.

It is certain that Christ will return; until then give yourselves to the prophetic Word of God

We've noted how the parousia or 2nd coming of X fits the context of Peter's 2nd epistle. Namely a defense of the truth of Christ's return to judge sinners and reward saints.

That was being attacked. See that in chapters 2-3.

For example, the false teachers, the "unprincipled men" who "twist the Scriptures to their own destruction" to use Peter's words, denied "the promise of His coming?" and made a mockery of it (3:2-4).

It is certain that Christ will return; until He comes pay heed to the prophetic Word of God

There are 2 major points in this passage as I've o/l it.

Beginning in v. 16 with ==>

I. An Eyewitness Testimony to the Factuality of the Faith (16-18)

He gives a negative followed by a positive.

A. Negatively: Christ's Return is not a Myth We Followed (16)

For we did not follow ingenious myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .

2. Power and coming = Second Coming of Christ – his return in Glory (yet future)

From the context – eschatological (end times / judgement)

T/word *παρουσία*. Used 24x, the majority of Christ's 2d coming.

b. Peter says ==>

When we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, we weren't pursuing after ingenious myths. . .

I. An Eyewitness Testimony to the Factuality of the Faith (16-18)

A. Negatively: Christ's Return is not a Myth We Followed (16)

B. Positively: Christ's Return is Prefigured in His Transfiguration Which we Witnessed (16-18)

. . . but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

The same kind of greatness that characterizes the Father also characterizes the Son.

2. The eyewitness account that Peter is referencing is what we call "The Transfiguration" (Matthew 17)

Peter gives an independent assessment here of what he saw years before when He, along with James and John, were privileged to get a preview of Christ's glory – the glory that will surround Him in his return.

Was a microcosm of the second coming (proleptic - anticipated and prefigured).

Elements: 1) OT saints; 2) Moses, the law-giver; 3) JC, the Son of God who fulfilled the Law; Elijah; 4) NT disciples.

For when He received honor and glory from God the Father such a voice was borne to Him by the Majestic Glory: "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

And we heard this voice borne out of heaven when we were with Him in the holy mountain.

Summarize

Verse 19 is what we might call a "hinge."

And we have the prophetic Word made more sure to which you do well to pay attention as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

That leads us to the 2nd major point in our outline ==>

II. An Enduring Testimony to the Factuality of the Faith (19-21)

A. The Trustworthiness of Scripture (19)

I think what Peter is saying here in v. 19 is this: "We were privileged to see prophecy fulfilled right before our eyes. Not only in t/incarnation of t/Son of God, but in t/indecribable glory of His transfiguration. We saw glory emanate from Him—God's glory— and we heard the voice of t/Father – the Majestic Glory: *"This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."* We were eyewitnesses of that, but all we can do is tell you about it. You can't experience it as we did. But you have something, you have t/prophetic Word that was confirmed as sure by what we saw. Pay attention to that.

Here we have ==>

1. The Confirmation of the Word (19a)

a. There's some debate as to what Peter means when he says ==>

And we have the prophetic Word *made* more sure . . .

(1) The The adjective "prophetic" (ὀφθαλμικός) used only here and in Romans 16:26 = That which pertains to the message of a prophet

(2) Prophetic Word = the Old Testament Scriptures

Specifically here (context) ==> OT prophecies that speak of X.

Luke 24:27 **And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**

Luke 24:44 **Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."**

Dozens of prophecies in the OT – by some accounts, over 200 – were fulfilled in Christ.

In his commentary on 2 Peter chapter 1 John Brown (19th c. Scottish Presby) cites another churchman by the name of Bishop Pearson ==> "If we compare the particular predictions with the historical accounts of His sufferings—if we joint the prophets and evangelists together, it will most manifestly appear that the Messiah was to suffer nothing which Christ has not suffered. If Zechariah say, 'they weighted for my price 30 pieces of silver,' Matthew will show that Judas sold Jesus at the same rate . . . If Isaiah say, 'He was wounded' if Zechariah says He was 'pierced;' if the prophet David yet more particularly mention 'His hands and His feet' as pierced, the evangelists will tell how He was fastened to the cross, and Jesus Himself will show us the print of the nails. If the Psalmist tell us they should 'laugh Him to scorn, and shake the head, saying He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him,' Matthew will describe the same action, and the same expression . . . Let David say, 'My god, my God, why hast Though forsaken Me!' and the Son of David will show in whose presence the father spoke it, – Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani!' Let Isaiah foretell 'He was numbered with the transgressors;' and you will find Him 'crucified between two thieves, one on His right hand and the other on His left.' Read in the Psalmist, 'In

My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink' and you will find in the evangelist, 'Jesus, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst; and they took a sponge and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed and gave Him to drink.' Read farther yet, 'They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture;' and to fulfil the prediction, the soldiers will make good the distinction, 'who took His garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also His coat: now the coats was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said, therefore, among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be.' Lastly, the prophets teach us that 'He shall be brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and be 'cut off out of the land of the living;' all the evangelists will declare how 'like a lamb' He suffered, and the very Jews will acknowledge that He was 'cut off.' And now, we may well conclude that 'Thus it is written, and thus it [was necessary that] Christ . . . suffer' . . . It is plain, from the prophetic word what things Messiah ought to have suffered, and equally plain that Jesus Christ suffered them; so that "Those things which God had before showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He has so fulfilled." [Brown, 192-93]

1 Peter 1:10–12 10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

This is the prophetic Word. It's a phrase that covers all of the OT, but esp. those passages that address X.

(a) By extension = New Testament also

You say, "But they didn't have the NT when Peter wrote." Not in totality. But t/Gospels (at least Mark's) were being circulated. So were Paul's letter (cf. 3:16).

I would also add that by "necessary consequence" (see what that term means later) this includes the NT Scriptures, just as 2 Tim. 3:16 does.

There can be no ontological difference between the two.

(3) But what does Peter mean ==>

And we have the prophetic Word *made* more sure . . .

Comparative ==> More sure than what?

Some interpret this as meaning the WOG is more certain than what Peter, James and John experienced w/Jesus on t/Mt. of Transfig.

That's more than problematic. What Peter saw and heard God say was not in question.

God confirmed with His voice t/glorious ministry of His Son. That cannot be doubted. Peter, James, John were eyewitnesses.

(a) That's the key word: "confirmed"

It isn't that Scripture is more sure than t/Glory of X at His Transfig. It's that t/Transfig. confirmed t/voice of the OT prophets.

"The opinion that Peter compares the prophetic Word with the transfiguration and calls this Word more "sure" than the transfiguration (v. 17, 18) or in all the majesty which the apostles came to see in Christ

(v. 16-18) is untenable. No, after seeing Christ's majesty the Old Testament prophecies were surer than ever to the apostles; they based nothing of their preaching on "myths" of any kind. By its fulfillment the fulfilled prophecy is naturally made more sure than it was while it was still awaiting fulfillment." [Lenski, 293]

What God says is sure. Spirit inspired prophecy is as sure before fulfillment as after, but the fulfillment confirms and seals it.

NCV ==> "This makes us more sure about the message the prophets gave." [New Century Version]

Philo, 1st c. Jewish historian, claimed that prophecies with eyewitness testimony behind them are the most certain.

Who were the eyewitnesses of Matthew 17? God the Father, God the Son, and Three Apostles. *I would say that is pretty well confirmed.*

(4) There may be something else here as well that relates to the nature of writing

BTIM - There's something to be said about having it in writing. Verbal agreements are binding, but they can be misunderstood or forgotten. "Get it in writing."

An architect puts together written documents, as does a lawyer.

In order to have an enduring testimony to the facts of the faith, at least in his life, we need God's Word in written form. Propositional revelation.

(a) There was debate among the Jews as to the authority and role of a heavenly voice (*bath qol* - , 'daughter of the voice')

Some of the Jews believed that the "bath qol" was not to be thought of as a continuation of God's revelation in the OT Scriptures. The canon of the OT was considered closed.

The competing Jewish schools of Hillel and Shammai were at odds on this. Shammai didn't recognize the authority of bath qol; Hillel did.

Later Jews said that "even a voice from heaven" could not overrule a Scripture (perhaps what Paul had in mind in Galatians 1:8-9).

And so one contemporary scholar adds that ==>

"The Jews always preferred prophecy to the voice from heaven. Indeed they regarded the latter, the *bath qol*, ('daughter of the voice'), as an inferior substitute for revelation . . . And as for the apostles, it is hard to overemphasize their regard for the Old Testament. One of their most powerful arguments for the truth of Christianity was the argument from prophecy (see the speeches in Acts, Rom. 15; 1 Pet. 2, or the whole of Heb. or Rev.). In the word of God written, they sought absolute assurance, like their Master, for whom '*it is written*' sufficed to clinch an argument." [M. Green, 98]

Peter is saying here, "*What we saw then, what we have devoted our very lives for, can be proven from the Scriptures.*"

'The question,' says Calvin, 'is not whether the prophets are more trustworthy than the gospel.' It is simply that 'since the Jews were in no doubt that everything that the prophets taught came from God, it is no wonder that Peter says that their word is more sure!.' [cited in M. Green, 98]

Something else to consider as to t/imp. of this "p.w." and how this applies to t/NT as well as the Old == 3:2 . . .

II. An Enduring Testimony to the Factuality of the Faith (19-21)

A. The Trustworthiness of Scripture (19)

1. The Confirmation of the Word (19a)

And we have the prophetic Word *made* more sure . . .

2. The Commendation of the Wise (19b)

There's a Consideration and a Condition . . .

a. Consideration

. . . to which you do well (καλῶς = good, noble, excellent) **to pay attention as a lamp shining in a dark place . . .**

One thing we noticed when we compared t/Transfig. account in Matthew 17 to Peter's account here is that in Matthew (Mark / Luke) there's the command "*Listen to Him!*"

Peter doesn't include that in v. 17. But he does say {restate 19b}

We listen to Christ when we heed his word (cf. Col. 3:16).

John 14:15 "*If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*"

John 14:23 "*If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word . . .*"

John 14: 24 "*He who does not love Me does not keep My words . . .*"

This is My beloved Son - Listen to Him!

. . . we have the prophetic Word made more sure to which you do well to pay attention . . .

How?

Have to know it. Accurately.

Have to listen to it.

Have to read it.

Have to study it.

Not enough simply to read // study // hear – but do! James 1:22.

That's really knowing it!

Look at the imagery:

. . . pay attention as a lamp shining in a dark place . . .

Adjective *αυχημενος* = dirty, gloomy

Sometimes it's nice to be in the dark. Some people like to sleep in the dark.

But this is a threatening, even morbid darkness. "Darkness associated with squalor, dryness, and general neglect." [Vincent] Murky.

Used in the Apocalypse of Peter for a description of hell itself.

What can dispel darkness? What can turn gloom into joy?

PSA 119:105 **Thy word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path.**

PRO 6:23 **For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light;**

On t/mountain of transfig. X's countenance shown brightly.

For us, in t/darkness of t/valleys we have t/Word of X to illumine our way. Present participle. Steady stream of light that comes from Scripture.

b. Condition

... until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. used to say, "Do right - till the stars fall from the sky - do right."

Here ==>

... pay attention [to the prophetic Word] as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. If you do that, you do well.

(1) "Morning Star" is a reference to Christ Himself

We see that in Num. 24:17: . . . A star shall come forth from Jacob, And a scepter shall rise from Israel . . .

REV 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star."

(2) "Day Dawns" = End of the Age (not AD 70)

2 Peter 3:10-12 **But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. . . . the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!**

(3) This is the "Day of the Lord"

In t/OT the "DOTL" = Day of Judgement and a Day of Salvation.

For the wicked – judgement, a time of darkness (Amos 5:18-20).

For the righteous – a day of salvation (Joel 2:21-32; 3:18; Zech. 14:1-21).

The upshot of all this? ==>

. . . pay attention [to the prophetic Word] as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. ??

In eternity there will be no need for the prophetic Word because the prophetic Word will have been fulfilled / filled in X.

"At the dawn, at the parousia, we will no longer see through a glass darkly, we will no longer need the mediating revelation of Scripture, for Christ will rise in our hearts." [D.A. Carson, Comm. on the NT use of the OT]

"Thus this text also strongly opposes all human a doctrine; for since the Word of God is the light in a dark and gloomy place. the conclusion follows that all besides it is darkness. For if there were another light besides the Word, Peter would not have spoken as he did. Therefore look not to how gifted with reason they are who teach any other doctrine—however grandly they set it forth. If you cannot trace God's Word in it, then doubt not that it is mere darkness. And let it not disturb you at all that they say they have the Holy Spirit. How can they have God's Spirit if they do not have his Word? Wherefore they do nothing else but call darkness light and make the light darkness, as the prophet Isaiah says, in Isaiah 5:20. This is God's Word, even the Gospel; that we are ransomed by Christ from death, sin, and hell: Whoever hears that, has this light and has kindled this lamp in his heart, even that by which we may see the one that enlightens us, and teaches us whatever we need to know. But where this is not, there we rush on, and by principles and works of our own device would find out the way to heaven. . . . For that light teaches us all we ought to know and all that is necessary to salvation, a thing which the world by its wisdom and reason knows not. And this light we must still have and depend upon, even to the day of

judgment. *Then shall we have no more need of the Word, just as we put out the lamp when the day breaks.*" [Luther, 248]

Rev. 22:1-5

Revelation 2:26–28 26 ‘And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS . . . ; 27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star.

Our reward is Christ . . .