

**EVIDENCE FROM SCRIPTURE AND
HISTORY OF THE SECOND
COMING OF CHRIST, ABOUT THE
YEAR 1843; EXHIBITED IN A
COURSE OF LECTURES**

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WILLIAM MILLER

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TO THE
ALBANY

INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting these Lectures to the public, the writer is only complying with the solicitations of some of his friends, who have requested that his views on the Prophecies of Daniel and John might be made public. The reader is therefore requested to give the subject a careful and candid perusal, and compare every part with the standard of Divine Truth; for if the explanation the writer has given to the scriptures under consideration should prove correct, the reader will readily perceive that it concerns us all, and becomes doubly important to us, because we live on the eve of one of the most important events ever revealed to man by the wisdom of God — the judgment of the great day.

In order that the reader may have an understanding of my manner of studying the Prophecies, by which I have come to the following result, I have thought proper to give some of the rules of interpretation which I have adopted to understand prophecy.

Prophetical scripture is very much of it communicated to us by figures and highly and richly adorned metaphors; by which I mean that figures such as *beasts, birds, air or wind, water, fire, candlesticks, lamps, mountains, islands, &c.*, are used to represent things prophesied of — such as kingdoms, warriors, principles, people, judgments, churches, word of God, large and smaller governments. It is metaphorical also, showing some peculiar quality of the thing prophesied of, by the most prominent feature or quality of the figure used, as *beasts* — if a *lion*, power and rule; if a *leopard*, celerity; if a *bear*, voracious; an *ox*, submissive; a *man*, proud and independent. *Fire* denotes justice and judgment in its figure; in the metaphor, denotes the purifying or consuming up the dross or wickedness; as *fire* has a cleansing quality, so will the justice or judgments of God. "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Therefore almost all the figures

used in prophecy, have their literal and metaphorical meaning; as *beasts-dévoûte*, literally; a kingdom, so, metaphorically good or bad, as the case may be, to be understood by the subject in connection.

To understand the literal meaning of figures used in prophecy, I have pursued the following method:—I find the word "*beast*" used in a figurative sense; I take my concordance, trace the word, and in Daniel vii. 17, it is explained to mean "*kings or kingdoms.*" Again, I come across the words "*bird or fowl,*" and in Isa. xlvi. 11, it is used, meaning a conqueror or warrior,—Cyrus. Also, in Ezekiel xxxix. 4—9, denotes armies or conquerors. Again, the words "*air or wind,*" as used in Rev. ix. 2, and 16, 17, to understand which I turn to Eph. ii. 2, and 4—14, and there learn that it is used as a figure to denote the theories of worldly men or vain philosophy. Again, "*water or rivers*" are used as figures in Rev. xvii. 15, it is explained to mean "*people or nations.*" "*Rivers*" of course mean the nation or people living on the river mentioned, as in Rev. xvi. 12. "*Fire*" is often used in a figurative sense; explained in Num. xxi. 27—28, Deut. xxxii. 23, Psal. lxxviii. 21, Heb. xii. 29, to mean justice and judgment.

As prophecy is a language somewhat different from other parts of Scripture, owing to its having been revealed in vision, and that highly figurative, yet God in his wisdom has so interwoven the several prophecies, that the events foretold are not all told by one prophet, and although they lived and prophesied in different ages of the world, yet they tell us the same things; so you take away one, and a link will be wanting. There is a general connection through the whole; like a well-regulated community they all move in unison, speaking the same things, observing the same rules, so that a Bible reader may almost with propriety suppose, let him read in what prophecy he may, that he is reading the same prophet, the same author. This will appear evident to any one who will compare scripture with scripture. For example, see Dan. xii. 1, Matt. xxiv. 21, Isa. xlvi. 2, Zeph. ii. 15, Rev. xviii. 7. There never was a book written that has a better connection and harmony than the Bible, and yet it has the appearance of a great store-house full of all the precious commodities heart could desire, thrown in promiscuously; therefore, the biblical student must select and bring together every part of the subject he wishes to investigate, from every part of the Bible; then let every word have its own Scripture meaning, every sentence its proper bearing, and have no contradiction, and your theory will and must of necessity be correct. Truth is

one undeviating path, that grows brighter and brighter the more it is trodden; it needs no plausible arguments nor pompous dress to make it more bright, for the more naked and simple the fact, the stronger the truth appears.

Let it be noticed that God has revealed to his prophets the same events in divers figures and at different times, as he has to Daniel in the second, seventh, and eighth chapters concerning the four kingdoms; or to Peter, (see Acts x. 16;) also Isaiah and John. Then, to get the whole truth, all those visions or prophecies must be concentrated and brought together, that have reference to the subject which we wish to investigate; and when combined, let every word and sentence have its proper bearing and force in the grand whole, and the theory or system, as I have before shown, must be correct. I have likewise noticed that in those events, visions, and prophecies which have had their fulfilment, every word and every particular has had an exact and literal accomplishment, and that no two events have ever happened, that I can learn, which will exactly apply or fulfil the same prophecy. Take, for instance, the prophecies concerning the birth, life, and crucifixion of our Savior, and in his history we find a literal fulfilment; yet in the birth, life, or death of any other individual it would be in vain to find a parallel. Again, take the prophecies which have been admitted, by Protestants at least, to apply to Cyrus, Alexander, Julius Cæsar, destruction of Jerusalem, and the church of Rome, and I have never been able to trace even a resemblance to the prophecies in question in any historical events except the true ones. If this is true, may we not suppose that the unfulfilled prophecies in their accomplishments will be equally as evident and literal?

There are two important points to which all prophecy seems to centre, like a cluster of grapes upon its stem—the first and second coming of Christ; the first coming to proclaim the gospel, set up his kingdom, suffer for sinners, and bring in an everlasting righteousness. His second coming, to which the ardent faith and pious hope of the tried and tempted child of God centres, is for complete redemption from sin, for the justification and glorification promised to all those who look for his appearing, the destruction of the wicked and mystical Babylon, the abomination of the whole earth.

His first coming was as a man, his human nature being only visible, his Godhead known only in his miracles. His second coming will be as God, his divine Godhead and power being most visible. He comes first, like the "first man of the earth, earthy;" his second

coming is "the Lord from heaven." His first coming was literally according to the prophecies. And so we may safely infer will be his second appearance, according to the Scriptures. At his advent, his forerunner was spoken of — "one crying in the wilderness;" the manner of his birth — "a child born of a virgin;" the place where — "Bethlehem of Judea;" the time of his death — "when seventy weeks should be fulfilled;" for what he should suffer — "to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." The *star* that appeared, the *stripes* he received, the *miracles* he performed, the *tauntings* of his foes — all were literally fulfilled. Then, why not suppose that all the prophecies concerning his second coming will be as literally accomplished as the former? Can any man show a single reason why it will not? If this be true, we can obtain much light by reading the Scriptures. We are there informed of the manner of his second coming — "suddenly, in the clouds, in like manner as he ascended;" the majesty of his coming — "on a great white throne, with power and great glory, and all his saints with him;" the object of his coming — "as the Ancient of Days, to send his angels into the four winds of heaven, gather his elect, raise the righteous dead, change the righteous living, chain Satan, destroy anti-Christ, the wicked, and all those who destroy the earth, judge, justify and glorify his people, cleanse his church, present her to his Father, live and reign with her on the new heavens and new earth," the form of the old having passed away.

The time when these things shall take place is also specified, by some of the prophets, unto 2300 days, (meaning years;) then shall the sanctuary be cleansed, after the anti-Christian beast has reigned her "time, times, and a half;" after the two witnesses have prophesied "a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth;" after the church captivity in the wilderness, "forty-two months;" after the "gospel should be preached in all the world for a witness, then shall the end come." The signs of the times are also given, when we may know, he is near, even at the door. When there are many "to here's and to there's;" when the way of truth is evil spoken of; when many seducers are abroad in the land; when scoffers disbelieve in his coming, and say, "Where is the promise of his coming;" when the wise and foolish virgins are called to trim their lamps, and the voice of the friend of the bridegroom is, "Behold, he cometh;" when the city of the nations

is divided into three parts; when the power of the holy people is scattered, and the kings of the east come up to battle; when there is a time of trouble, such as never was before, and the church in her Laodicean state; when the seventh seal opens, the seventh vial is poured out, the last woe pronounced by the angel flying through the midst of heaven, and the seventh and last trumpet sounds;—then will the mystery of God be finished, and the door of mercy be closed forever; then shall we be brought to the last point, his second coming.

Again, prophecy is sometimes typical; that is, partly fulfilled in the type, but completely only in the antitype. Such was the prophecy concerning Isaac, partly fulfilled in him, wholly so in Christ; likewise concerning Israel, partly fulfilled in them as a nation, but never fully accomplished until the final redemption of spiritual Israel. Likewise the prophecies concerning the Jewish captivity in Babylon, and their return, are only partly accomplished in the history of past events. The description of those things in the prophets is so august and magnificent, that if only applicable to the literal captivity of the Jews and their return, the exposition would be weak and barren; therefore I humbly believe that the exact fulfilment can only be looked for in the captivity of the church in the wilderness, under the anti-Christum beast, destruction of mystical Babylon, and glorification of the saints in the New Jerusalem state.

There are also in the 24th chapter of Matthew many things prophesied of, which were not fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem; such as the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds, the gathering his elect from the four winds of heaven, his taking one and leaving another. This shows a typical meaning in this prophecy, and that it will not all be fulfilled until the end of the world. Also, the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, prophesied of by himself eight days before, is noticed by Peter, 2d Epistle, i. 16—18, as being a type or figure of his second coming.

Who, that has read the prophecies with any degree of attention, will not acknowledge the great agreement between the Old Testament prophecies and the New? Almost every prophecy given by Christ and his apostles may be found, in the Old Testament prophets, represented by figures, which were familiar to the writers and readers of those times. The foregoing rules are some of the principal ones which I have observed in attempting to explain the prophecies of Daniel and John, and to give the time when the