

## PREMILLENNIALISM: THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS

As our study of premillennial doctrine has already demonstrated, this many sided theory will inevitably wend its way through a maze of Old Testament passages. The premillennialist may take them out of context and badly misunderstand them but there they are nonetheless woven into his fanciful theory. In fact, there are hundreds of such passages in the Old Testament. Some dealt with the history of ancient Israel and many referred to and prophesied the coming of the Messiah.

Must we follow the premillennialist passage by passage over this long and sometimes tedious trail of Scripture adapted to accommodate his theory? Or is there a simple and concise manner in which we can deal with this material? Happily for the truth, even if sadly for the pre-millennialist, there is a simple, effective, and truthfully accurate way to determine whether or not the Old Testament prophecies of the Christ are already fulfilled, on the one hand, or, on premillennialism's other hand, await fulfillment when Jesus Christ comes again.

The key lies in a statement made by the apostle Peter and recorded at II Peter 1:19-21. He wrote, "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, for the prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Since Peter was an apostle of Christ inspired by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26), what he wrote was actually a declaration by the Holy Spirit himself. And what did the Holy Spirit say? Emphatically, he declared that the prophecies of the Scripture are not subject to private interpretation. That is, no man, nor group or school of men, is inherently qualified to explain them. Why not? Because those prophecies did not come by, nor from, the will of man. Rather, they came from the Holy Spirit himself as he moved the prophets to speak and write. This means the only accurate source of explanation for the Messianic prophecies will be found in men whose knowledge and declarations were inspired by the same Holy Spirit who moved the Old Testament prophets in the first place. Thus, to know the truth, we must turn to the inspired New Testament prophets, especially Jesus and his apostles. This we will do in forthcoming articles.

—Jerry F. Bassett