

## 2 Peter 1:19

### Introduction

We saw last week that there were false teachers *within* the church who were accusing the Apostles of inventing the idea of Christ's coming to judge the world in the cleverness of their own minds. We asked ourselves last week: Do we just know in our heads that this is false teaching, or do we really practically believe with the living of our lives that Christ *is* coming in power to judge the world – and to reward those who are truly faithful to Him? It's because Peter wants us to *know* this *fully* that he writes in verses 16-18:

“For we did *not* follow cleverly devised myths when we *made known* to you the power and coming [or, ‘the coming in power’] of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He *received* honor and glory from God the Father [fulfillment of Psalm 8], *such* a voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is my beloved Son [fulfillment of Psalm 2], with whom I am well pleased [fulfillment of Isaiah 42]’; and we heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain [fulfillment of Psalm 2].”

The false teachers can say what they want about Christ's future coming in power to judge the world and reward the faithful, but God the Father Himself—the Majestic Glory—has spoken, and *He* has appointed Jesus to this very task. *He* has invested Him already with honor and glory so that Jesus might exercise His own rule and dominion over all the world. *God* has done it—“we were *eyewitnesses* of His majesty,” Peter tells us; the Majestic Glory has spoken—Peter writes: “we *heard* this very voice borne from heaven”; and so nothing in all the world can be more sure than the coming in power of our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Mat. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27). But having said *these* things, *now* there's *more* to be said.

This official “investiture” of Christ with royal sovereignty and power to exercise God's rule and dominion over all the world is, itself, the *fulfillment* of numerous Old Testament prophecies. When God the Father bestowed honor and glory on Jesus—and Peter and James and John were eyewitnesses of His majesty; and when such a voice was born to Jesus from the Majestic glory, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased”—and Peter and James and John heard this very voice borne from heaven – what Peter and James and John were seeing with their own eyes and hearing with their own ears was the fulfillment of prophecy. In other words, it's one thing for God to speak these words. This, by itself, is sufficient to destroy all doubt and establish in our hearts the 100% certainty of faith. And yet, in an amazing and wonderful way, there's even more that can be said. It's one thing for God Himself to speak; it's another thing for God to speak in fulfillment of the very words that He Himself has *already* spoken so long ago through the prophets. We're you feeling the weight of this already last week? Well, now Peter makes this explicit when he writes in verse nineteen:

**I. 2 Peter 1:19a** — And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed...

When God spoke to Jesus on the holy mountain in fulfillment of the prophetic word, instead of that prophetic word being eclipsed or made irrelevant and obsolete by this fulfillment, now it only shines out all the brighter.

The “prophetic word” that Peter speaks of is at one level the entire Old Testament from Genesis all the way to Malachi. The entire Old Testament is anticipatory, and so the entire Old Testament is in this sense prophetic. Or we could say that throughout the entire Old Testament there’s the constant sense or flavor of a fundamental incompleteness and a looking forward to something else—to that which will bring its completion, and so the entire Old Testament is by its very nature prophetic.

□ Matthew 11:13 — For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John...

When Peter speaks of the “prophetic word,” then, he’s *assuming* the prophetic nature of all the Old Testament Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi, but he’s especially focusing on all those numerous prophecies that speak more explicitly of the coming “Day of the Lord” – the day when God will decisively intervene in the affairs of men and of nations and establish His kingdom and His rule in all the earth. It’s *this* “prophetic word” contained in all of these numerous Old Testament prophecies (cf. Psalm 8; Psalm 2; Isaiah 42) that *we* have more fully confirmed for us today because there’s a sense in which *now* it’s **“already” been fulfilled** in the royal investiture of Jesus on the holy mountain.

Make no mistake, brothers and sisters; what Peter and James and John witnessed “*ahead of time*” was the *real* investiture and enthronement of Jesus upon His resurrection from the dead and His ascension into heaven (cf. Mat. 17:9). This is what they witnessed *with their own eyes* and heard *with their own ears*. So, therefore, in this royal person of Christ, and in this sovereign rule and authority that’s already been granted to Him by God and that He’s already exercising from His throne above, the kingdom—the universal rule and dominion of God’s Messiah—is already here. The long prophesied Messiah is here, and we are not still waiting for Him to be invested with royal power and authority, because this, too, has already happened – it was already witnessed by Peter and James and John on the holy mountain. And now all of this is what explains how *we, today*, have the prophetic word more fully confirmed. It’s not that before, the prophetic word was somehow insufficient or doubtful by itself, but rather that for us who are so often weak in faith, the already 100% certainty of the prophetic word has been even *more fully confirmed for us* in the “fulfillment” that Peter and James and John have witnessed with their own eyes and heard with their own ears. What a truly awesome gift this is!

But now we come to the wonderful, glorious tension of the “already” (the prophetic word “already” fulfilled) and the “not yet” (the *very same prophetic word* “not yet” fulfilled). In these verses, we have to see this tension and feel this tension if we’re to fully grasp the power and the beauty of Peter’s argument. Ask yourself this question: What need do we have any longer for the prophetic word if the fulfillment of that prophetic word has already come? To put it another way, doesn’t the fulfillment of the prophetic word render the prophetic word itself obsolete? And yet Peter’s whole point here is that this prophetic word has only been *more fully confirmed* for us (*through* its fulfillment “already”), and *therefore* we will do well to *pay heed*—to pay careful

attention—to *that prophetic word* as to a lamp shining in a dark place, **until** the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts.”

**II. 2 Peter 1:19b** — And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will **do well to pay careful attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts...**

*Because* the day has “*not yet*” dawned and *because* the morning star has “*not yet*” risen in our hearts—because the prophetic word has “*not yet*” been fulfilled—that word, far from being rendered obsolete, has only been made to shine out all the brighter like a lamp shining ever brighter and brighter in a dark place. The fulfillment (“already”) of the prophetic word on the holy mountain, rather than eclipsing that word and making it obsolete has only more fully confirmed *that word* for us so that we do well to pay all the more careful attention *to that word until* the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts – **until** the fulfillment of that prophetic word reaches its eschatological climax in Christ’s coming in power to judge all the world and to reward His faithful saints. Brothers and sisters, what a joyful *certainty* we have; what a wonderful joyful *assurance* has been given to us!

Peter describes the prophetic word which has been more fully confirmed for us as a lamp shining in a dark place. In other words, it’s this prophetic word that enables us to see clearly; it lights up the darkness so that we can find our way and choose the right path. Jesus described the prophet John the Baptist who proclaimed the word of the Lord as “a burning and shining lamp” (John 5:33-35). The Psalmist writes:

□ Psalm 119:105 — Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

By warning us of the coming of the Lord in power to judge all the world and by setting before us the promise of an entrance into His eternal kingdom richly provided to all who remain faithful to Him, the prophetic word of the Old Testament dispels the darkness that would otherwise blind our eyes and enables us to see clearly and with joy the path that we must walk in from day to day. That’s why Peter says, “to which you will do well to *pay careful attention.*” In a world where all around us is dark, where all around us there’s ignorance, and lies, and suppression of the truth, we must fix our eyes on the light and *come to* the light and *walk in* the light. We must fix our eyes on the prophetic word, and *come to* that prophetic word, and walk daily *in the light* of that prophetic word as we watch and wait for the coming in power of our Lord Jesus Christ to judge all the world and to save *us* – His people.

Too often, we approach the Old Testament prophetic word as though it’s been eclipsed and rendered already obsolete. We approach the Old Testament prophetic word as though it applies more to Old Testament Israel than it does to us, today, in the church. But Peter says that the exact *opposite* is true. We are those who’ve been grafted in as children of Abraham, and so we are the heirs today of all the Old Testament prophecies. “[*We*] have the prophetic word[—the whole prophetic word—]**more fully confirmed**, to which [*we*] will do well to pay careful attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, **UNTIL the day dawns and the morning star rises in [our] hearts...**”

In the darkness of the night that we live in, the light of the prophetic word blazes forth and shines ever so brightly, but when the full light of day has come there won't be any more need for the lamp that lights up the night. When the final, eschatological fulfillment has come and there's no more "not yet," *then* there will be no more need for the prophetic word. But brothers and sisters, *until* that day comes it's the prophetic word—which we have today more fully confirmed—that shines brightly in the darkness of this night as a harbinger or a guarantee of the coming full light of day. Peter writes in the very last verse of this letter:

- 2 Peter 3:18 — But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now **and to the *day of eternity***. Amen.

The Apostle Paul writes:

- Romans 13:12 — The night is far gone; **the *day is at hand***. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

But how is it that this future eschatological "day" will be ushered in? Let us, even right now, pay careful attention to the prophetic word as to a lamp shining in a dark place!

- Isaiah 35:3–4 — Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, ***your God will come*** with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you."
- Isaiah 40:10–11 (cf. Isa. 66:15–24) — Behold, ***the Lord God comes with might***, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.
- Malachi 4:1–2 — Behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

In the Old Testament "the day of the Lord" is "that day" when the Lord *comes* to judge the world and to save His people. In the Old Testament, there are many such "days of the Lord" in history, but these days are all a foreshadowing of the *final day* for which all of us as God's people are waiting.

- Obadiah 15–21 (cf. Isa. 25:6–12) — The day of the LORD is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head. For as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so all the nations shall drink continually; they shall drink and swallow, and shall be as though they had never been. But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape, and it shall be holy, and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions. The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau stubble; they shall burn them and consume them, and there shall be no survivor for the house

of Esau, for the LORD has spoken. Those of the Negeb shall possess Mount Esau, and those of the Shephelah shall possess the land of the Philistines; they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria, and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. The exiles of this host of the people of Israel shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the Negeb. Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

As children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as those who were once outsiders, but have now been grafted into the covenant people of God, this is the day for which *we* are now waiting. These verses are the verses that describe now *our* future and *our* hope. At the Jerusalem counsel in Acts 15 (15:13-19), James quotes the following verses from Amos and sees them “already” being fulfilled in the royal reign of Christ and His gathering together of all the nations who are called by His name.

□ Amos 9:11–15 (cf. Joel 3:18-21) — “In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name,” declares the LORD who does this. “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them,” says the LORD your God.

Now, if these verses are “already” being fulfilled even today in the royal reign of Christ and His gathering together of all the nations who are called by His name, can you see now how *we* have this prophetic word even *more fully confirmed*, so that we will do well to pay careful attention to it as to a lamp shining in a dark place, **UNTIL the day dawns and the morning star rises in [our] hearts**? In short, brothers and sisters, we ought to be constantly walking in the light of this Old Testament prophetic word so that we might learn to live “in the night” as those who are actually “children of light, children of the [coming] day” (1 Thess. 5:4-5).

□ Ephesians 5:8–9 — At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).

The Old Testament prophetic word has not been eclipsed and made obsolete through its New Testament fulfillment. Instead, it's only been more fully confirmed *for us* so that now it shines in the darkness *all the more brightly* as a harbinger and guarantee of the coming day when the morning star rises in our hearts.

The “morning star” is what we know today to be Venus. Since the orbit of Venus is so close to the sun and since it's also so close to our earth, it's the brightest “star” in our sky whether it's setting in the evening just after the sun (in this case it's the evening star) or rising in the morning just before the sun. It's this “morning star” that announces the coming of the day to the

watchmen in the night who are waiting and hoping for the morning. Peter’s probably remembering here the “prophetic word” in Numbers 24 that’s been made even more sure for us today and to which we will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place:

□ Numbers 24:17–19 (LXX; cf. Isa. 60:1; Mal. 4:2; Lk. 1:78) — I will point to him, but not now; I bless him, but he draws not near: **a star shall rise** out of Jacob, a man shall spring out of Israel; and shall crush the princes of Moab, and shall spoil all the sons of Sheth. And Edom shall be an inheritance, and Esau his enemy shall be an inheritance of Israel, and Israel shall do valiantly. And one shall arise out of Jacob, and destroy out of the city him that escapes.

Fifteen centuries later, in the book of Revelation, we hear the resurrected Jesus—invested now with all power and authority in heaven and on earth—saying to the Apostle John:

□ Revelation 22:16 — “***I am*** the root and the descendant of David, ***the bright morning star.***”

In other words, it’s Christ’s future coming in power that will announce to us the coming of the day, even as the morning star that rises in the east announces to everyone the coming of the morning.

But if Peter’s really talking about the future coming of Christ in power, then why does he speak of this coming here as the rising of the morning star “*in our hearts*”? If the point is ***not*** that Christ only *comes* “in our hearts” in a purely spiritual and personally experiential “coming”—and this is certainly ***not*** the point—then can you see what Peter’s point must be? When Christ comes in power to judge the world and to reward his saints with a rich entrance into His eternal kingdom, then the already 100% certainty of the prophetic word which has already been even *more fully confirmed for us* in the “fulfillment” that Peter and James and John witnessed with their own eyes and heard with their own ears, then this prophetic word will be even more gloriously confirmed in our hearts – so much so, in fact, that the prophetic word will be wholly eclipsed because we ourselves will be ***living in*** the fulfillment. We ourselves will be living in the fulfillment when everything is “already” and there is no more “not yet.” In that day, the light of the morning star will shine so brightly in our hearts that all the former weaknesses of our faith will be totally dispelled and we will rejoice with joy inexpressible in the glorious saving power of our Lord Jesus Christ. The eschatological event of Christ’s coming which we will witness with our own eyes is not just going to change our outward circumstances, it’s also going to do a most powerful work within our hearts. The 100% certainty and joy of faith in the prophetic word which has already been “more fully confirmed” for us will *become* the indescribable certainty and joy of living ourselves in the fulfillment of that prophetic word – when everything is “already” and there is no more “not yet” (cf. 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Cor. 13:12). This is what Peter means when he speaks of Christ’s coming in power as the morning star rising *in our hearts* and shining there, and shedding abroad it’s brilliant light – forever, and ever, and ever.

## **Conclusion**

But *until* the morning star rises in our hearts, and *until* that day dawns, brothers and sisters, we have even today a lamp that shines ever so brightly in the night. By telling us of the coming of

the Lord in power to judge all the world and setting before us the promise of an entrance into His eternal kingdom richly provided to all who remain faithful to Him, the prophetic word of the Old Covenant—now more fully confirmed for us who live under the New Covenant—*this* prophetic word dispels the darkness that would otherwise blind our eyes and enables us to see clearly and with joy the path that we must walk in from day to day. That’s why Peter says, “to which you will do well to *pay careful attention.*” In a world where all around us is dark, where all around us there’s ignorance, and lies, and suppression of the truth, we must diligently fix our eyes on the light and *come to* the light and *walk in* the light. We must fix our eyes on the prophetic word, and *come to* that prophetic word, and walk daily *in the light* of that prophetic word as we watch and wait for the coming in power of our Lord Jesus Christ to judge all the world and to save *us* – His people.

And as we watch and as we wait, brothers and sisters, for what is “not yet,” what a wonderful certainty we “already” have! What a joyful, unshakable assurance is given to us through the prophetic word – more fully confirmed for us in its fulfillment “*already*” on the holy mountain!

- 1 Thessalonians 5:4–10 — You are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.