

Question: Emmanuel, I Thessalonians 5:20 what does it mean not to despise prophecy?

i. Gifts and fulfillment

Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."

Hebrews 9:8-9

8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, 9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,

Hebrews 10:1

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

ii. We see this in the sacrifices of the Levitical Priesthood and the ministry of praise and thanksgiving

Leviticus 7:11-14

11'Now this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which shall be presented to the LORD. 12'If he offers it by way of thanksgiving, then along with the sacrifice of thanksgiving he shall offer unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of well stirred fine flour mixed with oil. 13'With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving, he shall present his offering with cakes of leavened bread. 14'Of this he shall present one of every offering as a contribution to the LORD; it shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offerings.

1 Peter 2:9

9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

1 Corinthians 3:16

16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Hebrews 9:13-15

1) Old Covenant: Animal Sacrifice by Levitical Priesthood

13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,

2) Animal Sacrifice: Fulfilled in Christ

14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

3) New Covenant: Fulfills Old

15 For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

4) New Covenant Practice: God accepts our “sacrifices” as expressions of praise, thanksgiving and service.

Hebrews 13:15-16

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. 16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Romans 12:1

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

iii. We see this also in the area of gifts and extra-Biblical Revelation

1) Gifts are divided roughly between those fulfilled and those continuing in their full form

1 Corinthians 4:6

6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.

Revelation 22:18-19

18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

iv. Any gift that entails extra-Biblical Revelation has been fulfilled in terms of it's physical manifestation but may continue in terms of it's spiritual manifestation.

Physical Manifestation: A prophet, standing before you saying, “Thus says the Lord...” (Application: write it down and staple to your Bible.)

Spiritual Manifestation/Fulfillment of the physical prophet standing before us and instead we have the holy, eternal, inerrant written Word - Holy Scripture. (Application is to memorize, meditate, study, read and hear God's written Word.)

v. Examples

Prophecy: The ministry of the prophet in terms of the physical prophet standing and saying “Thus says the Lord...” has been fulfilled. While the spiritual role of the prophetic utterance through the Holy, eternal, inerrant written Word of God continues. The actual existence of physical prophets to

who offer us continuing revelation to be added to Holy Scripture has ceased. Rather the spiritual role of the gift of prophecy is to bring prophetic utterances of Holy Scripture continually before the church.

1) Prophetic Utterance or Teaching

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

2) Despising Prophetic Utterance or Teaching

2 Peter 3:3-4

Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

3) Prophetic Utterance

Revelation 20:10

10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

4) Despising Prophetic Utterance or Teaching

Hell is ruled by satan

5) Prophetic Utterance

Revelation 20:15

15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 14:10-12

10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

6) Despising Prophetic Utterance or Teaching

There is not a real Hell with a real lake of fire. Hell is separation from God and eternal loneliness; or Hell is the cessation of existence, the lake of fire consumes the lost and they are destroyed forever.

7) Prophetic Utterance or Teaching

Hebrews 9:27

27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

8) **Despising Prophetic Utterance or Teaching**

People die and go to Heaven or Hell and come back to tell about their experiences.

9) **Prophetic Utterance or Teaching**

Hebrews 9:28

28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

10) **Despising Prophetic Utterance or Teaching**

Christ is not offered once but many times in the mass and Christ does not return once but returns many times appearing to both non-Christians and Christians.

vi. **The Despising of Prophetic Utterances or Teachings is a great problem today as men seek to make themselves equal with God by being the Word of God unto themselves rather than submitting to the authority of God's Holy, eternal, inerrant written Word.**

- 1) These charlatans are welcomed into the Church for their money making capabilities. They are sought after by the spiritually weak because they offer an alternative to the Lordship of Christ and the Authority of the Holy, eternal, inerrant written Word of God.
- 2) Their gifts and so called prophecies are not tested as required by God the Holy Spirit in *I John 4:1*
- 3) Nor are they placed under church discipline when found to be false.
- 4) The test is simple, the church secretary records carefully the so called prophecy and when it does not come true the so called prophet is rebuked and called to repentance. He is forbidden to continue in this false practice and if he continues he is put out of the church.