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Seven [^] Prophecies of September 2015
A TIME FOR DISCERNMENT



Over the last few months, September 2015 was prophesied as being one of the most significant months in Christian history. The past month was to bring about the **rapture**, an **economic collapse**, a **military takeover** by President Obama, an **asteroid** destroying the planet and the Pope announcing the **New World Order**. These prophecies were said to be based on some Biblical evidence, were accepted by many believers and were proclaimed by prominent Christian leaders across the globe.

“Time will tell” was the general response when the prophecies were made public, and time has indeed revealed the emptiness of the claims. 1 October 2015 bore witness that every prophecy was false, and even though hindsight is far easier than foresight, it was a warning against gullibility and a call for interpretations of end-times theories to be more Biblical. Equally important is the Biblical instruction to hold false prophets accountable for misleading and inaccurate predictions¹. At the least, Scripture should be honoured and any future predictions from the same ‘prophets’ should be judged (and ignored) according to history².

The fact that none of the seven predictions came to pass stems from the fact that none were truly Biblically prophetic. In any given month, a multiple increase in negative events could point towards the end-times, and September became a focus point this year because of the last “blood moon” and the supposed last day of the “shemitah” (Sabbath year). The previous time a month was deemed to be as prophetically important was December 2012, because of the Mayan Calendar. Clearly, if ‘signs’ are subjectively assigned prophetic significance according to human understanding, they don't predict the end.

THE SEVEN PROPHECIES

The following events were prophesied for September 2015. These predictions were not made in secret but published and marketed in printed and visual media. They have subsequently cost (and generated) millions of dollars internationally, have led many astray, and have created fear, division and anguish on a global scale.

The seven prophecies were as follows:

The Rapture: The supposed end of shemitah (the Sabbath year) on Rosh Hashana (the Jewish New Year) 2015 made it tempting to prophesy that the rapture would take place at this time. Add to this the “blood moon” prophecy, and the scene was set for ‘events of a Biblical nature’.

Financial Collapse: The end of the shemitah year on September 13th was prophesied as ushering in a financial meltdown as ‘God punished disobedient nations financially’.

Martial Law: The US domestic military exercise ended in September and many conspiracy theorists prophesied that martial law would be implemented in the US, which would allow President Obama to stay in office. Some also believed that Christians were going to be put into ‘FEMA concentration camps’ at this time.

¹ **Isaiah 44:25** “... who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense...”

Jeremiah 14:14 “Then the LORD said to me, ‘The prophets are prophesying lies in My name. I have not sent them or appointed them or spoken to them. They are prophesying to you false visions, divinations, idolatries and the delusions of their own minds.’”

Jeremiah 50:36 “A sword against her false prophets! They will become fools. A sword against her warriors! They will be filled with terror.”

Ezekiel 22:28 “Her prophets whitewash these deeds for them by false visions and lying divinations. They say, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says’--when the LORD has not spoken.”

Hosiah 11:6 “A sword will flash in their cities; it will devour their false prophets and put an end to their plans.”

² **Jeremiah 23:16** “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD.’”

The Blood Moons: Probably the biggest contributor to all these prophecies was the “four blood moons” theory – to do with the lunar eclipse tetrad of 2014-2015 that ended on September 28th. This has been associated with everything from the ‘Great Tribulation’ and the rapture to “something big” for Israel.

Asteroid Impact: An asteroid was supposed to hit earth on September 24th on the Jewish Day of Atonement.

CERN (LHC): There was also speculation that the world would end as a result of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), which was supposed to “open the abyss” in September 2015. This came on top of past speculations that CERN (the European Organisation for Nuclear Research) would create a mini black hole that would swallow the earth.

Pope Francis to announce the New World Order: The Pope’s visit to the US, and his address to the United Nations on 25 September, was supposed to coincide with the announcement of the ‘New World Order’ (see <http://incontextministries.org/index.php/investigate/hoaxology/9-hoaxology/1034-pope-to-implement-new-world-order>). An email in late August warned that the “New World Order would be implemented on September 25th with the New World Currency to be introduced on October 20th”. The email asserted that “the world is on the brink of a total Worldwide Financial Collapse.”

The Questions This Raises

The fact that none of these seven prophecies came true raises critical questions:

- How does the Church discern between what is true and what is false?
- Are unfulfilled prophecies due to bad judgement or bad character?
- What about the consequences for followers of false prophets?
- How do we view future predictions by these same ‘prophets’?

THE BIBLICAL QUALIFICATIONS OF A PROPHET

Sadly, the Church is full of self-proclaimed prophets who speak ‘in the name of God’ without a clear understanding of the responsibility and consequences thereof. Under scrutiny, they ultimately fail the Biblical test of a prophet. Christians accept false prophets as being legitimate primarily due to a lack of Biblical knowledge, and as a result, they do not hold them accountable for false predictions.

The fate of a false prophet in Biblical times was quite severe. According to Ezekiel 13v9: “The Lord declares that His hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations.” Matthew Henry comments on this verse as follows: *“God’s hand shall be upon them, to seize them and bring them to His bar, to shut them out from His presence, and they will find it a fearful thing to fall into His hands. They pretend to be prophets, particular favourites of heaven, and authorised to preside in the congregation of His church on earth; but, by pretending to the honours they were not entitled to, they lost those that otherwise they might have enjoyed.”*

The first act in dealing with false prophets should be a Biblical discernment of what a prophet should look like, according to God. The “blood moon” prophets and those who predicted the “New World Order” were not the first who proclaimed false divinations nor will they be the last.

The solution to this problem is to gain discernment from Scripture concerning prophets. No one need be deceived as to whether a professed prophet is true or false. Standards have been established in the Bible that make it possible to determine which messengers have come with messages from God and which are counterfeits. If the Biblical tests are applied consistently and persistently to the life and teachings of any prophet, they will reveal the source of their communications.

Five tests in identifying true prophets:

(with reference to the writing of Ellen G. White, <http://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/660.632>)

Test 1. *“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”* Isaiah 8:20

“If any teaching or action deviates from the pattern prescribed in the revealed standard of truth [the Bible] it is to be recognised as coming from the realm of darkness rather than light. Prophets spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit never contradicts His former instruction. All else that stems from the same source will harmonise with what has already been given.” For a Christian leader, therefore, to encourage his followers to

arm themselves with weapons (as one of the 'New World Order' prophets did) is not consistent with the words of Christ throughout Scripture.

Test 2. *"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Matthew 7:20*

"The setting for this statement is the latter part of the Sermon on the Mount in connection with the warning Jesus gave to His disciples, 'Beware of false prophets'. On the basis that every good tree produces good fruit, and that a corrupt tree produces corrupt fruit, Jesus presents another test to be applied to prophets.

- What kind of fruit is brought forth in their lives?
- What influence do their teachings have on others?
- What results show up in the life of the church as a whole?"

These lead to critical questions believers need to ask themselves:

- Does the prophecy make me hate more or love more?
- Does the prophecy fill me with fear or with hope?
- Does the prophecy mobilise me to share the Gospel or move me towards self-preservation?
- Do I see a call to Christ in the prophecy or a fear of man?
- Is the prophecy based on talking with God or star gazing?

Test 3. *"When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him." Jeremiah 28:9*

"Prediction is not the major work of the prophet; but in many instances the prophets claim that by divine inspiration they had been given insight into the future. Part of the testing of a prophet is observing whether or not his predictions are fulfilled." All of a prophet's predictions must be carefully scrutinised and their fulfilment observed, especially if it is date-specific, like the September 2015 prophecies.

Test 4. *"Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." 1 John 4:2*

"The Word becoming flesh is the incarnation of the Son of God as man. Earlier verses in the first chapter of John set forth the Word as God, the Creator, the Source of life, and the Light of mankind. His virgin birth, His sinless life, His atoning death, His resurrection and ascension, His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary as High Priest, and His second coming, are all closely related to His coming in the flesh. The first four are parts of His earthly life and experience. The others are made possible by what He accomplished while He was here on earth. All of these must be recognised and taught by the one accepted as a true prophet. And this is not to be a mere theoretical acknowledgment of the truth; the life of the prophet should correspond with the profession. One who denies the teaching of the Bible in any of these truths pertaining to Christ, His life, and His redemption is not confessing that 'Jesus Christ is come in the flesh', and is not, therefore, 'of God'. See 2 John 7."

Test 5: *A "higher spiritual plane... in the messages of true prophets there is nothing cheap, common or childish."*

"While their writings deal with ordinary, everyday affairs of life, they do so in a dignified and fitting manner. Though great truths are expressed simply enough for children to understand, they are not childish, but profound enough to engage the keenest scholars in ever-expanding research. The spiritual principles laid down are the most lofty known to the human mind. Both the theme of the Bible and its mode of expression are worthy of, and command the respect of, the most learned as well as the most humble.

Messages brought by the prophets are of a practical and useful nature. There are no weird fantasies, conspiracy theories, idle threats or pointless ramblings in their communications. Though some messages are given in symbolic language, their intent may be discovered by following clearly discernible rules of interpretation. We may repeat Paul's statement that all Scripture is profitable.

The words of the Master clearly point out that one of the spiritual problems of those who live in the days preceding His second advent is that of dealing with false Christs and false prophets. These imposters will have little success among those who have been fortified with the truth and who know how to apply the tests. Every member of the remnant church should be so familiar with these criteria that he will automatically apply them in every instance where they are needed, without having to ask, 'How can I tell whether this prophet is true or false?'"

However...

There is a clear Biblical distinction between false prophets and false prophecies. A false prophet is someone who tries to deceive people into an unbiblical and faithless life. Even though the September doomsday prophets need

to give an account of their erroneous predictions, it should be said in their defence that their motive was never to lead people away from God. It may well be that there was economic advantage for some of the 'prophets' who marketed products associated with the predictions, but for the most part, there seemed to be an honest call to prepare for the end.

THE CONTENT OF A BIBLICAL PROPHECY

One of the key elements of any prophecy is not prediction nor interpretation but a call to repentance³. This is always a clear indication of whether a prophecy could be from God or not. If it is simply a prediction about events to follow (like many "blood moon" interpretations turned out to be) without a call to repentance, then it is most likely not from the Lord. If it does not mobilise people to a greater sense of urgency in proclaiming the good news of Christ then it should be seen for what it is: a prediction based on human understanding. Christian leaders who predicted the announcement of the New World Order called people to gather gold, stock up on food supplies and be armed to fight (<http://www.lindseywilliams.net/store-food-water-and-firearms/>), and any Bible-believing follower of Christ should have identified this as unbiblical, un-Christlike and therefore a false prophecy.

Secondly, a Biblical prophecy should also fall within a Biblical timeframe. Prophecies in Scripture indicate that one event will follow another with the final event being the proclamation of the Gospel to the ends of the earth⁴. The fact that the "blood moons" suddenly line up with Jewish dates and connect with a Bible verse 'in a prophetic way' does not nullify the other events which should also take place before we witness the end. There are a number of prophetic events that should take place before we believe predictions and interpretations.

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

There should be a three-fold response to failed prophecies: accountability, repentance and forgiveness.

The authors of the false prophecies should own up for leading people astray and should be accountable for speaking falsely in the name of Jesus. The book entitled "*THE FOUR BLOOD MOONS*" was one of the *New York Times*' best-selling paperbacks in March 2014 and generated millions of dollars in revenue. Prophecies were never meant to turn a profit, and when millions are made in the name of God, there should be an accountability factor present.

There should be an equally serious attempt to repent and refrain from seeking excuses and making future predictions. To falsely prophesy that the Pope is the anti-Christ who will announce a New World Order creates enormous suspicion among fellow believers, taking prophecy into a level of ungodly slander. Those who believe they have the right to slander people in the name of God should repent not only for proclaiming falsehoods but also for creating fear, hatred and division⁵.

For those who believed the prophets, following the predictions religiously, there should be as much forgiveness as there should be a warning. We as Bible readers ought to know better when it comes to people claiming the ability to foretell the future (even if they are Christians). Jesus said quite plainly that "no man knows" when the day of His return will be⁶. Why not? Because it has not been revealed by God yet, let alone put in the Bible. Jesus said even He and the angels did not know this.

³ **Lamentations 2:14** "The visions of your prophets were false and worthless; they did not expose your sin to ward off your captivity. The prophecies they gave you were false and misleading."

⁴ **Mark 13:10** "And the gospel must first be preached to all nations."

Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

⁵ **Leviticus 19:16** "Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbour's life. I am the LORD."

Psalms 15:3 "...whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbour, and casts no slur on others..."

Proverbs 10:18 "Whoever conceals hatred with lying lips and spreads slander is a fool."

Matthew 15:19 "For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander."

Ephesians 4:31 "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice."

Titus 3:2 "... to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone."

James 4:11 "Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it."

⁶ **Matthew 24:36** "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."

We ought to know that unless the future is revealed by God, humans don't know exactly what will happen for sure on what date for events out of human control.

IN CONCLUSION

Yes, a number of events that were predicted did actually take place, but without any of the prophesied events that were supposed to accompany them. This is probably the reason why so many Christians believed the prophets that built their theories on events rather than on the Word:

- The massive asteroid that was prophesied to bring about an apocalypse did indeed pass by Earth on Thursday, 24 September. But even though the asteroid came close to the planet, in terms of cosmic scale, it did not impact the planet as prophesied, according to the US space agency NASA. As it turned out, the asteroid known as 2012 TT5 zoomed past Earth at a distance of about 5 million miles, nearly 22 times as far away as the moon.
- In an historic speech delivered at the opening of the 70th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on Friday 25 September, Pope Francis called for a defence of the environment and a recognition and adherence to "moral law" in society, while knocking abortion, war, Christian persecution and "anomalous" lifestyles. The Pope touched on issues such as human trafficking, climate change, sexual exploitation, social and economic justice and international security, as well as the issue of the persecution of Christians and general religious minorities in the Middle East and Africa.
His words had nothing to do with announcing a 'New World Order'. Neither were they another 'deceiving speech' – the accusation of many false prophets. These were the words of someone who, according to the *Christian Post*, "proved to be a unifying proclaimer of Jesus" (26 September).
- The "blood moon" lunar eclipse also appeared on 28 September as predicted, but no great event accompanied it as prophesied.

It is indeed a time to not only discern between good and evil, but especially between good and better, and better and best. It is a time for virtuous and wise believers to reflect Biblical attitudes and implement Godly principles.

It is a time to discern.

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