

Ronald L. Dart Ministries



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NEWSLETTER

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Why Prophecy?

An article written by Ronald L. Dart

“Surely the LORD God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets. The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The LORD God hath spoken, who can but prophecy?” (Amos 3:7-8).

If you advanced a prophecy and the prophecy came to pass, you might expect to have a following the very next day. Would it surprise you to know that many would-be prophets have a following even *before* their prophecies come to pass? If you set your prophecy 15 years into the future, chances are you will have at least a small following until then.

Even the pretense of foretelling the future is fascinating to us. Every year the prophecies of various seers are published and read with interest—never mind that for every prediction that works out they have 100 that fail.

Consider this: Suppose we set up a scientific experiment with 1000 people predicting the results of the toss of a single coin. Since there are only two choices, the coin will fall heads about half the time, so about half of our experimenters will be right every time we toss the coin. On the first toss, 500 will be right, and we can send the other 500 home. After the next toss, we will have 250 left. If we carry on our experiment, in the end we will have sent 999 people home, and we will have one man left. This man called the fall of the coin correctly ten times in a row.

Is this one person better at calling the fall of the coin than the other 999 who tried? Not at all—he may have flipped a coin himself to decide which way to call it. But you would be surprised how many people would attribute special powers to such a person—or perhaps to the coin. But in truth, the law of averages predetermined that one person out of the thousand would succeed. There was no way to predict which person.

So the fact that a psychic is right about one prediction means nothing—she may have made a thousand predictions to get that one right. But that one right prophecy will earn her a following. It is a measure of our fascination with the future.

But there is a problem with the future: it does not exist. The future is being determined moment by moment by the decisions of billions of people and trillions of chance events. The combinations of outcomes are endless. Since the future does not exist, the future is unknowable.

But wait. If the future is unknowable, then even God cannot know the future. How can there be prophecy? Carefully read again the Scripture at the beginning of this piece. The answer is there.

God does not know what you are going to have for supper tonight. He can make a prediction based on the fact that your wife just bought some salmon at the market and has tartar sauce on her shopping list. But even God cannot know if your wife will ruin the fish or if you will decide to work late and have a cheeseburger. These are things God has left you to determine for yourself.

God does, however, know what he intends to do, and this is the basis of all prophecy. God decides what he will do and then reveals his secret to the prophets.

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Is Prophecy History Written in Advance?

By Ronald L. Dart

Edited from the transcript of *Why Prophecy?*

This idea that “prophecy is history written in advance” is highly problematic and it is important that we know that. Implicit in this idea are some assumptions that many people make about prophecy—assumptions that have led us to make some flagrant mistakes and undermine our credibility when we speak about prophecy. They make these errors because their fundamental philosophy, their fundamental idea about prophecy is wrong.

If God wrote history in advance, then God wrote Hitler, Auschwitz, Birkenau, the Nazis, and the SS into the plan. He wrote the Holocaust into history ahead of time if prophecy is history written in advance. How could a loving God write a history like the one we are living?

So, let’s see if we can get something straight. The idea that “prophecy is history written in advance” is an assumption. It is a hypothesis. It is a theory. It is not the truth and it is a theory that we can test, that we can check out. The future is being created moment by moment by the decisions you make and more importantly by the decisions that God makes. And a lot of the decisions that God makes are based upon the decisions that you make. Tomorrow will be determined by the decisions and the choices that are made by all of us today. It doesn’t exist otherwise. Tomorrow will be different if you choose differently on the things that you are going to do today. The future does not exist. The future is predictable, but it is not knowable and that is something you are going to have to wrestle with. The future grows out of the decisions that we and God are making today. Here is proof.

The Prophet Jonah

The proof of what I am saying lies in an obscure Old Testament book—the book of the prophet Jonah. We know how Jonah was given a message by God for some reason that is not really explained. Jonah said, “I don’t want to do this,” and he took off in the opposite direction. There were great storms on the sea and the ship was about to sink. Jonah warned them, “Well, I was fleeing from God,” and it scared them all to death. So he told them finally, “Throw me over the side and God will make the seas calm and you will survive.”

They didn’t really want to do that, but when they saw they couldn’t make it, they threw him over the side. And God had prepared a great fish that ate him up and carried him away. He prayed to God from the fish’s belly and repented of his attitudes. Finally the fish vomited him up on the shore and Jonah went to Nineveh.

This is a story that all of us find so fascinating. But the real story of Jonah only begins now. “The word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time saying, Get up. Go to Nineveh, that great city and you preach unto it the preaching that I tell you” (Jonah 3:1).

So Jonah got up and he went to Nineveh according to the Word of the Lord. Nineveh was a great city, about three days journey, and he entered into the city and he cried. You all know the cry don’t you? “And yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” He takes a few more steps down the street and he says, (yelling) “And yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”

I want you to answer a couple of questions for me:

- Is this a prophecy? Yes.
- Did it come from God? Yes.
- Do you think that God would give Jonah a prophecy that was not true? No.
- Was Jonah a false prophet? No.
- Is the prophecy true? Yes.
- Did the prophecy come to pass? No.

Do you see our problem? There is a giant problem in the middle of this. You read Jonah and you kind of know the story. You know what happened. The people of Nineveh actually heard Jonah’s prophecy and they repented. The king heard it and said, “Hold it. Everybody fast. Make the animals fast. No food, no water for anybody, no animals, nothing. Put on sackcloth. Oh, by the way, put sackcloth on the cows. Throw dirt on them. Let them cry and moan for water and let us all cry and moan before God because the end of us is right at hand!” And God looked down and said, “Well, look at that. Look at that.” Forty days came and forty days went and Nineveh was not overthrown.

Now if prophecy is history written in advance we have a problem because the actual events that played out were these. Jonah came to town saying “And yet

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Why Prophecy?

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The prophet, on God's instruction, writes it down or gives it orally.

With this as a given, then it has to follow that God has a purpose in letting us in on his plans. It seems highly unlikely that God gives us predictions of the future just to satisfy our curiosity or to give us an advantage over our competitors. Why, then, does God tell us what will happen in the future?

When you have asked this question, you have made the most important single step in understanding prophets and prophecy.

Prophecy comes to us for two important reasons: (1) God wants us to do something about the prophecy, and do it *now*, or (2) he wants us to understand history as it takes place. The first is a warning; the second a revelation.

You can find the simplest and clearest illustration of this, not in a prophetic book, but in Genesis. In this case, the prophet was God himself.

There came a day when Abraham saw three "men" approaching his camp in the hot afternoon. One of them was the Lord, the other two were angels. After they had shared a meal together, God made a specific promise to Abraham and Sarah regarding the birth of a son (Genesis 18:10). The promise was a revelation of something God intended to do. The promise was necessary lest Abraham and Sarah assume the birth of Isaac was an accident.

But God had not come solely to give this promise. It was also his intent to make a final determination of the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. He told two men—Abraham and Lot—what he intended to do, and he told them for two very different reasons. God told Abraham because he wanted him to understand. He told Lot because he wanted him to move.

As Abraham and the Lord walked together, the Lord asked himself, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation. . . For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD. . ." (vv. 17-19).

God wanted Abraham to understand, because Abraham would pass the word. He would explain to his children and his household what God did to Sodom and why he did it. In fact, you would not be reading these words had Abraham not seen to it that the record of this encounter was preserved.

And so Abraham received the prophecy: "Behold," said the Lord, "because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know."

Later, when Abraham saw the smoke of Sodom ascending, he knew what God had found. Because of the prophecy, he knew that God had done it, and he knew *why*.

In a way, God's visit to Sodom seems unnecessary. Surely he already knew how bad the city was. Why, then, did he go at all? There were two reasons. One reason is reflected in Abraham's response to the prophecy. "What if there are fifty righteous people in the city," he asked, "will you destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

Abraham was concerned for his nephew, Lot, who lived in Sodom. God promised that if he found so many as ten righteous souls in Sodom that he would spare the whole city for the sake of the ten. It was necessary for God to go to Sodom, not so much to find out how bad it was, but to *demonstrate* how bad it was. The men of Sodom were allowed to show their colors one last time. There were not ten righteous souls to be found. There was only one.

It was for this one that they came. Like Abraham, Lot was given the prophecy of what God intended to do. This time, there was nothing for Lot to understand. He was given a warning, and God expected him to act on it immediately. The two angels that came to Lot told him to get his sons and daughters and get out of Sodom: "For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it."

There is a sad footnote to this. Lot, by receiving the message from the angels, became a prophet. He took the prophecy to his daughter's husbands, but they thought him a fool. He told his wife the angels had warned them not to look back, but she did and became a pillar of salt.

Nothing has changed. Men are just as interested in the future as they ever were. If you tell them what is coming in the years ahead they listen with interest. But few really care to understand—to see the hand of God in history. And fewer still seem to take warning.

It will take a lot to make some people finally see the hand of God in history. Like those who heard the words of Jeremiah, they will suffer calamity on top of disaster, and still refuse to see meaning in it. "They have believed

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the LORD, and said, It is not He; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine” (Jeremiah 5:12). “It is not God who did it,” they say, “it is just bad luck. You’ll see. It will get better.”

It is only the prophets who stand in the gap. It is the prophets who cry against the sins of people and tell them that God is working in history. It is the prophets who tell them what is coming, so that when it is here, they will know that God has done it.

If you like to study prophecy, you do well. But don’t try to become a fortune teller. Try to understand God. When he is ready for you to see the future he will show it to you. Until then, you may be better off living in the present.

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forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” The people of Nineveh repented; God changed his mind and did not destroy the city. The future of Nineveh was still open when Jonah walked into that city.

To get this entire message by Ronald L. Dart, order your copy of *Why Prophecy?* from the order form enclosed, by calling 1-888-BIBLE-44, or emailing the CEM office at adm@borntowin.net. You can also visit our website at www.borntowin.net and listen online.

Born To Win—Radio Benin

By Michael Porter

- **Monday 8:30 P.M.**
- **Tuesday 6:00 A.M.**
- **Wednesday 2:30 P.M.**
- **Thursday 8:30 P.M.**
- **Friday 8:00 A.M.**
- **Saturday 7:30 A.M.**
- **Sunday 8:00 A.M.**

The 2018 Benin Feast of Tabernacles, September 23 to October 1, will be held at Maison Du Peuple in Allada, a town located in the Atlantique Department of Benin. We hope to lodge in a local hotel throughout the period and we shall also distribute free Bibles to many of our radio listeners in attendance.

Calling Christian Warriors

By Blake Silverstein

Firstly, we would like to thank each and every one of you who have prayed and donated to make this ministry possible. Christian Educational Ministries is able to deliver on the Great Commission because of Christian Warriors just like you.

Right now we also need help with Social Media—particularly Facebook. More than a billion people from around the world use Facebook every day. The opportunity to reach unbelievers, “the lost”, and other Christians both young and old is overwhelming. It is a BIG task that requires a lot of people to do a little work.

What can you do to help us spread the Gospel? It is simple and easy. Simply “like” our Christian Educational Ministries Facebook page and:

- Share our daily radio broadcasts, Scripture images, the Friday Night Bible Study and our weekly sermon videos.
- Ask others to do this as well.
- And please don’t forget to post your comments.

You wouldn’t believe how much sharing this content with others will boost its reach. If you are part of other social groups, share with them as well. This is a *FREE* and simple way to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world (Matthew 28) in the 21st century.

In addition to your prayers and generous tithes and offerings, you can make a difference by clicking a button and sharing God’s Word with Christians and unbelievers of all ages and places.



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That the man of God may be proficient and equipped for every good work.

Gentleness: Theme of October Scripture Writing Plan



So far this year we have written scriptures about God, faith, hope, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and goodness. This month's theme is gentleness. Our goal is to have read and written down a minimum of 365 scriptures by the end of 2018. Let's do this and see the value it brings to our lives.

Note: The New International Version (NIV) was used to source these scriptures.

October 1	Galatians 5:22-23	October 11	Hebrews 5:1-4	October 21	Matthew 12:18-21
October 2	1 Peter 3:15-16	October 12	1 Kings 19:11-12	October 22	Matthew 21:4-5
October 3	1 Thessalonians 2:7-8	October 13	Isaiah 30:18	October 23	Philippians 2:1-4
October 4	1 Timothy 3:1-5	October 14	Isaiah 40:11	October 24	Philippians 4:4-7
October 5	1 Timothy 6:11-12	October 15	Isaiah 42:1-4	October 25	Proverbs 15:1-2
October 6	2 Corinthians 10:1-6	October 16	Isaiah 54:8	October 26	Proverbs 25:15
October 7	2 Timothy 2:24-26	October 17	Isaiah 63:15-16	October 27	Proverbs 26:17
October 8	Colossians 3:12-14	October 18	James 3:17	October 28	Psalms 18:35
October 9	Ephesians 4:1-6	October 19	Luke 1:76-79	October 29	Romans 15:7-9
October 10	Galatians 6:1-3	October 20	Matthew 11:29-30	October 30	Romans 2:4-5
				October 31	Titus 3:1-2

CEM Mission Statement

Christian Educational Ministries (CEM) was founded in November 1995 by Ron and Allie Dart as an independent, non-denominational ministry to serve the public and individual Christians of every kind through the ministry of Ronald L.

Dart. Mr. Dart, an ordained minister and evangelist, has served God through hundreds of sermons, broadcasts, Bible Studies, and books—bringing clarity and simplicity to topics.

CEM promotes Ron Dart's radio ministry, *Born to Win*, which is heard from coast-to-coast. His clear, conversational, and inviting style can be heard the world over. The *Born to Win* website, www.borntowin.net, features more than 1000 of Mr. Dart's timeless sermons and studies at any one time.

Our mission is:

First, to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. (Matthew 28).

Second, to teach the disciples of Jesus Christ so that they may be "proficient and equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:17).

Third, to teach and train this generation and the next with studies and programs focused on youth, through the Dart's special passion, Youth Educational Adventures (YEA). (Deuteronomy 11:19, Proverbs 22:6).

Fourth, to bring God's people closer together, through cooperative efforts wherever they may be. (2 Corinthians 5:18).

To this end, we teach the Bible and its Truth, with a goal of helping people make their own lives work while they are a positive influence and blessing to those around them. Follow Mr. Dart and CEM at www.borntowin.net, Facebook, YouTube, and other media.

Born to Win

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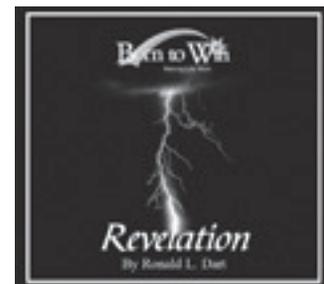


Why Prophecy? - FREE CD

Does God have an exact schedule for end-time events? Is prophecy “history written in advance”? Ronald L. Dart examines our methods of analyzing prophecy and the damage caused by mistakes in doing so. He challenges a lot of assumptions about prophecy and the future. Ron Dart’s conclusion? “All prophecy is conditional.” The Bible shows us that we need not say “There is no hope.” God tells us the future so that we can change the future... just look at Nineveh. This CD will include a bonus message on *Jonah*.

Revelation - CD Album

What happens to “that old serpent which deceiveth the whole world” (Revelation 12:9)? Mr. Dart will open your understanding to the most obscure book in the Bible. At last you can learn what the mysterious symbols and visions mean. The background of the Book of Revelation, its connection to Old Testament prophecy, and how it sheds light on the teachings of Jesus will be made clear. John said: “Blessed is the one who reads the word of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear what is written in it, because the time is near” (Revelation 1:3 NIV). Don’t be caught off guard. You need to be prepared. Regularly priced at \$63.95 and offered to you on CD for only \$31.95 and in MP3 format for \$22.95.



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