THE CURIOUS PROPHETS

One of the most amazing things about the Bible is the way in which, over a period of centuries, God scattered numerous clues concerning things to come in the Christian Age. It is when one puts all these clues together that he realizes that God had a very important set of plans.

The clues begin in the Garden of Eden when Satan was told that his head would be bruised by the seed of woman. Abraham was promised that all nations would be blessed through his seed. Moses foretold that in the future God would raise up a leader like himself (Deut. 18:15).

It became evident through the years that God was planning to raise up a very special deliverer--a "messiah". David (Psalms 110:4) revealed that this deliverer would be a priest---after the order of Melchizedek. (He made no further comments or explanation---especially puzzling since he was speaking at a time when there was already a well-established priesthood established by the Law of Moses….and since any new priesthood would necessitate a basic change in the Mosaic law). It is only when we read Hebrews 7 that we see what David was referring to.

Jeremiah (31:31-34) pointed out that God would have a whole new system ("covenant") which would be quite different from the Law of Moses. Daniel (2:44) pointed out that God would set up an entirely new kingdom, one that would endure forever.

Isaiah (chapter 2) provides some specific details of what will happen when God makes these great changes. We learn that it will be in the "last days", that the message will go out from Jerusalem, and that it will include outreach to all nations.

Questions arise concerning all these bits of information provided over many centuries from multiple sources. How did they know about what was going to happen? Did they understand the significance of what they were saying? Did those who heard---or read---their words understand what these men were talking about?

We really do not have a clear answer to these questions---*until* we read I Peter, chapter 1;. We find these very revealing words in verses 10-12:

"Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, *searched intently* and with the greatest care, *trying to find out* the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. *Even angels* long to look into these things."

Amazing! So all of these people knew that God was having them speak of wonderful events some time in the future. How curious they must have been! They tried to get the Lord to let them in on these momentous developments. But the answer was…"No". They were serving future generations (Us!). Peter pointed out that not only the prophets, but even *angels* knew something big was up, but they too were kept "in the dark". (Do you suppose this was in the backs of their minds when they finally found out and rejoiced mightily at the birth of Jesus?). No wonder Paul

referred to the "mystery" as he wrote in Colossians 1:26, "…the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is *now* disclosed to the saints."

In order to be pleasing to God one has to have faith. But God has never demanded a *blind* faith. He always provides an abundance of evidence on which our faith can be founded.

When Paul wrote (Romans 10:17) that faith comes from hearing God's message, he was fully aware of all the convincing evidence provided in the multiple prophecies which were fulfilled in his generation. No one could reasonably conclude that all these ancients---by pure coincidence or accident- could have woven together such an amazing set of accurate predictions. God's presence in the process is unmistakable.

May we never forget or fail to appreciate the marvelous legacy of faith-building evidence which God has provided for our generation!