THE QUESTION

What did the early Christians believe about prophecy?

Asked by a THF member on May 22, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 14 numbered quotations · the 47 early Christian passages and 246 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-christians-believe-about-prophecy

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

The early Christians taught that true prophets spoke by the Holy Spirit, not by their own power, and that the fulfillment of their words showed they came from God. They read the prophets as pointing to Christ, held that prophetic gifts continued in the church, and warned against false prophets who spoke from other spirits.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

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POINT 1 OF 8

Prophets spoke by the Spirit, not themselves

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Hippolytus compares the prophets to musical instruments played by the Word. They did not speak their own ideas but what God revealed. Justin likewise describes the prophets as righteous men, filled with the Holy Spirit, who said only what they saw and heard.

1 "When they were moved by Him, the prophets announced what God willed. For they did not speak by their own power, let there be no mistake about that."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Hippolytus,** *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* 1 (c. 200–236 AD) **Source 28, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

2 "Long ago, before our time, there were certain men more ancient than all those known as philosophers, both righteous and loved by God, who spoke by the Divine Spirit and foretold events that would happen and are now happening. They are called prophets."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *Dialogue with Trypho* (c. 130–165 AD) **Source 4, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 8

Fulfilled prophecy shows it came from God

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tertullian tells pagan readers that the world's events were written beforehand in Scripture, and that true predictions prove their source is from above. Origen adds that the prophecies were kept so later readers could see them fulfilled and be drawn to godly living.

3 "Now, I think that the truth of a prophecy proves that it is from above."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *Apology* 20 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 25, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

4 "These predictions, being shown by events to have come from the Spirit of God, bind men to the practice of piety as it is set forth in the law and the prophets."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 10 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 33, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

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POINT 3 OF 8

The prophets spoke above all about Christ

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Barnabas says the prophets received grace from Christ and prophesied about Him. Lactantius says their words could not be fully understood until Christ fulfilled and explained them.

5 “The prophets, having received grace from Him, prophesied about Him.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Barnabas,** *Epistle of Barnabas* (c. 70–132 AD) **Source 1, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

6 “For the prophets spoke about Him, and what they said could not have been understood in any way unless it had been completely fulfilled.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Divine Institutes* 15 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 45, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 8

The same Spirit explains what He foretold

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus teaches that the Spirit who spoke through the prophets also gave the true meaning of their words through the church's elders. Origen notes that the prophets spoke plainly about how to live, but put deeper mysteries in riddles and parables for diligent seekers.

7 “The same Spirit of God, who spoke through the prophets about what the coming of the Lord would be like, provided a true interpretation of these prophecies through the elders.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book III* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 11, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

8 “But in deeper and more mysterious subjects, which lay beyond the reach of common understanding, they set them forth in the form of enigmas and allegories, or of what are called dark sayings, parables, or similitudes.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 10 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 33, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

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POINT 5 OF 8

Christ fulfilled and sealed the old prophecies

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Tertullian reads Daniel's words about vision and prophet being sealed as pointing to Christ. In his view Christ completes everything announced about Him, so the long line of prophecy that looked ahead to His coming reaches its goal in Him.

9 “This is because Christ is the seal of all the prophets, fulfilling everything that had long before been announced concerning Him.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *An Answer to the Jews* 11 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 23, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 8

Prophetic gifts continued in the church

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Justin tells a Jewish debate partner that prophetic gifts are still found among Christians. Irenaeus says he hears many church members with prophetic gifts. A writer against the Montanists says Paul meant prophecy to remain in the whole church until Christ returns.

10 “The prophetic gifts are still with us, even today.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *Dialogue with Trypho* (c. 130–165 AD) **Source 5, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

11 “Similarly, we also hear many members in the Church who have prophetic gifts, speaking all kinds of languages through the Spirit and revealing hidden truths for the common good and declaring God's mysteries.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book V* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 15, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

12 “For the apostle considers that the gift of prophecy should remain in the whole Church until the time of the final coming.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Asterius Urbanus,** *Extant Writings of Asterius Urbanus* 1 (c. 232–250 AD) **Source 36, page 8** Read it in the library ›
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POINT 7 OF 8

False prophets answer what people want

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Hermas warns that a false prophet has no divine Spirit and tells doubters what their own desires want to hear, like a fortune teller. The Spirit from God is not consulted on demand but speaks on His own.

13

"And he, the false prophet, not having the power of a Divine Spirit in him, answers them according to their questions and according to their wicked desires, and fills their souls with expectations according to their own wishes."

later in the same passage

"For no spirit given by God needs to be asked."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Hermas,** *Shepherd* (c. 90–150 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 2, page 6 Read it in the library ›

POINT 8 OF 8

Frenzied prophecy broke with church custom

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Describing the start of the Montanist movement, this writer says Montanus fell into a frenzy and spoke strange things. Many believers rebuked him because his kind of prophecy was contrary to what the church had received and kept from the beginning.

14

"Suddenly, being seized with a kind of frenzy and ecstasy, he raved, and began to speak and utter strange things, and to prophesy in a way contrary to the custom of the Church, as handed down from early times and preserved from there forward in continuous succession."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Asterius Urbanus,** *Extant Writings of Asterius Urbanus* 1 (c. 232–250 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 35, page 8 Read it in the library ›

THE LIMITS

What these passages don't tell us

- These passages do not explain how prophecy was used in ordinary church meetings.
- They do not fully settle how Tertullian's words about prophecy being sealed fit with others who say the gift continued.

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- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 47 early Christian passages and 246 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–47, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 48–132, in Bible order), then 161 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *47 passages from 16 writers*

Barnabas, *c. 70–132 AD · source 1*

1 *Epistle of Barnabas* (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 3** "prophets, having obtained grace from Him, prophesied concerning Him… [continues online] **read ›**

Hermas, *c. 90–150 AD · source 2*

2 *Shepherd* **Quote 13, page 5** "then, the Divine Spirit take rewards and prophesy… [continues online] **read ›**

Justin Martyr, *c. 130–165 AD · sources 3–8*

3 *First Apology* (on point 3) the prophecies that were not yet understood, they had a ruler, as foretold by the holy and divine Spirit of prophecy through Moses, "that a ruler would not fail the… [continues online] **read ›**

4 *Dialogue with Trypho* (1885 English) **Quote 2, page 2** "are called prophets. These alone both saw and announced the truth to men, neither reverencing nor fearing any man, not influenced by a desire for glory, but speaking those things… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Dialogue with Trypho* (1885 English) **Quote 10, page 4** "the prophetical gifts remain with us, even to the present time… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *First Apology* (1885 English; on point 3) "that the Spirit of prophecy might signify to us that He who suffers these things has an ineffable origin, and rules His enemies, He spake thus: "His generation who shall… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *First Apology* (1885 English; on point 2) "when the Spirit of prophecy speaks as predicting things that are to come to pass, He speaks in this way: "For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Dialogue with Trypho* (1885 English; on point 3) "the whole prophecy refers to Hezekiah, and it is proved that it was fulfilled in him, according to the terms of this prophecy… [continues online] **read ›**

Theophilus of Antioch, *c. 169–183 AD · sources 9–10*

9 *To Autolycus* 33 (1885 English; on point 1) "that we Christians alone have possessed the truth, inasmuch as we are taught by the Holy Spirit, who spoke in the holy prophets, and foretold all things… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *To Autolycus* 9 (1885 English; on point 1) of God carrying in them a holy spirit and becoming prophets, being inspired and made wise by God, became God-taught, and holy, and righteous… [continues online] **read ›**

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Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 11–17*

11 *Against Heresies: Book III* (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 3** “For the one and the same Spirit of God, who proclaimed by the prophets what and of what sort the advent of the Lord should be, did by these elders… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Against Heresies: Book III* (on point 6) Spirit. Truly wretched individuals! They wish to be false prophets, but they reject the gift of prophecy from the Church, acting like the Encratites who, due to hypocrites, distance themselves… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 2) “prophecy is a prediction of things future, that is, a setting forth beforehand of those things which shall be afterwards… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Against Heresies: Book III* of man so that humankind might also become the sons of God? Mary, rejoicing over this, exclaimed, prophesying on behalf of the Church, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my… [continues online] **read ›**

15 *Against Heresies: Book V* **Quote 11, page 4** “it to be like His own Son. Through the Father's hands, meaning through the Son and the Holy Spirit, humans, not just a part of humans, were made in… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (on point 1) “Seeing it through the spirit of prophecy, he rejoiced… [continues online] **read ›**

17 *Against Heresies: Book V* (on point 1) t be what He appeared to be. I've already noted that Abraham and the other prophets saw Him in a prophetic way, foretelling in visions what was to come… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 18–21*

18 *Stromata* 6.15 (on point 3) “all the prophets who foretold the Lord's coming, and the holy mysteries accompanying it, were persecuted and killed… [continues online] **read ›**

19 *Stromata* 4.21 “another the working of miracles; to another prophecy… [continues online] **read ›**

20 *Stromata* 6.15 (1885 English; on point 4) “it was spoken from the beginning to those only who understand… [continues online] **read ›**

21 *Stromata* 6.8 (1885 English; on point 4) “prophecy is full of knowledge (gnosis), inasmuch as it was given by the Lord, and again explained by the Lord to the apostles… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 22–25*

22 *Against Marcion* 8 “will be the spirit of might. "To another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *An Answer to the Jews* 11 (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 4** “so, since prophecy has been fulfilled through His advent — that is, through the nativity, which we have above commemorated, and the passion, which we have evidently explained — that is the… [continues online] **read ›**

24 *De Anima (On the Soul)* 9 (1885 English; on point 6) “seeing that we acknowledge spiritual charismata, or gifts, we too have merited the attainment of the prophetic gift, although coming after John (the Baptist… [continues online] **read ›**

25 *Apology* 20 (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 2** “very seasons and elements going out of their ordinary course, monsters and portents taking the place of nature's forms — it was all foreseen and predicted before it came to… [continues online] **read ›**

Hippolytus, *c. 200–236 AD · sources 26–29*

26 *Refutation of All Heresies* 29 (1885 English; on point 2) “these have been styled prophets, on account of their foreshowing future events… [continues online] **read ›**

27 *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* 1 (1885 English; on point 4) “if the blessed prophets who preceded us did not choose to proclaim these things, though they knew them, openly and boldly, lest they should disquiet the souls of men, but… [continues online] **read ›**

28 *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 1, page 2** “For as the blessed prophets were made, so to speak, eyes for us, they foresaw through faith the mysteries of the word, and became ministers of these things also to… [continues online] **read ›**

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29 *Exegetical Fragments* 1 (1885 English; on point 2) “The prophet then, after thus recounting the things which have taken place already, and been fulfilled in their times, declares yet another mystery to us, while he points out the… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 30–34*

30 *Commentary on Matthew* 10 (on point 5) say to you, and more than a prophet.” Luke 7:26 But thanks be to God that, even if the grace of prophecy was taken from the people, a grace… [continues online] **read ›**

31 *Commentary on John* 6 (on point 4) 16:25–26, "Now, to Him who is able to establish you according to my Gospel, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept in silence through… [continues online] **read ›**

32 *Against Celsus* 35 (1885 English; on point 3) “is our practice, indeed, to make use of the words of the prophets, who demonstrate that Jesus is the Christ predicted by them, and who show from the prophetic writings… [continues online] **read ›**

33 *Against Celsus* 10 **Quotes 4, 8, pages 2, 3** “the prophecies were recorded and preserved by men living at the time… [continues online] **read ›**

34 *Against Celsus* 51 (on point 3) were fanatics and mob leaders, and who claimed that they had come from heaven, unless it were clearly shown that He had been born in Bethlehem, or, as another might… [continues online] **read ›**

Asterius Urbanus, *c. 232–250 AD · sources 35–36*

35 *Extant Writings of Asterius Urbanus* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 14, page 5** “the same arrogant spirit taught them to revile the Church universal under heaven, because that false spirit of prophecy found neither honour from it nor entrance into it… [continues online] **read ›**

36 *Extant Writings of Asterius Urbanus* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 12, page 4** “the apostle deems that the gift of prophecy should abide in all the Church up to the time of the final advent… [continues online] **read ›**

Gregory Thaumaturgus, *c. 240–270 AD · source 37*

37 *A Sectional Confession of Faith* 1 “another discerning of spirits; to another various kinds of tongues… [continues online] **read ›**

Novatian, *c. 240–258 AD · sources 38–39*

38 *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 29 (on point 1) of the words and in the Lord's Scriptures, urge us after these things to believe also in the Holy Spirit, once promised to the Church and given at the… [continues online] **read ›**

39 *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 10 (1885 English; on point 3) “testimony of the prophetic word have you… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 40–42*

40 *Treatises* (1885 English) “not prophets aforetime, and subsequently apostles, told of these things… [continues online] **read ›**

41 *Epistles* (1885 English; on point 1) “of the prophets whom the Holy Spirit quickened to the foreknowledge of future events… [continues online] **read ›**

42 *Epistles* (1885 English; on point 6) “also he who first speaks in prophecy is bidden to be silent if a revelation be made to a second… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · source 43*

43 *Apostolic Constitutions* good reason He also said to all of us together, when we had been made complete concerning those gifts given by Him through the Spirit, “Now these signs will follow… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · source 44*

44 *Oration on the Psalms* 1 (on point 4) “in prophecy hid the Spirit under the letter… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 45–47*

45 *Divine Institutes* 15 (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 3** “the prophets spoke of Him; nor could the things which they said have been in any way understood, unless they had been altogether fulfilled… [continues online] **read ›**

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46 *Divine Institutes* 15 (1885 English; on point 4) “that it will so come to pass, the predictions of the prophets briefly announce under the cover of other names, so that no one can easily understand them… [continues online] **read ›**

47 *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 71 (1885 English; on point 2) “things are said by the prophets, but as seers, to be about to happen… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *85 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

48 **Exodus 23:8** And you shall not accept gifts; for gifts blind the eyes of those who see and corrupt righteous words. **read ›**

49 **Deuteronomy 13:2** and the sign or the wonder comes to pass of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods’—gods whom you have not known— (Septuagint Deuteronomy 13:3 (Deuteronomy 13:2 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

50 **1 Samuel 9:9** (Formerly in Israel, when anyone went to inquire of God, he would say, “Come, let us go to the seer”; for the people formerly called the prophet “the seer.”) **read ›**

51 **1 Samuel 10:6** Then the Spirit of the Lord will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. **read ›**

52 **1 Samuel 10:10** From there he came to the hill, and behold, a band of prophets was opposite him; and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them. **read ›**

53 **1 Samuel 19:20** Saul sent messengers to take David; and they saw the assembly of the prophets, and Samuel standing as appointed over them; and the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they prophesied. **read ›**

54 **2 Samuel 23:2** The Spirit of the Lord spoke in me, and his word was on my tongue. **read ›**

55 **1 Kings 22:10** The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting each on his throne, armed, in the gates of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them. **read ›**

56 **1 Kings 22:12** And all the prophets prophesied the same, saying, “Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and it will prosper, and the Lord will give into your hands even the king of Syria.” **read ›**

57 **2 Kings 21:10** And the Lord spoke by the hand of his slaves the prophets, saying, **read ›**

58 **2 Chronicles 18:11** And all the prophets prophesied the same, saying, “Go up to Ramoth-gilead and you shall prosper, and the Lord will give it into the hands of the king.” **read ›**

59 **Ezra 7:3** the son of Samaria, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, **read ›**

60 **Nehemiah 5:1** Now the cry of the people and of their wives was great against their brothers the Jews. (Septuagint 2 Esdras 15:1 (Nehemiah 5:1 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

61 **Psalms 2:6** “But I have been made king by him on Zion, his holy mountain, **read ›**

62 **Proverbs 14:19** The evil will fall before the good, and the ungodly will wait at the doors of the righteous. **read ›**

63 **Ecclesiastes 2:13** And I saw that wisdom has an advantage over foolishness, as light has an advantage over darkness. **read ›**

64 **Jeremiah 23:32** Therefore behold, I am against the prophets who prophesy false dreams, and did not tell them, and led my people astray with their lies and their deceptions; and I did not send them, and I did not command them, and they will not profit this people at all. **read ›**

65 **Jeremiah 28:8** The prophets who were before me and before you from of old also prophesied over many lands and against great kingdoms, for war. (Septuagint Jeremiah 35:8 (Jeremiah 28:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

66 **Jeremiah 28:9** As for the prophet who prophesied for peace, when the word comes to pass, they will know the prophet whom the Lord has sent them in faithfulness.” (Septuagint Jeremiah 35:9 (Jeremiah 28:9 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

67 **Ezekiel 13:2** “Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, and you shall prophesy and say to them: Hear the word of the Lord. **read ›**

68 **Ezekiel 13:3** Thus says the Lord: Woe to those who prophesy from their own heart, and who see nothing at all! **read ›**

69 **Ezekiel 13:16** the prophets of Israel, who prophesy concerning Jerusalem and see peace for her, and there is no peace, says the Lord. **read ›**

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70 **Hosea 12:10** And I will speak to the prophets; and I have multiplied visions, and by the hands of the prophets I have been represented. (Septuagint Hosea 12:11 (Hosea 12:10 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

71 **Amos 1:7** And I will send forth a fire upon the walls of Gaza, and it shall devour its foundations. **read ›**

72 **Amos 3:7** For the Lord God will certainly do nothing unless he reveals instruction to his slaves the prophets. **read ›**

73 **Obadiah 1:1** The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God to Idumea: I have heard a report from the Lord, and he has sent out a summons to siege among the nations: “Arise, and let us rise up against her to war.” **read ›**

74 **Micah 2:11** you have been chased, though no one pursues. A spirit has set up a lie; it has dripped on you for wine and strong drink. And it shall be, that from the dripping of this people **read ›**

75 **Micah 3:7** And those who see dreams will be put to shame, and the fortune-tellers will be laughed to scorn; and they all will speak against them, because there will be no one to answer them. **read ›**

76 **Micah 3:8** Surely I will be filled with strength by the Spirit of the Lord, and with judgment and might, to declare to Jacob his ungodly deeds, and to Israel his sins. **read ›**

77 **Nahum 3:6** And I will cast abominable filth upon you according to your unclean deeds, and I will make you an example. **read ›**

78 **Nahum 3:7** And it will come to pass that all who see you will go down from you and say, “Wretched Nineveh! Who will mourn for her? From where shall I seek comfort for her?” **read ›**

79 **Habakkuk 3:1** A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, with a song. **read ›**

80 **Zechariah 13:4** And it shall be in that day that the prophets shall be ashamed, each one of his vision, when he prophesies; and they shall put on a skin of hair, because they lied. **read ›**

81 **1 Esdras 7:3** And the holy works prospered while Haggai and Zechariah the prophets prophesied. **read ›**

82 **Tobit 2:6** and I remembered the prophecy of Amos, as he said, “Your feasts shall be turned into mourning, and all your gladness into lament.” **read ›**

83 **Wisdom of Sirach 1:1** Since many great things have been given to us through the Law and the Prophets and the others who followed after them, for which Israel ought to be praised for its instruction and wisdom; and since not only must those who read become knowledgeable themselves, but lovers of learning must also be able to be of use to those outside, both by speaking and by writing: my grandfather Jesus, having given himself more and more to the reading of the Law and the Prophets and the other books of our fathers, and having gained considerable skill in them, was himself also led to write something pertaining to instruction and wisdom, so that lovers of learning, having become devoted to these things as well, might make still greater progress by living according to the law. You are urged, therefore, to read with goodwill and attention, and to be forgiving wherever, despite our diligent labor in translating, we may seem to fall short in some of the expressions; for what is said in Hebrew does not have the same force when it is brought over into another language. And not only these things, but the Law itself and the prophecies and the rest of the books differ not a little when they are spoken in their own language. For in the thirty-eighth year, in the reign of King Euergetes, having come into Egypt and stayed there some time, I found a copy of no small instruction; and I myself thought it most necessary to apply some diligence and labor to the translation of this book, bringing much watchfulness and skill to it in that space of time, in order to complete the book and publish it also for those living abroad who wish to love learning, preparing their character beforehand to live according to the law. All wisdom is from the Lord, and is with him forever. **read ›**

84 **Wisdom of Sirach 20:29** Presents and gifts blind the eyes of the wise, and like a muzzle in the mouth they turn away correction. **read ›**

85 **Wisdom of Sirach 24:33** I will again pour out teaching like prophecy, and leave it to generations of the ages. **read ›**

86 **Wisdom of Sirach 31:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

87 **Wisdom of Sirach 39:1** he will seek out the wisdom of all the ancients, and will be occupied with prophecies. **read ›**

88 **Wisdom of Sirach 42:19** declaring the things that have passed and those that will be, and revealing the traces of hidden things. **read ›**

89 **Wisdom of Sirach 46:15** By his faithfulness he was proved a prophet, and by his faithfulness he was known to be faithful in vision. **read ›**

90 **Wisdom of Sirach 46:20** And after he had fallen asleep he prophesied and showed the king his end, and lifted up his voice from the earth in prophecy, to blot out the lawlessness of the people. **read ›**

91 **Wisdom of Sirach 48:8** you anointed kings for retribution, and prophets as successors after him; **read ›**

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92 **Wisdom of Sirach 48:24** by a great spirit he saw the last things, and he comforted those who mourned in Zion. **read ›**

93 **Wisdom of Sirach 49:7** For they mistreated him; yet he was consecrated in the womb as a prophet, to root out and harm and destroy, and likewise to build and to plant. **read ›**

94 **1 Maccabees 14:19** And these were read before the assembly in Jerusalem. **read ›**

95 **1 Maccabees 14:41** and that the Jews and the priests were well pleased that Simon should be their leader and high priest forever, until a faithful prophet should arise; **read ›**

96 **2 Maccabees 2:13** The same things were also reported in the records and in the memoirs of Nehemiah, and how he founded a library and collected the accounts of the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about dedicated gifts. **read ›**

97 **1 Enoch 37:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

98 **1 Enoch 49:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

99 **1 Enoch 59:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

100 **1 Enoch 108:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

101 **Luke 13:3** I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way. **read ›**

102 **Luke 13:4** Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were worse offenders than all the people who dwell in Jerusalem? **read ›**

103 **Acts 2:17** And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. **read ›**

104 **Acts 2:18** And indeed on my slaves and on my female slaves in those days I will pour out of my Spirit, and they will prophesy. **read ›**

105 **Acts 3:18** But the things which God announced beforehand through the mouth of all his prophets, that the Christ should suffer, he fulfilled in this way. **read ›**

106 **Acts 8:19** saying, “Give me this authority too, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.” **read ›**

107 **Acts 9:14** Here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.” **read ›**

108 **Acts 11:2** When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision contended with him, **read ›**

109 **Acts 11:27** Now in these days, prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. **read ›**

110 **Romans 1:2** which he promised before through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, **read ›**

111 **Romans 5:13** For until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not charged when there is no law. **read ›**

112 **Romans 12:6** And we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: if prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faithfulness; **read ›**

113 **1 Corinthians 12:10** to another workings of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discernment of spirits, to another kinds of tongues, and to another interpretation of tongues. **read ›**

114 **1 Corinthians 12:28** God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, and kinds of tongues. **read ›**

115 **1 Corinthians 14:1** Pursue love and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. **read ›**

116 **1 Corinthians 14:3** But he who prophesies speaks to men for their building up, encouragement, and comfort. **read ›**

117 **1 Corinthians 14:22** Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to the unbelieving; but prophecy is not for the unbelieving, but for those who believe. **read ›**

118 **1 Corinthians 14:31** For you all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be exhorted. **read ›**

119 **1 Corinthians 14:32** The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, **read ›**

120 **1 Corinthians 14:39** Therefore, brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. **read ›**

121 **2 Corinthians 2:14** Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the aroma of the knowledge of him in every place. **read ›**

122 **1 Thessalonians 5:20** Do not despise prophecies. **read ›**

123 **1 Peter 1:10** Concerning this salvation, the prophets sought and searched diligently. They prophesied of the grace that would come to you, **read ›**

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124 **1 Peter 1:11** searching for the person or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he testified beforehand to the sufferings of Christ and the glories after them. **read ›**

125 **2 Peter 1:20** knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation. **read ›**

126 **2 Peter 1:21** For no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke, being moved by the Holy Spirit. **read ›**

127 **Revelation 1:1** The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his slaves the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his slave John, **read ›**

128 **Revelation 1:3** Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it, for the time is near. **read ›**

129 **Revelation 10:7** but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God is fulfilled, as he announced the good news to his slaves the prophets. **read ›**

130 **Revelation 10:11** They told me, “You must prophesy again over many peoples, nations, languages, and kings.” **read ›**

131 **Revelation 19:10** I fell before his feet to worship him. He said to me, “Do not do that! I am a fellow slave with you and with your brothers who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” **read ›**

132 **Revelation 22:6** He said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show his slaves what must soon take place.” **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *161 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Exodus 17:12 · 25:11

Joshua 12:1

Psalms 3:6 · 4:5 · 16:9 · 22:16 · 28:1 · 72:1

Proverbs 1:17

Isaiah 2:3 · 52:6 · 53:8

Jeremiah 23:16

Ezekiel 1:28 · 3:17 · 37:1

Daniel 8:17

Micah 4:1

Malachi 1:11

Matthew 1:18 · 2:6 · 5:21 · 5:22 · 5:27 · 6:24 · 7:15 · 7:16 · 9:13 · 9:29 · 10:20 · 11:5 · 11:11 · 11:14 · 11:17 · 13:17 · 16:6 · 18:10 · 19:30 · 20:16 · 21:32 · 22:13 · 22:21 · 26:56 · 27:46 · 28:13

Mark 2:17 · 11:4 · 12:20 · 13:32 · 14:62 · 16:15 · 16:17

Luke 1:46 · 2:29 · 3:11 · 5:32 · 6:46 · 7:26 · 7:32 · 10:20 · 10:27 · 15:22 · 16:16 · 19:29 · 22:15

John 1:5 · 1:14 · 1:18 · 4:22 · 4:24 · 5:30 · 5:46 · 7:42 · 8:39 · 10:34 · 11:42 · 12:34 · 13:19 · 13:24 · 14:16 · 14:18 · 14:19 · 14:26 · 15:15 · 15:20 · 15:25 · 15:26 · 16:13 · 17:6 · 17:11 · 19:34 · 19:36 · 20:22

Acts 2:37 · 8:9 · 10:47

Romans 4:11 · 8:6 · 8:7 · 8:9 · 11:4 · 16:25

1 Corinthians 2:6 · 2:10 · 2:11 · 2:12 · 3:3 · 3:13 · 4:15 · 7:29 · 7:40 · 10:4 · 11:3 · 11:5 · 11:7 · 11:9 · 11:10 · 11:18 · 11:23 · 12:1 · 12:3 · 12:4 · 12:7 · 12:8 · 12:12 · 12:31 · 13:1 · 14:21 · 14:25 · 14:26 · 14:34 · 15:46

2 Corinthians 4:13 · 12:2 · 12:4

Galatians 1:8 · 2:8 · 4:4 · 4:19 · 5:17

Ephesians 4:5 · 4:6 · 4:8 · 4:16 · 5:31

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1 Thessalonians 5:23
2 Thessalonians 1:9
1 Timothy 4:1
2 Timothy 3:8
Hebrews 2:14 · 11:16 · 13:8
1 Peter 2:23 · 3:20
2 Peter 1:18
1 John 4:1 · 4:2
3 John 1:9
Revelation 3:1 · 5:8

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What did the early Christians believe about prophecy?” on May 22, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY