

Prophecy and the Closed Canon, Part 1

Scripture: Revelation 22:18-19

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There is no fresher or more intimate revelation than Scripture. God doesn't need to give us private revelation to help us in our walk with Him. "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, *equipped for every good work*" (2 Timothy 3:16 - 17; emphasis added). Scripture is sufficient. It offers all we need for every good work.

Christians on both sides of the charismatic fence must realize a vital truth: *God's revelation is complete for now*. The canon of Scripture is closed. As the apostle John penned the final words of the last book of the New Testament, he recorded this warning: "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and from the holy city, which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18-19). Then, the Holy Spirit added a doxology and closed the canon.

When the canon closed on the Old Testament after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, there followed four hundred "silent years" when no prophet spoke God's revelation in any form.

That silence was broken by John the Baptist as God spoke once more prior to the New Testament age. God then moved various men to record the books of the New Testament, and the last of these was Revelation. By the second century A.D., the complete canon exactly as we have it today was popularly recognized. Church councils in the fourth century verified and made official what the church has universally affirmed, that the sixty-six books in our Bibles are the only true Scripture inspired by God. The canon is complete.

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