

God's Work in History

God's Work In History:

**50 Biblical Predictions
Made And Fulfilled**

**By
Don Stewart**

God's Work in History

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Introduction

The first book in our four-volume series on the subject of Bible prophecy, "God Wants Us to Know the Future," was an introductory work. It dealt with some of the basic issues about the topic.

In this second book we cover two major themes:

First, we outline the basic story of the Bible.

Second, we document 50 specific predictions that the God of the Bible has made in the past as well as their literal fulfillment. While this list of predictions, as well as their fulfillments, is not exhaustive, it certainly is sufficient to demonstrate the existence, knowledge and power of the Lord, the God of the Bible.

In sum, this book will not only provide a basic understanding of biblical history, it will demonstrate that the God of the Bible exists, that He has correctly predicted the future, and that He is in control of the future.

This is followed by our third volume, "25 Signs We Are Near the End." In this book, we record the biblical predictions of signs of the "last days" that set the stage for the coming of the Lord.

The fourth volume, "Look Up! A Timeline of 50 Last Days Events," provides an explanation of events that are still to come.

Consequently, through all four volumes, we look at God's work in the past, His present work in our world, the signs of the times, as well as the future events that are yet to take place.

Prediction 1: The Warning Given To Adam And Eve

Our first prediction and its fulfillment will explain why the world is in the state that it presently finds itself. In fact, it is the *only* explanation that the human race has been given which outlines who we are, as well as why we are here on this planet. In other words, the importance of the context of this prediction and fulfillment cannot be overestimated.

Background

To understand this first prediction, we must begin at the very beginning. The Bible begins with this famous verse:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1 CEV).

After recording the creation of the earth in the first six days, at the end of the sixth day we find that the Lord brought about the crown of his creation—human beings:

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness, so they may rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth.” God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them (Genesis 1:26,27 NET).

With the creation of humankind, God's work was now finished.

Everything Was Very Good

Scripture says that when the Lord finished creating, everything was “very good.” We read the following:

God looked at what he had done. All of it was very good! Evening came and then morning—that was the sixth day (Genesis 1:31 CEV).

The First Prediction: Warning For Failure To Obey

The first prediction we find in Scripture was the warning given to the first humans, Adam and Eve. After placing them in a perfect environment, they were given only one negative commandment—not to eat the fruit of a certain tree:

Then the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat fruit from every tree of the orchard, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will surely die” (Genesis 2:16,17 NET).

The consequence for disobedience would be death—separation from God.

The Fulfillment Of The Prediction

Unfortunately, Scripture tells us that Adam and Eve did indeed disobey God. We read about this as follows:

When the woman saw that the tree produced fruit that was good for food, was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of it to her

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husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves (Genesis 3:6,7 NET).

The Specific Judgments Announced

The Fall caused specific judgments to be given against males, females, the earth itself, and the serpent. They are as follows:

The Judgment On Males And The Earth

Males received their own specific judgment because of Adam's rebellion. The Bible records the following prediction:

The Lord said to the man, "You listened to your wife and ate fruit from that tree. And so, the ground will be under a curse because of what you did. As long as you live, you will have to struggle to grow enough food. Your food will be plants, but the ground will produce thorns and thistles. You will have to sweat to earn a living; you were made out of soil, and you will once again turn into soil" (Genesis 3:17-19 CEV).

The ground was cursed because of the sin of Adam. Consequently, humans would have to struggle to grow food. It would not be an easy process.

The Judgment On Females

The sin of Eve caused judgment upon females. Scripture puts it this way:

To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your labor pains; with pain you will give birth to children. You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you" (Genesis 3:16 NET).

The Judgment Upon The Serpent

The serpent was also judged because of its participation in the Fall. We read:

So the Lord God said to the snake: "Because of what you have done, you will be the only animal to suffer this curse—For as long as you live, you will crawl on your stomach and eat dirt. You and this woman will hate each other; your descendants and hers will always be enemies. One of hers will strike you on the head, and you will strike him on the heel" (Genesis 3:14-15 CEV).

Why This Account Is So Important!

These first three chapters of Genesis are of the utmost importance. Indeed, without them, the remainder of Scripture would make no sense whatsoever for the following reasons:

It Explains Where Sin Came From

These chapters explain the origin of sin. Genesis tells us that everything was created perfect in the beginning. In other words, everything and everyone was in a pristine state when the Lord finished creating our world.

It Explains Why We Find The World In The Present State

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These chapters tell us why the world is in the present fallen state that we find it. Our imperfect world has only come about because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Simply stated, the world we live in is not the world which the Lord originally created.

It Explains Why We Need A Savior

Because sin, above all, has separated the human race from God, a Savior is needed to restore the relationship. Without these first three chapters of Genesis, we would not know why a Savior would be necessary.

It Explains The Need For A New World

This also explains why our world has to be made new again. God's perfect world, which has become imperfect through sin, will indeed, need to be made perfect again. His plan for a perfect world will ultimately be fulfilled.

Sadly, the first prediction in Scripture, the warning given to Adam and Eve, has come to pass. Since the time of Adam and Eve the world has been in a fallen state. However, the good news is that it will not last forever. Indeed, there will come a day when all things will be made new!

Prediction 2: The First Promise Of The Messiah (Genesis 3:15)

Sin had now entered the previously perfect world. However, in the midst of this tragedy the Lord offered hope to this wayward couple, Adam and Eve, as well as to every human being who would be born after them.

Furthermore, this theme of hope would be carried throughout the pages of the Bible. The hope would be in a "Person" who would bring humankind back to a right relationship with God.

Background

Though the first couple disobeyed God and brought sin into the world, the Lord also provided a promise of hope. In other words, instead of immediately destroying them and the newly fallen world, the Lord made His first of many promises to bring a Savior into the world.

The Prediction: A Savior Would Make All Things Right

The Lord said the following to the serpent:

You and this woman will hate each other; your descendants and hers will always be enemies. One of hers will strike you on the head, and you will strike him on the heel (Genesis 3:15 CEV).

The serpent who led Eve into sin would one day be defeated. Along with his defeat, the world would be made new again. This defeat would come through an individual, a Savior, whom the Lord would send into the world.

The Story Of The Bible: God's Kingdom Is Coming In The Person Of The King

Genesis 3:15 is the first of many predictions of the coming of the Messiah, the Savior, as well as the coming of the kingdom of God to the earth.

The predictions of the coming kingdom of God and the Messiah are found throughout the Old Testament. Indeed, as we read through the Hebrew Scriptures, we find that these are the two major themes which are developed.

A King Will Rule Forever

This coming kingdom will be ruled by a King. As we examine the Old Testament, we find numerous promises given to the people that a King is coming.

The Fulfillment

These many promises were fulfilled in the First Coming of Jesus of Nazareth. In fact, at the annunciation, the angel Gabriel said the following to His mother Mary:

Then the angel told her: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end" (Luke 1:30-33 CSB).

We will document this promise in further detail when we come to the New Testament predictions.

The King Has Come And Is Coming Again

Simply put, the King, the Lord Jesus, has already visited this earth and He is coming again. We can trace this truth all the way back to the Garden of Eden and the promises that the Lord made to the woman.

Therefore, when humanity first sinned God began to make promises that all things would be made right again someday through the coming King and His kingdom.

Prediction 3 The Flood Of Noah

Not only did sin enter the world with the rebellion of Adam and Eve, but the time would eventually come when the Lord would have to destroy almost everything that He had originally created. The reason for this restart of the world is found in the account of the Flood of Noah.

Background

Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Life. After the expulsion of the first couple out of the Garden of Eden, the population of the world began to increase. However, along with the increase of the people, the world also saw the increase of sin.

The First Son Is The First Murderer

After the Fall, Adam and Eve had children. The Bible records that Eve thought that her first son, Cain, would be the promised deliverer. Instead, he became the first murderer!

Adam And Eve Produced Children In Their Likeness

The Bible says that Adam and Eve conceived children in their "likeness:"

Adam was 130 years old when he fathered a son in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. Adam lived 800 years after he fathered Seth, and he fathered other sons and daughters (Genesis 5:3,4 CSB).

The idea behind this is that their offspring now had the same fallen nature as they did, their parents.

The Long Lives Of The Patriarchs

In the early years that humans were upon the earth, they lived very long lives. In fact, when we look at the ten names in the genealogy of Genesis 5 we find that they averaged about nine hundred years before they died.

Eventually the sin of humankind reached the place where the Lord had to judge the entire earth.

Humans Were Violent And Sinful Continually

Two things characterized the human race at this time: continual sin and violence. The Book of Genesis records it like this:

But the Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind had become great on the earth. Every inclination of the thoughts of their minds was only evil all the time. . . The earth was ruined in the sight of God; the earth was filled with violence (Genesis 6:5,11 NET).

The Prediction Of The Flood

Because of the state of humankind, the Lord warned the people of the earth that He was going to send a Flood:

The Lord saw how bad the people on earth were and that everything they thought and planned was evil. He was very sorry that he had made them, and he said, "I'll destroy every living creature on earth! I'll wipe out people, animals, birds, and reptiles" (Genesis 6:5-7 CEV).

The Fulfillment

Good to His Word, the Lord then sent a Flood that destroyed all of humanity except for the family of Noah:

The waters rose more than twenty feet above the mountains. And all living things that moved on the earth died, including the birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all humankind. Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. So the Lord destroyed every living thing that was on the surface of the ground, including people, animals, creatures that creep along the ground, and birds of the sky. They were wiped off the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark survived (Genesis 8:20-23 NET).

The Aftermath: The Lord Starts Over

Once the family of Noah descended from the ark, they discovered a new world. In the world after the Flood, certain things were changed. This included capital punishment for those who took a human life:

For your lifeblood I will surely exact punishment, from every living creature I will exact punishment. From each person I will exact punishment for the life of the individual since the man was his relative. "Whoever sheds human blood, by other humans must his blood be shed; for in God's image God has made humankind" (Genesis 9:5,6 NET).

The Covenant With Noah

God then made a new covenant with Noah, as well as with the new world that followed the Flood:

And God said, "This is the guarantee of the covenant I am making with you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all subsequent generations: I will place my rainbow in the clouds, and it will become a guarantee of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, then I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures of all kinds. Never again will the waters become a flood and destroy all living things. When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will notice it and remember the perpetual covenant between God and all living creatures of all kinds that are on the earth" (Genesis 9:12-16 NET).

The world will never be judged again by means of water.

In sum, the prediction of God's judgment did indeed come to pass. The world after the Flood was radically different from the previous world.

The Rebellion Continued: Babel

It seems that the people of this new world did not learn from the lesson of the Flood. The Lord had told the people to scatter across the earth; yet they refused to obey.

Until this time, all the people spoke the same language. Their disobedience caused the Lord to confound their language to the place where they had to break up into different people groups.

The Table Of Nations

When God confounded their languages, the people then scattered to various parts of the earth. The 10th chapter of Genesis records the places where the different people-groups dispersed.

Summing Up The First Eleven Chapters Of Genesis

In the beginning chapters of the Book of Genesis, the Bible records the account of Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and the incident at the Tower of Babel. These are, of course, monumental events that have shaped our world as we know it today.

However, these events are recorded for us as “background information” to the main story of Scripture. Indeed, the main part of the Book of Genesis, as well as the rest of the Bible, is about a man and his family—the family of Abraham. We are now about to consider the rest of the story. . .

Prediction 4: The Promises To Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3)

The next series of promises are of the utmost importance! In fact, they set the stage for the remainder of biblical history. As the human race once again multiplied after the devastation from the Flood of Noah, God chose one man, and one family, to be His witness to the world. This would be the family of Abraham.

Background

Though the world was made new again after the Flood, sin continued to increase. Indeed, the sinful human heart would endlessly rebel against God.

The Predictions

God called a man to leave his homeland to go to a land that he had never seen. In doing so, he would be a witness of the living God to the world. The Bible explains it this way:

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you (Genesis 12:1-3 NIV).

When the Lord called Abram out from his country and his family, He promised to create a great nation through him as well as through his descendants. The Lord also promised Abram that *he* would be blessed and that his name would be made great.

Furthermore, the Lord promised that Abram's descendants would be blessed and that those who cursed them would themselves be cursed. In addition, through his offspring, the entire world would be blessed.

Later, the Lord added further things to His promises to Abram and his descendants:

The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you" (Genesis 13:14-17 NIV).

The Lord promised Abram and his offspring that they would inherit a land with specific borders. This land will be their permanent possession. He also told Abram that his descendants were going to be innumerable.

There is more. The Lord promised Abram that their agreement, or covenant, would be everlasting:

I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God (Genesis 17:7-8 NIV).

The agreement which the Lord made with Abram is irrevocable. In other words, it can never be broken.

The Promises Made To Isaac

Abram, whose name was changed by the Lord to Abraham, had two sons; Isaac and Ishmael. The Lord made it clear that the promises to Abraham would be fulfilled in his son, Isaac. He made the following promises to Isaac:

Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed (Genesis 26:3,4 NIV).

God promised Isaac that his offspring would be “as numerous as the stars in the sky.” Furthermore, he and his descendants would inherit this “Promised Land” that was pledged to his father Abraham.

The Promise Made To Jacob

Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. God later promised Isaac's son Jacob that he would be the heir to the promises:

And God said to him, “I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants. The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you” (Genesis 35:11,12 NIV).

It was promised that many nations will come from Jacob's descendants. His descendants will also include kings.

There Are Many Specific Promises Made To Abraham, Isaac, And Jacob

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob received a number of very specific promises from the Lord. They include the following:

- Promise 1** A great nation will come from the man Abraham.
- Promise 2** Abraham's name shall be blessed.
- Promise 3** He shall be a blessing to all nations.
- Promise 4** Those that bless Abraham's people will be blessed.
- Promise 5** Those that curse Abraham's people will be cursed.
- Promise 6** His descendants, through his son Isaac, will inherit a land with specific boundaries.
- Promise 7** This land will be theirs forever.
- Promise 8** His descendants will be countless.
- Promise 9** Among their descendants will be kings.

There Are Further Predictions And Promises

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As God had promised, Abraham's descendants multiplied. Several hundred years after the Lord made these initial promises to Abram, the people were about to enter the "land of promise." Before the nation went into the Promised Land, God reconfirmed the covenant that He had made with them:

See, I have given you this land. Go in and take possession of the land the LORD swore he would give to your fathers--to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--and to their descendants after them (Deuteronomy 1:8 NIV).

This particular land was to belong to them. This is exactly what the Lord had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Lord Promised Blessings For Obedience

There were also specific promises of blessings if they obeyed the Lord:

If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God (Deuteronomy 28:1-2 NIV).

Simply put, if they obeyed Him, the people would be blessed.

There Will Be Consequences For Disobedience

On the other hand, the Lord also warned them of the consequences of disobedience:

However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you: . . . Then the LORD will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods--gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your ancestors have known (Deuteronomy 28:15,64 NIV).

While the ownership of the Promised Land was theirs forever, their occupancy was linked with their obedience. In other words, they would remain in the land as long as they obeyed the Lord. Disobedience to the commandments of the Lord would cause the people to be removed from the land.

However, if removed, God promised to one day bring back the scattered people. We read the following promises in the Book of Deuteronomy:

When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come on you and you take them to heart wherever the LORD your God disperses you among the nations, and when you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you (Deuteronomy 30:1-3 NIV).

From these verses we can observe three further predictions.

Promise 10 If the people would remain faithful to God, He would bless them and give them victory over their enemies.

Promise 11 Yet, God would remove them from the land if they were unfaithful to Him. They would eventually be scattered across the whole earth as strangers in unfamiliar lands and they would find no rest for their wanderings.

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Promise 12 However, God in His faithfulness did promise to bring them back into the land.

From these promises God made to Abraham and his descendants, we find at least twelve specific things that were predicted for him and his offspring.

The Fulfillment Of These Promises

As we look at the verdict of history, we find that each of these promises have been wonderfully and marvelously fulfilled. We can make the following observations about them.

Fulfillment One: A Great Nation Did Come From Abraham

As the Lord had predicted, a great nation did come from Abraham. In fact, by the time they were about to enter the Promised Land, his descendants in the nation Israel were numerous.

This is especially remarkable when we consider that Abraham and his wife Sarah were beyond the age of child bearing when their first son, Isaac, was born. Therefore, the nation that sprang from Abraham started with a supernatural beginning.

Fulfillment Two: Abraham's Name Has Been Blessed

Abraham was promised that his name would be blessed among the nations. This too has been literally fulfilled. Three of the great religions of the world, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, all look to Abraham as their human founder. His name is still revered around the world. In fact, there is no name in the entire world that is revered more than that of Abraham.

Fulfillment Three: Abraham And His Descendants Have Been A Blessing

The promise was that the descendants of Abraham shall bless the entire world. This has been literally fulfilled, both nationally and individually.

Indeed, the one particular descendant of Abraham who fulfills this promise is Jesus Christ. The first verse of the New Testament reads as follows:

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1 NIV).

The New Testament proclaims Jesus was Israel's Messiah and the Savior of the world. The coming of Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of a specific promise that God made to Abraham. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians:

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ (Galatians 3:16 NIV).

Paul says that the prediction to Abraham concerned one particular descendant—Jesus Christ. Again, the specific prediction given to Abraham has been fulfilled.

Fulfillment Four: Those Who Have Blessed Abraham's People Have Been Blessed

The Bible records examples of individuals and nations who have helped Israel and have found themselves being blessed by God.

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For example, Scripture records that God spared the woman Rahab because she hid Israel's spies from the people of Jericho. When the city was destroyed the members of her family were the only ones who were not killed. Rahab eventually married one of the Israelites. Among their descendants included King David, and the Lord Jesus Christ. She was indeed blessed by God!

Fulfillment Five: Those Who Have Cursed Abraham's People Have Been Cursed

There was also a curse pronounced upon those peoples who have attempted, and attempt, to destroy Israel. Not only has Israel survived, but the nations that have persecuted them, such as Moab, Ammon, Edom, Philistia and Amalek, either have been destroyed, or have completely lost their individual identity.

Have you ever heard of a German Amorite? A Danish Edomite? A Swiss Jebusite? No! These people groups have been totally absorbed into other cultures and races. The Jews, however, have not lost their national identity.

As the Bible predicted, all these nations that attempted to destroy Israel have been judged, while those who have befriended Israel have prospered. (We look at this amazing truth in some detail in the third book of our series, *25 Signs We Are Near the End*, Sign 2).

Fulfillment Six: His Descendants Inherited The Promised Land

The descendants of Abraham, through his son Isaac, did inherit the land of promise. Several hundred years after God spoke to Abraham, the nation of Israel entered into the Promised Land.

Fulfillment Seven: This Land Is Still Occupied By Them

Today, they still are there, thousands of years after the initial promise. This is another remarkable fulfillment of the promise, especially given the history of the nation and the fact that it has been exiled twice from their land, only to later return.

Fulfillment Eight: Countless Numbers Of Descendants Did Come From Abraham

The number of Abraham's descendants has, indeed, become countless just as Scripture predicted. They have numbered in the tens of millions and are continuing to this day. This is remarkable when we consider, again, that Abraham and Sarah's first child, Isaac, was born after both of them were beyond the child-bearing age.

Fulfillment Nine: The Descendants Of Abraham Did Include Kings

As predicted, Abraham's descendants were royalty. We find that kings such as David and Solomon ruled the nation.

Fulfillment Ten: They Were Blessed When They Obeyed God

God had promised blessings for His people as long as they remained obedient to Him. The Old Testament records times of great prosperity when Israel was faithful to the Lord. During the reign of Solomon, the borders were enlarged, and the people were mightily blessed of God.

Fulfillment Eleven: God Removed Them Twice For Disobeying Him

If they were unfaithful, God promised to remove them from the land. This has been literally fulfilled. In 721 B.C., the Assyrians took the Northern kingdom of Israel into captivity.

God's Work in History

In 606 B.C., in the first of three sieges, King Nebuchadnezzar began to take the people of the southern kingdom of Judah captive to Babylon. In 588-586 B.C., after a long siege, he burned the city and the temple.

The children of Israel also were scattered in A.D. 70 when Titus the Roman surrounded the city of Jerusalem and burned the rebuilt city and the temple.

For almost 1900 years, the Jews wandered about the earth as strangers being persecuted from every side. The culmination of their persecution occurred in the holocaust of World War II, when six million Jews were put to death in concentration camps. The predictions again were literally fulfilled.

Fulfillment Twelve: God Has Brought Them Back Twice

However, as God promised, He allowed all those who desired to return, to return to the land. In 537-536 B.C., or after seventy years, those who had been taken captive to Babylon were allowed to return (Ezra chapter 1).

Though removed from their homeland a second time in A.D. 70, once again the people returned. Against all odds, the state of Israel was reborn on May 14, 1948, and the Jews began to return to their homeland from all points of the compass. This is the second time in their history they have come back into their land after being forcibly removed.

Since 1948, they have survived some terrible conflicts, including the Six-Day War in 1967 and the 1973 Holy Day War. Conflicts continue to this day, yet they still survive.

Through all of this, the nation neither perished nor lost its national identity. History has demonstrated that any people who leave their homeland will, after about five generations, lose their national identity by being absorbed into a new culture, but the Jews have remained a distinct entity.

Conclusion:

The record shows that the Lord, against all odds, has marvelously fulfilled each and every promise that was made to Abraham and his descendants.

The entire history of the Bible, from this time forward, will center on Abraham and his descendants.

Prediction 5 **God Will Provide A Lamb** **(Genesis 22)**

In the midst of all of the promises to Abraham and His descendants there is one particular prediction that stands out. The meaning of this prediction offers the only hope for the predicament that the human race finds itself in. It is the sacrifice of the “Lamb of God” for the sins of the world.

The Background

Against all odds, the son of promise was finally born. When he was still a youth, the Lord told his father Abraham to do the seemingly unthinkable: sacrifice his son. The Bible records what happened as follows:

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” “Here I am,” he answered. “Take your son,” he said, “your only son Isaac, whom you love, go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about” (Genesis 22:1-2 CSB).

In complete obedience, Abraham brought Isaac to the place where the Lord had directed.

The Prediction

Isaac would not need to be sacrificed to the Lord. In this instance, Abraham predicted that God would provide a substitute:

Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?” “Yes, my son?” Abraham replied. “The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together (Genesis 22:7,8 NIV).

Note the specific promise. The Lord “Himself” would provide a lamb. This passage foreshadowed what was to come.

At the last moment, the Lord stopped Abraham from sacrificing his only son.

Abraham reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” He replied, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Do not lay a hand on the boy or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from me” (Genesis 22:10-12 CSB).

A Ram Is Sacrificed Instead

The Lord then provided a ram for sacrifice. The Bible explains what happened next:

Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son. And Abraham named that place The Lord Will Provide, so today it is said: “It will be provided on the Lord’s mountain” (Genesis 22:13-14 CSB).

The Fulfillment

Some two thousand years later, the ultimate promise to Abraham would be fulfilled:

God's Work in History

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29 NKJV).

The Lamb of God has indeed come into our world fulfilling the promise that God made to Abraham so long ago. Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who came to this earth to take away the sins of the world.

Jesus Himself said of His coming:

Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28 NET).

Note that the purpose that He came into the world was to die for the sins of the people.

Later Peter would write:

For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb (1 Peter 1:18-19 CSB)

The death of Christ has redeemed us and will save us from our sins, if we believe in Him.

We read the following in the Book of Revelation.

Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders (Revelation 5:6 NIV).

Jesus Christ was indeed the Lamb that was slain.

The Irony Of Genesis 22

While the Lord would not let Abraham sacrifice his only son, God the Father allowed *His* only Son to be the sinless sacrifice for the misdeeds of us all.

In sum, the promised son of Abraham was not allowed to be sacrificed. Instead, the Lord, Himself, would, one day, provide a Lamb—*the Lamb*.

This promise to Abraham was indeed fulfilled two thousand years ago with the death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary.

Prediction 6

The Destruction Of Sodom And Gomorrah (Genesis 18)

During the time of Abraham, sin continued to increase. In his lifetime, there was one particular episode of the depravity of sin that was especially noteworthy—the prediction of the destruction of the two evil cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. In fact, this event, because of its horrific nature, is cited a number of times in Scripture.

The Background

The land in which Abraham and his nephew Lot were grazing their herds was too small for both of them. Therefore, they decided to separate. In doing so, Abraham gave Lot the choice to select where he wanted to settle down. The Bible explains what took place:

Lot looked up and saw the whole region of the Jordan. He noticed that all of it was well-watered (before the Lord obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, all the way to Zoar. Lot chose for himself the whole region of the Jordan and traveled toward the east (Genesis 13:10,11 NET).

Lot chose to live in the well-watered region of Sodom.

The Prediction

However, the area which Lot chose was infected with evil. Eventually the Lord would judge these wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. We read the following:

So the Lord said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so blatant that I must go down and see if they are as wicked as the outcry suggests. If not, I want to know” (Genesis 18:20,21 NET).

While the Lord sent His messengers to Sodom, He had a conversation with Abraham, making it clear that these evil cities would be destroyed if ten righteous people could not be found in them.

Since there were not ten righteous to be found, the destruction of Sodom was assured. The angels that were sent from the Lord warned Lot to get his family out of Sodom immediately:

Get them out of this place because we are about to destroy it. The outcry against this place is so great before the Lord that he has sent us to destroy it (Genesis 19:12-13 NET).

The Fulfillment

As predicted, the evil cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were supernaturally destroyed by the Lord.

The sun had just risen over the land as Lot reached Zoar. Then the Lord rained down sulfur and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah. It was sent down from the sky by the Lord. So he overthrew those cities and all that region, including all the inhabitants of the cities and the vegetation that grew from the ground (Genesis 19:23-25 NET).

Everything in Sodom, and the cities around it, was obliterated in the punishment by the Lord.

The Warning Of Jesus

The memory of the destruction of Sodom is something that the New Testament uses as an example of future judgment:

Then Jesus began to criticize openly the cities in which he had done many of his miracles, because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you! And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be thrown down to Hades! For if the miracles done among you had been done in Sodom, it would have continued to this day. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for the region of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you!" (Matthew 11:20-24 NET).

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah gives us a picture of how God views gross sin. These people had reached the place where they were beyond hope.

Therefore, the Lord destroyed the cities as He predicted to Abraham. Again, we find another literal fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

Prediction 7
Jacob And Esau:
The Older Shall Serve The Younger

We now come to another prediction that has had far-ranging ramifications, even to this day. It involves the future of the descendants of the patriarch Isaac, the son of Abraham. Contrary to the usual practice, where the younger son serves the older, the older son, in this account, will actually serve the younger—the promised line of the Messiah will come through the younger son of Isaac, Jacob.

The Background

Isaac, the son of promise, had twin sons Esau and Jacob. In that culture, the birthright as well as all its privileges was usually given to the eldest son in the family. In this case, however, instead of following the usual custom, the Lord chose Jacob to be the one in the promised line of the Messiah. Consequently, the oldest son, Esau, would be subservient to his younger brother.

The Prediction

We find the Lord making this prediction:

Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. But the children struggled inside her, and she said, “If it is going to be like this, I’m not so sure I want to be pregnant!” So she asked the Lord, and the Lord said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples will be separated from within you. One people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger” Genesis 25:21-23 NET).

The idea that “the older would serve the younger” is not a new concept in Genesis. In fact, as far back as chapter four we find the Lord choosing and approving the younger brother as the one through whom the Lord’s purposes will be accomplished. Indeed, the offering of Cain, the older brother, was rejected by God, whereas the offering of the younger brother, Abel, was accepted by the Lord.

Later, when Cain murdered Abel, Seth, who was born after both of them, was set apart for the chosen line (Genesis 4:26–5:8).

In addition, as we also discovered that Isaac was the chosen son of promise over his older brother Ishmael (Genesis 17:18–19).

Still later, we will learn that Rachel was chosen over her older sister Leah (Genesis 29:18) and Judah, the son born fourth, was chosen over his three older brothers (Genesis 49:8).

In sum, we find that the prediction of the older serving the younger, was not unique to just this case of Jacob and Esau. Indeed, Scripture gives us many examples.

The Fulfillment

This prediction, that the older Esau would serve the younger Jacob, has been literally fulfilled in the history of these two sons of Isaac, as well as in the history of the nation Israel.

Esau, and his descendants the Edomites, were not interested in the things of God. In fact, the Edomites were a constant source of trouble for Israel. Eventually, the Lord predicted their demise as a distinct people group.

God's Work in History

On the other hand, the descendants of Jacob, the children of Israel, not only exist to this day, they are central to the plan of God for both time and eternity.

This promised line was not chosen because they contained perfect people, far from it. They were God's chosen people because He sovereignly selected them to be the nation that would be the recipients of His promises.

Prediction 8

The Egyptian Bondage

While the Lord had specifically chosen the descendants of Abraham to be His witness to the world, warnings were also given to them about a difficult future. One of them concerned a future time of bondage in Egypt. As always, the predictions concerning the people of God eventually find their fulfillment.

The Background

We noted that the Lord promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land of promise. Furthermore, they would be His witness to the unbelieving world. However, before this chosen nation was to enter the Promised Land, the Lord predicted that there would be some difficult years ahead.

The Prediction

The Lord gave Abram the following promise:

Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign country. They will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. But I will execute judgment on the nation that they will serve. Afterward they will come out with many possessions. But as for you, you will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will return here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its limit (Genesis 15:13-16 NET).

We should notice that there are a number of specific predictions contained in this passage.

First, though Abram had settled in the Promised Land, his descendants will live as "strangers in a foreign country."

Furthermore, they will be enslaved in that country for some four hundred years.

When the four hundred years is complete, the people will leave the land.

When they are able to leave, they will not leave empty-handed. Indeed, they will come out with many possessions.

Abraham will not experience this removal from the land. He will die in peace.

And lastly, the people would indeed be removed from the Promised Land, and to return, when the Amorites, who currently possessed the land at this time, had reached sin to the place where the Lord would remove them.

The Fulfillment

This is another example of the amazing fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Indeed, a number of miraculous events had to take place to get Israel to Egypt in the first place. We can sum it up as follows:

Abraham Did Die In Peace

As predicted, Abraham died at a good old age and was buried in the Promised Land. However, as the Lord predicted, his descendants spent four hundred years in bondage in another land.

The Story Of Joseph Explains How Israel Was Brought To Egypt

The account in Scripture of the life of the patriarch Joseph provides us with the explanation as to how the Lord fulfilled this particular prediction which God had earlier made to Abraham. Specifically, that his descendants would be enslaved in another land for several hundred years.

Through a series of amazing events, Joseph, the son of Jacob, was sold as a slave to Egypt where he eventually was brought before Pharaoh to interpret his two dreams. Joseph told Pharaoh that seven years of plenty were coming to Egypt followed by seven years of famine.

Consequently, Pharaoh should prepare for the coming famine by appointing someone to properly store the overflow of grain in the years of plenty. When he gave Pharaoh the correct interpretation, Joseph was the person selected to oversee the storing of the grain overflow. Eventually, the family of his father, Jacob, moved to Egypt at the request of Pharaoh. This explains how the nation left the land of Canaan and resided in Egypt.

The New Pharaoh Arises

Eventually, though, a Pharaoh arose that did not know Joseph:

Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt. He said to his people, "Look at the Israelite people, more numerous and stronger than we are! Come, let's deal wisely with them. Otherwise they will continue to multiply, and if a war breaks out, they will ally themselves with our enemies and fight against us and leave the country." So they put foremen over the Israelites to oppress them with hard labor (Exodus 1:8-11 NET).

As predicted, the Israelites were placed into bondage in Egypt.

The Bondage Was Only Temporary

The Egyptian bondage was part of the predicted future of the nation. However, the Lord would not allow them to remain in bondage forever. Indeed, a deliverer would arise who would lead them out of Egyptian bondage to the very borders of the Promised Land. Until then, as the Lord had told Abraham, the people would live in this "other country" for many years until that deliverance would occur.

Prediction 9

The Departure From Egypt

(Exodus 12)

While the Egyptian bondage was predicted in the Bible, so was the exodus from their bondage. Indeed, God had promised that the descendants of Abraham would one day live in a “Promised Land” after spending four hundred years in another country. To be able to fulfill this promise, they must first escape the bondage of Egypt.

The Background

The people had spent centuries in Egyptian bondage. Consequently, they cried out to the Lord for someone to deliver them:

During that long period of time the king of Egypt died, and the Israelites groaned because of the slave labor. They cried out, and their desperate cry because of their slave labor went up to God. God heard their groaning, God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, God saw the Israelites, and God understood (Exodus 2:23-25 NET).

The Lord heard their cry and remembered His agreement with Abraham and His descendants.

The Lord Sends A Deliverer

A deliver was indeed sent—Moses. When Moses met the Lord at the “burning bush” he was told that he would be that promised deliverer:

The Lord said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt. I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a land that is both good and spacious, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the region of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. And now indeed the cry of the Israelites has come to me, and I have also seen how severely the Egyptians oppress them. So now go, and I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt” (Exodus 3:7-10 NET).

The Lord Told Moses Pharaoh Would Not Let Them Go

The Lord told Moses to approach the Pharaoh and to ask him to let the people of Israel go. However, the Lord also said that the Pharaoh would say, “No.” The Lord then told Moses that He would send a series of plagues upon the Egyptians until the time when the Pharaoh would indeed let the people go:

But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, not even under force. So I will extend my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will do among them, and after that he will release you (Exodus 3:19-20 NET).

The Plagues Upon Egypt

As predicted, Pharaoh would not let the people go. Therefore, as the Lord had told Moses, He would send a number of plagues upon the Egyptians. True to His Word, Egypt was struck with a number of devastating plagues. Still, the Pharaoh would not let the people of Israel go.

The Prediction Of The Last Plague

Finally, the Lord said that there would be one last plague that would come upon the people of Egypt. After this, Pharaoh would let them go:

The Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will release you from this place. When he releases you, he will drive you out completely from this place, Instruct the people that each man and each woman is to request from his or her neighbor items of silver and gold (Exodus 11:1,2 NET).

The Lord, to Moses and to the people, predicted that not only would Pharaoh release them after this last plague, the people would also come out of their bondage of Egypt with riches. This is precisely what Abraham, too, was told centuries earlier.

I will execute judgment on the nation that they will serve. Afterward they will come out with many possessions (Genesis 15:14 NET).

The Fulfillment

All of these predictions came true. The last plague, the death of the firstborn, caused the Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go:

Pharaoh got up in the night, along with all his servants and all Egypt, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no house in which there was not someone dead. Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron in the night and said, "Get up, get out from among my people, both you and the Israelites! Go, serve the Lord as you have requested! Also, take your flocks and your herds, just as you have requested, and leave. But bless me also" (Exodus 12:30-32 NET)

As the Lord predicted to Moses, this final plague would cause the Pharaoh to allow the people to leave. In addition, as the Lord had promised, the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt with great wealth:

Now the Israelites had done as Moses told them - they had requested from the Egyptians silver and gold items and clothing. The Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, and they gave them whatever they wanted, and so they plundered Egypt (Exodus 12:35-36 NET).

The predictions of the Lord were once again literally fulfilled. Israel left the land of bondage, after this last plague, and they left the land with great wealth.

The Lasting Effect Of The Miracles Of The Exodus

Interestingly, this deliverance from Egypt was long-remembered by the people of Israel. For example, some eight hundred years later, Jeremiah prayed to the Lord acknowledging His wonderful works in Egypt in the past:

You did miracles and amazing deeds in the land of Egypt which have had lasting effect. By this means you gained both in Israel and among humankind a renown that lasts to this day (Jeremiah 32:20 NET).

The predicted miraculous deliverance from the bondage of Egypt was literally accomplished by the God of the Bible. Its effects were remembered throughout the history of the nation.

With blood and power, the people of Israel were released from the bondage of Egypt. They were now on their way to the land that the Lord had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Prediction 10 The Parting Of The Red Sea

After the people were supernaturally set free from the bondage of Egypt, the Egyptians soon followed after them. This would lead to one of the greatest miracles in all of recorded Scripture—the parting of the Red Sea.

The Background

In the account of the Exodus, we are told a number of times that the Pharaoh of Egypt continued to harden his heart. Soon after letting them go, he broke his word to Moses and Israel and ordered his army to chase them down:

When it was reported to the king of Egypt that the people had fled, the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people, and the king and his servants said, “What in the world have we done? For we have released the people of Israel from serving us!” Then he prepared his chariots and took his army with him. He took six hundred select chariots, and all the rest of the chariots of Egypt, and officers on all of them (Exodus 14:5-7 NET).

When the Egyptian army caught up to Israel, the people were seemingly trapped at the Red Sea. There was no way out. Did God allow them to escape from Egypt only to perish in the desert?

The Prediction

Moses then predicted that the Lord would perform a miracle to rescue them from the Egyptians:

Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still (Exodus 14:13,14 NIV).

Note the specific prediction. These Egyptians, who have caused so much pain and suffering to the people of Israel, would never be seen again by them!

The Fulfillment

When all seemed to be lost, the Lord fulfilled His promise and delivered Israel through the Red Sea:

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. . . . Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen.” Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the Lord swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived (Exodus 14:21-22, 26-28 NIV).

As predicted, these Egyptians, along with their Pharaoh, were never seen by the nation of Israel again. This act was later acknowledged by the psalmist:

Give thanks to him who parted the Red Sea. His faithful love endures forever. He led Israel safely through, His faithful love endures forever but he hurled Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea. His faithful love endures forever (Psalm 136:13-15 NLT).

God's Work in History

The Lord, once again, fulfilled His promises.

A History Of Deliverance

Not only was the nation delivered from the bondage of Egypt, as well as the deliverance from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, the entire history of this nation has been characterized by one deliverance after another.

Indeed, as we continue our journey through the Old Testament, we will find a number of times where the Lord miraculously delivers His people, just as He had predicted that He would!

Prediction 11 The Fall Of Jericho

After the Exodus, it would take some forty years for the people of Israel to enter into the Promised Land. Once there, the Lord would again show His mighty power to them, as well as to all of the inhabitants of Canaan. God would do this by supernaturally destroying the first major city in which Israel would encounter—Jericho.

Background

Though the nation of Israel was miraculously delivered from the bondage of Egypt, as well as from the Red Sea, the nation did not learn its lessons. When they came to the border of the Promised Land, the Lord commanded them to send some observers to bring back a report of what they had found in the land of Canaan:

The Lord said to Moses, "Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders." So at the Lord's command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran. All of them were leaders of the Israelites (Exodus 13:1-3 NIV).

The observers returned with this report:

They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there (Numbers 13:26-28 NIV).

Their observations frightened ten of the twelve observers as well as the people:

Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses, saying, "Let us go up and occupy it, for we are well able to conquer it." But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against these people, because they are stronger than we are!" Then they presented the Israelites with a discouraging report of the land they had investigated, saying, "The land that we passed through to investigate is a land that devours its inhabitants. All the people we saw there are of great stature. We even saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak came from the Nephilim), and we seemed like grasshoppers both to ourselves and to them" (Numbers 13:30-33 NET).

The Forty Years Of Wandering

Their unbelief caused judgment to be pronounced against the nation—they would wander in the wilderness for forty years. With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, everyone from the age twenty and above would die during those forty years. On the other hand, those under twenty would be the generation that would enter into the Promised Land.

Crossing The River Jordan: A Prediction And A Fulfillment

A new generation eventually appeared, and it was time for the people of Israel to enter into the land of promise. The entrance began with another miracle of the Lord. He told Joshua what would take place when they came to the Jordan river:

And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the Lord—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap (Joshua 3:13 NIV).

God's Work in History

Scripture tells us the waters of the river Jordan did indeed miraculously stop flowing while the people crossed and entered the Promised Land. This literally fulfilled what the Lord had predicted would happen:

So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (that is, the Dead Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground (Joshua 3:14-17 NIV).

The nation of Israel began with the miracle of the birth of Isaac, they left Egypt by means of the miracles surrounding the Exodus, and now they would enter into the Promised Land through another miracle.

As we have previously noted, each of these miracles were predicted ahead of time by the Lord.

The Fall Of Jericho Predicted

The first city that the people would encounter would be the fortified city of Jericho:

The Lord told Joshua, "See, I am about to defeat Jericho for you, along with its king and its warriors. Have all the warriors march around the city one time; do this for six days. Have seven priests carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the horns. When you hear the signal from the ram's horn, have the whole army give a loud battle cry. Then the city wall will collapse and the warriors should charge straight ahead" (Joshua 6:2-5 NET).

The Lord promised that He would defeat Jericho. However, the way in which He would do it would be miraculous.

We should note the specific predictions found here. The plan was to have the people silently march around the city one time for six straight days and then seven times around the city on the seventh day.

After the seventh time, the priests would blow the shofar, or the ram's horn, the people would then cry out, and then the wall would miraculously collapse.

The Fulfillment

The people obeyed the instructions of the Lord. For six days they marched around the city without saying a word. Finally, on the seventh day, they marched around the city six times. Scripture then tells us what occurred on the seventh time around:

The rams' horns sounded and when the army heard the signal, they gave a loud battle cry. The wall collapsed and the warriors charged straight ahead into the city and captured it (Joshua 6:20 NET).

Therefore, precisely as predicted, the wall of Jericho did indeed come tumbling down.

The Archaeological Evidence For The Fall Of Jericho

We not only have the biblical account of the fall of Jericho, the evidence from archaeology also supports the account in Scripture. In fact, we can sum up what was found as follows.

Confirmation 1: Jericho Was Strongly Fortified

Massive ramparts which surrounded the city were discovered. This fits with the biblical description (Joshua 2:5,7,15: 6:5,20).

Confirmation 2: The Wall Collapsed At The Time The City Was Destroyed

The evidence reveals that the wall collapsed at the time Jericho was destroyed. This fits the biblical account (Joshua 6:20). There is the possibility that an earthquake accomplished this.

Confirmation 3: The Destruction Occurred At The Time Of Harvest

Large quantities of stored grain were found in the destroyed city. This indicates the time of the destruction was in the spring. Scripture also indicates this (Joshua 2:6; 3:15: 5:10).

Confirmation 4: The City Was Destroyed By Fire

Fire destroyed this massive city. This is precisely what the Scripture says took place (Joshua 6:24).

Confirmation 5: The Siege Was Short

Since the grain in the city was not eaten by the people this indicates that the siege of Jericho was short-lived (Joshua 6:1,15,20).

Jericho was a well-fortified city stocked with grain. Therefore, any siege would normally have taken months to achieve its results. However, the uneaten, stored grain showed that the siege was indeed short.

Confirmation 6: The Grain Was Not Plundered

Usually, when a city is overtaken, everything is plundered. However, we do not find this to be the case in Jericho. Strangely, the grain was not used by the invaders to feed either their citizens or their army.

This is unique in the ancient world but accords perfectly with what the Scripture says (Joshua 6:1,17-18).

The Evidence Speaks Loud And Clear

Therefore, the archaeological evidence fits precisely with the testimony of Scripture. Indeed, this massively fortified city had a quick, fiery, violent end with its wall collapsing to let in the Israelite soldiers.

This occurred in the springtime of that year. Hence, we have every reason to believe that the predictions of Jericho's destruction were literally fulfilled.

We deal with this evidence in further detail in our series *Ancient Mysteries of the Bible Solved, Volume 1*.

The Promises Of God Continue To Be Fulfilled

With the fall of Jericho, we find that the promises of God continued to supernaturally come to pass. Lest we forget, the entire history of the nation has been guided by the miraculous hand of God. As we just noted, the nation started out supernaturally with the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah. Indeed, they had passed the child-bearing years when this miraculous event took place.

God's Work in History

We also discovered how the Lord used many “divine appointments” to fulfill an earlier prediction that He had made to Abram—how his people would live in a foreign country for four hundred years before returning to the Promised Land. The beginning of the miraculous return of the people is documented in the Book of Exodus.

Hence, we should not be surprised to find a predicted miraculous entry into the land, or that Jericho fell, as predicted, in a miraculous way. We will continue to see this pattern as we examine the remainder of the Old Testament.

Prediction 12 The Curse Of Jericho

In accordance with the Lord's prediction, the wall of the city of Jericho had supernaturally fallen down when the people of Israel merely walked around the city once a day for six days and then seven times on the seventh day. Israel had gained the victory over the inhabitants by the mighty hand of God!

Not only was the city destroyed, the Lord also put a curse upon anyone who would attempt to rebuild it. Unhappily, there were those who did not pay attention to this warning from the Lord.

The Prediction

The Lord, through Joshua, uttered a curse upon anyone who would attempt to rebuild the city:

At that time Joshua made this solemn declaration: "The man who attempts to rebuild this city of Jericho will stand condemned before the Lord. He will lose his firstborn son when he lays its foundations and his youngest son when he erects its gates!" (Joshua 6:27 NET).

Notice the specific predictions that we find here. Anyone who attempts to rebuild the destroyed city of Jericho, as a fortified city, will be punished by the Lord. This punishment will include the loss of his firstborn son as well as his youngest son.

The Fulfillment

Jericho had been rebuilt as an unwalled city after Joshua's day (Joshua 18:21; Judges 3:13; 2 Samuel 10:5). Yet, these actions did not go against the direct command of God.

However, later in the history of Israel, contrary to the expressed will of the Lord, there was an attempt to rebuild Jericho as a fortified city by setting up its gates and laying its foundations. This act was in direct defiance to the His commandment. We read what happens as follows:

In Ahab's time, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, and he set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, in accordance with the word of the Lord spoken by Joshua son of Nun (1 Kings 16:34 NIV).

Tragically, the curse upon those who would attempt to rebuild Jericho as a fortified city was literally fulfilled.

To this day, the ancient city has never been rebuilt as a fortified city. In fact, one can visit Jericho and see the ruins of the old city. It stands as a stark testimony to the promises of God to Joshua and to the people of Israel, as well as a warning to those who disobey His commandments.

Again, we see a number of specific fulfillments in this prediction. Both the youngest son, Segub, as well as the firstborn son of this man, Hiel, lost their lives because of this foolish act of their father. As predicted, the firstborn died when the foundations were laid, and the youngest son died when the gates were set up.

They not only died, they died in the predicted order—the firstborn died when the foundations were first laid and then the youngest when the gates were set up.

A Valuable Lesson

This episode is another example of a predictive prophecy that has been literally fulfilled. In addition, it serves as an illustration of the fate of those who purposely defy God's commands.

While the Lord had explicitly said that Jericho should not be rebuilt, the command was ignored. Judgment then followed. This principle is found throughout Scripture. When the Lord gives a command, it must be obeyed. Failure to obey always results in judgment. This is a good lesson for all of us to learn.

Simply put, the Lord had clearly spoken at the time of Joshua and He was still speaking in lifetime of the evil King Ahab of Israel. The people discovered that rejecting God's command was no "small thing."

Thus, the Lord Himself made it clear that He alone remained the genuine King of the nation of Israel, and His Word was to be listened to, as well as to be obeyed. There would be no exceptions.

Prediction 13

The Death Of Saul

After centuries passed by, Israel finally was given a king to rule over them. Unfortunately, this individual was not God's choice to govern the people. As can be imagined, the results would be tragic.

The Background

At the time of the death of Joshua Scripture tells us that there was much land still to be conquered:

When Joshua was very old, the Lord told him, "You are very old, and a great deal of land remains to be conquered" (Joshua 13:1 NET).

Israel never did conquer all of the land which the Lord had promised to give them.

The Time Of The Judges

After the death of Joshua, we then enter a three-hundred-and-fifty-year period known as the time of the "Judges," or the "Chieftains." Israel was ruled by a number of these Chieftains during this period.

The Cycle Of Disobedience

Unhappily, we discover that a continuous cycle of sin and captivity characterized this period. Simply put, the cycle went as follows:

First, the people were obedient to the Lord and thus were blessed by Him. However, they then turned away from Him and engaged in many sinful practices. This resulted in the Lord sending another nation to their land to put them into bondage.

The people would then cry out to the Lord for a deliverer. The Lord would answer their prayer and a deliverer (or a Chieftain) would be raised up to defeat their enemies. The result would be that the people would be blessed by God and they would prosper for a while. Then the cycle would soon start all over again.

The entire period was summed up in these words:

In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit (Judges 21:25 NIV).

Israel Wants A King

Eventually, the people wanted to be like the other nations and have their own king. We read about this in 1 Samuel:

So all the elders of Israel gathered together and approached Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons don't follow your ways. So now appoint over us a king to lead us, just like all the other nations have" (1 Samuel 8:4,5 NET).

The Lord had previously promised that a king would one day rule over Israel. Yet, this was not the right time for this to occur.

The Lord Was Displeased With Their Request

The Lord told Samuel that the request of the people was a rejection of Him:

But this request displeased Samuel, for they said, "Give us a king to lead us." So Samuel prayed to the Lord. The Lord said to Samuel, "Do everything the people request of you. For it is not you that they have rejected, but it is me that they have rejected as their king (1 Samuel 8:6,7 NET).

Saul Is Chosen By The People

Unfortunately, the people chose the wrong man. Not only was Saul not the right person for the job, he was not from the promised line of the Messiah—the tribe of Judah.

Saul's Failed Rule

When we examine the rule of King Saul as recorded in First Samuel, we discover failure after failure. Eventually the Lord stopped speaking to Saul.

The Prediction Of The Death Of Saul

In desperation, Saul sought out a medium in an attempt to contact the dead prophet Samuel. This backfired on Saul when the Lord brought Samuel the prophet back from the dead to pronounce judgment upon him:

Samuel said, "Why are you asking me, now that the Lord has turned away from you and has become your enemy? The Lord has done exactly as I prophesied! The Lord has torn the kingdom from your hand and has given it to your neighbor David! Since you did not obey the Lord and did not carry out his fierce anger against the Amalekites, the Lord has done this thing to you today. The Lord will hand you and Israel over to the Philistines! Tomorrow both you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also hand the army of Israel over to the Philistines!" (1 Samuel 28:16-19 NET).

Notice the specifics of this prediction.

First, the Lord would tear the kingdom away from Saul.

Second, the kingdom would go to God's man—David.

Third, this punishment would be a result of Saul not destroying the Amalekites.

Fourth, Saul and the nation of Israel will be handed over to the Philistines.

Fifth, on the very next day, both Saul and his son Jonathan would be dead.

Sixth, the army of Israel would also be handed over to the Philistines.

The Fulfillment

Each of these predictions by the prophet Samuel were literally fulfilled. The Bible records that the very next day, in a battle with the Philistines, Saul and Jonathan were both killed. The kingdom then went to David, God's man. Israel, including its army, was now in the grip of the Philistines.

The predictions of the Lord, whether it be judgment upon sin, or blessings for obedience to Him, continued to be fulfilled.

Prediction 14 The Promises Made To David And Solomon

Saul was never God's choice to rule Israel. After his death, God's man began to rule over the nation—David. He was followed by his son—Solomon.

Among other things, David was promised that an eternal kingdom would be established from his family line. Solomon was also given a number of promises by the Lord. As we shall see, each one of these specific promises has literally come to pass.

Background

Saul was a terrible leader of the people. While he was their choice, he was not God's choice. The prophet Samuel made this clear in his words to the failed King Saul:

You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people (1 Samuel 13:13,14 ESV).

We are told that the rightful king would be a man "after God's own heart." In other words, this individual would have a genuine heart to serve the Lord. This was never true of Saul.

The Not So Obvious Choice

When it was time for Israel to have a genuine king, the Lord told the prophet Samuel to anoint one of the sons of Jesse:

When they came, he [Samuel] looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:6,7 ESV).

It would be David, the youngest son of Jesse, who would be anointed as king over Israel. In other words, he would not be the obvious choice.

We find the Lord specifically predicting that David would eventually be king over the people of Israel:

So Jesse had him brought in. Now he was ruddy, with attractive eyes and a handsome appearance. The Lord said, "Go and anoint him. This is the one!" So Samuel took the horn full of olive oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers. The Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day onward (1 Samuel 16:12,13 NET).

The Fulfillment

True to the prophecy, David did indeed become king over his people. Again, we must emphasize that he was certainly not a likely choice as far as the population of Israel were concerned.

The Prediction Of What Would Happen At Keilah

There is an interesting episode in the life of David, which not only demonstrates that God correctly predicts the future, it also tells us that He is aware of every possible outcome that may or may not take place. The Bible records what happened as follows:

When David realized that Saul was planning to harm him, he told Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod!" Then David said, "O Lord God of Israel, your servant has clearly heard that Saul is planning to come to Keilah to destroy the city because of me. Will the leaders of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O Lord God of Israel, please inform your servant!" Then the Lord said, "He will come down." David asked, "Will the leaders of Keilah deliver me and my men into Saul's hand?" The Lord said, "They will deliver you over" (1 Samuel 23:9-12 NET).

There are a number of things to note here:

David, in fear of his life from King Saul, enquired of the Lord. Specifically, he wanted to know if the leaders of the city of Keilah would deliver him into the hands of Saul.

The Lord told David that they would indeed deliver him. In other words, if David remained in the city, the leaders would turn him over to Saul.

Knowing this, David and his men left the city for their own safety:

So David and his men, who numbered about six hundred, set out and left Keilah; they moved around from one place to another. When told that David had escaped from Keilah, Saul called a halt to his expedition (1 Samuel 23:13 NET).

Basically, what we have here is the Lord telling David about a future that *could* have happened but *never* did take place. Therefore, among other things, it demonstrates that the Lord knows not only everything that will happen, He also knows everything that could possibly happen!

In sum, David was rescued when He sought the Lord and then believed what the Lord told him about his immediate future.

The Consequences Of David's Murder Of Uriah The Hittite

Although David was a man after God's own heart, he was not perfect. In fact, the Bible records a despicable incident in his life where he slept with a woman named Bathsheba, the wife of another man, got her pregnant, and then ordered the death of her husband—Uriah the Hittite.

David Is Confronted By Nathan The Prophet

Eventually David was confronted by the Lord for his sin. The prophet Nathan visited him and told him a story of a rich man who stole the only lamb of a poor man. David was so upset that he blurted out that this rich man must die for this treacherous act.

David Is Confronted With His Multiple Sins

Nathan then told David the shocking truth:

Nathan said to David, "You are that man! This is what the Lord God of Israel says: 'I chose you to be king over Israel and I rescued you from the hand of Saul. I gave you your master's house, and put your master's

wives into your arms. I also gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all that somehow seems insignificant, I would have given you so much more as well! Why have you shown contempt for the word of the Lord by doing evil in my sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and you have taken his wife as your own! You have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. So now the sword will never depart from your house. For you have despised me by taking the wife of Uriah the Hittite as your own! This is what the Lord says: 'I am about to bring disaster on you from inside your own household! Right before your eyes I will take your wives and hand them over to your companion. He will have sexual relations with your wives in broad daylight! Although you have acted in secret, I will do this thing before all Israel, and in broad daylight' (2 Samuel 12:7-12 NET).

The Lord, speaking through the prophet, predicted a number of disasters that would fall upon the sinning king. David responded:

Then David exclaimed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord!" Nathan replied to David, "Yes, and the Lord has forgiven your sin. You are not going to die. Nonetheless, because you have treated the Lord with such contempt in this matter, the son who has been born to you will certainly die" (2 Samuel 12:13 NET).

David was immediately repentant for these terrible sins which he committed. He realized that, above all, he had sinned against the Lord. He would later declare this in one of the Psalms:

Against you - you above all - I have sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight (Psalm 51:4 NET).

The Predictions With Respect To David's Future

From this passage, we discover a number of predictions that were made by Nathan the prophet concerning David and his family. As we should expect by now, each of them was literally fulfilled. They include the following:

The First Consequence: There Would Be Disaster Upon The Entire House Of David

First, the family line of David would constantly experience difficult times. As Nathan told him, the "sword would never depart from your family." The Old Testament records the fulfillment of this prediction.

Amnon, David's Son, Rapes His Sister

In a horrible episode, one of David's sons, Amnon, raped Tamar—the beautiful sister of another of David's sons—Absalom.

Pretending to be sick, he requested Tamar to bring him some food while he was in his bedroom. Scripture then explains what happened:

Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the cakes into the bedroom; then I will eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes that she had prepared and brought them to her brother Amnon in the bedroom. As she brought them to him to eat, he grabbed her and said to her, "Come on! Get in bed with me, my sister!" But she said to him, "No, my brother! Don't humiliate me! This just isn't done in Israel! Don't do this foolish thing! How could I ever be rid of my humiliation? And you would be considered one of the fools in Israel! Just speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you." But he refused to listen to her. He overpowered her and humiliated her by raping her (2 Samuel 13:10-14 NET).

This disgusting episode would have further consequences within the family of David.

Absalom, David's Son, Has Amnon Killed

The humiliation of Tamar had caused tremendous anger from her brother Absalom. Two years later, he got his revenge:

Absalom instructed his servants, "Look! When Amnon is drunk and I say to you, 'Strike Amnon down,' kill him then and there. Don't fear! Is it not I who have given you these instructions? Be strong and courageous!" So Absalom's servants did to Amnon exactly what Absalom had instructed (2 Samuel 13:28,29 NET).

Therefore, one son of David had another son of his murdered.

David Driven Out Of Jerusalem By His Son Absalom

Later, in an insurrection against him by his own son Absalom, David was driven out of Jerusalem:

Then a messenger came to David and reported, "The men of Israel are loyal to Absalom!" So David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come on! Let's escape! Otherwise no one will be delivered from Absalom! Go immediately, or else he will quickly overtake us and bring disaster on us and kill the city's residents with the sword . . . So the king and all the members of his royal court set out on foot (2 Samuel 15:13,14,16 NET).

The family of David did indeed suffer tremendously as the prophet had predicted. In fact, the problems never seemed to end.

The Second Consequence: The Humiliation Of David And His Concubines

In a second punishment, for taking another man's wife, David, and his concubines, would be humiliated by his own son Absalom. The Bible tells us what happened:

They pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom had sex with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel (2 Samuel 16:22 NET).

As predicted, David's own son, Absalom, publicly humiliated his father in having sex with his father's concubines.

The Third Consequence: His Newborn Son Would Die

Sadly, as predicted by Nathan, the newborn son of David and Bathsheba would not survive:

On the seventh day the child died. But the servants of David were afraid to inform him that the child had died (2 Samuel 12:19 NET).

While this son of David and Bathsheba did indeed die, all was not lost. David himself testified that he would again see his son someday. David testified:

While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept because I thought, 'Perhaps the Lord will show pity and the child will live. But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Am I able to bring him back? I will go to him, but he cannot return to me!' (2 Samuel 12:22-23 NET).

David would see his son in the next life. Indeed, he believed that each of them would be in the presence of the Lord in heaven. We develop this idea of what happens to babies that die in our book *Heaven*.

God's Work in History

In sum, we find that from this particular sinful episode in the life of David—the adultery with Bathsheba, her subsequent pregnancy, and then the murder of her husband Uriah the Hittite—a number of tragic consequences resulted.

One son of David rapes his sister, another son has the rapist killed. Absalom drives his father out of Jerusalem and then publicly humiliates him by having sex with his concubines for all to see. In addition, the son born to David and Bathsheba dies soon after birth.

These episodes literally fulfilled the predictions of the prophet Nathan as to the punishment which David would receive. Indeed, the Lord would not allow David to get away with his sins—the sword never departed from his family.

The Promise To David Of A Future Temple

While there were sinful episodes in the life of David, there was also much success.

David ruled over Israel from Hebron for the first seven years and then moved his center of authority to Jerusalem. He also brought the Ark of the Covenant to the environs of Jerusalem.

During his rule, David had the idea to build a temple for the Lord to house the Ark. However, the Lord would not allow him to do it. David explained it this way:

King David rose to his feet and said: “Listen to me, my fellow Israelites, my people. I had it in my heart to build a house as a place of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, for the footstool of our God, and I made plans to build it. But God said to me, ‘You are not to build a house for my Name, because you are a warrior and have shed blood’ (1 Chronicles 28:2-3 NIV).

It would be David's son, Solomon, who would build the temple of the Lord.

The Promises Of An Eternal Kingdom

Though he would not build the temple, David was promised an everlasting kingdom. Indeed, it would be one of His descendants who would rule forever:

The Lord God of Israel chose me out of my father's entire family to become king over Israel and have a permanent dynasty. Indeed, he chose Judah as leader, and my father's family within Judah, and then he picked me out from among my father's sons and made me king over all Israel. From all the many sons the Lord has given me, he chose Solomon my son to rule on his behalf over Israel. He said to me, ‘Solomon your son is the one who will build my temple and my courts, for I have chosen him to become my son and I will become his father. I will establish his kingdom permanently, if he remains committed to obeying my commands and regulations, as you are doing this day (1 Chronicles 28:4-8 NET).

We also read about this in Second Samuel:

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established

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forever.” In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David (2 Samuel 7:12-17 ESV).

In sum, the life of David illustrates a number of specific predictions which were made by the Lord, and we discover that each one of them was literally fulfilled.

As we noted, not all of the predictions consisted of blessings upon him and his family. Indeed, on the one hand, the Lord punished David for his sins, but on the other hand, He blessed him for his faithfulness.

Solomon

The reign of Solomon followed that of David. As opposed to his father who was a man of war, there was peace and prosperity during his rule. Solomon himself was the recipient of many promises by the Lord.

Solomon Given Wisdom Above All Others

We are told that the Lord appeared to Solomon and promised to grant him a choice. Solomon, wisely, asked for wisdom rather than riches:

That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Tell me what I should give you.” Solomon replied to God, “You demonstrated great loyalty to my father David and have made me king in his place. Now, Lord God, may your promise to my father David be realized, for you have made me king over a great nation as numerous as the dust of the earth. Now give me wisdom and discernment so I can effectively lead this nation. Otherwise no one is able to make judicial decisions for this great nation of yours.”

God said to Solomon, “Because you desire this, and did not ask for riches, wealth, and honor, or for vengeance on your enemies, and because you did not ask for long life, but requested wisdom and discernment so you can make judicial decisions for my people over whom I have made you king, you are granted wisdom and discernment. Furthermore I am giving you riches, wealth, and honor surpassing that of any king before or after you” (2 Chronicles 1:7-12 NET).

The Promise Of Wisdom Fulfilled

The promises of wisdom and wealth were literally fulfilled in the life of Solomon. First, we read of the great wisdom that the Lord granted to Solomon:

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol, and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom (1 Kings 4:29-34 ESV).

This wisdom was on display for the queen of Sheba:

Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions. . . And she said to the king, “The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard (1 Kings 10:1,6, 7 ESV).

Solomon was indeed given wisdom above any other human being.

Solomon Was Given Untold Riches

As the Lord had also promised, Solomon was also granted tremendous wealth:

Solomon accumulated chariots and horses. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses. He kept them in assigned cities and in Jerusalem. The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones; cedar was as plentiful as sycamore fig trees are in the lowlands. Solomon acquired his horses from Egypt and from Que; the king's traders purchased them from Que. They paid 600 silver pieces for each chariot from Egypt, and 150 silver pieces for each horse. They also sold chariots and horses to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Syria (2 Chronicles 1:14-17 NET).

The Greatness Of Their Kingdoms

Both David and Solomon were kings over a large kingdom. Their prosperity was tied to their faithfulness to the Lord.

The prediction of a great kingdom for both David and Solomon was literally fulfilled. In fact, archaeology is continuing to verify the greatness and extent of the kingdom of these first two rightful kings of Israel. We document this in our book *Ancient Mysteries of the Bible Solved, Volume 1*.

A Promise And A Warning Was Given To Solomon

The Lord appeared to Solomon with a promise, as well as a warning:

If my people, who belong to me, humble themselves, pray, seek to please me, and repudiate their sinful practices, then I will respond from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land. Now I will be attentive and responsive to the prayers offered in this place. Now I have chosen and consecrated this temple by making it my permanent home; I will be constantly present there. You must serve me as your father David did. Do everything I commanded and obey my rules and regulations. Then I will establish your dynasty, just as I promised your father David, 'You will not fail to have a successor ruling over Israel.'

"But if you people ever turn away from me, fail to obey the regulations and rules I instructed you to keep, and decide to serve and worship other gods, then I will remove you from my land I have given you, I will abandon this temple I have consecrated with my presence, and I will make you an object of mockery and ridicule among all the nations (2 Chronicles 7:14-20 NET).

The warning was clear. Unhappily, the people, as well as the king, did not listen to it.

Solomon Did Not Remain Faithful

Unfortunately, Solomon did not remain faithful to the Lord. Recall, the Lord promised to David that his descendants would rule as long as they remained faithful to Him. In fact, David's last words to Solomon also emphasized this:

When David was close to death, he told Solomon his son: "I am about to die. Be strong and become a man! Do the job the Lord your God has assigned you by following his instructions and obeying his rules, commandments, regulations, and laws as written in the law of Moses. Then you will succeed in all you do and seek to accomplish, and the Lord will fulfill his promise to me, 'If your descendants watch their step and live faithfully in my presence with all their heart and being, then,' he promised, 'you will not fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel' (2 Kings 1:1-4 NET).

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However, Solomon played the fool and disobeyed the Lord. He married pagan wives who brought their heathen idols to the holy city of Jerusalem.

This would cause the kingdom to be torn from the line of Solomon after his death. Judgment was indeed coming.

Conclusion On David And Solomon

In sum, in the lives of the first two rightful kings of Israel, David and Solomon, we find a number of specific predictions made by the Lord to each of them. As we documented, God's predictions of what would take place in the future were again literally fulfilled.

The predictions concerning David dealt with both blessings as well as judgment. David was honored as the first rightful king of Israel and he was blessed with the promise that one of his descendants would be the long-awaited Messiah. These predictions were literally fulfilled.

However, because of his sin with Bathsheba, and the murder of her husband, Uriah, David was severely punished. His family was constantly in tatters and his own son, Absalom, instituted an insurrection against his rule.

Solomon also received a number of promises from the Lord. Specifically, they dealt with riches as well as wisdom. Again, we find that the specific predictions of the Lord found their literal fulfillments.

Sadly, later in his life, Solomon turned away from the Lord. This disobedience would cause his kingdom to be split after his death. The greatness would never return.

Prediction 15 The Birth And The Deeds Of King Josiah

There are a few examples in Scripture of the Bible naming a person before that individual is born, as well as what they will do in their lifetime. One of these predictions is found in the Old Testament with the promise of the birth of the good king Josiah.

The Background

After the death of King Solomon, the kingdom of Israel became split. The ten northern tribes, Israel, followed a man named Jeroboam. While the two southern tribes, Judah, consisted of the tribe of Benjamin and the tribe of Judah.

A New Religious System Appears

Jeroboam brought a new religious system to the kingdom of Israel that was contrary to the one which the Lord established. This system can be summarized as follows:

First, he brought in new objects of worship in the form of golden calves:

After the king had consulted with his advisers, he made two golden calves (1 Kings 12:28 NET).

Second, this new system was instituted in new places of worship: Bethel, the center, and Dan, in the far north of his kingdom:

Then he [Jeroboam] said to the people, "It is too much trouble for you to go up to Jerusalem. Look, Israel, here are your gods who brought you up from the land of Egypt." He put one in Bethel and the other in Dan. This caused Israel to sin; the people went to Bethel and Dan to worship the calves (1 Kings 12:29-30 NET).

New buildings of worship were also constructed to house this new system of worship. They were in the form of temples on the "high places:"

He built temples on the high places (1 Kings 12:31 NET)

In addition, a new non-Levitical priesthood was established to lead in the these newly established places of worship:

[Jeroboam] appointed as priests people who were not Levites (1 Kings 12:31 NET)

Finally, a new feast was inaugurated to compete with the God-given Feast of Tabernacles:

Jeroboam inaugurated a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the festival celebrated in Judah. On the altar in Bethel he offered sacrifices to the calves he had made. In Bethel he also appointed priests for the high places he had made (1 Kings 12:32 NET)

In sum, Jeroboam created a new religion that was contrary to the divinely revealed faith that the Lord had established among His people.

Obviously, the Lord could not let something like this flourish in the Promised Land. Therefore, He sent His prophet to announce judgment.

The Prediction

We read what then took place:

On the fifteenth day of the eighth month (a date he had arbitrarily chosen) Jeroboam offered sacrifices on the altar he had made in Bethel. He inaugurated a festival for the Israelites and went up to the altar to offer sacrifices. Just then a prophet from Judah, sent by the Lord, arrived in Bethel, as Jeroboam was standing near the altar ready to offer a sacrifice. With the authority of the Lord he cried out against the altar, "O altar, altar! This is what the Lord says, 'Look, a son named Josiah will be born to the Davidic dynasty. He will sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who offer sacrifices on you. Human bones will be burned on you' (1 Kings 12:33; 13:1-2 NET).

This is a very specific prophecy from an unnamed prophet of the Lord. But did this prophet have the authority to make such a prediction? How was the king to know if this was truly from the Lord?

The Need For A Prophet To Predict Something In Their Own Lifetime

Earlier, Moses had written of the qualifications of a genuine prophet of God:

The Lord said to me . . . I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, is to be put to death."

You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord?" If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously, so do not be alarmed (Deuteronomy 18:1-22 NIV).

Note that the true prophet of God must predict something that would take place in his or her own lifetime. Only then will the people know that a genuine prophet of God has spoken. If the so-called prophet does not do this, then he or she is not to be taken seriously.

An Immediate Sign Was Given

In this case, there was a prediction of an immediate sign that would confirm that this prophet had made a divine utterance in the prediction of the birth of a future king named Josiah:

That day he [the prophet] also announced a sign, "This is the sign the Lord has predetermined: The altar will be split open and the ashes on it will fall to the ground." When the king heard what the prophet cried out against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam, standing at the altar, extended his hand and ordered, "Seize him!" The hand he had extended shriveled up and he could not pull it back. The altar split open and the ashes fell from the altar to the ground, in fulfillment of the sign the prophet had announced with the Lord's authority (1 Kings 13:3-5 NET).

To prove that this long-range prophecy would eventually occur, this unnamed prophet also gave a prophecy that had an immediate fulfillment.

God's Work in History

This genuine prophet from Judah gave the sign that the altar would be split apart and the ashes which were on it would be poured out.

When Jeroboam heard this, he ordered his guard to seize this man of God. At that time, the hand of the king was paralyzed, shriveled up, and the altar immediately split open and the ashes did indeed fall to the ground.

This literally fulfilled the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord.

It was clear that this destruction of the altar at Bethel demonstrated the Lord's rejection of this unbiblical form of worship. In addition, this evil man Jeroboam who was exercising both political and religious power over the people of Israel, suddenly found himself under the power and authority of the Lord. Pathetically, Jeroboam realized his helplessness. Thus, in a panic, he sought the aid of the true prophet of the Lord:

Please entreat the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me (1 Kings 13:6 NET).

The Lord, the Living God, answered his request and the hand of the king was restored:

So the prophet sought the Lord's favor and the king's hand was restored to its former condition (1 Kings 13:6 NET).

Significantly, we should note that Jeroboam referred to the Lord as "your God," not as "his God." The god of Jeroboam was not the true God of the nation of Israel.

Two Predictions Made, One Immediately Fulfilled

We find two specific predictions in this passage. First, this prophet gave a long-range sign. While crying out against the altar, he predicted that a future son would be born to the house of David. This particular son who would sacrifice the priests of the high places and human bones on this same altar. The prophet even went so far as to identify the name of this future king of Judah, Josiah.

The Eventual Fulfillment

Scripture records the literal fulfillment of this long-range prophecy:

He [Josiah] also tore down the altar in Bethel at the high place made by Jeroboam son of Nebat, who encouraged Israel to sin. He burned all the combustible items at that high place and crushed them to dust; including the Asherah pole. When Josiah turned around, he saw the tombs there on the hill. So he ordered the bones from the tombs to be brought; he burned them on the altar and defiled it. This fulfilled the Lord's announcement made by the prophet while Jeroboam stood by the altar during a festival. King Josiah turned and saw the grave of the prophet who had foretold this. He asked, "What is this grave marker I see?" The men from the city replied, "It's the grave of the prophet who came from Judah and foretold these very things you have done to the altar of Bethel." The king said, "Leave it alone! No one must touch his bones." So they left his bones undisturbed, as well as the bones of the Israelite prophet buried beside him.

Josiah also removed all the shrines on the high places in the cities of Samaria. The kings of Israel had made them and angered the Lord. He did to them what he had done to the high place in Bethel. He sacrificed all the priests of the high places on the altars located there, and burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem (2 Kings 23:15-20 NET).

Again, we find the literal fulfillment to this prediction by this unnamed prophet of the Lord some three hundred years later.

God's Work in History

A king of Judah, named Josiah, was born. According to the prediction of the Lord, he destroyed the pagan high places that were built. In addition, he sacrificed the pagan priests on their altars and burned their human bones upon them. Scripture then informs us that all of this was the fulfillment of that earlier prediction by the unknown prophet.

A Number Of Lessons Are Learned

This episode teaches us a number of important truths about the subject of Bible prophecy.

First, it illustrates the necessary confirmation of a true prophet of God. In this case, the unnamed prophet gave a short-range, as well as a long-range prophetic utterance. Each was fulfilled. Furthermore, it once more demonstrates that the genuine predictions given by the Lord, through His prophets, will always come to pass precisely as they are stated.

In other words, God means what He says and says what He means. We find this vital truth documented for us again and again in Scripture, just as we will, coming, in the prediction of a godly king who will rid the Holy Land of the ungodly practices that were initially set up by the evil king Jeroboam.

Prediction 16 The Captivity Of The Northern Kingdom Of Israel

As we noted, the nation of Israel was eventually divided into two kingdoms—north and south. The southern kingdom of Judah had kings which were both good and bad.

However, the kings that ruled over the northern kingdom of Israel were all evil. Consequently, judgment was predicted for this kingdom who had entirely turned their back on the Lord.

Background: The Prediction Of The Divided Kingdom

Tragically, toward the end of his life Solomon played the fool and worshipped other gods. As a result, the Lord pronounced judgment against his family line. He would take away the twelve-tribe kingdom from the family of David and Solomon. Scripture records the prediction:

When Jeroboam had left Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met him on the road; the two of them were alone in the open country. Ahijah was wearing a brand new robe, and he grabbed the robe and tore it into twelve pieces. Then he told Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces, for this is what the Lord God of Israel says: 'Look, I am about to tear the kingdom from Solomon's hand and I will give ten tribes to you (1 Kings 11:29-31 NET).

The line of Solomon would be left with only two tribes—Judah and Benjamin.

Rehoboam, The Successor To Solomon Acts Unwisely

The division of the kingdom occurred when Solomon's son Rehoboam did not act wisely with the people. The Bible explains what happened:

Jeroboam and all the people reported to Rehoboam on the third day, just as the king had ordered when he said, "Return to me on the third day." The king responded to the people harshly. He rejected the advice of the older men and followed the advice of the younger ones. He said, "My father imposed heavy demands on you; I will make them even heavier. My father punished you with ordinary whips; I will punish you with whips that really sting your flesh." The king refused to listen to the people, because the Lord was instigating this turn of events so that he might bring to pass the prophetic announcement he had made through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat (1 Kings 12:12-15 NET).

This unwise decision of Rehoboam, of listening to the younger advisers rather than the advice of the older men, would have the devastating consequences of splitting up the kingdom.

The Prophecy Is Fulfilled, The Kingdom Is Divided

As predicted by the prophet Ahijah, the kingdom was divided between the north and the south:

When all Israel saw that the king refused to listen to them, the people answered the king, "We have no portion in David, no share in the son of Jesse! Return to your homes, O Israel! Now, look after your own dynasty, O David!" So Israel returned to their homes (1 Kings 12:16 NET).

The nation of Israel was now divided. The ten northern tribes, Israel, followed Jeroboam, while the two southern tribes, Judah, remained with Rehoboam.

The Other Sanctuaries

Other sanctuaries were then built in opposition to the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. The Bible explains:

Jeroboam thought to himself, "The kingdom will now likely revert to the house of David. If these people go up to offer sacrifices at the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, they will again give their allegiance to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to King Rehoboam." After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. And this thing became a sin; the people came to worship the one at Bethel and went as far as Dan to worship the other (1 Kings 12:26-30 NIV).

These other sanctuaries would continue throughout the time of the existence of the northern kingdom.

The Prediction Of The Captivity Of The Northern Kingdom

As mentioned, every king who ruled the northern kingdom of Israel was evil. Eventually, the Lord sent prophets to predict the captivity of the ten northern tribes of Israel.

We should note that the northern kingdom of Israel was sometimes called "Ephraim," which was the name of the largest of the ten tribes, and at other times Israel was called "Samaria," which was the name of its capital city.

The Fulfillment

After only two hundred years of existence as a nation distinct from Judah, the ten northern tribes of Israel were conquered by the Assyrians and taken captive. Scripture records the fulfillment:

The king of Assyria invaded the entire land, marched against Samaria and laid siege to it for three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes (2 Kings 17:5-6 NIV).

The ten northern tribes were taken into captivity by the Assyrians.

This is a sad episode in the history of the nation of Israel. Ironically, the ruins of the destroyed sanctuary in Dan remains to this day. It is a stark reminder of the judgment of God upon sin—judgment that the Lord clearly predicted.

Unfortunately, this would not be the last tragic story in the history of the chosen people.

Prediction 17 The Fall Of Nineveh And The Assyrian Empire

Nineveh was the capital of the evil Assyrian empire—the predicted nation who brought the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity. As we documented, this prediction was literally fulfilled.

While this evil nation was used by the Lord to remove the northern kingdom in 721 B.C., the people of Nineveh, the Assyrian empire, would themselves also be judged by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The prophet Nahum was raised up to predict such a punishment. The prophet Zephaniah also prophesied against this evil empire.

Background

The entire book of Nahum is a prophecy against Nineveh. About one hundred years before this particular prediction about Nineveh, a revival took place when the people, from the king to the lowest citizen, repented of their sins. This is documented in the Book of Jonah.

Unfortunately, the people of Nineveh returned to their former brutal, ungodly ways. Once again, they faced the judgment of the Lord. However, on this occasion, the punishment would indeed take place.

In the past God had used Assyria as the rod of his anger against Israel:

What sorrow awaits Assyria, the rod of my anger. I use it as a club to express my anger (Isaiah 10:5 NLT)

Now the Lord would stretch out His hand against Assyria itself.

The Predictions Of Nahum And Zephaniah

The prophet Nahum, along with Zephaniah, made a number of specific predictions about the fall of this great city. As we shall see, each one has been literally fulfilled.

The Guilty Will Be Punished

The Book of Nahum begins by emphasizing that the Lord will punish the wicked:

The Lord is powerful, yet patient; he makes sure that the guilty are always punished (Nahum 1:3 CEV).

If any city in the ancient world deserved the punishment of God, it would certainly be Nineveh—the capital of the Assyrian Empire.

History tells us that the Assyrian army would viciously destroy those peoples whom they conquered. Among other things, they buried their enemies alive, skinned them alive, impaled them on sharp poles and then left them out in the sun to burn. They practiced such brutality on men, women, and children. The time had come for Assyria itself to be punished.

Prediction 1: Nineveh Will Be Destroyed By The Lord

First, we find the complete destruction of Nineveh predicted:

God's Work in History

The Lord . . . will make an end of Nineveh; he will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness (Nahum 1:7,8 NIV).

Interestingly, like Nahum, Zephaniah the prophet also made it clear that it would be the Lord who would destroy Assyria:

The Lord will attack the north and destroy Assyria (Zephaniah 2:13 NET).

As predicted, Nineveh was indeed destroyed. The siege of the city began in 614 B.C. and ended in 612 B.C. While it was the Babylonians, along with others, who were the human instruments which obliterated Nineveh, ultimately it was the Lord who accomplished this. The Bible makes this clear.

The prediction of Nineveh's utter desolation, even while that Assyrian capital ruled the world, testifies to the divine origin of the message of Zephaniah and Nahum.

Prediction 2: The Boastful City Of Nineveh Would Become Like A Ruinous Heap, Like A Desert

Among other things, Nineveh boasted of its incomparable strength and beauty. Zephaniah records what the city thought of itself:

She thought to herself, "I am unique! No one can compare to me!" (Zephaniah 2:15 NET).

While Nineveh boasted of its greatness, the Lord promised to make the city like a ruinous heap:

He will make Nineveh a heap of ruins; it will be as barren as the desert (Zephaniah 2:15 NET).

What a contrast! The magnificent city will become barren like the desert. The prediction that the Lord will leave Nineveh "as barren as the desert" is remarkable in view of the fame of the city's great irrigation system.

Zephaniah listed some of the specifics as to what would happen to this once proud city:

Flocks and herds will lie down in the middle of it as well as every kind of wild animal. Owls will sleep in the tops of its support pillars they will hoot through the windows. Rubble will cover the thresholds; even the cedar work will be exposed to the elements. This is how the once-proud city will end up the city that was so secure. . . . What a heap of ruins she has become, a place where wild animals live! Everyone who passes by her taunts her and shakes his fist (Zephaniah 2:14-15 NET).

Notice the specifics of this prediction. Basically, nothing would be left of this once magnificent city. Instead of admiration, those who passed by the ruins would taunt this once great city.

History tells us that the destruction was indeed complete. In fact, Nineveh was unrecognized by Xenophon and his retreating Greeks when they passed by it in 401 B.C. He stated that he could not even find the city!

Add to this, one of the early excavators of Nineveh, Henry Layard, wrote about what he had uncovered:

We have been fortunate enough to acquire the most convincing and lasting evidence of that magnificence and power, which made Nineveh the wonder of the ancient world, and her fall the theme of the prophets, as the most single instance of divine vengeance. Without the evidence that these monuments afford, we might also have doubted that the great Nineveh ever existed, so completely has she become "a desolation and a waste" (Henry Layard, *Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon* (1853) pp. 135–36).

God's Work in History

Interestingly, Nineveh had relied on a number of things for its own protection. This included its specific geographical location (Nahum 3:8), their various allies (Nahum 3:9), the fortresses which were guarding the nation (Nahum 3:12), as well as its well-trained army (Nahum 3:13).

These various protections made them feel invincible. However, at the end of the day, none of these defenses could help Nineveh from incurring the wrath of God. The punishment of the Lord was complete.

Prediction 3: Assyria Would Not Afflict Judah Any Longer

The Lord also gave the promise that Assyria would never again cause problems to the southern kingdom of Judah:

This is what the Lord says: “Although they have allies and are numerous, they will be destroyed and pass away. Although I have afflicted you, Judah, I will afflict you no more. Now I will break their yoke from your neck and tear your shackles away” . . . Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, Judah, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed (Nahum 1:12,13,15 NIV).

The Assyrians had been a thorn in the side of the kingdom of Judah. This prophecy of Nahum could not be clearer. Nineveh and the Assyrians would no longer trouble the chosen people. This prediction, too, was literally fulfilled.

We find an important truth here. As Nahum wrote, the God of the Bible is an “avenging God” who is angry at sin:

The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The Lord takes vengeance on his foes and vents his wrath against his enemies (Nahum 1:2 NIV).

He does indeed take vengeance upon those who are His enemies.

Yet, the Lord is also a good God who cares for His people—for those who put their trust in Him.

The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him (Nahum 1:7 NIV).

The Apostle Paul would later encourage people to do the following:

Consider the goodness and severity of God (Romans 11:22 NKJV).

While the God of the Bible is indeed a “God of love” (1 John 4:8, 16), as the prophet Nahum emphasized, the Lord is also a God of light (Nahum 1:5). Indeed, the Lord shines His light upon evil and exposes it.

Thus, while the Lord is truly a refuge for those who put their faith in Him, as the evil people of Nineveh discovered, God is also an avenger to those who are His enemies.

Prediction 4: There Would Be No More Descendants Coming From The People Living In Nineveh

It was also predicted that those who were then living in Nineveh would not have any descendants:

The Lord has given a command concerning you, Nineveh: “You will have no descendants to bear your name (Nahum 1:14 NIV).

God's Work in History

Even though the city of Nineveh was powerful, and the people were numerous, the God of Israel would cause them to exit the stage of history. In other words, the residents of this great city, and in particular the king, would not have any surviving descendants.

Again, this prediction was literally fulfilled. The royal line of Nineveh ceased.

Prediction 5: The Fulfillment Of These Predictions Would Take Place Soon After They Were Given

This is an important point. These predictions against Nineveh would be fulfilled very soon after they were given. In other words, this was a direct warning to the Assyrians that existed at the time Nahum and Zephaniah prophesied. Consequently, it would not be hundreds, or thousands, of years before these predictions would be literally fulfilled.

Fascinatingly, Nahum wrote his entire book at a time when Assyria was at the very peak of its power. Consequently, there would have been nobody who would have ever thought that the mighty city of Nineveh would fall and would fall so soon.

Yet, the Lord, the God of the Bible, who knows all things, including the “things to come,” gave this message to his prophet Nahum to give assurance to the frightened people of Judah that the Assyrians would no longer be problematic to them.

Prediction 6: The People Of Nineveh Would Be Drunk During Their Final Hours

The last hours of the people of Nineveh would be one of drunkenness:

They are like drunkards overcome by wine, or like dry thornbushes burning in a fire (Nahum 1:10 CEV).

The author Diodorus Siculus, writing in 20 B.C. wrote that the Assyrian soldiers were drunk when an unexpected night attack occurred that caused their demise. This is found in his work *Bibliotheca Historica*.

Prediction 7: The People Would Prepare Bricks For The Defense Walls

While being sieged, it was predicted that the people would try to repair the walls:

Draw water for the siege, strengthen your defenses! Work the clay, tread the mortar, repair the brickwork! (Nahum 3:14 NIV)

The moat at the ruins of Nineveh is still filled with fragments of mud bricks which were removed from the walls when they were breached. The people were indeed trying to repair the walls when the city was destroyed.

Prediction 8: The Gates Of The City Would Be Destroyed

We also find the prediction that the city gates will be destroyed by fire:

Your army is weak. Fire has destroyed the crossbars on your city gates; now they stand wide open to your enemy (Nahum 3:13 CEV).

This has also shown to be historically true.

Prediction 9: Nineveh Would Be Destroyed By A Flood

The city of Nineveh would come to an end by means of a flood.

God's Work in History

But like a roaring flood, the Lord chases his enemies into dark places and destroys them . . . The river gates are thrown open and the palace collapses (Nahum 1:8; 2:8 NIV).

Nahum predicted that Nineveh would experience the flooding of rivers which would destroy the palace. The historian Diodorus wrote that in the third year of the siege of Nineveh, heavy rains occurred that caused a nearby river to flood part of the city. In doing so, the walls of the city were broken.

Another historian, Xenophon, mentioned terrifying thunder associated with the city's capture. This seems to assume that heavy rains were taking place when the city fell.

Again, we find the historical record attests to the fulfillment of Nahum's prophecy.

Prediction 10: Nineveh Would Be Plundered

Ironically, the Assyrians had increased their wealth by plundering the nations, but now it was Nineveh who would be plundered:

Her conquerors cry out: "Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold!" There is no end to the treasure; riches of every kind of precious thing (Nahum 2:9 NIV).

There seemed to be no limit as to the treasures of Nineveh. The Babylonian Chronicle described the spoils taken in the sacking of Nineveh as "a quantity beyond counting."

In fact, "no other land seems to have been sacked and pillaged so completely as was Assyria" (Cambridge Ancient History (3:130–31).

Hence, the plunderer gets plundered!

Prediction 11: When Sieged, The People Would Try To Escape

Here we find another specific prediction about what will take place when the siege occurs:

Nineveh was like a pool of water throughout her days, but now her people are running away; she cries out: "Stop! Stop!" but no one turns back (Nahum 2:8 NET).

Instead of remaining in this once mighty city, the people attempted to escape.

Prediction 12: Nineveh's Defenders Would Flee As Cowards

Now we have an interesting prediction about what their soldiers would do. Recall that they were trusting in their magnificent army to keep them from harm:

Your courtiers are like locusts, your officials are like a swarm of locusts! They encamp in the walls on a cold day, yet when the sun rises, they fly away; and no one knows where they are (Nahum 3:17 NET).

History tells us that the "brave" defenders of Nineveh did indeed flee!

Prediction 13: Nineveh's Idols Will Be Destroyed

We should not miss this one. The idols that this great empire put their trust in were now going to be destroyed:

God's Work in History

The Lord has given a command concerning you, Nineveh: “You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the images and idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave (Nahum 1:14 NIV).

Again, the Lord makes it clear that human-made idols are completely worthless. The northern kingdom of Israel had previously learned this lesson, as would the southern kingdom of Judah. Indeed, in a few short years after this prophecy of Nahum was fulfilled, Jerusalem and its temple would be destroyed, and the people deported to Babylon.

Prediction 14: Nineveh, Once Destroyed, Would Never Be Rebuilt

Finally, Scripture predicts that this once great city, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, would never be rebuilt after its destruction.

Destruction, devastation, and desolation! Their hearts faint, their knees tremble, each stomach churns, each face turns pale! . . . you will no longer prey upon the land; the voices of your messengers will no longer be heard (Nahum 2:10, 13 NET).

Indeed, once the Assyrian empire came to an inglorious end, their messengers were no longer heard. No longer could they prey upon the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Therefore, we find that the biblical prophets Nahum and Zephaniah dashed any hope for the great city of Nineveh to be restored. This arrogant city was to be destroyed beyond any possible repair.

In addition, the Assyrian kingship would be forever doomed. The Lord had assured His people that Nineveh would be destroyed and, in doing so, emphasized that the deliverance of Judah from this foe would be once-and-for-all complete.

Again, we have another series of amazing predictions. Many cities in the ancient world were rebuilt time and time again. However, this was not true of Nineveh.

Summary On The Fulfillments

In sum, each of these fourteen predictions were literally fulfilled a short time after they were given. The prophecies found in the Book of Nahum addressed the Assyrian capital of Nineveh exclusively and condemned its idolatrous practices (Nahum 1:14), violence (Nahum 3:1–3), and its sorceries (Nahum 3:4).

Zephaniah, on the other hand, condemned the arrogance of this proud city (Zephaniah 2:15). For these sins, each of these prophets predicted the complete destruction of this powerful city of the ancient world.

It is amazing that this once proud and threatening city is described in such terms of absolute devastation. As we indicated, for centuries Nineveh had become virtually lost to the rest of the world. As the Scripture predicted, it did indeed become a complete desolation!

We also take a more in-depth look at the destruction of Nineveh from an archaeological standpoint in our book *Ancient Mysteries of the Bible Solved, Volume 1*.

Prediction 18 The Death Of The False Prophet Hananiah

In Scripture, we find that the Lord has raised up many prophets to speak to His people. Among them was Jeremiah who predicted the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem as well as the temple. The prophet also predicted the deportation of the people of Judah to Babylon.

Unfortunately, Jeremiah had to contend with false prophets as he preached the Word of the Lord to the people. One of these individuals was named Hananiah. In one particular episode, it would become obvious who was the true prophet of God.

The Background

The people of Judah were warned through Jeremiah the prophet that Babylon was God's instrument to take them captive. In fact, in 606 B.C. the deportation to Babylon had already begun. The King of Judah, Jehoiachin, had been deported to Babylon, along with some of the people, as well as with some of the vessels of the temple.

At this time, a certain false prophet named Hananiah arose and contradicted Jeremiah's prophetic message:

In the fifth month of that same year, the fourth year, early in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, the prophet Hananiah son of Azzur, who was from Gibeon, said to me in the house of the Lord in the presence of the priests and all the people: "This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two years I will bring back to this place all the articles of the Lord's house that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon removed from here and took to Babylon. I will also bring back to this place Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah and all the other exiles from Judah who went to Babylon,' declares the Lord, 'for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon' (Jeremiah 28:1-4 NIV).

Note the specifics of his predictions. Within two years the articles of the temple would be brought back to Judah, Jehoiachin, the king, would return from Babylon along with the captives that had already been taken.

Clearly, this so-called prophet contradicted the message of the genuine prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah responded to these false prophecies:

Then the prophet Jeremiah responded to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the Lord's temple. The prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the Lord do all this! May the Lord make your prophecy come true! May he bring back to this place from Babylon all the valuable articles taken from the Lord's temple and the people who were carried into exile. But listen to what I say to you and to all these people. From earliest times, the prophets who preceded you and me invariably prophesied war, disaster, and plagues against many countries and great kingdoms. So if a prophet prophesied peace and prosperity, it was only known that the Lord truly sent him when what he prophesied came true (Jeremiah 28 5-9 NIV).

We should note well what Jeremiah said. If indeed someone prophesied peace and prosperity, then this person would not be considered a genuine prophet of the Lord unless his prediction came true.

This caused Hananiah to do the following:

The prophet Hananiah then took the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and broke it. Then he spoke up in the presence of all the people. "The Lord says, 'In the same way I will break the yoke of servitude of all

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the nations to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon before two years are over.” After he heard this, the prophet Jeremiah departed and went on his way (Jeremiah 28:10-11 NIV).

Hananiah “doubled-down” on his previous predictions. He claimed the Lord would take away the yoke of servitude of all nations to King Nebuchadnezzar, and He would do it within two years.

At this time the Lord spoke to Jeremiah. He was to tell the people of Judah the following:

But shortly after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, the Lord spoke to Jeremiah. “Go and tell Hananiah that the Lord says, ‘You have indeed broken the wooden yoke. But you have only succeeded in replacing it with an iron one! For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘I have put an irresistible yoke of servitude on all these nations so they will serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. And they will indeed serve him. I have even given him control over the wild animals (Jeremiah 28:12-14 NET).

Obviously, the Lord was not pleased with these predictions of Hananiah. Indeed, they were giving false comfort to the sinful inhabitants of Jerusalem who were soon to be deported to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar was to be God's instrument of judgment upon the people of Judah.

The Prediction Of The Death Of Hananiah

Jeremiah would not let this false prophesy stand. Note the specific prediction that Jeremiah gave toward this false prophet Hananiah:

Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, “Listen, Hananiah! The Lord has not sent you, yet you have persuaded this nation to trust in lies. Therefore this is what the Lord says: ‘I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This very year you are going to die, because you have preached rebellion against the Lord (Jeremiah 28:16 NIV).

While Hananiah predicted the return of the exiles, the return of the king, and the return of the temple vessels within two years, Jeremiah gave his own prediction of an event that would take place within one year—Hananiah, the false prophet, would die!

The Fulfillment

The prediction was literally fulfilled just as the man of God predicted:

In the seventh month of that same year, Hananiah the prophet died (Jeremiah 28:17 NIV).

It should have then become obvious to all who was indeed the genuine prophet of God!

Note the specifics of the fulfillment of the predictions. First, Hananiah, the false prophet, did die. Second, it was within the time period predicted by Jeremiah. Third, the false predictions of Hananiah did not come true. Indeed, the people did not immediately return from Babylon, nor was Nebuchadnezzar stopped from subduing the nations, as Hananiah falsely predicted.

God's Test Of A True Prophet

In this instance, Jeremiah fulfilled the biblical requirements that a true prophet must demonstrate. Many years previously, Moses wrote the following about the test of a true prophet:

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I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. I will hold accountable whoever does not listen to my words that he speaks in my name. But the prophet who presumes to speak a message in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods—that prophet must die.' You may say to yourself, 'How can we recognize a message the Lord has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the Lord's name, and the message does not come true or is not fulfilled, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him (Deuteronomy 18:18-22 CSB).

The Lord made it clear that a genuine prophet must predict something that would take place in their own lifetime. In his prediction about the death of Hananiah within a year's time, Jeremiah demonstrated that he was the one who was speaking for the Lord.

Furthermore, as we shall document, the predictions of Jeremiah regarding the city of Jerusalem, the temple, as well as the Babylonian exile, all came literally true. All in all, we will indeed discover that Jeremiah was a true prophet of the living God.

Prediction 19

The Beginning Of The Babylonian Captivity And The Destruction Of Jerusalem And The Temple

While the northern kingdom of Israel had earlier gone into captivity in 721 B.C., the southern kingdom of Judah would last a little while longer; however, their removal from the land was only a matter of time. The nation who would bring the Jews into captivity, as well as the specific duration of their exile, was predicted by the prophet Jeremiah.

The Background

As we saw in our previous prediction, Jeremiah proved to be a genuine prophet of God with his prediction of the death of the false prophet Hananiah. Previously, Hananiah claimed to speak in the name of the Lord and predicted that those who had already been taken to Babylon would be back within two years. This would also include the king as well as the temple vessels. On the other hand, Jeremiah made it clear that the captivity would last for a much longer time—some seventy years.

The Prediction

Jeremiah wrote a letter to the captives in Babylon telling them to settle down in Babylon:

This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper” (Jeremiah 29:4-7 NIV).

Again, we should note the specifics of his exhortation. They were to settle down in Babylon and prosper there for the entire time of their captivity. In point of fact, they would not be coming back immediately to Jerusalem.

The Fulfillment: The Captivity

The judgment of the Lord against the southern kingdom of Judah would be extensive. In 606 B.C. some of the vessels of the temple, as well as the King Jehoiachin and others, were taken to Babylon. However, this would not be the end of the suffering of Judah.

In a second deportation in 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar took almost the entire population of Jerusalem:

Nebuchadnezzar took from there all the riches in the treasuries of the Lord's temple and of the royal palace. He removed all the gold items which King Solomon of Israel had made for the Lord's temple, just as the Lord had warned. He deported all the residents of Jerusalem, including all the officials and all the soldiers (10,000 people in all). This included all the craftsmen and those who worked with metal. No one was left except for the poorest among the people of the land (2 Kings 24:13-17 NET).

As predicted, in the third deportation, all of the remaining people of the southern kingdom of Judah were exiled to Babylon. Though the false prophets said that this could never happen, it did indeed take place precisely as the Lord said it would. We read the following about the destruction of Jerusalem by the army of King Nebuchadnezzar:

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He burned down the Lord's temple, the royal palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem, including every large house. The whole Babylonian army that came with the captain of the royal guard tore down the walls that surrounded Jerusalem. Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, deported the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen. But he left behind some of the poor of the land and gave them fields and vineyards (2 Kings 25:9-12 NET).

The Book of Chronicles explains what happened in this manner:

He brought against them the king of the Babylonians, who slaughtered their young men in their temple. He did not spare young men or women, or even the old and aging. God handed everyone over to him. He carried away to Babylon all the items in God's temple, whether large or small, as well as what was in the treasuries of the Lord's temple and in the treasuries of the king and his officials. They burned down the Lord's temple and tore down the wall of Jerusalem. They burned all its fortified buildings and destroyed all its valuable items. He deported to Babylon all who escaped the sword. They served him and his sons until the Persian kingdom rose to power. This took place to fulfill the Lord's message delivered through Jeremiah. The land experienced its sabbatical years; it remained desolate for seventy years, as prophesied (2 Chronicles 36:17-21 NET).

This is one of the most tragic times in the history of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, they had been forewarned as the Scripture testified:

The Lord God of their ancestors continually warned them through his messengers, for he felt compassion for his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked God's messengers, despised his warnings, and ridiculed his prophets. Finally the Lord got very angry at his people and there was no one who could prevent his judgment (2 Chronicles 36:15-16 NET).

In this summary statement, the Chronicler not only described the last days before the Babylonian captivity, he basically summarized the entire history of the nation.

We find that the Lord—in His great compassion—had sent His special messengers time and time again to call His people to repentance.

However, not only were these messengers mocked and scoffed at, their words were also despised. Yet, as always, the Word of the Lord comes true!

Prediction 20

The Fall Of Babylon And The Rise Of Media/Persia

Babylon was the nation that the Lord used to bring the southern kingdom of Judah into captivity. However, like Assyria, which took the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity and then received its judgment by the Lord, Babylon would also experience God's punishment.

The Background

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had a dream that troubled him. He knew that it meant something, but he did not know exactly what it meant. Therefore, he summoned all the wise men of Babylon to interpret the meaning of the dream.

His request was simple—they were to tell him what he had dreamt as well as what it meant. Obviously, they could not do this. So, they asked the king to tell them what he had dreamt and then they would tell him what it meant. The king was not impressed:

The king replied to the wise men, "My decision is firm. If you do not inform me of both the dream and its interpretation, you will be dismembered and your homes reduced to rubble! (Daniel 2:5 NET).

The wise men then told the king that his request was unreasonable:

The wise men replied to the king, "There is no man on earth who is able to disclose the king's secret, for no king, regardless of his position and power, has ever requested such a thing from any magician, astrologer, or wise man. What the king is asking is too difficult, and no one exists who can disclose it to the king, except for the gods - but they don't live among mortals!" (Daniel 2:10,11 NET).

The king was angry at their response. He ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be killed. This included Daniel and his three friends.

Daniel Seeks The Lord

Daniel asked the Babylonian authorities for time that the Lord might disclose to him the dream and the interpretation. That night, the Lord revealed the dream and its meaning to Daniel. Ushered into the king's presence, Daniel was asked if he could disclose the dream as well as its interpretation. Daniel gave the following response:

No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come (Daniel 2:27,28 NIV).

Daniel admitted that he himself could neither tell the king his dream nor its interpretation. But, as he said, there is a God in heaven who does indeed reveal mysteries. It is He who miraculously revealed this to Daniel. Daniel then explained the dream as well as the interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar.

It seems the king was thinking about the future—what would happen in the coming days and years.

The Lord then gave him a dream of a huge statue which had a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, stomach and thighs of bronze, legs of iron and toes of iron mixed with clay. Then a stone, which was cut out without

hands, destroyed the statue by striking its feet. This rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain which filled the entire earth.

Daniel then went on to interpret this dream:

You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold (Daniel 2:37,38 ESV).

Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold in the dream, was then told that another kingdom would arise after his that would be inferior to Babylon. A third kingdom would eventually arise that would destroy the second kingdom and likewise a fourth kingdom would arrive which would destroy the third. Each kingdom, like the metals in his dream, in some sense, would be inferior to the previous one.

Daniel's Vision

As to the identity of this second kingdom we find the answer in the seventh and eight chapters of the Book of Daniel.

In chapter seven, we read the following description of Daniel's vision of four great beasts:

The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a human being, and the mind of a human was given to it. And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh! (Daniel 7:4-5 NIV).

Daniel is given the interpretation of the vision:

The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever (Daniel 7:17,18 NIV).

These are the same four kingdoms that were described in King Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

Daniel Receives Further Revelation

Daniel then received another vision in the third year of Belshazzar:

In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me previously. In this vision I saw myself in Susa the citadel, which is located in the province of Elam. In the vision I saw myself at the Ulai Canal. I looked up and saw a ram with two horns standing at the canal. Its two horns were both long, but one was longer than the other. The longer one was coming up after the shorter one. I saw that the ram was butting westward, northward, and southward. No animal was able to stand before it, and there was none who could deliver from its power. It did as it pleased and acted arrogantly (Daniel 8:1-4 NET).

The Timing Of This Vision

It is important that we understand the timing of this particular prophecy. Daniel said it took place in "the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar." From secular history, we are able to pinpoint the date.

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The King of Babylon at this time was a man named Nabonidus whose oldest son was named Belshazzar. In an ancient work titled *The Verse Account of Nabonidus* the following is written:

[when] the third year was about to begin He (Nabonidus) entrusted the "Camp" to his oldest (son), the firstborn, the troops everywhere in the country he ordered under his command. He let everything go, entrusted the kingship to him (Pritchard, 1969, p. 313).

We learn the name of his firstborn son was Belshazzar from another ancient inscription known as the *Nabonidus Cylinder*. Putting these two inscriptions together we find that Nabonidus entrusted the kingship to Belshazzar, his oldest son, in the third year of his [Nabonidus'] reign which most scholars place around 553 B.C. This would make the third year of the reign of Belshazzar about 550 B.C. It was in this year that Daniel received this particular prophecy.

The Identity Of The Ram: Medo Persia

The ram is equivalent to the chest and arms of silver in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great statue (Daniel 2:32, 39.) In addition, it is also the same as the lopsided bear in Daniel's own vision of the four beasts:

Then a second beast appeared, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and there were three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and devour much flesh!' (Daniel 7:5 NET).

The Lord left no doubts as to the meaning of the vision:

He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end. The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia (Daniel 8:19,20 NIV).

According to this prediction, the Medes and the Persians would be the kingdom that replaces the Babylonian.

The Rise Of Media And Persia

In Daniel's vision, recorded in chapter eight, he saw a ram with two notable horns. However, one of the horns was higher than the other. The ram was said to push westward, northward, and southward and become great. As we noted, the angel Gabriel explained to Daniel that the ram represented the kingdoms of Media and Persia.

From secular history, we find that the prediction found in this passage matches what we know from history. Initially, the Medes were a stronger people than the Persians. In fact, the Medes ruled over them. The Persians eventually revolted against the Medes and under Cyrus the Great conquered the Median kingdom. Cyrus then ascended to the throne of the Media/Persian Empire.

This fits perfectly with the vision given to Daniel. The Medes were originally superior to the Persians, but the higher horn, the superior power, came up last. Under Cyrus, and his son Cambyses, the Persian Empire would rule over a much larger swath of territory than the Babylonians. Consequently, the prediction of another great kingdom that would come after Babylon was fulfilled by the rise of the Media/Persian Empire.

The Handwriting On The Wall: The Fall Of Babylon

Finally, we come to the fulfillment of the first part of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar as well as the two visions of Daniel. It is found in Daniel's interpretation of the famous incident of the handwriting on the wall.

Daniel interpreted the inscription, and its meaning, as follows:

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This is the inscription that was written: mene, mene, tekel, parsin. Here is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians (Daniel 5:25-28 NIV).

The demise of Babylon was at hand. In fact, the predictions of the Lord would be fulfilled that very night. We read:

That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two (Daniel 5:30,31 NIV).

Recall that these predictions about the fall of Babylon were made earlier in the rule of Belshazzar—his third year.

How It Happened

When Daniel interpreted the handwriting on the wall, he prophesied to Belshazzar that he will lose his kingdom to the Medes and Persians. The Book of Daniel records that it did indeed happen that very night. As we noted, Daniel had been told years earlier that the kingdom of Babylon would fall to the Medes and the Persians (Daniel 8:19-20).

However, Daniel does not explain how it happened. Interestingly, there are three ancient writings which do tell us how it transpired. These documents are the Nabonidus Cylinder, and the Cyrus Cylinder (both from the sixth century B.C.), and the writings of the Greek historian Herodotus (fifth century B.C.).

We can summarize the testimony of these ancient documents as follows: Cyrus, who was the ruler of the Medes and the Persians, intercepted the army of Nabonidus, King of Babylon, while they were on their way from the city of Tema to Babylon. When the Babylonian forces were defeated it left the city of Babylon essentially undefended.

In a creative maneuver, Cyrus diverted the Euphrates River, which flowed through Babylon, so that his troops could march into the city on the riverbed. Once accomplished, the capital of Babylon fell to Cyrus and his army on October 11th or 12th, 539 B.C. This event literally fulfilled Daniel's prophecy.

In sum, we see the Lord predicting the demise of Babylon as well as predicting the people who would be the next kingdom—the Medes and the Persians. This miraculously took place in the lifetime of the prophet Daniel which once again demonstrates that he was a genuine prophet of God, as well as the fact that there is indeed a God in heaven!

Prediction 21

The End Of The Seventy Year Babylonian Captivity

The prophet Jeremiah had made it clear that the people of the southern kingdom of Judah would be sent to Babylon. There would also be a specific time in which they would remain in captivity—seventy years:

For the Lord says, ‘Only when the seventy years of Babylonian rule are over will I again take up consideration for you. Then I will fulfill my gracious promise to you and restore you to your homeland’ (Jeremiah 29:10 NET).

Interestingly, their captivity would consist of the rule of not one kingdom, but rather two.

Media/Persia Rules In Babylon

As we saw in our last prediction, Babylon was conquered by the Medes and the Persians. However, the people of Judah remained in captivity during this transition of empires.

Eventually, the prophet Daniel realized that the end of the captivity was near at hand:

In the first year of Darius son of Ahasuerus, who was of Median descent and who had been appointed king over the Babylonian empire - in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, came to understand from the sacred books that, according to the word of the LORD disclosed to the prophet Jeremiah, the years for the fulfilling of the desolation of Jerusalem were seventy in number (Daniel 9:1-2 NET).

The End Of Captivity

Precisely as the Lord had predicted, the seventy-year Babylonian captivity came to an end. We read about this in the first chapter of Ezra with the proclamation of King Cyrus:

In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in order to fulfill the Lord's message spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord stirred the mind of King Cyrus of Persia. He disseminated a proclamation throughout his entire kingdom, announcing in a written edict the following: “Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: “The Lord God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has instructed me to build a temple for him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Anyone from his people among you (may his God be with him!) may go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and may build the temple of the Lord God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. Anyone who survives in any of those places where he is a resident foreigner must be helped by his neighbors with silver, gold, equipment, and animals, along with voluntary offerings for the temple of God which is in Jerusalem” (Ezra 1:1-4 NET).

The prediction was literally fulfilled. We read about this in the Book of Second Chronicles:

He deported to Babylon all who escaped the sword. They served him and his sons until the Persian kingdom rose to power. This took place to fulfill the Lord's message delivered through Jeremiah. The land experienced its sabbatical years; it remained desolate for seventy years, as prophesied (2 Chronicles 36:20-21 NIV).

This seventy-year exile from their homeland was a part of the plan of the Lord to give the southern kingdom of Judah a future as well as a hope. Jeremiah wrote the following to the people:

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For I know what I have planned for you,' says the Lord. 'I have plans to prosper you, not to harm you. I have plans to give you a future filled with hope (Jeremiah 29:11 NET).

The horrific episode of the destruction of the city, the temple, and the seventy-year captivity had come to an end. The Word of the Lord had again come true. Judgment is God's strange work. He loves to be merciful to His people.

As we examine this prediction, we find a number of specific items that were fulfilled.

First, there was an end to the captivity. This was not a given. It was possible, humanly speaking, that no decree would ever be given to allow the people to return to their homeland.

Second, the time of the captivity was also literally fulfilled—seventy years. Again, we have a specific prediction as to the length of the captivity.

Third, it would be a miraculous prediction by the prophet Isaiah that would set the stage for this return. Later, we shall look more closely at this remarkable prediction (Prediction 27: The Amazing Decree of Cyrus).

Prediction 22

The Third Kingdom: Greece

And The Rise And Fall Of Alexander The Great

Recall that the Lord predicted four Gentile world kingdoms to rise and fall before the kingdom of God would come to the earth. Babylon would be the first, followed by Media-Persia.

Daniel made it clear whom the third kingdom would be—Greece. We are also given much prophetic detail about the unique leader of this third world kingdom—Alexander the Great. In fact, Scripture gives us a number of predictions about this leader and his kingdom.

The Four Great Beasts

We find that Daniel had his own vision of these four Gentile kingdoms who would rule the world. Instead of seeing them as a great statue of various metals, as in the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, his vision was of four great beasts.

The third kingdom, which would come after Babylon and Media-Persia, is described as follows:

After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule (Daniel 7:6 NIV).

The initial description of this third kingdom was that of a leopard.

Daniel Wants To Know The Meaning

These descriptions of these four beasts confused Daniel. He then asked for the meaning:

I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me. I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this. So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: 'The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever' (Daniel 7:15-18 NIV.)

From God's perspective, these four great Gentile kingdoms would be four terrifying beasts. This third beast, which is the same as the third kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, is not identified for us in this passage.

The Male Goat And The Ram

Later, Daniel was given a vision of a two-horned ram, which we have previously identified as Media-Persia, and a male goat who would conquer the ram:

As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath. I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power (Daniel 8:5-7 ESV).

The Lord then provided the interpretation as to the identity of the third beast—the male goat:

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The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power (Daniel 8:21-22 NIV).

The shaggy male goat is identified as the king of the Greek Empire. He is also described as a conspicuous horn.

As we mentioned, the male goat, in this vision, represents the same kingdom as the belly and thighs of bronze in the vision of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream:

The head of the statue was made of fine gold. Its chest and arms were silver, its belly and thighs were bronze. . . but after your kingdom comes to an end, another kingdom, inferior to yours, will rise to take your place. After that kingdom has fallen, yet a third kingdom, represented by bronze, will rise to rule the world (Daniel 2:32, 39 NLT).

The Conspicuous Horn: Alexander Of Macedon

The leader of this third kingdom would be a figure like no other, arguable the most successful military commander in the history of the world—Alexander of Macedon—Alexander the Great.

Alexander, born in 356 B.C., was the son of Philip, king of Macedon. Scripture has much to say about this famous personage.

To begin with, he is called the “first king” of the kingdom of Greece. History informs us that Alexander was indeed the first king of the empire.

His amazingly swift conquests are predicted in Daniel. As the “goat from the west,” this notable horn would defeat the ram—the armies of the Medes and the Persians. The goat struck the ram and shattered his two horns indicating the Greek Empire’s crushing defeat of Medo-Persia (331 B.C.).

This prophecy was literally fulfilled when Alexander led the Greek armies across the Hellespont into Asia Minor in 334 B.C. He then defeated the forces of the Persian army at the river Granicus. Alexander again met and quickly defeated the Persians at Issus.

Scripture describes his campaigns as coming from the west, crossing the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground. This refers to Alexander’s speedy conquest of the entire Near East in only three years.

The Death Of The Male Goat

Although the male goat magnified himself, at the height of his power the large horn was broken:

The goat became very powerful. But at the height of his power, his large horn was broken off (Daniel 8:8 NET).

This refers to Alexander’s sudden death at the peak of his greatness in 323 B.C.

The Contribution Of Alexander: Hellenism

Alexander’s main contribution to humankind was Hellenization—the merging of Greek culture with the customs of the peoples he conquered (*Hellas* is the Greek word for Greece).

God's Work in History

In fact, koine, or common, Greek, became the universal trade language from 330 B.C. to about A.D. 300. In addition, the Septuagint, which is the earliest translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, as well as some of the writings of early church fathers, were all composed in Greek.

We Find Multiple Fulfillments Again

As we have seen with each of these predictions that we have recorded, the fulfillment does not merely consist of one prediction. In fact, we can document the following specific fulfillments.

First, the kingdom that would supplant the Medes and the Persians is specifically named—Greece.

Second, there would be one leader who would bring them to glory.

Third, many specific exploits of Alexander are listed.

Fourth, he would die at the height of his power.

As we should expect by now, each of these predictions about this third kingdom, as well as its leader, were literally fulfilled. Once again, this illustrates that the God of the Bible knows the future and that He is in complete control.

Prediction 23
The History Of Greece
After The Death Of Alexander

The next important series of predictions revolves around the Greek kingdom after the death of Alexander. We find that not only was the history of the third empire predicted, we are told of its identity, Greece, the fate of its leader, as well as the aftermath once Alexander died. Each of these predictions has been literally, as well as minutely, fulfilled in history.

Background

Alexander of Macedon, Alexander the Great, had died prematurely. Yet Scripture does not equate the end of the life of Alexander with the end of the Greek kingdom. Indeed, it tells us what would happen to the kingdom after Alexander's untimely death.

Prediction

The leader of this empire, Alexander, would die at the height of his glory. Yet, his empire would not dissolve. Instead, it would be divided into four kings who would rule specific kingdoms:

The goat became very powerful. But at the height of his power, his large horn was broken off. In the large horn's place grew four prominent horns pointing in the four directions of the earth (Daniel 8:8,9 NLT).

Though the kingdom will be divided into four prominent horns, none of them will have the same power as the previous large horn:

The shaggy male goat represents the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes represents the first king of the Greek Empire. The four prominent horns that replaced the one large horn show that the Greek Empire will break into four kingdoms, but none as great as the first (Daniel 8:21,22 NLT).

Fulfilment

As the Bible predicted, the four conspicuous horns that replaced Alexander described his four generals who ruled over different areas of his kingdom—Cassander over Macedon and Greece, Lysimachus over Thrace and Asia Minor, Seleucus over Syria and Babylon, Ptolemy over Egypt.

Again, we must consider the odds of this happening by mere chance.

First, it was predicted that the leader will die at the height of his glory.

Second, his kingdom was to be divided into four parts. Of course, this means that one, two, three, or five divisions would contradict the prediction. But they did not happen. As prophesied, the kingdom of Alexander was divided into four parts.

Third, the four kingdoms that would arise out of the nation of Greece, would not have the same power as the kingdom of Alexander.

Finally, like the previous two kingdoms, Babylon and Media-Persia, Greece would also be conquered.

The empire that would accomplish this would be the most powerful of all—Rome.

Prediction 24

The Rise Of Antiochus IV Epiphanes

The Bible predicted that after the death of Alexander the Great, his kingdom would be divided into four notable horns, or kingdoms. Yet none of them would have the same authority as Alexander. As we just noted, this was literally fulfilled.

The Rise Of A Deceitful King

We are also told that out of the four notable horns a deceitful king will arise:

Toward the end of their rule, when rebellious acts are complete, a rash and deceitful king will arise. His power will be great, but it will not be by his strength alone. He will cause terrible destruction. He will be successful in what he undertakes. He will destroy powerful people and the people of the holy ones. By his treachery he will succeed through deceit. He will have an arrogant attitude, and he will destroy many who are unaware of his schemes. He will rise up against the Prince of princes, yet he will be broken apart - but not by human agency. The vision of the evenings and mornings that was told to you is correct. But you should seal up the vision, for it refers to a time many days from now (Daniel 8:23-26 NET).

This rash and deceitful king would be a man known as Antiochus IV.

Who Was Antiochus IV?

Born around 215 B.C., Antiochus IV was the son of King Antiochus III, (also known as “The Great”). Though his original name was Mithradates, this son of the king took the name Antiochus after he ascended to the throne.

He was the eighth in succession of twenty kings of the Seleucid Empire— one of the four empires in which Alexander’s empire was divided. Antiochus IV ruled from 175 B.C. until his death in 164 B.C.

He Gave Himself Divine Titles

Antiochus was the first Seleucid king to give himself divine titles. This evil king had coins minted that said, “of King Antiochus.” Later, however, the coins were made to read “of King Antiochus, God Manifest, Victory Bringer.”

Interestingly, his behavior, which was quite often eccentric. led some of his contemporaries to call him *Epimanes*, “The Mad One.” This is a play on words of the title he gave himself, *Epiphanes*—the coming one.

Daniel 11: A Further Description Of Antiochus

In the eleventh chapter of the Book of Daniel, the Lord provided a history of the political situation of the Jewish people from the time of Daniel until the time of the Maccabees. This section contains some of the most amazing predictions in the entire Bible.

As we get to verse 21, we come across the prediction of a personage who would not only wreak havoc with the Jews, he would also become the clearest type, or foreshadowing, of the coming man of sin—the final Antichrist.

The Predictions And Fulfillments

As we meet this evil person in this 11th chapter of Daniel, we read the following:

God's Work in History

Then there will arise in his place a despicable person to whom the royal honor has not been rightfully conferred. He will come on the scene in a time of prosperity and will seize the kingdom through deceit (Daniel 11:21 NET).

We note that at the outset he is called a “despicable person.” This title was given to him because of his hatred and treatment of the Jews. It was also predicted the royal honor had not been rightfully conferred on him.

This was also literally true. Antiochus IV was not directly in line to be king but would nevertheless seize the kingdom by intrigue, while the rightful heir, Demetrius, was held in Rome. We then read:

Armies will be suddenly swept away in defeat before him; both they and a covenant leader will be destroyed (Daniel 11:23 NET).

Again, we find a literal fulfillment of these predictions. Though Ptolemy VI Philometor (181–146 B.C.) attacked him with superior forces, Antiochus IV would be able to defeat them.

In addition, he deposed the prince, or leader, of the covenant, the Jewish high priest—a man named Onias III.

There are a number of specific predictions in Scripture about this evil personage that were literally fulfilled. They include the following:

1. Antiochus Started Out As A “Little Horn”

Like Alexander the Great, as well as the Final Antichrist who is to come, Antiochus was called a “little horn:”

From one of them came a small horn. But it grew to be very big, toward the south and the east and toward the beautiful land. It grew so big it reached the army of heaven, and it brought about the fall of some of the army and some of the stars to the ground, where it trampled them (Daniel 8:9 ESV).

This part of Daniel's vision anticipated the rise of a ruler from the Greek Empire. Antiochus fulfilled this prediction.

2. He Exalted Himself As High As The Prince Of The Host

Antiochus would consider himself as a person of the highest importance:

He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host (Daniel 8:11 NKJV).

This description refers to God Himself!

We are also told that he would exalt himself in his heart:

And he shall exalt himself in his heart (Daniel 8:25 NKJV).

As we mentioned earlier, the fact that he minted coins claiming that he was “God manifest,” testifies to his arrogant attitude concerning himself. Indeed, he exalted himself as high as the “Prince, or Commander, of the host”—the living God!

3. Antiochus Was Thought To Be A Man Of Peace

Antiochus deceived the people of Judea by appearing as a man of peace. The following prediction was made about him in the Book of Daniel:

By his treachery he will succeed through deceit. He will have an arrogant attitude, and he will destroy many who are unaware of his schemes (Daniel 8:25 NET).

The Book of First Maccabees records the fulfillment of this prediction as it describes the treachery of Antiochus to Israel:

Deceitfully he spoke peaceable words to them, and they believed him; but he suddenly fell upon the city, dealt it a severe blow, and destroyed many people of Israel (1 Maccabees 1:30 NRSV).

4. Antiochus Persecuted The Jews

Antiochus IV was a persecutor of the Jewish people. The apocryphal book of First Maccabees describes him in this manner:

After subduing Egypt, Antiochus returned in the one hundred forty- third year. He went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force. He arrogantly entered the sanctuary and took the golden altar, the lampstand for the light, and all its utensils. He took also the table for the bread of the Presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns, and the gold decoration on the front of the temple; he stripped it all off. He took the silver and the gold, and the costly vessels; he took also the hidden treasures that he found. Taking them all, he went into his own land. He shed much blood, and spoke with great arrogance (1 Maccabees 1:20-24 NRSV).

Antiochus brought terrible agony upon the Jewish nation. As we are told here in the Book of First Maccabees, he was an arrogant murderer.

5. Antiochus Was On The Scene For About Seven Years

Interestingly, the time Antiochus would be on the scene is specifically given to us in the Book of Daniel. Scripture says:

He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated" (Daniel 8:14 NIV).

The time 2,300 evenings is just about seven years.

6. Antiochus Took Away The Daily Sacrifices

Antiochus committed the ultimate sacrilege by desecrating the holy temple in Jerusalem. This includes stopping the daily sacrifices. We read about his horrible deeds in the book of First Maccabees:

And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the towns of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane sabbaths and festivals, to defile the sanctuary and the priests, to build altars and sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and other unclean animals, and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, so that they would forget the law and change all the ordinances. He added, "And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die" (First Maccabees 1:44-50 NRSV).

Among other things, Antiochus defiled the temple by stopping the sacrifices, ordering pigs to be sacrificed on altars, as well as building shrines for idols. He also changed the Laws that the Lord had set down. Those who did not obey the commands of Antiochus were put to death.

7. He Died, But Not By Human Power

The Bible also predicts the demise of Antiochus:

He will be a master of deception and will become arrogant; he will destroy many without warning. He will even take on the Prince of princes in battle, but he will be broken, though not by human power (Daniel 8:25 NLT).

This prediction accurately describes his death. Contrary to many ancient kings, Antiochus did not die in battle, neither was he assassinated by those close to him. Indeed, he did not die at the hands of any human being. First century author, Flavius Josephus described how he died:

By the anxiety he [Antiochus] was in, [he] fell into a distemper, which lasted a great while, and as his pains increased upon him, so at length perceived he should die in a little time; so he called his friends to him, and told them his distemper was severe upon him, and confessed withal, that this calamity was sent upon him for the miseries he had brought upon the Jewish nation, while he plundered their temple and condemned their God; and when he had said this, he gave up the ghost (Josephus, *Antiquities* 12:9:1).

The second century B.C. history, Polybius, stated the following about Antiochus' death:

[He] died at Tabae in Persia, smitten with madness, as some people say, owing to certain manifestations of divine displeasure (Polybius, 1927: 31:9).

We could add to this the testimonies of the Roman historian Appian, second century A.D., as well as Diodorus Siculus who wrote during the first century B.C. Each of them testified that Antiochus died from disease.

These testimonies confirm the biblical prediction of the manner in which Antiochus would die—it would not be by any human means.

In sum, the specific predictions about the rise and fall of this evil ruler were all literally fulfilled.

As mentioned, Antiochus is the clearest type, or foreshadowing, of the future Antichrist. (For more information on this subject see our book *The Final Antichrist: The Coming Caesar*).

**Prediction 25:
The Rise Of The Fourth Beast: Rome**

In keeping with the predictions of the Lord through the prophet Daniel, a fourth kingdom would eventually arise after the demise of Babylon, Media-Persia, and then Greece.

The Prediction

We find this fourth kingdom described in Nebuchadnezzar's dream as follows:

Then there will be a fourth kingdom, one strong like iron. Just like iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything, and as iron breaks in pieces all of these metals, so it will break in pieces and crush the others. In that you were seeing feet and toes partly of wet clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom. Some of the strength of iron will be in it, for you saw iron mixed with wet clay. In that the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, the latter stages of this kingdom will be partly strong and partly fragile. And in that you saw iron mixed with wet clay, so people will be mixed with one another without adhering to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. In the days of those kings the God of heaven will raise up an everlasting kingdom that will not be destroyed and a kingdom that will not be left to another people (Daniel 2:40-44 NET).

This kingdom—Rome—would be more powerful than the previous three combined. It would also be the last major kingdom on the earth until the arrival of God's kingdom.

The Fulfillment

Although not specifically named in the Book of Daniel, it is clear that Rome fulfilled the predictions given in the interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Indeed, from history, as well as from the New Testament, we discover that Rome played a huge part in events predicted in Scripture.

Rome Conquered Greece

First, the Roman Empire conquered Greece and became a larger, as well as a more powerful, kingdom than the previous three. Furthermore, Rome ruled for a longer period of time than any of the three previous empires. Yet, their rule was inferior to the previous three.

This inferiority consisted of their ruling authority. In fact, Rome was inferior to the previous three kingdoms in this regard. The people, as well as the Roman senate, played significant roles in setting its policies. Consequently, they controlled the emperors—much more than had been true in these three preceding empires.

King Nebuchadnezzar was an absolute monarch. However, the rulers who followed him in the next three kingdoms, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome, were each increasingly less powerful, personally, than the previous rulers.

We again find that the specific predictions made in Scripture have been literally fulfilled.

The Emphasis Upon The Fourth Beast

It is important that we always pay attention to that which the Bible emphasizes. We have an illustration of this truth in Daniel chapter seven.

God's Work in History

In Daniel's vision we discover the emphasis on the fourth of these four terrible beasts that the prophet saw in his vision. In fact, there are only three verses that describe the first three beasts, while the remaining twenty-one verses of the chapter deal with this coming fourth beast and the time of its rule.

Likely, this was due for two reasons. First, the uniqueness of this creature, for this beast did not resemble any animal known to humanity.

Second, this beast was notable for the future impact that it would have upon His people. Indeed, Daniel was concerned with this little horn, that will emerge from the ten horns, because it will be allowed to overcome the people of God.

Since this is a specific prediction of the time of the end, what it emphasizes is important from the Lord's point of view. Even from a human viewpoint, the end of the age with the triumph of the believers would be a matter of primary concern to the prophet Daniel.

We Must Pay Attention To The Advice Given In Daniel

Therefore, we want to heed the advice given in the later chapters of Daniel:

But you, Daniel, close up these words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will dash about, and knowledge will increase. . . [Daniel said] I heard, but I did not understand. So I said, "Sir, what will happen after these things?" He said, "Go, Daniel. For these matters are closed and sealed until the time of the end. Many will be purified, made clean, and refined, but the wicked will go on being wicked. None of the wicked will understand, though the wise will understand (Daniel 12:4,8-10 NET).

According to Scripture, as we get nearer toward the time of end, our knowledge of Bible prophecy will greatly increase.

Therefore, we should expect to better understand what is taking place in our world and how it lines up with "last days" Bible prophecy. This is precisely what we find. The third volume in this series *25 Signs We Are Near the End* documents this.

Prediction 26 The Destruction Of Tyre

One of the most amazing predictions found in the entire Bible concerns the ancient city of Tyre. In fact, it is one of the many biblical predictions which clearly shows the supernatural character of the Scripture, as well as the God who is revealed in its pages.

The Background

Tyre was the commercial center for the ancient Phoenicians. It was famous for both its wealth as well as its beauty. In fact, it was Hiram, the King of Tyre, who supplied a number of items for both David and Solomon:

So David lived in the fortress and called it the City of David. David built all around it, from the terrace inwards. David's power grew steadily, for the Lord God who commands armies was with him. King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs, carpenters, and stonemasons. They built a palace for David. David realized that the Lord had established him as king over Israel and that he had elevated his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel (2 Samuel 5:9-12 NET).

Later, Hiram, provided materials and skilled workmen for the temple:

King Hiram of Tyre had always been a loyal friend of David. When Hiram learned that David's son Solomon was the new king of Israel, he sent ambassadors to congratulate him.

Then Solomon sent this message back to Hiram: "You know that my father, David, was not able to build a Temple to honor the name of the Lord his God because of the many wars waged against him by surrounding nations. He could not build until the Lord gave him victory over all his enemies. But now the Lord my God has given me peace on every side; I have no enemies, and all is well. So I am planning to build a Temple to honor the name of the Lord my God, just as he had instructed my father, David. For the Lord told him, 'Your son, whom I will place on your throne, will build the Temple to honor my name.' "Therefore, please command that cedars from Lebanon be cut for me. Let my men work alongside yours, and I will pay your men whatever wages you ask. As you know, there is no one among us who can cut timber like you Sidonians!"

When Hiram received Solomon's message, he was very pleased and said, "Praise the Lord today for giving David a wise son to be king of the great nation of Israel." Then he sent this reply to Solomon:

"I have received your message, and I will supply all the cedar and cypress timber you need. My servants will bring the logs from the Lebanon mountains to the Mediterranean Sea and make them into rafts and float them along the coast to whatever place you choose. Then we will break the rafts apart so you can carry the logs away. You can pay me by supplying me with food for my household."

So Hiram supplied as much cedar and cypress timber as Solomon desired. In return, Solomon sent him an annual payment of 100,000 bushels of wheat for his household and 110,000 gallons of pure olive oil. So the Lord gave wisdom to Solomon, just as he had promised. And Hiram and Solomon made a formal alliance of peace (1 Kings 5:1-12 NLT).

In contrast, we later find that Tyre was not friendly to the people of God. In fact, for its godless behavior, it was about to receive the judgment of the Lord.

The Predictions Of Judgment Against Tyre

Scripture gives us some very specific predictions with respect to the fate of ancient Tyre. They are found in Ezekiel 26 and 28, while Ezekiel 27 contains a lament in which Ezekiel describes the great prosperity of Tyre.

Nebuchadnezzar Would Capture Tyre (Ezekiel 26:1-14)

The first prediction, given by the prophet Ezekiel in Babylon, concerns the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. While Tyre was at the height of its financial prosperity as the multinational center of the Ancient Near East, it was about to be judged by the Lord. Ezekiel, speaking for the Lord, predicted that Nebuchadnezzar would capture Tyre.

Tyre Rejoices Over The Fall Of Jerusalem

As background information, we find that Tyre rejoiced over the fact that the city of Jerusalem had fallen to the Babylonians:

On February 3, during the twelfth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, this message came to me from the Lord: "Son of man, Tyre has rejoiced over the fall of Jerusalem, saying, 'Ha! She who was the gateway to the rich trade routes to the east has been broken, and I am the heir! Because she has been made desolate, I will become wealthy!' (Ezekiel 26:1-2 NLT).

The source of the conflict concerned Jerusalem and Tyre vying for the lucrative trade routes between Egypt and Mesopotamia. While Tyre dominated the sea routes, it was Jerusalem who controlled the caravan routes.

Now, with the captivity of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and their loss of control of these overland caravan routes, more products would now be shipped by way of the sea which, of course, would lead to the commercial advantage of Tyre which, in turn, would add to their wealth.

Tyre was, therefore, boasting in the fact that it would become wealthy from the losses suffered in Jerusalem. This displeased the Lord.

The Specific Predictions

The Lord then made some specific predictions against this city:

Therefore, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am your enemy, O Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, like the waves of the sea crashing against your shoreline. They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down its towers. I will scrape away its soil and make it a bare rock! It will be just a rock in the sea, a place for fishermen to spread their nets, for I have spoken, says the Sovereign Lord. Tyre will become the prey of many nations, and its mainland villages will be destroyed by the sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord (Ezekiel 26:3-6 NLT).

There are a number of specific predictions concerning Tyre that are made in this passage.

The Lord will bring many nations against Tyre.

They will be like waves crashing upon the sea.

These nations will destroy its walls and tear down its towers.

Tyre will become a bare rock.

It will become a place where fishermen spread their nets.

Tyre will become the prey of many nations.

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Its mainland villages will be destroyed.

The Key To Understanding This passage

To properly interpret this particular prophecy, we must understand that there were two cities called Tyre. There was "Old Tyre," also known as the "Mainland City," as well as the "Island city."

If we keep the two cities distinct, then we will observe the amazing fulfillment of each of these predictions.

The Fulfillment

This prophecy contains some of the most remarkable fulfillments in all of history. In fact, as we will discover, these specific fulfillments have occurred at various times over the centuries before reaching their ultimate fulfillment.

Nebuchadnezzar Defeats Mainland Tyre

After the last deportation of the Jews to Babylon in 587 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar turned his attention to the wealthy city of Tyre. While he defeated the "Mainland city," destroying all of its settlements, he could not defeat the "Island city." After a 13-year siege, he gave up.

The Siege Of The Island City: Alexander The Great

Some 250 years after the prediction was given, the Island City of Tyre came under siege. In doing so, the prophecy of Ezekiel was remarkably fulfilled.

In 332 B.C., Alexander the Great arrived in Tyre on his way to Egypt. He desired to sacrifice in the temple of Hercules on the Island city. However, the citizens would not allow him to enter the city. After a seven-month siege, he took the Island city.

Alexander did so in a remarkable way. He used the stones from the ancient mainland city to build a causeway out to the Island city so that his battering rams could breach the walls. The causeway was about a half mile long and 200 feet wide.

The rubble from the old city was so thoroughly removed by Alexander's engineers that no trace of the ancient city can be found today! In fact, there is controversy to this day as to the precise location of the ancient city on the mainland. This fulfilled the words of Ezekiel:

They will steal your wealth and loot your merchandise. They will tear down your walls and destroy your luxurious homes. Your stones, your trees, and your soil he will throw into the water (Ezekiel 26:12 NET).

Everything was indeed thrown into the water by Alexander and his men; literally fulfilling the prophecy of Ezekiel.

New Testament Times

In the New Testament era, Tyre had recovered from Nebuchadnezzar's and Alexander's onslaughts. In fact, Jesus visited Tyre:

After going out from there, Jesus went to the region of Tyre and Sidon (Matthew 15:21 NET).

Yet, the city was no longer a major power on the Mediterranean.

One Nation After Another Comes Against Tyre

Furthermore, in the literal fulfillment of this prophecy, it was not merely Babylon that would destroy Tyre but rather one nation after another, "like the waves of the sea," which would prove its ultimate destruction. The evidence is as follows:

Deterioration Then Eventual Destruction

After the Muslim conquest in A.D. 638, Tyre began to deteriorate and would eventually be destroyed as well as become uninhabitable.

In A.D. 1124, the city was taken by the Crusaders. Later, in A.D. 1291, the Mameluke Muslims took Tyre and reduced the Island city to ashes. It would never be rebuilt to its previous glory of the past!

The modern city of Tyre in Lebanon is medium-sized. It is smaller than the ancient site. Furthermore, no city has been built over the ruins of the ancient city of Tyre, in fulfillment of the words of the prophet Ezekiel.

Therefore, we have the precise fulfillment of the prophecy with both Nebuchadnezzar, as well as many other nations, contributing to its downfall.

The Fishermen Spread Their Nets

Over one hundred years ago, a visitor to Tyre made the following observation:

The island, as such, is not more than a mile in length. The part which projects south beyond the isthmus is perhaps a quarter of a mile broad, and is rocky and uneven. It is now unoccupied except for fisherman, as a "place to spread their nets" (W.M Thompson, *The Land and the Book*, 1910, p. 155n).

This fulfills Ezekiel's prediction:

I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place where fishing nets are spread. You will never be built again, for I, the Lord, have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord (Ezekiel 26:14 NET).

Tyre, once destroyed, has never been rebuilt to its former glory. In fact, over the centuries, we have various testimonies that only sparse populations lived on the island and they did so in horrible conditions.

History, therefore, tells us, that the set of predictions made by Ezekiel have been remarkably fulfilled.

Conclusion

When all the evidence is considered, this prediction about the judgment upon the magnificent ancient city of Tyre is truly mind boggling. It further demonstrates God's complete control over all things. Paul Ferguson explains:

1. The rubble from Tyre would be put into the sea. This was fulfilled in 332 B.C. by Alexander the Great's army, 250 years after Ezekiel was written.
2. The passage does not state that Nebuchadnezzar would capture the island city and get its wealth. On the other hand, it does not say that Nebuchadnezzar would not conquer Tyre at all—he conquered "Old Tyre." It simply states that he did not get anything of value from it. This is exactly what Ezekiel 29:17ff states. There is no contradiction.

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3. The total destruction of Tyre would be accomplished gradually by one nation after another.

4. In the end Tyre would be destroyed down to the bear (sic) rock and never rebuilt. The final destruction took place in A.D. 1291, almost 2,000 years after Ezekiel was written.

Thus it turns out that, with a close investigation of the text and history, Ezekiel 26 is actually a proof text for the inerrancy and supernatural origin of the Bible! (Paul Ferguson, Tyre . . . Prophecy Fulfilled, Bible and Spade, Spring 2006).

Therefore, the biblically predictions about Tyre, though seemingly impossible, were indeed literally fulfilled!

Prediction 27

The Amazing Decree Of Cyrus

Another miraculous biblical prediction concerns the birth, as well as the actions, of a Persian king named Cyrus. He would be the one who would permit the people of Judah to return to Jerusalem after their seventy years in Babylon. In fact, this is one of the most astounding prophecies in the entire Bible. We can summarize what occurred in the following manner.

The Historical Background

The southern kingdom of Judah had been sent into captivity for seventy years. This exile had been predicted by the prophets. However, just as the prophets predicted the coming captivity, they also predicted the return from captivity. In one remarkable prophecy, Isaiah the prophet predicted the specific person who would give the command for the Jews to return. His name was Cyrus.

King Cyrus is an important figure in biblical history. Indeed, he fulfilled the prediction of the Lord with respect to the end of the Babylonian Empire. This destruction of the empire ended the seventy-year captivity of the Jews. In addition, it allowed the people to return to the land of promise.

The prophecy about him is truly astounding! About one hundred and fifty years before Cyrus was born, the prophet Isaiah recorded the Lord making the following prediction concerning the rise and rule of Cyrus as well as one of the commandments He would give. Isaiah wrote:

This is what the Lord, your Redeemer who formed you from the womb, says: I am the Lord, who made everything; who stretched out the heavens by myself; who alone spread out the earth; who destroys the omens of the false prophets and makes fools of diviners; who confounds the wise and makes their knowledge foolishness; who confirms the message of his servant and fulfills the counsel of his messengers; who says to Jerusalem, "She will be inhabited," and to the cities of Judah, "They will be rebuilt," and I will restore her ruins; who says to the depths of the sea, "Be dry," and I will dry up your rivers; who says to Cyrus, "My shepherd, he will fulfill all my pleasure" and says to Jerusalem, "She will be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Its foundation will be laid" (Isaiah 44:24-28 CSB).

Before his birth, King Cyrus of Persia was foreordained by the living God to carry out a number of specific tasks. In fact, he would be the person who would give the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem and to lay the foundation of the destroyed temple.

There are further predictions of the Lord concerning Cyrus:

The Lord says this to Cyrus, his anointed, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and disarm kings, to open doors before him, and even city gates will not be shut: "I will go before you and level the uneven places; I will shatter the bronze doors and cut the iron bars in two. I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches from secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord. I am the God of Israel, who calls you by your name. I call you by your name, for the sake my servant Jacob and Israel my chosen one. I give a name to you, though you do not know me. I am the Lord, and there is no other; there is no God but me. I will strengthen you, though you do not know me, so that all may know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is no one but me. I am the Lord, and there is no other (Isaiah 45:1-5 CSB).

The Specifics Of The Predictions

With respect to the predictions made by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, we can note a number of things.

1. The Nation Would Be In Captivity

The first thing that this passage assumes is that the people of Judah and Jerusalem would be exiled from their land. This assumes that some foreign invader would remove them from their homeland.

2. The City Of Jerusalem Would Be Destroyed

Not only would the people be removed from the land, the holy city of Jerusalem would be destroyed in the process.

3. The Temple Would Be Destroyed

The city would not be the only thing to be destroyed. The Bible says that the first temple would also be destroyed along with the city.

4. A Command Would Be Give To Release The People From Captivity

The exile would not last forever. At a particular time, a commandment would be given to release the people from this captivity.

5. This Commandment Would Be Given By A Man Named Cyrus

The person who would make this commandment would be named Cyrus. Cyrus is specified as the one who would allow the people to come back to their homeland, rebuild their city and the temple.

6. Though Cyrus Did Not Know The Lord, He Was Still Used By Him To Carry This Out

The prophet made another important point. Cyrus was the human instrument who would be used by the Lord to carry out His purposes, in spite of the fact that Cyrus did not personally know the God of Israel!

All of these things were specifically predicted by Isaiah the prophet.

The Predictions Were Fulfilled

Each of these predictions have been literally fulfilled. We can note them as follows.

1. Jerusalem Went Into Captivity 100 Years After Isaiah's Prophecy

As predicted, in three stages, the nation was taken into captivity to the city of Babylon. Despite repeated warnings, the people did not turn to the Lord. Therefore, they went into a seventy-year captivity as was stated by God's prophets.

2. The City And Temple Were Both Destroyed

The Babylonians not only took the people away from their land, they also destroyed both the city of Jerusalem and the temple. Again, the prophecies were literally fulfilled just as the Lord had predicted.

3. Cyrus Gave The Command For The Return

After the captivity was over, miraculously the commandment to allow the people to return to their land and build the city and the temple was given by a Persian King named Cyrus—a king who had no personal relationship with the Lord, the God of Israel.

God's Work in History

In sum, these predictions, as well as their fulfillments, are further proof that the God of the Bible knows the end from the beginning—the things that have not yet come to pass! In fact, that same prophet Isaiah recorded the Lord saying such a thing:

I announced events beforehand, I issued the decrees and made the predictions; suddenly I acted and they came to pass. I did this because I know how stubborn you are. Your neck muscles are like iron and your forehead like bronze. I announced them to you beforehand; before they happened, I predicted them for you, so you could never say, 'My image did these things, my idol, my cast image, decreed them.' You have heard; now look at all the evidence! Will you not admit that what I say is true? (Isaiah 48:3-6 NET).

True indeed!

Prediction 28

The Coming Of Elijah

The Bible predicted the return to earth for one of the two people who were born but never died, Elijah. While the physical appearance of Elijah has yet to take place, the Lord did send someone who fulfilled the ministry of Elijah—John the Baptist.

The Background

Recall that Elijah the prophet was one of two people who never died. According to the Old Testament, the patriarch Enoch, as well as Elijah, did not experience physical death. The Scripture records the following took place when Elijah was conversing with the younger prophet Elisha:

And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it and he cried, "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" And he saw him no more (2 Kings 2:11,12 ESV).

Like the patriarch Enoch, Elijah did not experience physical death.

The Prediction

As the Old Testament closes, we have this prediction about the coming of the prophet Elijah to the earth:

Remember the law of my servant Moses, to whom at Horeb I gave rules and regulations for all Israel to obey. Look, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord arrives. He will encourage fathers and their children to return to me, so that I will not come and strike the earth with judgment (Malachi 4:4-6 NET).

Notice that it says Elijah will come back to the earth.

The Fulfillment

This last fulfillment of an Old Testament prediction will bring us to the period of the New Testament, as well as beyond. It seems that Elijah will come in two stages. We know this from the answer that Jesus gave to this very question:

The disciples asked him, "Why then do the experts in the law say that Elijah must come first?" He answered, "Elijah does indeed come first and will restore all things. And I tell you that Elijah has already come. Yet they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wanted. In the same way, the Son of Man will suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist (Matthew 17:10-13 NET).

In other words, he has come, and he still is to come! John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah but Elijah himself will still come before the time of the end.

To discover what this means we will now turn our attention to the predictions and fulfillments made in the New Testament. However, before we do this, we will make some concluding observations about what we have just documented in the Old Testament.

Observations On The Old Testament History And The Predictions Within It

Our brief overview of Old Testament history, as well as a look at 28 separate predictions that have been literally fulfilled, has taught us several things. We can make the following observations:

God Has A Plan For Time And Eternity

The first thing that becomes obvious when we examine the Old Testament is that there is indeed a God who exists. The evidence is overwhelming. Indeed, we have observed time after time that the God of the Bible has predicted specific events before they have taken place. In each case, the predictions have been literally fulfilled.

Furthermore, we also discovered that the God of the Bible has a plan for both time and eternity. This plan consists of bringing His kingdom to the earth in the presence of the coming King.

The Plan Is Centered Upon The Descendants Of Abraham

As we also observed, God's plan is based upon Abraham and his descendants. The first eleven chapters of Genesis dealt with monumental events such as the creation of the universe, the Fall of humanity, the Flood of Noah, and the Tower of Babel.

However, the greater part of Genesis dealt with one man—Abraham—and his family. This is the main subject that is emphasized in Scripture God's relationship to human beings.

The Old Testament Is Divinely Inspired, But Incomplete

The divine inspiration of the Old Testament is clearly documented. However, as we saw, the Old Testament is incomplete.

In fact, many of the predictions recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures remain to be fulfilled. We will examine some of these predictions, as well as their fulfillments, when we consider the evidence from the New Testament.

It Is More Than Merely 28 Predictions Made And Fulfilled

One of the things which we observed with our 28 predictions that have been made and fulfilled is that it is not merely 28 specific items that we have discovered. Indeed, within each of these major predictions are a number of other specific predictions that have been fulfilled.

Consequently, if we are counting every specific prediction that has been made, then we would have over 100 biblical predictions that have been literally fulfilled.

Furthermore, the predictions we have listed are not exhaustive. Indeed, the Hebrew Scriptures contain many more.

The Predictions Contained, As Well As Their Fulfillments, Cannot Be Explained On A Natural Level

Finally, after looking at the predictions found in the Old Testament along with their specific fulfillments, we conclude that the God of the Bible does indeed exist, that He knows the future, that He controls the future, and that He has told us about certain things that will happen in the future.

God's Work in History

The fact that we have documented these predictions, as well as their fulfillments, should cause anyone who examines the evidence to sit up and take notice. For the Old Testament to contain all of these specific predictions and then to see them literally fulfilled should be convincing evidence of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

Yet, we are not finished! There are numerous other biblical predictions that have also been literally fulfilled. These are recorded in the New Testament.

It is now time to examine these predictions as well as their fulfillments.

The New Testament Predictions

We have seen a number of specific predictions made in the Old Testament as well as their literal fulfillment in history. Yet, as we also observed, the Old Testament is incomplete. In fact, there are many outstanding prophecies contained in its pages which were not fulfilled during this period.

The New Testament records a number of fulfilled predictions that were made in the Hebrew Scriptures. They center around the coming of the Promised Savior—the Messiah.

We also find a number of predictions that the New Testament makes that were fulfilled soon after they were given. In fact, a number of predictions made by Jesus were fulfilled in His lifetime. This fits the qualifications of an Old Testament prophet who had to predict something in his or her own lifetime that must be literally fulfilled to be considered a prophet of God.

We will now examine some of the predictions made in the Old Testament about the coming of the Messiah—Jesus Christ—as well as some of the specific predictions that He Himself made. We will discover the miraculous nature of each of these predictions as well as their specific fulfillments.

Prediction 29

The Birth Of John The Baptist

After the last book of the Old Testament was written, there was a period of about four hundred years of silence. The silence was broken when the Lord, once again, supernaturally spoke to His people. This first occurrence took place in the temple in Jerusalem.

As the nation of Israel originally began with the supernatural birth of Isaac, we find the prediction of the same thing occurring as the New Testament era begins.

The Prediction

The silence of God was broken with great news for His people! The forerunner of the Messiah was about to be born! The Bible explains it in this manner:

During the reign of Herod king of Judea, there lived a priest named Zechariah who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah, and he had a wife named Elizabeth, who was a descendant of Aaron. They were both righteous in the sight of God, following all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly. But they did not have a child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both very old (Luke 1:5-7 NET).

Although Zechariah and Elizabeth were beyond the child bearing years, the Lord would miraculously grant them the birth of a son. Scripture explains what happened next:

Now while Zechariah was serving as priest before God . . . An angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense, appeared to him. And Zechariah, visibly shaken when he saw the angel, was seized with fear. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son; you will name him John. Joy and gladness will come to you, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go as forerunner before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him." (Luke 1:8,11-17 NET).

The angel Gabriel predicted that Zechariah and Elizabeth would have a son. Furthermore, he would be the one who would announce to the world of the soon-coming Messiah.

The Birth Of John The Baptist

True to His Word, the Lord allowed Zacharias and Elizabeth to conceive a son:

Now the time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they wanted to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother replied, "No! He must be named John." They said to her, "But none of your relatives bears this name." So they made signs to the baby's father, inquiring what he wanted to name his son. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they were all amazed (Luke 1:57-63 NET).

The Ministry Of John

The ministry of John the Baptist fulfilled the predictions of the angel Gabriel. Scripture explains it this way:

God's Work in History

He [John] went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: A voice of one calling in the wilderness, Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all people will see God's salvation (Luke 3:3-6 NIV).

John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets. He predicted that a new age was about to dawn—the age of the Messiah. John lived to see the arrival of the predicted Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth.

Therefore, as the New Testament era begins, it begins with a prediction, as well as a literal fulfillment, of a baby that will be born and who will grow up to be the forerunner of the Promised Messiah.

Prediction 30 The Messiah Will Be Born In Bethlehem

From the time humanity first sinned, the Lord had predicted that a Deliverer would be sent to bring the fallen human race back into a right relationship with Him. Centuries went by without the appearance of this promised Savior.

The New Testament records that He did indeed finally appear in the person of Jesus of Nazareth!

The Place Of His Birth Predicted

In the Old Testament, a number of predictions were made about the Messiah. Among other reasons, this was done to make it abundantly clear as to His identity.

One particular prediction would eliminate every city in the world but one in which the Messiah would be born. Indeed, anyone who would claim to be the Messiah had to be born in David's city, Bethlehem. The prophet Micah wrote:

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times (Micah 5:2 NIV).

Therefore, every other city in the world is eliminated. The genuine Messiah can only be born in one city—the city of David, Bethlehem.

The Fulfillment

The New Testament books of Matthew and Luke record the fulfillment of this prediction:

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them (Luke 2:1-7 NIV).

There are a couple of things that are fascinating about this passage.

The Decree Of Caesar

To begin with, we have this decree given by the Roman Emperor, Caesar. The decree announced that people must go to the city of their lineage to register for the purpose of taxation. Joseph went to the hometown of his family, Bethlehem. Had it not been for the decree, the baby would have been born in their own hometown—Nazareth.

We also discover it was when Joseph and Mary reached Bethlehem that the baby Jesus was born.

The Testimony Of Matthew

Matthew also records that Bethlehem was the city in which Jesus was born:

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After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him (Matthew 2:1-2 NIV).

To sum up the Old Testament predictions, not only would the Messiah appear, He would be born in a very special place—Bethlehem, the city of David. Indeed, the Lord had designated this one city to be the birthplace of the Savior.

We discover that Jesus was born in that predicted place. In other words, His birth testified that He had the proper credentials to be the Promised Messiah.

Summary

The Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures, gives many specific predictions regarding the identity of the coming Messiah. One of these prophecies was about His birthplace.

To remove all doubt, every city in the world was eliminated except for one—the little town of Bethlehem.

Of course, this is something that none of us have control over. Indeed, we cannot determine the precise geographical location of our birth. Yet, because of a decree from a Roman Emperor, His mother Mary was brought to the city of Bethlehem to enroll with her husband, Joseph, for the purpose of taxation. Jesus was then born in the little town of Bethlehem in Judea fulfilling the prediction of the prophet Micah.

The old hymn puts it perfectly as to what happened that day in Bethlehem.

In thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

Indeed, all of our hopes and fears have been met in the Person of God the Son, Jesus Christ, who was born that day in Bethlehem.

Prediction 31 The Messiah Will Be A Descendant Of King David

Not only would the Messiah be born in the city of King David, He would also be a male physical descendant of the king. Therefore, merely being born in Bethlehem was not enough. To claim to be the Messiah a physical link to David must be shown. Jesus fulfilled both of these predictions.

The Background

As we noted in a previous prediction, David was the first rightful King of Israel. The Lord made a number of promises to him. Among them was that his throne would be everlasting. In other words, his descendants would be the rightful rulers of the nation.

The Prediction

David was told that one of His offspring would be the Promised Messiah:

When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever (2 Samuel 7:12-19 NIV).

It will be through the house, or family, of David, that the Messiah will come.

The family line of the kings of Judah, the descendants of David and Solomon, are listed in 1 Chronicles 3:10-16. The list begins with Solomon's son Rehoboam and goes all the way to the last king of Judah, Zedekiah. However, the Messiah had not yet come into the world. The fulfillment of the prediction would have to wait another six hundred years.

The Fulfillment

The very first verse of the New Testament informs us that Jesus was a descendant of King David:

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1 NIV).

The promise was earlier made to Mary, the mother of Jesus:

So the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God! Listen: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end" (Luke 1:30-33 NIV).

Mary's child would be the promised descendant of King David. He would rule forever and ever according to the words of the angel Gabriel.

There Is No Possibility Of This Being Contrived

Interestingly, this is another one of those predictions about the coming of the Promised Messiah that it is humanly impossible for someone to purposely fulfill.

Indeed, nobody can determine what family they are going to be born into. None of us have any say so in that matter.

Yet, as we saw in our previous prediction, Jesus the Messiah was born at the right geographical location—Bethlehem—and now we discover that He was also born into the right family line—the line of David.

Can you imagine something like this happening by mere chance? Of course not. But there is much more with respect to the predictions Jesus fulfilled at His birth.

Prediction 32

The Messiah Will Arrive Before Jerusalem And The Temple Are Destroyed Again

There is a third aspect to the coming of the Messiah that was supernaturally fulfilled. Not only would He be born in Bethlehem, and be a literal descendant of David, the time of His coming was also predicted. In fact, according to the prophecy, the Messiah must arrive before certain events would take place in Jerusalem.

The Background

In giving the outline of the future of the nation of Israel, the same angel, Gabriel, who made the announcement of the coming birth of her son to Mary, some five hundred years earlier had told the prophet Daniel a number of things about the future. Among them was the timing of when the Messiah would appear.

The Prediction

The prediction was that the Messiah would arrive before the destruction of Jerusalem, as well as the temple:

After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood (Daniel 9:26 NIV).

Notice the specifics that are listed here. The Anointed One, the Messiah, will arrive on the scene. He would be put to death. Afterward, the city of Jerusalem and temple would be destroyed. This temple would be the one that would be rebuilt after the captives in Babylon returned to Jerusalem. Thus, Daniel is not only predicting the construction of a second temple, he is also predicting its destruction, too.

The Fulfillment

Jesus was born while the second temple was still standing; however, Christ predicted its destruction because the people rejected Him as the Messiah:

Now as Jesus was going out of the temple courts and walking away, his disciples came to show him the temple buildings. And he said to them, "Do you see all these things? I tell you the truth, not one stone will be left on another. All will be torn down (Matthew 24:1-3 NET).

Consequently, Jesus arrived on the scene of history before the temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed a second time.

Summing Up These Three Predictions

From the Hebrew Scriptures, we discover that the Messiah will be born in the little town of Bethlehem, He will be a male descendant of King David, and He will come upon the scene of history before the city of Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed for a second time.

In other words, anyone who would claim to be the fulfillment of these three Old Testament predictions must have been born at least two thousand years ago, seeing that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple occurred in A.D. 70.

Consequently, we must look to history to find a literal fulfillment of these predictions. We find that only one person has the proper credentials to claim to be the Promised Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth!

Prediction 33

The Messiah Would Be A Miracle Worker

When the promised Messiah would come into the world, there would be miracles that followed Him. According to the Old Testament, at his coming, the deaf would hear, the blind would see, the mute would be able to speak, and the lame would walk.

The Testimony Of Jesus

We find that Jesus Himself appealed to these miracles as a testimony to His Divine character as the promised Messiah. When John the Baptist was in prison, he sent messengers to Jesus to ask if He truly were the Christ, the Messiah. The Bible explains it this way:

John the Baptist, who was now in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you really the Messiah we've been waiting for, or should we keep looking for someone else?" Jesus told them, "Go back to John and tell him about what you have heard and seen—the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor" (Matthew 11:2-5 NLT).

This would remind them of various Old Testament passages including Isaiah 35:5-6. This passage reads as follows:

Then blind eyes will open, deaf ears will hear. Then the lame will leap like a deer, the mute tongue will shout for joy; for water will flow in the desert, streams in the wilderness (Isaiah 35:5,6 NET).

Jesus, therefore, appealed to His miracles to back up His claims as the long-awaited Messiah.

On another occasion, He said to His disciples:

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves (John 14:11 NRSV).

Therefore, miracles were Jesus' specific claim to substantiate His identity as the predicted Messiah of the Old Testament—it is *not* our claim!

The Word "Miracle" Is Used In Two Ways: Miracles Of Timing And The Purely Supernatural

It is important to understand what we are talking about when we use the word "miracle." The term is actually used in two different ways in the Bible. First, it is used to describe an unusual or natural event that occurs at a precise time. This is usually in answer to prayer. In sum, the miracle is in the timing—not in the nature of the event itself.

Secondly, the word "miracle" is also used in the Scripture to describe events that are purely supernatural in character. In other words, there is no possible natural explanation for them.

Some Examples Of Miracles Of Timing In The Life Of Jesus

There are a number of examples of this first type of miracle, the miracles of timing, in the four gospels. They include the following.

The Miraculous Catch Of Fish Is A Miracle Of Timing

The gospels record, on two separate occasions, Jesus being involved in a miraculous catch of fish. We read the following in Luke:

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish." "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again." And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear! A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking (Luke 5:4-7 NLT).

There is certainly nothing remarkable about fishermen putting out their nets and bringing in a huge catch of fish. In fact, this sort of thing happens all the time. Yet, the miracle, in this instance, is in the precise timing of the event. The disciples had fished all night but had caught nothing. When Jesus told them to let down their nets again, the catch of fish was huge. Hence, the miracle is in the timing.

Another example of this type of miracle took place after Jesus' resurrection from the dead. The Gospel of John reports this particular incident between Jesus and several of His disciples on the Sea of Galilee:

When it was already very early morning, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. So Jesus said to them, "Children, you don't have any fish, do you?" They replied, "No." He told them, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they threw the net, and were not able to pull it in because of the large number of fish (John 21:4-6 NET).

As in the previous example, there is nothing miraculous about throwing a net into the water and having it filled with fish. This event, however, was indeed a miracle because, like in the previous example, these disciples had been fishing all night and had not caught a thing. Yet, when the resurrected Christ told them where to put their net, it immediately became full.

The Miracle Of The Coin In The Mouth Of The Fish

Another miracle of timing is recorded in the account of the coin found in the mouth of the fish to pay the temple tax. When asked about paying the temple tax, Jesus told Peter to do the following:

However, we don't want to offend them, so go down to the lake and throw in a line. Open the mouth of the first fish you catch, and you will find a large silver coin. Take it and pay the tax for both of us" (Matthew 17:27 NLT).

Once again, the miracle is not in the event itself; but, rather, in the timing of the event. The coin was found in the mouth of the first fish that they caught so that they were able to pay the tax.

The Miracle Of The Pigs Running Into The Sea

The gospel account of pigs running into the sea, after Jesus allowed the demons to enter them, could also be considered a "normal," natural event. Matthew records it this way:

And He [Jesus] said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water (Matthew 8:32 NKJV).

It is theoretically possible for a herd of pigs to rush into the sea and drown themselves because of some natural cause or causes. However, this herd did so immediately after Jesus gave the command to allow the demons to enter them.

The Servant Healed At A Distance By Jesus

John's gospel records Jesus healing a man's son without being physically present. When a man asked Jesus to come and heal his son, the Lord told him that the son was now well and that, he should go back home. We read the account as follows:

Jesus then said, "Your son will live. Go on home to him." The man believed Jesus and started back home. Some of the official's servants met him along the road and told him, "Your son is better!" He asked them when the boy got better, and they answered, "The fever left him yesterday at one o'clock." The boy's father realized that at one o'clock the day before, Jesus had told him, "Your son will live!" So the man and everyone in his family put their faith in Jesus (John 4:50-53 CEV).

Again, this is another example of a miracle of timing. The fact that the fever broke was not miraculous in-and-of-itself. This sort of thing happens all the time. However, in this case, the miracle is that the fever broke at the exact time that Jesus told the man that his son was healed.

The Earthquake At Jesus' Death

The Bible says that an earthquake occurred at the time of Jesus' death. Matthew writes:

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split (Matthew 27:50-51 NKJV).

Of course, an earthquake is a natural event. Nothing special in and of itself. The miracle is that the timing of the earthquake coincided with Jesus' death.

In sum, events like these, that the four gospels record, are not contrary to the laws of science and nature; but, nonetheless, they are miracles of timing and place.

We could also cite other events in the gospels that could fall into this category. They would include the immediate cessation of the storm on the Sea of Galilee and the withering of the fig tree. They were natural events that were supernaturally timed to demonstrate Jesus' authority.

Consequently, these events clearly demonstrate that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the long-awaited Messiah whose coming was predicted by the Old Testament prophets.

The Gospels Record Events That Are Beyond Natural Law: The Purely Supernatural

The four gospels also record a second type of miracle. This kind of miracle is purely supernatural. In other words, it simply cannot be explained in terms of everyday cause and effect.

Jesus Walking On Water: There Is No Natural Explanation Possible

One example of this type of miracle is Christ walking on top of the water. Matthew writes:

About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came to them, walking on the water (Matthew 14:25 NLT).

God's Work in History

This miracle certainly cannot be explained on a natural level. Indeed, it is physically impossible for a human being to walk upon water.

The Miraculous Feeding Of The Five Thousand

A second example of this kind of miracle from the ministry of Jesus is His feeding of the five thousand. All four gospels record the event. Simply put, when a multitude of people who had followed the Lord became hungry, Jesus took the food that was available—five loaves and two fish—and He miraculously turned it into enough food to feed the entire crowd. We then read of the results:

They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the broken pieces left over, twelve baskets full. Not counting women and children, there were about five thousand men who ate (Matthew 14:20,21 NET).

Not only did everyone get something to eat, they all ate to their satisfaction. Miraculously, the disciples then gathered twelve baskets full of leftovers! The normal laws of cause and effect certainly cannot explain this event.

The Raising Of Lazarus Who Was Dead For Four Days

We discover another example of a purely supernatural miracle in the raising of the dead man Lazarus. In fact, the Bible tells us that Lazarus had been dead for four days when the Lord Jesus brought him back to life:

“Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, said, “Lord, by now the smell will be terrible because he has been dead for four days.” Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you will see God’s glory if you believe?” So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so they will believe you sent me.” Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And Lazarus came out, bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” (John 11:39-44 NLT).

Jesus Christ was indeed Lord over both life and death!

Summary To The Predictions That The Messiah Would Perform Miracles

In sum, we discover in the life of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the four gospels, miracles did indeed occur. The miracles were either unusual events that occurred at God’s precise timing, or events beyond the normal laws of nature and science.

In either case, the miracles are convincing evidence of Jesus being the promised Messiah of the Old Testament.

Therefore, the predictions of the Hebrew Scriptures, that the Messiah would be a miracle-worker, were indeed literally fulfilled at the First Coming of Jesus Christ.

Add to this the fact that Jesus was born at the right time in history, before the city and temple were destroyed, at the right place, Bethlehem, and in the right family line, David’s, and we have further irrefutable evidence that He was indeed the Predicted Messiah of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Prediction 34

The Christian Church Would Survive

Another major prediction that Jesus made, and was literally fulfilled, concerned those who would believe in him. We read of this particular prediction in the Gospel of Matthew:

Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it (Matthew 16:18 NLT).

According to Jesus, nothing would stop the continuation of His teachings through those who would place their faith in Him.

Shortly after this prediction, Jesus made another one:

From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead (Matthew 16:21 NLT).

Notice the specific nature of these two predictions.

Though He would eventually be executed in the city of Jerusalem, His teachings as well as His followers would live on. In other words, His ministry would not end with His death.

The Fulfillment Of This Prediction

There is one historical fact that made this claim of Jesus seemingly impossible. For every previous person who claimed to be Israel's Messiah, their followers either left the movement after their death, or someone else took the place of them.

In other words, once the person making the claims died, their memory was gone forever. Someone took their place or the movement ceased to exist.

However, this was not the same with Jesus. Though, He died, His message was carried on by His followers. Instead of forgetting Him, or making someone else the centerpiece of the movement, it has always been about Him.

The Message Of The Book Of Acts And The New Testament Letters

As we read the Book of Acts, which is the testimony of the spread of the Christian faith in the early years, as well as the New Testament letters to the churches, the one thing that we consistently find is that the message is always about Jesus! Indeed, never do we have the slightest hint of anyone else usurping His authority over the believers. We will provide merely a few examples of this.

On the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus' death and resurrection, Peter had this to say to the crowd that had gathered:

People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and

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killed him. But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip (Acts 2:22 NLT).

It was Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ, whom Peter preached that day. He was a miracle worker, as well as the One whom God raised from the dead. It was He whom the people were to believe in.

Peter would later say:

There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12 NLT).

Even after His death on the cross of Calvary, Peter said that there was salvation in nobody else.

Another episode recorded in the Book of Acts emphasized the need to believe in Jesus:

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" he asked them. "No," they replied, "we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." "Then what baptism did you experience?" he asked.

And they replied, "The baptism of John." Paul said, "John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus." As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:1-5 NLT).

These disciples were waiting for the kingdom of God to arrive. However, they only knew of the ministry of John the Baptist who proclaimed that the Christ, the Messiah, was coming.

In other words, they knew nothing about the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus. Note that Paul emphasized that right belief must be in the Person of Jesus Christ. Upon hearing this, they believed in Him and were baptized in His name, under His authority.

The Book of Acts closes with Paul reaching Rome. It concludes with these words:

For the next two years, Paul lived in Rome at his own expense. He welcomed all who visited him, boldly proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. And no one tried to stop him (Acts 28:30-31 NLT).

Hence, the Book of Acts ends with the same message that it began with—the message of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ!

The New Testament Letters

We discover this same truth in all of the New Testament letters. Indeed, Jesus Christ is always at the center of everything that was written. We can make the following observations.:

Paul's Letters Had Jesus At The Center

In each of the letters of the Apostle Paul, whether it be to churches or to individuals, Jesus is always the main subject. For example, the letter to the Galatians begins as follows:

This letter is from Paul, an apostle. I was not appointed by any group of people or any human authority, but by Jesus Christ himself and by God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead. All the brothers and sisters here join me in sending this letter to the churches of Galatia.

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May God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen (Galatians 1:1-5 NLT)

Note that Paul emphasized that he was an apostle “appointed by Jesus Christ.” This was a number of years after Christ had died. Paul could say this because, as he added, Christ had been raised from the dead. Therefore, Paul was serving a living Savior!

We find this is consistent in all of Paul's letters. They all center around the Person of the risen Christ

1 Peter

We find the same emphasis in the letters of Peter. He wrote the following in his first letter:

This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. . . All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation (1 Peter 1:1,4, NLT).

Though years had passed since Jesus had died on the cross of Calvary, Peter emphasized that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ. He, too, added that Christ had been raised from the dead.

James

James, the half-brother of the Lord Jesus, emphasized his special relationship to Jesus:

This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (James 1:1 NLT).

He remained a slave, or servant, of Jesus, though Christ was no longer living upon the earth.

Jude

Jude, another half-brother of Jesus, began his letter in this manner:

This letter is from Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James. I am writing to all who have been called by God the Father, who loves you and keeps you safe in the care of Jesus Christ (Jude 1-2 NLT).

Jude called himself a slave of Jesus and emphasized that the believers are being kept safe because they are in the care of Jesus Christ. Again, this was written decades after Jesus' death on the cross.

Revelation

Finally, John, in the Book of Revelation, began his work in the following manner:

This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:1-3 NLT).

Note that his revelation was actually “from Jesus Christ.” Though written some sixty years after Jesus had died, John testified that the source of this particular writing was from the Lord Jesus Himself. To sum up, these writings have fulfilled the predictions that Jesus had made—His church, His followers, as well as His teachings, would survive. We could go on and on, but the point is obvious. Indeed, the message of Jesus Christ to the world did not end with His death upon the cross of Calvary.

Prediction 35 Jesus' Words Would Be Everlasting

Jesus made a number of predictions during His public ministry. Among those, was that His words would be everlasting! This amazing prediction has indeed been literally fulfilled!

Jesus made the astounding prediction that heaven and earth would pass away but that His words would not pass away. He said:

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away (Matthew 24:35 ESV).

He predicted that His words would be everlasting. We need to appreciate the amazing nature of this prophecy. Here was a man who lived in the first century A.D. with only a small group of followers, and His country was subject to the bondage of Rome. There was no modern means of mass communication or storage of the words of a person.

The Fulfillment

Yet, Jesus made the amazing prediction that His words would be eternal—that they would never pass away.

Although it seemed impossible at the time, it has occurred exactly as Christ predicted. The words of Jesus are still with us today. They are read and believed by untold millions as they have been for the last two thousand years. It has happened just as He said.

This is one of many of the predictions of Jesus that seemingly had no chance to be literally fulfilled. If we think about it for a minute, we will appreciate this fact. An itinerant preacher in a conquered country in the first century Roman Empire had the audacity to predict that His Words would never pass away. What would be the odds of this coming true? Who would take seriously these words?

Perhaps others have made similar predictions, but we will never know because their words have indeed passed away. Yet the words of Jesus continue to this day.

A Prediction That Cannot Be Denied

To sum up, this is one prediction of Jesus that nobody can deny. We have His words recorded for us in the four gospels. They have been copied, recopied, printed and circulated for the last two thousand years. This is an undeniable fact. He knew this would happen, He predicted that it would happen.

How was Jesus able to do this? The answer is simple: Jesus Christ was able to predict this because He is both Lord and God!

Prediction 36
Mary Of Bethany Would
Be Remembered For What She Did

Jesus also predicted some specific things that had to do with individuals. Among them is an amazing prophecy about a woman who understood exactly what He was saying about His upcoming death in the city of Jerusalem—Mary of Bethany.

As impossible as it may seem, Jesus' predictions concerning her, and her loving deed to Him, have literally come to pass.

The Predictions

The gospels tell us that Mary of Bethany poured ointment on the body of Jesus in anticipation of His coming death. The disciples rebuked her for wasting it, but Jesus said she had done a good thing.

Matthew records the following prediction of Jesus concerning her insightful act:

For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her (Matthew 26:11-13 ESV).

Jesus predicted that Mary's story would be told wherever the good news about Him would be preached. The Lord also said that the gospel would be preached in the whole world.

As He predicted, the story of Mary of Bethany, and her anointing of Jesus before His death, is still told today. Indeed, it is proclaimed everywhere on the earth, wherever the gospel is preached.

Again, we find that this prediction is nothing short of amazing. An obscure event that took place in an obscure part of the first century Roman Empire, was predicted to be remembered as long as the gospel was to be preached.

While seemingly impossible for those who heard the prediction at that time, it has been literally fulfilled.

Indeed, the fact that you are reading about this episode right now fulfills the prediction of Jesus!

Prediction 37

The Fate Of The Unbelieving Cities of Capernaum, Bethsaida, And Chorazin

The greater the light that the Lord shines on us, the greater responsibility we have to respond to the light. There were several cities in Jesus' ministry who should have responded to His mighty deeds in their presence, but they did not. Consequently, judgment was pronounced against them.

The Background

Jesus' ministry covered the area of the Galilee. In fact, the Lord made one of the cities, Capernaum, His headquarters:

Jesus climbed into a boat and went back across the lake to his own town (Matthew 9:1 NLT).

Yet the people in Capernaum and the surrounding cities of the Galilee, though seeing so many of His miracles, did not embrace Him as their Messiah.

The Prediction

The lack of belief caused the Lord to specifically pronounce judgment upon these particular cities:

Then Jesus began to criticize openly the cities in which he had done many of his miracles, because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you! And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be thrown down to Hades! For if the miracles done among you had been done in Sodom, it would have continued to this day. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for the region of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you!" (Matthew 11:20-24 NET).

The predictions are clear. Strong words indeed from the Lord Jesus. These three cities would receive the punishment from the Lord for rejecting Him. Let's go down the list.

Chorazin

What do we find today? Ruins.

Capernaum

More ruins.

Bethsaida

To this day, the exact location is unknown!

Another City On The Sea Of Galilee: Tiberias

What makes these predictions even more amazing concerns another city in Jesus' day, in the same geographical vicinity as these three. This city, Tiberias, also located on the Sea of Galilee, is mentioned in the Gospel of John:

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Several boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the Lord had blessed the bread and the people had eaten (John 6:23 NLT)

A thriving city in Jesus' day, but with no judgment spoken against it by the Lord Jesus.

In contrast to these other three cities, Tiberias has continued to exist throughout history, and is still a thriving city today!

What are the odds that three of the four cities mentioned in the New Testament, the ones in which Jesus pronounced judgment upon, do not exist to this day? On the other hand, the fourth city, in the same immediate vicinity, which Jesus said nothing about with respect to God's judgment, still exists.

Conclusion

Think about the odds of this happening by chance! Four cities around the Sea of Galilee that are specifically mentioned in the New Testament. Three of them have judgment pronounced upon them by Jesus. The fourth does not.

The result? These three cities Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin do not exist to this day. They are either ruins or, in the case of Bethsaida, unknown as to its exact location.

On the other hand, Tiberias has continually existed since the time of Christ. This is not a coincidence. Indeed, it is another example of the supernatural fulfillment of the various predictions made by Jesus.

Prediction 38

The Rejection Of The Messiah

Although Jesus had the credentials of the Promised Messiah, Scripture records predictions of His own people rejecting Him. These predictions are found in both testaments.

The Predictions Of Scripture

Seven hundred years before the coming of Christ, the prophet Isaiah clearly predicted His rejection:

Who has believed our message? To whom has the Lord revealed his powerful arm? My servant grew up in the Lord's presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.

We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all (Isaiah 53:1-6 NLT).

Therefore, it was predicted that when the Messiah would eventually arrive on the scene, He would be despised and rejected by His own people. In fact, He would be humiliated by them. His physical sufferings are also predicted by Isaiah. In other words, at His First Coming, the people would not accept Him as the long-awaited Messiah.

The Testimony Of Jesus

Jesus Himself acknowledge that the people would reject Him:

For I have come to you in my Father's name, and you have rejected me. Yet if others come in their own name, you gladly welcome them (John 5:43 NLT).

They would reject Him who came in the name of God the Father but would gladly receive another who came in his own name, his own authority.

John wrote about this sad truth:

He came to his own people, and even they rejected him (John 1:11 NLT)

Jesus Often Spoke Of His Death And Resurrection

Jesus always knew that He would be rejected by His own people. In fact, at the very beginning of His public ministry, Christ spoke of both His death and resurrection. We read of this in John's gospel:

"What right do you have to do these things?" the Jewish leaders demanded. "If you have this authority from God, show us a miraculous sign to prove it." "All right," Jesus replied. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "What!" they exclaimed. "It took forty-six years to build this Temple, and you can do it in three days?" But by "this temple," Jesus meant his body. After he was raised from the dead, the disciples remembered that he had said this. And they believed both Jesus and the Scriptures (John 2:18-22 NLT).

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Hence, from the very outset of His ministry, Jesus was well aware that the people would reject Him. Christ knew that He would eventually die for the sins of the world.

His Sufferings And Eventual Glory Were Predicted

Peter would later write about the fact that the two comings of Christ were clearly predicted in the Old Testament. The prophets spoke of both His suffering as well as His ultimate glory:

This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you. They wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ's suffering and his great glory afterward. (1 Peter 1:10,11 NLT).

At His First Coming, the Lord was to suffer for the sins of the world. Jesus was well aware of what would happen to Him. He knew that His message would be rejected. This was all part of God's eternal plan.

The Fulfillment Of The Predictions

The life and ministry of Jesus Christ was unique. Indeed, Jesus said things that nobody else has ever said, and did things that nobody else has ever done. So why did the people reject Him?

While there were many factors that led the Jewish people to reject Jesus as their Messiah, it can be stated simply: they did not believe in Him because they did not want to believe. It is the same reason most people throughout history have rejected Jesus as Messiah.

It is not that they *could* not believe, it is that they *would* not believe! It is not that people needed more evidence; it is that they have not acted upon the evidence that they already have.

The Response On Palm Sunday

This rejection was played out in the last week of Jesus' life. Incredibly, less than a week before His rejection by the people, Jesus was actually acknowledged by the crowds in Jerusalem. Matthew explained what happened on "Palm Sunday" as follows:

Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road ahead of him, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Jesus was in the center of the procession, and the people all around him were shouting, "Praise God for the Son of David! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Praise God in highest heaven!" The entire city of Jerusalem was in an uproar as he entered. "Who is this?" they asked. And the crowds replied, "It's Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee" (Matthew 21:8-11 NLT).

At this time, it looked like the people had accepted Jesus as their promised Messiah. However, this adulation did not last long.

Before Pontius Pilate

Just a few days later, when Pontius Pilate brought Jesus out before the people, they were clear about their feelings toward Him:

So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands. Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that

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you may know that I find no fault in Him.” Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, “Behold the Man!” (John 19:1-5 NKJV).

We also read:

Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And [Pilate] he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” But they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!” (John 19:14-15 NKJV).

The rejection of the Lord Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament predictions of Him as well as Jesus' own predictions about how His ministry would be received.

Summary

We must appreciate the amazing fulfillments of these predictions about the rejection of the Messiah at His First Coming.

From the time of Moses, the people had waited about 1,500 years for their Messiah, their Deliverer, to come. In fact, each generation of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were looking forward to His arrival.

When He would arrive, it was told that He would fulfill certain predictions found in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Old Testament. Jesus fulfilled them all. Yet, as the Scripture predicted, the people would reject Him, nevertheless.

With hindsight, we can see how all of this happened; though, it should never have happened.

The predicted outcome has been literally fulfilled with the rejection of Jesus at His First Coming. They did not want Him to rule over them. This rejection led to His death on the cross of Calvary. But as the Scripture tells us, the story did not end there!

Prediction 39 The Betrayal Of Judas Iscariot

While the Lord Jesus chose twelve men to be His closest disciples, His inner circle, one of them would ultimately betray Him. The Lord was always aware of this fact from the very beginning. Indeed, He predicted that this dastardly act would eventually take place.

The Background

When the Lord began His public ministry, multitudes began to follow Him. From that group, Jesus chose twelve men to be His trusted “apostles.”

We are told that the Lord spent the night in prayer before choosing the twelve. Among them was a man named Judas:

One day soon afterward Jesus went up on a mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night. At daybreak he called together all of his disciples and chose twelve of them to be apostles. Here are their names...Judas Iscariot (who later betrayed him) (Luke 6:12,16 NLT).

The gospels tell us that Judas was a thief. John wrote:

But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, “That perfume was worth a year’s wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor.” Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples’ money, he often stole some for himself (John 12:4-6 NLT).

Jesus also called him “the devil.” He said:

Didn’t I choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is the devil? (John 6:70 NET).

Judas Contacted The Religious Leaders

Knowing that they wanted Jesus dead, Judas sought out the religious leaders:

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the leading priests and asked, “How much will you pay me to betray Jesus to you?” And they gave him thirty pieces of silver. From that time on, Judas began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus (Matthew 26:14-16 NLT).

Judas, the thief, was only interested in money.

The Prediction

At the “Last Supper,” Jesus predicted that one of His disciples, Judas, would betray Him:

Jesus responded, “It is the one to whom I give the bread I dip in the bowl.” And when he had dipped it, he gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. When Judas had eaten the bread, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus told him, “Hurry and do what you’re going to do.” None of the others at the table knew what Jesus meant. Since Judas was their treasurer, some thought Jesus was telling him to go and pay for the food or to give some money to the poor. So Judas left at once, going out into the night (John 13:26-30 NLT).

The Fulfillment

After the Last Supper, Jesus and His disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane:

When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.

Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground (John 18:1-6 NIV).

Two specific predictions of Jesus were literally fulfilled at that time.

First, it would be one of Jesus' own disciples who would betray Him, rather than an acquaintance or a causal friend.

Furthermore, that man would be Judas Iscariot.

Therefore, though there were twelve disciples in Jesus' inner circle, it would be Judas Iscariot who would betray Him.

The fact that Jesus knew this, and predicted it, is further evidence of His supernatural ability to predict the future.

Prediction 40 All Of Jesus' Disciples Would Abandon Him

Jesus chose twelve disciples to be in His inner circle. While they are revered to this day because of their unique position in the life and ministry of the Lord, we find that they were fallible human beings just like the rest of us. This was never more obvious than the night that Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot.

The Background

As the earthly ministry of Jesus was about to come to an end, Jesus met with His disciples in the "upper room." The Lord was preparing His disciples for the events that would soon take place.

The Betrayal Predicted

At the Last Supper, Jesus caught the attention of His disciples by certain predictions that He made.

To begin with, He informed them that one of them, one of His own disciples, would betray Him.

Interestingly each of them asked if it was them who would do this dastardly deed:

When it was evening, Jesus sat down at the table with the Twelve. While they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." Greatly distressed, each one asked in turn, "Am I the one, Lord?" He replied, "One of you who has just eaten from this bowl with me will betray me. For the Son of Man must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!" Judas, the one who would betray him, also asked, "Rabbi, am I the one?" And Jesus told him, "You have said it" (Matthew 26:20-25 NLT).

Next, the Lord predicted that all of them would scatter that very night, leaving Jesus alone:

On the way, Jesus told them, "Tonight all of you will desert me. For the Scriptures say, 'God will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there" (Matthew 26:31-32 NLT).

According to this prediction, not one of them would remain with Him when He would be taken away under arrest.

The Fulfillment

Despite their earlier protests, we read the account of their abandonment. Scripture records the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction that all of them would desert Him:

At that moment Jesus said to the crowd, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me like you would an outlaw? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple courts, yet you did not arrest me. But this has happened so that the scriptures of the prophets would be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled (Matthew 26:55,56 NET).

True to His prediction, every single one of them fled at the time of His betrayal. If only one of them had stayed and stated that they too would have to be arrested along with their Master, then the prediction would not have been fulfilled.

Yet, the next morning, when Jesus was crucified, it was only John, the son of Zebedee, who was there at the cross. All of the others were nowhere to be found.

Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home (John 19:25-27 NLT).

Jesus Appears To His Disciples

After He came back from the dead, the resurrected Christ appeared to His Disciples minus Thomas:

That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! "Peace be with you," he said. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! Again he said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven" (John 20:19-23 NLT).

Eight days later, Jesus appeared again to His disciples, this time with Thomas present:

One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side." Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. "Peace be with you," he said. Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me" (John 20:24-29 NLT).

The Restoration Of The Disciples

Thankfully, the risen Christ forgave these faithless disciples and restored them to the ministry.

In fact, on the Day of Pentecost, the birthday of the church, all eleven of them were there proclaiming the message that Christ had risen.

This account remains a testimony as to how the Lord has worked with each and every believer throughout history. When we fail, and we all do, the Lord forgives and restores us.

Therefore, the prediction of Jesus, with respect to His "inner circle" of disciples, was literally fulfilled. They all fled when He was betrayed, only John was at the cross when He died, but all of them were restored despite their lack of faith.

**Prediction 41:
Peter Would Deny Knowing Jesus
On A Number Of Occasions**

We often think more of ourselves than we should. An example of this can be found in the life of Simon Peter. He mistakenly thought that he was superior to the other disciples. Peter did indeed learn his lesson, the hard way, in his multiple denials of Jesus.

The Background

On the night of His betrayal, Jesus met with His twelve disciples in the upper room. After Judas left, Jesus started speaking about His future. Among other things, He predicted the outcome of that fateful evening.

The Prediction

What the Lord said shocked the disciples, especially Peter:

“My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.” Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”

Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times! (John 13:33-38 NIV).

Jesus predicted that the man, Peter, who was often the spokesman for the Twelve, would deny His Lord on three separate occasions that evening.

Luke records the prediction in this manner:

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.” Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you.” But Jesus said, “Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me (Luke 22:31-34 NLT).

Matthew adds one more thing:

Peter declared, “Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you” (Matthew 26:33 NET).

Peter assumed that he would never desert Jesus, even if everyone else did.

The Fulfillment

Later that night, Jesus’ predictions were fulfilled. Christ was arrested by the Romans and brought to a number of different places before a number of different people. Simon Peter, though originally fleeing with the other disciples, eventually followed Him.

On Three Occasions He Would Deny Jesus

It has wrongly been supposed that Peter denied knowing Jesus only three times. In other words, three specific times he was accused of being a disciple of Jesus and three times he denied it.

However, this is not what the Scriptures are telling us. It was on three different occasions, or three different instances, that he denied Jesus. On each of these three occasions Peter denied Jesus a number of times. Therefore, the number of specific denials totaled more than three.

Scripture records the various denials of Peter.

Peter's First Denial: In The Courtyard Of Annas

We read about the first occasion that Peter denied Jesus:

Simon Peter and another disciple followed them as they brought Jesus to Annas. (Now the other disciple was acquainted with the high priest, and he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard.) But Simon Peter was left standing outside by the door. So the other disciple who was acquainted with the high priest came out and spoke to the slave girl who watched the door, and brought Peter inside. The girl who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, "You're not one of this man's disciples too, are you?" He replied, "I am not" (John 18:15-17 NET).

Therefore, the first occasion when Peter would deny Jesus was at the house of the former high priest, Annas.

Peter's Continues To Deny Christ

We read about the further denials of Peter:

Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?" He denied it, saying, "I am not." One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow (John 18:25-27 NIV).

Matthew explains the final denial in this manner:

A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, "You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent." Peter swore, "A curse on me if I'm lying—I don't know the man!" And immediately the rooster crowed (Matthew 26:73,74 NLT).

Therefore, as the Lord predicted, on three specific occasions on that fateful night, Peter denied the Lord.

When he realized exactly what he had done, the Bible says that Peter wept bitterly:

Suddenly, Jesus' words flashed through Peter's mind: "Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me." And he went away, weeping bitterly (Matthew 26:75 NLT).

Peter Was Restored

Happily, this was not the end of the story! Later, after Jesus' resurrection from the dead, we read about the restoration of Peter.

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In this account, Jesus appeared to the disciples at the Sea of Galilee while they were fishing. Standing upon the shore, He told them where to place their nets. After doing so, they brought up a huge catch of fish.

Once they reached the shore, and ate breakfast, Peter had this conversation with the risen Christ:

After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," Peter replied, "you know I love you." "Then feed my lambs," Jesus told him. Jesus repeated the question: "Simon son of John, do you love me?" "Yes, Lord," Peter said, "you know I love you." "Then take care of my sheep," Jesus said.

A third time he asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you." Jesus said, "Then feed my sheep" (John 20:15-17 NLT).

Recall that Peter bragged that even if all of the other disciples abandoned Jesus, he never would. That's why Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him more than these disciples.

Peter Is The Spokesman For The Disciples On Pentecost

Finally, we discover that this man, who abandoned Jesus at the time of His betrayal, who later denied knowing Him on three different occasions, and who was finally restored by the Lord to his former position as being spokesman for the group, was given the privilege of preaching the first sermon of the Christian Church. We read the following in the Book of Acts:

Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, "Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o'clock in the morning is much too early for that. No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel (Acts 2:14-16 NLT).

After citing a passage in Joel, Peter then went on to preach Jesus to the crowd:

People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip (Acts 2:22-24 NLT).

Hence, the restoration of Simon Peter was complete. Though he failed his Lord on the night of His betrayal, Peter was graciously allowed to preach the first sermon of the Christian church.

Summary

The disciple Peter, who believed that he alone would not fail his Master, not only abandoned Him in Gethsemane, but was also found to deny knowing Jesus on a number of different occasions.

When he realized his sin, the Bible says that he wept bitterly.

Eventually the Lord restored Peter and allowed him to be that disciple who would preach the first sermon about the risen Christ on the Day of Pentecost.

All of this that we have just mentioned literally fulfilled the predictions of Jesus on the night of His betrayal. This is further evidence that Jesus accurately predicts the future.

Prediction 42

Christ Would Be Turned Over To The Gentiles To Be Put To Death

Jesus privately told His disciples of certain events that would take place on His last trip to Jerusalem. Among them, would be the Jewish religious leaders turning Him over to the Roman authorities to be put to death.

The Background

It was at Caesarea Philippi where Jesus first acknowledged to His disciples that He was indeed the promised Messiah. Immediately upon this acknowledgement, the Lord began to predict His coming death:

From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead (Matthew 16:21 NLT).

This obviously shocked His disciples. But He was not finished.

The Lord then made a second prediction about His impending death:

When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.” And the disciples were filled with grief (Matthew 17:22-23 NIV).

Again, Jesus emphasized that He would be put to death and He also again emphasized that He would be raised from the dead on the third day.

On the third occasion where the Lord predicted His death, He added something new—it would be the Gentiles, not the Jews, who would put Him to death:

Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!” (Matthew 20:17-19 NIV).

As we will explain, this prediction of the Gentiles killing Him would have been another surprise for His disciples.

On a fourth occasion in Matthew's gospel, Jesus gave the final prediction about His upcoming death:

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, “As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified” (Matthew 26:1-2 NIV).

In sum, the Lord made it clear to His disciples that it would ultimately be the Gentiles, not the Jews, who would kill Him. In addition, these Gentiles would mock Jesus as well as flog Him.

This Is A Surprising Prediction

We know from the four gospels that a number of attempts were made upon the life of Jesus, as well as plots to kill Him. However, each and every one of them were made by Jews. This includes the religious leaders, Herod Antipas, and the crowd at Nazareth.

Therefore, to predict that it would be the Gentiles who would kill Him seemed to be totally inconsistent with what had happened thus far in His life and ministry.

Yet, as we will discover, it was indeed the Romans who were the ones who carried out the death sentence against Jesus.

The Fulfillment

After Jesus' betrayal, the religious leaders brought Jesus to the house of the former chief priest, Annas:

Then the squad of soldiers with their commanding officer and the officers of the Jewish leaders arrested Jesus and tied him up. They brought him first to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. (Now it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was to their advantage that one man die for the people.) (John 18:12-14 NET).

Next, Jesus was sent to Caiaphas, the ruling high priest.

Eventually, Jesus appeared before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council, who decided that he was worthy of death:

Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Well, aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?" But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I demand in the name of the living God—tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

Jesus replied, "You have said it. And in the future you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, "Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?" "Guilty!" they shouted. "He deserves to die!" (Matthew 26:62-66 NLT).

Finally, the Jewish religious leaders brought Jesus to the Romans for the purpose of Him being put to death. In the presence of Pontius Pilate the Jews acknowledged their lack of ability to put anyone to death:

"Then take him away and judge him by your own law," Pilate told them. "Only the Romans are permitted to execute someone," the Jewish leaders replied. (This fulfilled Jesus' prediction about the way he would die.) (John 18:31,32 NLT).

Lacking the ability to put someone to death, the Jewish religious leaders had to turn Jesus over to the Gentiles, the Romans.

Jesus Is Mocked By The Soldiers

As the Lord predicted, these Gentiles would ridicule Him as well as beat Him. We read the following:

Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. "Hail! King of the Jews!" they mocked, as they slapped him across the face (John 19:1-3 NLT).

The various predictions of Jesus, as to the Jews delivering Him over to the Romans, were thus literally fulfilled.

Summary

Each of the previous assassination attempts on the life Jesus, as well as various plots that were hatched, had all been carried out by those other than the Romans. Herod the Great attempted to kill the baby Jesus. In Nazareth, the citizens of that city tried to throw him over a cliff. Plots were made by the religious leaders along with the Herodians. Herod Antipas wanted to kill the Lord. Yet, none of these attempts resulted in His death.

Scripture records Jesus' prediction that it would be the religious leaders, who would hand Him over to the Gentiles, and that it would be the Gentiles who would actually put Him to death. Furthermore, they would not merely kill Him. Indeed, they would beat Jesus as well as ridicule Him.

As we documented, each of these predictions was literally fulfilled.

Prediction 43

Jesus Would Die In Jerusalem

Jesus not only told His disciples that He would be handed over by the Jewish religious leaders to the Romans to be put to death. He made it clear *where* His death would take place, too. It would be in the “holy city” of Jerusalem.

The Prediction

Time and time again, Jesus emphasized that His death would be in the city of Jerusalem:

From that time on Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and experts in the law, and be killed, and on the third day be raised (Matthew 16:21 NET).

Jerusalem would be the city where the Lord Jesus would die.

Herod Was Seeking To Kill Jesus Outside Of Jerusalem

We find that King Herod was attempting to kill Jesus. But when told of this, Jesus made it clear that He must die in the city of Jerusalem:

At that time some Pharisees said to him, “Get away from here if you want to live! Herod Antipas wants to kill you!” Jesus replied, “Go tell that fox that I will keep on casting out demons and healing people today and tomorrow; and the third day I will accomplish my purpose. Yes, today, tomorrow, and the next day I must proceed on my way. For it wouldn't do for a prophet of God to be killed except in Jerusalem! (Luke 13:31-33 NLT).

It would be Jerusalem, and Jerusalem alone, where the Lord Jesus would die. Christ made this abundantly clear.

Jesus then lamented over the holy city:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me. And now, look, your house is abandoned. And you will never see me again until you say, 'Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!' (Luke 13:34-35 NLT).

Jerusalem, where the Lord had continually sent His prophets, would be the location of the death of the Messiah, the Son of God.

The Fulfillment

As Jesus predicted, He did indeed die in the city of Jerusalem just as He promised.

Yet this was His plan; it was not the plan of the religious rulers. They had been wanting to kill Him for quite some time. However, they certainly did not want to do it when the crowds were there:

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, “As you know, Passover begins in two days, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.” At that same time the leading priests and elders were meeting at the residence of Caiaphas, the high priest, plotting how to capture Jesus secretly

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and kill him. "But not during the Passover celebration," they agreed, "or the people may riot" (Matthew 26:1-5 NLT).

Jesus not only predicted that His death would be at the hands of the Gentiles, He also predicted that it would take place in Jerusalem.

True to His prediction, Scripture records that Jesus did die in Jerusalem:

Pilate posted a sign on the cross that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it (John 19:19,20 NLT).

In sum, as we continue to examine the circumstances around the death of Jesus, we find that He made a number of very specific predictions about what would take place. Each and every one of them was literally fulfilled; nothing went unfulfilled.

This provides further evidence of Jesus' knowledge of all things: past, present, and future.

Prediction 44

Jesus Would Die By Crucifixion

As we have documented, Jesus provided many specific details to His disciples about His death for the sins of the world. In other words, it was not merely a few general statements that He made which could be interpreted in a number of different ways.

To the contrary, Christ left no doubt in the minds of His disciples as to *what* precisely would happen to Him, *where* it would happen, as well as *how* it would take place.

The Background

We have already noted that Jesus Christ predicted that He would be handed over to the Gentiles, mistreated, and then put to death in the city of Jerusalem. However, He also added further details to His disciples about His upcoming death.

The Prediction

Jesus made another specific prediction concerning His death—He would die by means of crucifixion.

In fact, as we examine the New Testament record, we find that there were a number of times when people attempted to take His life through various means.

The Slaughter Of The Innocents

Soon after His birth, there was an attempt to kill the Lord Jesus. We read about this in Matthew:

After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,” the angel said. “Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him. . . Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men’s report of the star’s first appearance (Matthew 2:13 16-17 NLT).

This attempt by Herod the Great was meant to kill the “newborn King” while He was still and infant. As noted, it failed.

Nazareth

We also read about an attempt on Jesus’ life in His hometown of Nazareth. Luke describes it in this manner:

When they heard this, the people in the synagogue were furious. Jumping up, they mobbed him and forced him to the edge of the hill on which the town was built. They intended to push him over the cliff, but he passed right through the crowd and went on his way (Luke 4:28-30 NLT)

This, too, failed.

Picking Up Stones To Stone Him

On another occasion, the Jewish religious leaders attempted to stone Jesus to death:

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Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!" At that point they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus was hidden from them and left the Temple (John 8:58,59 NLT)

As with the other attempts, this one also did not result in the taking of the life of the Lord Jesus.

The Plot To Kill Jesus

We discover that the religious leaders began to plot how they would kill the Christ. John writes:

So from that time on, the Jewish leaders began to plot Jesus' death. As a result, Jesus stopped his public ministry among the people and left Jerusalem. He went to a place near the wilderness, to the village of Ephraim, and stayed there with his disciples (John 11:53,54 NLT)

Again, we find the desire of many in Israel to end the life of the Man who claimed to be the long-awaited Messiah.

The Jews Had No Power To Enact Capital Punishment

This is an important point. It was only the Romans who could crucify someone. They, alone, could legally enact capital punishment.

As we read the gospels, we discover that the Romans were not interested in Jesus, or the things that He was saying and doing. Consequently, they would have no reason to crucify Him.

Therefore, for Jesus to make such a prediction was certainly at odds with the situation at the time.

The Fulfillment

All four gospels testify to the fact that Jesus Christ died by means of crucifixion.

Matthew

Matthew records the fact of Jesus being nailed to a cross:

Along the way, they came across a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. And they went out to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull"). The soldiers gave Jesus wine mixed with bitter gall, but when he had tasted it, he refused to drink it.

After they had nailed him to the cross, the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice. Then they sat around and kept guard as he hung there (Matthew 27:32-36 NLT).

Mark

Mark recorded the time that the crucifixion took place:

And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull"). They offered him wine drugged with myrrh, but he refused it. Then the soldiers nailed him to the cross. They divided his clothes and threw dice to decide who would get each piece. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him (Mark 15:22-25 NLT).

Luke

Luke testified that two criminals were on either side of the sinless Jesus when He was crucified:

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Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left (Luke 23:32-33 NLT).

John

John also noted the two others who were crucified next to Him:

So they took Jesus away. Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha). There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them (John 19:16-18 NLT).

It was the unanimous testimony of the four gospels that the Lord Jesus died by crucifixion.

The Book Of Acts

We also read the testimonies in the Book of Acts as to the fact that Jesus died by means of crucifixion.

Simon Peter proclaimed the following on the Day of Pentecost:

People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip (Acts 2:22-24 NLT).

We note the emphasis by Peter that Jesus was nailed to a cross.

The Letters Of Paul

The Apostle Paul echoed the testimony of the four gospels and the Book of Acts:

It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense (1 Corinthians 1:22-23 NLT).

The preaching of the message about Christ centered around Him being crucified for the sins of the world.

Therefore, it is the united testimony of the New Testament that Jesus Christ, as He predicted, died by means of crucifixion.

Summary

Jesus predicted the precise manner of His death—it would be by means of crucifixion. Lest, we think that this is not something miraculous, we need to remember that a number of assassination attempts had already been attempted upon His life. This includes the slaughter of the babes in Bethlehem soon after His birth, the incident at Nazareth where they tried to push Him over the hill, and an attempt at stoning Him before He passed through the crowd.

Furthermore, the Jews did not have the ability to put someone to death by means of crucifixion. In fact, it was certainly not a given that the Romans would agree to crucify this particular prisoner. However, as Jesus predicted, He would indeed be put to death by means of crucifixion. His words were again literally fulfilled.

Prediction 45: Christ Would Die During The Passover

There is something else that Jesus predicted about His upcoming death that we should pay close attention to. Not only would it take place in the city of Jerusalem, not only would it be by means of crucifixion, but it would also occur during the time of the Passover celebration.

The Timing Of His Death

Jesus made it clear when He would die—it would be during the Feast of the Passover:

When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people” (Matthew 26:1-3 ESV).

We should note that at the same time that Jesus was predicting His death during the Passover, the religious leaders were also planning His death. However, they made it clear that it could *not* happen during the time of the Passover celebration.

Therefore, on the one hand, we have the desire of the religious leaders to kill Jesus, but not wanting to do it during the time of the feast because of the possible uproar of the people, while on the other hand, we have Jesus predicting that He would indeed die during the Passover celebration.

The Fulfillment: He Died During The Passover With The Crowds In Jerusalem

As always, the predictions of Jesus were literally fulfilled. He died on Good Friday during the time of the Passover Celebration. In fact, each of the four gospels emphasizes that He died on the day of the preparation for the Sabbath—which would be Friday.

In that particular year, the day before the Sabbath also fell upon the day of preparation for the Passover celebration.

Matthew

Matthew tells us that the religious leaders came to Pilate the day after Jesus was crucified. This would have been Saturday:

The next day (which is after the day of preparation) the chief priests and the Pharisees assembled before Pilate (Matthew 27:62 NET).

Mark

Mark records the fact that Jesus was buried on the day of preparation—the day before the Sabbath began. This would have been Friday—since the Sabbath began at sundown on Friday:

Now when evening had already come, since it was the day of preparation (that is, the day before the Sabbath), Joseph of Arimathea, a highly regarded member of the council, who was himself looking forward to the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus (Mark 15:42 NET).

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Mark goes on to tell us that Jesus was buried before sundown began on Friday.

After Joseph bought a linen cloth and took down the body, he wrapped it in the linen and placed it in a tomb cut out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone across the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where the body was placed (Mark 15:46-47 NET).

Since it was against Jewish law to do physical work, or to travel on the Sabbath, the day before was called the Preparation Day—the day which prepared for the Sabbath.

Luke

Luke also tells us that the women left Jesus' tomb because the Sabbath was about to begin with the sun going down:

It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment (Luke 23:54-56 ESV).

John

John specifically informs us that Jesus was put to death on the “day of preparation for the Passover:”

(Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover, about noon.) Pilate said to the Jewish leaders, “Look, here is your king!” Then they shouted out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked, “Shall I crucify your king?” The high priests replied, “We have no king except Caesar!” Then Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified (John 19:14-16 NET).

The Scripture also tells us that the Sabbath was a high day—an especially important day—because it coincided with the Passover festival.

In fact, John explained to his readers why the bodies of those who had been crucified on Good Friday were taken down before the sun would set:

Then, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies should not stay on the crosses on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was an especially important one), the Jewish leaders asked Pilate to have the victims' legs broken and the bodies taken down (John 19:31 NET).

Hence, those who were crucified were taken down from the cross before the Sabbath day began, as well as the time of the Passover celebration. Again, we emphasize, that this was not the plan of the religious rulers. In fact, they made it clear that while they wanted to put Jesus to death, they needed to do it apart from the crowd. The Apostle Paul would later write:

Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us (1 Corinthians 5:7 NLT)

Consequently, the consistent message of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ died for the sins of world and He died during the time of the feast of the Passover.

Summing Up The Predictions Jesus Made About His Death

When we put everything together that Jesus predicted about His death, we note the following eleven specific predictions.

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Jesus would be betrayed by one of His own disciples.

He specifically named Judas Iscariot as the traitor.

His remaining disciples would all scatter at His betrayal.

Peter would deny knowing Him on three separate occasions.

The Jewish religious leaders would hand Him over to the Romans.

He would be physically mistreated and ridiculed by them.

He would be put to death at the hands of the Gentiles.

His death would take place in Jerusalem.

He would die by means of crucifixion; something only the Romans could do.

His death would occur during the Passover celebration.

Contrary to the plot of the religious rulers, it would not be away from the huge crowds. Amazingly, each and every one of these ten predictions literally came true. These facts leave no doubt that Jesus truly had the ability to predict what would take place in the future—something that only God can do!

Prediction 46: Jesus' Resurrection From The Dead On The Third Day

We have seen that Jesus predicted at least ten specific details with respect to His betrayal and death. Each of them was literally fulfilled. However, His death was not the end.

In fact, it was only the beginning! He also predicted that death could not hold Him.

The Background

Whenever Jesus predicted to His disciples of His upcoming death in Jerusalem, Christ always made it clear that His death would not be the end of His existence among them. Indeed, there would be a miraculous event that would take place that would separate Jesus from any other person who has ever lived—His resurrection from the dead.

The Predictions

In this instance, there was not merely one prediction of His resurrection from the dead. In fact, during the last six months of His life, the Lord predicted this a number of times to His disciples. Indeed, His predictions were so well-known, that the religious leaders asked Pontius Pilate to place a guard at the tomb! We read about this in Matthew:

The next day, on the Sabbath, the leading priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate. They told him, "Sir, we remember what that deceiver once said while he was still alive: 'After three days I will rise from the dead.' So we request that you seal the tomb until the third day. This will prevent his disciples from coming and stealing his body and then telling everyone he was raised from the dead! If that happens, we'll be worse off than we were at first." Pilate replied, "Take guards and secure it the best you can." So they sealed the tomb and posted guards to protect it (Matthew 27:62-65 NLT).

The Fulfillment

As predicted, the Lord Jesus did rise upon the third day after His death. All four gospels testify to this fact.

Matthew

Matthew testified that Jesus had risen on the first day of the week:

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to view the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, because an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and approached the tomb. He rolled back the stone and was sitting on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards were so shaken by fear of him that they became like dead men. The angel told the women, "Don't be afraid, because I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. For he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay (Matthew 28:1-5 CSB).

The first day of the week was Sunday. This was the day in which Christ rose from the dead. According to Jewish reckoning, this would be the third day since His death upon the cross on Friday.

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Mark

The writer of the second gospel, Mark, also emphasized that Jesus had risen on the first day of the week:

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they could go and anoint him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb at sunrise. They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone from the entrance to the tomb for us?" Looking up, they noticed that the stone — which was very large — had been rolled away (Mark 16:1-4 CSB).

After mentioning the stone had been moved from the door of the tomb, Mark then testified to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Luke

The third gospel, that of Luke, also emphasized that Jesus was raised on the first day of the week, the third day after His death:

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb. They went in but did not find the body of the Lord Jesus (Luke 24:1-3 CSB).

Luke then went on to record why the body was missing—Jesus had risen from the dead!

John

The writer of the fourth gospel, John, gave the same account as the other three:

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him" (John 20:1-3 ESV).

As was true with Matthew, Mark and Luke, John also testified that Jesus had risen on that day.

The Apostle Paul would later write:

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (1Corinthians 15:1-4 ESV).

Jesus was indeed raised from the dead on Sunday, the third day after His death.

Summary

It is one thing to make predictions about your upcoming death, however, it is impossible, humanly speaking, to fulfill a prediction of rising from the dead three days after your death. Yet, this is exactly what took place in the life of Jesus of Nazareth! As the record shows, each gospel, as well as the testimony of the Apostle Paul, stated that Jesus not only came back from the dead, He was raised on the third day after His death on the cross of Calvary. Therefore, the fact of His resurrection, as well as the exact day that He would rise, are documented for us in Scripture. Each fulfills the predictions of Jesus regarding His return from the dead. The Lord is risen indeed!

Prediction 47: The Destruction Of Jerusalem And The Temple

The city of Jerusalem, the location where the Lord has placed His name in a special way, had refused to accept Jesus as their Messiah. This would cause Jesus to pronounce judgment upon the city as well as upon the temple.

The Background

On Palm Sunday, many of the people of Jerusalem welcomed Jesus as their Messiah:

As he approached the road leading down from the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" But some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." He answered, "I tell you, if they keep silent, the very stones will cry out!" (Luke 19:37-40 NET).

Yet, less than a week later, these same people would be asking for His death.

The Prediction

Knowing the events that were about to transpire, the Lord predicted judgment upon both the city of Jerusalem as well as the temple:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me. And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate. For I tell you this, you will never see me again until you say, 'Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!' (Matthew 23:37-39 NLT).

The temple in Jerusalem has been, and will be, the site of many momentous events. The greatest of these, as predicted, was Jesus the Messiah coming to the temple.

Yet, He was rejected by His own people. Consequently, destruction and punishment would follow.

The Predictions In Daniel

There is something else that we should take note of here. The prophet Daniel also predicted the destruction of the second temple before it was even built!

After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood (Daniel 9:26 NIV).

Daniel wrote this after the first temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed. He was in Babylon waiting for the seventy years of Babylonian captivity to expire so that the people could return to their land.

In this verse, we have the prediction of a second temple being built as well as it being destroyed.

We must appreciate the miraculous nature of these predictions of Daniel. He was in Babylon, in captivity. At this time, it was the Medes and the Persians who were ruling. His prediction assumed that not only would the people return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city, but they would eventually build a second temple, too.

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Then, at some future time, the city and the temple would be destroyed again!

The Fulfillment

Jesus predicted that the city of Jerusalem, as well as the temple, would be destroyed. About forty years later, His prediction came true. The nation that had rejected Him was judged by the Lord.

In A.D. 70 the city of Jerusalem, as well as the temple, were both destroyed by the Roman army led by Titus Vespasian.

Here we again find these amazing predictions, first by Daniel, and then by Jesus, being literally fulfilled.

Prediction 48

The Scattering Of The People (The Second Exile) And The Predicted Return

From 606 B.C. to 536 B.C the Jewish people were captives in Babylon. This was specifically predicted by the Lord through His prophets.

However, this would not be the last time that the people would be removed from their land. Jesus also predicted that a second exile would take place.

The Background

As Jesus was dealing with the future of the city of Jerusalem as well as with the temple, He also turned His attention to the people. They had rejected Him as their Messiah. This would lead the Lord to predict a second exile for the people.

The Prediction

Jesus made it clear that the Jews of Jerusalem would be completely removed from the Holy City:

They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away as captives among all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (Luke 21:24 NET).

He also stated the reason for this exile:

Now when Jesus approached and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "If you had only known on this day, even you, the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and surround you and close in on you from every side. They will demolish you - you and your children within your walls - and they will not leave within you one stone on top of another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God" (Luke 19:41-44 NET).

Jesus said the reason for their coming punishment was their rejection of Him.

The Fulfillment

When the city of Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in the year A.D. 70, the people were sent into a second exile.

The Predicted Return

As we have documented more fully in our third book in this series, *25 Signs We Are Near the End*, the scattering after the destruction of the Second Temple was not the end of the Jewish people, or their hopes for a return. To the contrary, there was always the desire for the nation in exile to come back to their ancient homeland. In fact, over the last nineteen hundred years, many writers, while noting the exile, also noted the miraculous fulfillment of Bible prophecy in their scattering.

For example, Claudius Buchanan, a missionary to India, wrote the following in 1812 concerning the Jews:

There are three remarkable prophecies concerning the Jews.

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1. "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a King, without a Prince and without a sacrifice, and without an Image and without an Ephod, and without Teraphim," Hosea 3:4
2. "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other" Deuteronomy 29:64; and yet, "the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned amongst the nations," Numbers 23:9.
3. "Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye-word among all the nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. Among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest," (Deuteronomy 28,37,65.

The first of these prophecies is very remarkable; for whoever heard of a nation "abiding many days" without its civil and religious polity, and surviving its political existence? The very assertion seems to involve an absurdity. Did the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Greeks, or Romans survive their civil and religious polity?

The second prediction is not less singular than the former; for if the Jews were to be received among the nations of the earth, why should they not "be reckoned with the nations?" Would any man, in a remote age, venture to foretel that there would be a certain nation, which, in the ages to come, would be received and tolerated by all other nations, merely to be persecuted?

But the third prophecy is such as must afford a contemplation to Infidelity, to the end of time. The Jews were to become "an astonishment, and a proverb, and bye-word among the nations," because they shed the blood of the Saviour of the world. Now it is not surprising that Christians should reproach them for such a crime. But how should we expect that they would be "trodden down of the heathen world" who never heard of such a Saviour? Behold the Hindoo, at this day, punishing the Jew without knowing the crime of which he has been guilty!

These three prophecies have been manifestly fulfilled; and if we had no other evidence, this is sufficient to prove "that there is a God and that he hath made a revelation to man" (Claudius Buchanan, *The Works of the Reverend Claudius Buchanan Comprising Researches in Asia*, 1812, pp. 128,129).

These three points are indeed irrefutable. In fact, each of them are indeed amazing predictions which demonstrate, beyond all reasonable doubt, that there is indeed a God in heaven.

The Worldwide Dispersion Of The Jews

Buchanan also documented the existence of Jews in India during his lifetime. He gave the following fascinating testimony about his observations:

While the author was in the East, the state of the Jews who were dispersed in different countries, frequently occupied his thoughts. He had heard that they existed in distinct colonies in certain parts of India; that some of them had arrived long before the Christian Era, and had remained in the midst of the Hindoos, to this time as a distinct and separate people, persecuted by their native princes, from age to age, and yet not destroyed; "burning like the bush of Moses, and not consumed;" and he had a strange desire "to turn aside and see this great sight" His mind was impressed with the conviction that their preservation, in such a variety of regions, and under such a diversity of circumstances, could only be effected by the interposition of Divine PROVIDENCE, which reserved them, thus distinct, for some special and important purpose (Buchanan, p. 132).

There are a number of things that we learn from his observations in the Far East.

First, he encountered Jews in a number of different countries.

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While they had been in the land for some two thousand years, they remained a distinct people, never mingling with the populace.

As was true everywhere they went, the Jews were persecuted by the locals. However, though persecuted, the people were not destroyed.

Buchanan concluded that their preservation was due to divine providence which destined them for some future important purpose.

This testimony about the Jews is consistent with other authors from past generations. This caused these various authors, living at different times and in different countries, to all conclude that God had a special purpose for them in the future. They, of course, would prove to be correct.

The Predicted Restoration To Their Land Will Also Be Fulfilled Someday

Buchanan then added a fourth prophecy—an end will come to their wandering and they will return to their ancient homeland:

There is a fourth prophecy concerning this people which will be shortly accomplished. The Prophet Hosea, after foretelling that the children of Israel should abide many days without a King, adds these words: Afterward shall they return, and seek the Lord their God and David their King; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days (Hosea 3:5).

The question, which is now in the mouth of every Christian, is that which was asked in the vision of the prophet Daniel on the same subject: “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” Daniel 12:6. When shall the “indignation against the holy people be accomplished?” Daniel 11:51; that they may return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king” (Buchanan, p. 150).

When indeed will this take place? That has been the question on the mind of the Jewish people for the last two thousand years. Buchanan further noted:

I have had many interesting conferences with the Jews on the subject of their present state; and have been struck with two circumstances, their constant reference to the DESOLATION of Jerusalem and their confident hope that it will be one day REBUILT. The desolation of the Holy City is ever present to the minds of the Jews, when the subject concerning themselves as a *Nation*; for though they are without a king and without a country, they constantly speak of the *unity* of their nation. Distance of time and place seems to have no effect in obliterating the remembrance of the desolation. I often thought of the verse in the Psalms, “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.” They speak of Palestine as being close at hand, and easily accessible. It is become an ordinance of their Rabbins in some places, when a man builds a new house, he shall leave a small part of it unfinished, as an emblem of ruin, and write on it these words, Zecher Lachorchan, i.e. In MEMORY of the DESOLATION (Buchanan p. 142).

Of course, God alone knew the precise time when the Jews would indeed return to their ancient homeland and form the modern state of Israel. It would not be for some one hundred and forty years after Claudius Buchanan wrote.

Still, as this writer, along with many others in the distant past, wrote about the return of the people in the “last days,” just as the Scripture predicted.

The Special Relationship Continues

The special relationship between God and the nation Israel has been emphasized throughout Scripture. It continues to this day. We read about this in the Book of Amos:

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From among all the families on the earth, I have been intimate with you alone. That is why I must punish you for all your sins (Amos 3:2 NLT).

Although nationally they are presently in unbelief of Jesus as their Messiah, the Lord is still watching over them and He will continue to do so.

Summary And Conclusion

For rejecting Him, the Lord Jesus predicted the exile of the Jewish people from Jerusalem. He also predicted their future return.

As we fully document in the third book of our series, *25 Signs We Are Near the End*, the miracle of the survival of the Jews, as well as their return to their ancient homeland, are two of the many signs that demonstrate that we are in the time of the end.

Indeed, though their city and temple had been destroyed, the nation, though scattered throughout the world for almost two thousand years, survived. Furthermore, they returned to their ancient homeland and formed a modern state.

The fulfillments of these predictions, with respect to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, give irrefutable testimony that there is indeed a God in heaven who is in charge of all things.

Prediction 49

The Ministry Of The Apostle Paul

The persecution of the first Christians by the Jewish religious leaders caused them much trouble. Indeed, men and women were sent to prison, as well as being put to death for their faith in Jesus as the Messiah. However, one of these persecutors of the believers would have a life-changing experience.

The Background

Saul of Tarsus was a member of the party of the Pharisees. They were known for their strict adherence to the law of Moses. On the road to Damascus, the Lord interrupted his journey with this life-altering experience. Scripture records the following took place:

But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do" (Acts 9:1-6 ESV).

Saul of Tarsus met the risen Christ on the road to Damascus.

The Predictions

After his conversion, the Lord predicted the future course of Saul's ministry. In fact, he told a man named Ananias to lay hands upon Saul so that he would receive his sight. When Ananias objected, the Lord said the following to him:

Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name (Acts 9:15-16 ESV).

Note the specific predictions about the future of Saul. He is a chosen instrument of the Lord who would bring His message before three different groups—Gentiles, kings, as well as those from Israel. Furthermore, he would suffer while fulfilling this ministry.

The Fulfillment

Saul did indeed appear before Gentiles, kings, as well as Jews. Scripture gives the following testimony:

Paul Before The Jews

The Book of Acts records Paul speaking to the Jews about Jesus. Indeed, on his first missionary journey, Scripture records that Saul, who became the Apostle Paul, went to the Jewish synagogues:

So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit. They went down to the seaport of Seleucia and then sailed for the island of Cyprus. There, in the town of Salamis, they went to the Jewish synagogues and preached the word of God. John Mark went with them as their assistant (Acts 13:4-5 NLT).

Here, as well as everywhere else, they preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Jews.

Paul Before King Agrippa

The Book of Acts records an account of Paul appearing before the governor Festus as well as King Agrippa:

As Paul was saying these things in his defense, Festus exclaimed loudly, "You have lost your mind, Paul! Your great learning is driving you insane!" But Paul replied, "I have not lost my mind, most excellent Festus, but am speaking true and rational words. For the king knows about these things, and I am speaking freely to him, because I cannot believe that any of these things has escaped his notice, for this was not done in a corner. Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe." Agrippa said to Paul, "In such a short time are you persuading me to become a Christian?" Paul replied, "I pray to God that whether in a short or a long time not only you but also all those who are listening to me today could become such as I am, except for these chains" (Acts 26:24-29 NET).

Paul was able to preach the good news to the king as well as Festus.

The Predictions Of Paul's Sufferings Were Literally Fulfilled

Paul also suffered for the sake of the gospel message. In fact, he documented this in his second letter to the Corinthians:

I know I sound like a madman, but I have served him far more! I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm. Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches (2 Corinthians 11:23-28 NLT).

This list demonstrates the literal fulfillment of the predictions given to him.

Paul And His Need For Jesus As His Savior

Though he was a person who held strictly to the Law of Moses, this did not bring him into a relationship with the living God. Consider his own testimony:

Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ (Philippians 3:4-7 ESV).

On a human level, Saul had everything going right for him. However, none of his abilities could make him acceptable to the Lord. He realized that he needed to make Jesus Christ his Savior.

Paul Waiting To Appear Before Caesar

Paul also appeared before Caesar. In fact, the Book of Acts closes with Paul waiting to appear before the Roman Emperor:

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For the next two years, Paul lived in Rome at his own expense. He welcomed all who visited him, boldly proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. And no one tried to stop him (Acts 28:30,31 NLT).

The Testimony Of Lord Lyttleton About Saul's Conversion

Eighteenth century author George Lyttleton wrote the following concerning the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

I thought the conversion and the Apostleship of St. Paul alone, duly considered, was of itself a demonstration sufficient to prove Christianity as a Divine Revelation (George Lord Lyttleton, *Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul in a letter to Gilbert West*, London, 1814).

Saul's conversion must have some explanation. The only explanation that fits all the facts is the one which he himself gives—he had met the risen Christ on the road to Damascus.

All in all, we discover that the ministry of Saul of Tarsus, who became the Apostle Paul, fulfilled all of the predictions made about him at his conversion.

Summary And Conclusion

Saul of Tarsus, the greatest enemy of the Christian faith, became its greatest missionary. Something radically changed his life. He testified on a number of occasions that it was meeting the risen Christ on the Damascus Road.

After his conversion, Scripture records the Lord made certain predictions to a man named Ananias concerning the future of this former blasphemer and hater of believers in Jesus.

The New Testament tells us that these predictions have all become true in the life of Saul of Tarsus who became the Apostle Paul!

Again, the predictions contained in the Bible are fulfilled precisely as they were given.

Prediction 50

The Good News Would Be Preached To The Entire World

Our last prediction that we will consider concerns the extent to which the good news of Jesus Christ would be preached. Earlier, we emphasized that the message about Jesus did not change even though He had died. As we emphasized, this is unique in the history of religion.

Usually the religion dies, or someone new comes along and they become the focal point. Neither has been true with the message of Jesus. In fact, the message about Him has always remained the same.

There is one final point that must be considered. Not only would His followers continue after His death, His message would go out to the entire world.

Indeed, when Jesus met with His disciples after He had risen from the dead, He gave them the following marching orders:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20 NIV).

Note that they were to go into the entire world and proclaim the good news about Him.

The Prediction

As Jesus was about to ascend into heaven, He gave some final orders to His disciples as well as a prediction as to where the “good news” would be spread:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8 ESV).

According to Jesus, His disciples were going to spread the Word everywhere. In fact, He said that the good news would go all the way to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Humanly Speaking It Was Not Certain That This Would Ever Happen

The prediction of Jesus, that His message would reach the entire world, was not a given. In fact, from a human standpoint, there were many things which stood in the way of it being accomplished. They include the following:

The Hostility Of The Religious Leaders

The religious leaders were hostile to the message of Jesus. They were the ones who conspired to put Him to death. They would not welcome the disciples continuing to preach about Him.

In fact, we read about such pushback in the Book of Acts. After being confronted with an obvious miracle, the religious leaders conferred with one another:

What should we do with these men?” they asked each other. “We can’t deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it. But to keep them from spreading their

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propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus' name again." So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.

But Peter and John replied, "Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:16-20 NLT).

As was the case then, so it is true today. Believers in Jesus Christ will not stop preaching the message about Him no matter how much they are persecuted by others.

The Citizens Of The Nation Of Israel

Add to this the people of Israel. They had hoped that Jesus would have been the promised Messiah. However, they lost hope when He was crucified.

The Romans

The Romans already had a number of gods they worshipped, including paying tribute to Caesar. Why would they, or anyone else for that matter, ignore all the other gods to worship a Jewish religious leader who suffered the ignoble death of crucifixion?

Therefore, on a human level, there was no guarantee that the message about Jesus would have gone any farther than Jerusalem.

The Fulfillment

Again, we find that the Lord fulfilled His promise of His message going out to the "ends of the earth."

As noted, the message began in the city of Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. In the early years of the church, the disciples remained in Jerusalem.

The Disciples Are Scattered

The stoning of the first Christian martyr, Stephen, led to the disciples being scattered outside of Jerusalem:

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1 NIV).

The disciples eventually scattered even further:

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord (Acts 11:19-21 NIV).

This led them to various parts of the Roman Empire to preach the good news about Jesus.

The Gospel Reaches Rome

One of the letters that the Apostle Paul wrote was to the church at Rome. At the time he wrote, this church was well established:

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Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God — the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures . . . To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1,7 NIV).

In fact, at the end of his letter, he greeted twenty-five people which included 17 men, 8 women, as well as two unnamed women, verses 13 and 15, and two entire households, verses 10-11.

Paul Visited Rome

As a prisoner, Paul himself was brought to Rome:

When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him (Acts 28:16 NET).

Therefore, the prediction of Jesus, as He was about to leave this world, was literally fulfilled in the good news going to Rome and beyond.

Of course, after the New Testament era, we know that His message has penetrated our entire world with Christianity being the largest of all the world religions! All this began with a man who lived in an obscure country in the Roman Empire.

One Solitary Life

There was a famous sermon, given in the 1920's by Dr. James Allen Francis, in which he listed the amazing facts about the life and ministry of Jesus, as well as the effect it has had upon the world. The following is an adaptation of that sermon which he gave.

It has been called "One Solitary Life." We will close this book with these marvelous words:

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village as the child of a peasant woman.

He grew up in another obscure village.

He worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty and then for three years was an itinerant preacher.

He never wrote a book.

He never held an office.

He never owned a home.

He never had a family.

He never went to college.

He never put his foot inside a big city.

He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where he was born.

He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness.

He had no credentials but himself.

He had nothing to do with this world except the naked power of his divine manhood.

While still a young man the tide of popular opinion turned against him.

His friends ran away.

One of them denied him.

Another betrayed him.

He was turned over to his enemies.

He went through the mockery of a trial.

He was nailed upon the cross between two thieves.

His executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth while he was dying, and that was his coat.

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When he was dead, he was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone and today he is the center of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon the earth as powerfully as has this one solitary life.

Summary And Conclusion

In this book we have looked at two important subjects—a general overview of biblical history, as well as 50 specific predictions that the Bible makes concerning the future. From what we have seen, there are two simple observations that we can make:

Observation 1: God Has A Program For Time And Eternity

The Bible makes it clear that life on this planet has meaning. Indeed, it tells us about the only God who exists, who created all things, and who made the human race in His image.

The story of the Bible is the story of human history. Rather than being a series of meaningless events, we discover from Scripture that history is going somewhere. Indeed, the kingdom of God will eventually come to our planet in the Person of the King!

Observation 2: The Lord Has Given Sufficient Evidence Of His Existence As Well As His Control Over All Things

The fact that we can point to 50 specific predictions which have been literally fulfilled in the past, testifies to the truthfulness of the message. As we have documented, each of these predictions were supernaturally given.

In other words, they were not a product of logical deductions or human guesswork about what would take place in the future. Neither were they predictions of a general nature.

In fact, each prediction contained specific items that could be proven to be true or false based on what would happen after they were given. The fact that time and time again these predictions have been literally fulfilled should cause any honest inquirer to marvel at the results.

Our Conclusion

Therefore, from the evidence, we can confidently conclude that the Lord, the God of the Bible, has supernaturally worked in history. Indeed, when all of the facts have been considered, there is really no other logical conclusion that one can make.

We leave the reader with the words that the Lord spoke long ago through the prophet Isaiah:

You have heard; now look at all the evidence! Will you not admit that what I say is true? (Isaiah 48: 6 NET).

About the Author

Don Stewart is a graduate of Biola University and Talbot Theological Seminary (with the highest honors).

Don is a best-selling and award-winning author having authored, or co-authored, over eighty books. This includes the best-selling *Answers to Tough Questions*, with Josh McDowell, as well as the award-winning book *Family Handbook of Christian Knowledge: The Bible*. His various writings have been translated into over thirty different languages and have sold over a million copies.

Don is now a full-time missionary with GoinChrist Ministries. His website educatingourworld.com provides many free resources for those wanting to know what Christians believe, as well as why we believe.

Currently there are 64 books on the site in PDF form, totaling about 13,000 pages of material while answering over 1,900 questions. All of his books can be downloaded for free on his website www.educatingourworld.com.