

# God Wrote a Book: Fulfilled Prophecies

## Opening Discussion

1. What do you think about modern people who make predictions?
2. What biblical prophecies intrigue you? Why?
3. What is the biblical standard for prophets?

Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.' **Isaiah 46:9-10**

The Bible contains fulfilled predictive prophecies that can only be explained by Divine foreknowledge.

## 1. What is prophecy?

- Definition: the human report of a Divine revelation.
- Characteristics
  - Telling forth the Word of God
  - Declarative prophecy: applying the truths of what God's Word says to current situations.
  - Predictive prophecy: describing historical events in prophetic language before they occur.
- Predictive prophecy:
  - Is not "history before it happens."
  - Predictive prophecy requires two characteristics: specificity and obscurity.
    - Specificity: predictive prophecy must be specific enough that after they occur, it will be clear the events were predicted.
    - Obscurity: predictive prophecy must be obscure enough that the exact details of the event remain hidden. If not, events can be orchestrated to match the prophecy.

"Nostradamus's popularity seems to be due in part to the fact that the vagueness of his writings and their lack of specific dates make it easy to selectively quote them after any major dramatic events and retrospectively claim them as true." History.com

## 2. Fulfilled prophecies in the Bible

- The destruction of Assyria
  - The book of Nahum is about the destruction of Assyria
  - One of the details given is that the city would be drunk during its destruction.
  - Another detail in Nahum is that the city would be flooded.

You also will be drunken; you will go into hiding; you will seek a refuge from the enemy.

**Nahum 3:11**

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him. But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness. **Nahum 1:8**

“It happened at this very time that the king of the Assyrians . . . had become elated over his past successes, turned to indulgence and divided among his soldiers for a feast animals and great quantities of both wine and all other provisions. Consequently, since the whole army was carousing, Arbaces, learning from some deserters of the relaxation and drunkenness in the camp of the enemy, made his attack upon it unexpectedly in the night.” The river “flooded part of the city, and cast down the wall to a length of 20 stades.” Diodorus Book II 26-27, Greek Historian circa 90 BC.

- The Babylonian Exile and Babylon’s Destruction

Behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the Lord, and for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants . . . and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the Lord, making the land an everlasting waste. **Jeremiah 25:9-12**

- Babylon would conquer Judah
  - They will serve Babylon for 70 years
  - Babylon would eventually become a wasteland.
  - Jeremiah prophesied between 687 and 582 BC.
  - Jerusalem was conquered in 582 BC.
  - Babylon was conquered in 538 BC.
  - The Jewish people spent 70 years in captivity.
- The rise of Cyrus the Great
    - That he would conquer Babylon
    - That the doors would open before him
    - Cyrus’s troops diverted the water of the Euphrates river and marched into Babylon.
    - Isaiah prophesied between 739 and 681 BC.
    - Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC.

Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed. **Isaiah 45:1**

- The Bible also predicts the destruction of Tyre, Edom, and many other nations with remarkable precision.
- The rise of Persia, Greece, Rome, and Jesus.
  - Daniel 2:31-45
  - Daniel 7-8

And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever. **Daniel 2:44**

- The timing of the Messiah

“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war.” **Daniel 9:24-26**

- Lunar and solar years
  - 70 “weeks” = 490 lunar years = 483 solar years
  - 69 “weeks” = 483 lunar years = 476 solar years
- Artaxerxes
  - Comes to the throne in 465 BC
  - Sends Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem circa 445 BC
  - 69 “weeks”, or 476 years later is between 30 and 33 AD
- The destruction of the temple in 70 AD

Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” **Matthew 24:1-2**

- The restoration of Israel

I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. . . And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you

a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. **Ezekiel 36:24-28**

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