

## THE RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE: FULFILLED PROPHECY

### God's Challenge to Other Religions: Isa 46:1-11

*1 Bel has bowed down, Nebo stoops over; Their images are {consigned} to the beasts and the cattle. The things that you carry are burdensome, A load for the weary {beast.} 2 They stooped over, they have bowed down together; They could not rescue the burden, But have themselves gone into captivity. 3 "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, And all the remnant of the house of Israel, You who have been borne by Me from birth, And have been carried from the womb; 4 Even to your old age, I shall be the same, And even to your graying years I shall bear {you!} I have done {it,} and I shall carry {you;} And I shall bear {you,} and I shall deliver {you.} 5 "To whom would you liken Me, And make Me equal and compare Me, That we should be alike? 6 "Those who lavish gold from the purse And weigh silver on the scale Hire a goldsmith, and he makes it {into} a god; They bow down, indeed they worship it. 7 "They lift it upon the shoulder and carry it; They set it in its place and it stands {there.} It does not move from its place. Though one may cry to it, it cannot answer; It cannot deliver him from his distress. 8 "Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. 9 "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; {I am} God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; 11 Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned {it, surely} I will do it.*

### Some Examples of Fulfilled Prophecy:

#### 1. Time of Messiah: Dan 9:24-26

*24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy {place.} 25 "So you are to know and discern {that} from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince {there will be} seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end {will come} with a flood; even to the end there will be war;*

*desolations are determined.*

- Starting point 445 BC: 20 year of Artaxerxes 1 (Neh 2)
- Unit of measurement: sabbatical cycle: 7 yrs beginning in Oct
- Standard Jewish counting method: include start & end units
- After 62 weeks = AD 28-35; Jesus is cut off in this period!

## **2. Israel's Future: Hos 3:4-5**

*4 For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or {sacred} pillar, and without ephod or household idols. 5 Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the \Lord\ their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the \Lord\ and to His goodness in the last days.*

- Six unusual sociological features characterizing Israel for almost 2000 yrs
- King/prince: no king since 587 BC or AD 44; no prince from AD 70 to 1948
- Sacrifice/sacred pillar: no sacrifice since 70; app no pillar since c 500 BC
- Ephod/teraphim: no priesthood since 70, no idols since c 500 BC

## **3. Twin Cities: serve as control; can we switch them?**

Memphis/Thebes (Ezk 30:13; 14-16)

destroy idols of Memphis vs cut off hordes of Thebes  
used as quarry for Cairo vs reduced to small villages

Tyre/Sidon (Ezk 26:3-14;28:22-23)

throw rubble into sea, place to spread fishnets, never  
rebuilt vs war & disaster w/o statement re/ abandoning  
Tyre abandoned today vs Sidon still major port

Babylon/Nineveh (Isa 13:20-22, Jer 51:26; Zeph 2:13-15)

Babylon: deserted, no Arabs or shepherds, wild animals, no rock taken for  
stone vs Nineveh: desolate, sheep grazing

B avoided by Arabs, soil too poor for grass, natives take bricks but burn stone  
for lime

Nineveh long abandoned, now in suburbs of Mosul; largest mound, Quyunyiq,  
means "many sheep"

Capernaum/Nazareth (Mt 11:20-24; Lk 4:14-30)

Cap to be destroyed for not repenting at Jesus' miracles

Naz: nothing of sort, tho they tried to kill Jesus

Today Cap abandoned, recently excavated; Naz prosperous city, much larger  
than in NT times

#### 4. Light to the Gentiles: Isa 42:6; 49:6

ISA 42:5-9 *Thus says God the \Lord\, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk in it, 6 "I am the \Lord\, I have called you in righteousness, I will also hold you by the hand and watch over you, And I will appoint you as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations, 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon, And those who dwell in darkness from the prison. 8 "I am the \Lord\, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images. 9 "Behold, the former things have come to pass, Now I declare new things; Before they spring forth I proclaim {them} to you."*

ISA 49:1-7 *Listen to Me, O islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar. The \Lord\ called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me. 2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me, And He has also made Me a select arrow; He has hidden Me in His quiver. 3 And He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory." 4 But I said, "I have toiled in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity; Yet surely the justice {due} to Me is with the \Lord\, And My reward with My God." 5 And now says the \Lord\, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the \Lord\, And My God is My strength), 6 He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth." 7 Thus says the \Lord\, the Redeemer of Israel, {and} its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, "Kings shall see and arise, Princes shall also bow down; Because of the \Lord\ who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You."*

--What other Jewish Messianic claimant has started a world religion of Gentiles?

--On top of that, he is rejected by Israel (49:7), and is cut off at the time predicted (Dan 9:26)

#### For Further Reading:

Barfield, Kenny. *The Prophet Motive: Examining the Reliability of the Biblical Prophets*. Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate, 1995. The most detailed presentation to date of fulfilled prophecy in Scripture as evidence for the truth of Christianity.

Montgomery, John Warwick, ed. *Evidence for Faith: Deciding the God Question*. Dallas, TX: Probe/Word, 1991. A general presentation of Christian evidences which includes several chapters on fulfilled prophecy.

Newman, Robert C., ed. *The Evidence of Prophecy: Fulfilled Prediction as a Testimony to the Truth of Christianity*. Hatfield, PA: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research

Institute, 1988. Detailed discussions of several fulfilled predictions concerning nations of the ancient near east, Israel, and the Messiah.

Payne, J. Barton. *The Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1973. A compendium of all prophetic passages in the Bible, suggesting how and when each was or will be fulfilled.