

Why We Believe the Bible
Fulfilled Prophecy
Deuteronomy 18:17-22

Theme: Bible, Inspiration

Aim: To show that fulfilled prophecy is evidence of the Divine origin of the Bible.

1. A few years back there was a lady named Jean Dixon who was acclaimed as a great prognosticator of future events. Yet, she would issue hundreds of predictions and the vast majority of them failed to come to pass.
2. That stands in direct contrast to Biblical prophecy.
3. We have looked at several lines of evidence as to why we ought to accept the Bible's own claim to be message from God, given by inspiration.
4. One of the most convincing is fulfilled prophecy because we know that no one knows the future.

I. What do we mean by that phrase "fulfilled prophecy?"

A. Word prophecy does not always mean predicting the future.

1. The word prophecy gets its meaning from what a prophet does.
2. The word literally means to speak for or on the behalf of another, as Aaron was Moses' prophet (Exodus 7:1).
3. All that a prophet, like Isaiah or Jeremiah, says is prophecy. But only a small part has to do with future events. But some does.

B. Interestingly enough the Bible itself sets the standard for evaluation of prophets.

1. Deuteronomy 18:17-22.
2. Isaiah challenged the false prophets of his day to meet the standard, Isaiah 41:22.

C. To this reason might add the following qualifications for predictive prophecy. (Taken from: *Rock Solid Faith*, By: Bert Thompson, pg. 223-24.)

1. It must be specific as opposed to nebulous or vague to be free from guess work.
2. There must be sufficient time between the prediction and its supposed fulfillment to again, be free of guess work, or influence by the one making the prediction.
3. The prophecy must be stated in clear understandable terms.
4. The prophecy must not have historical overtones, that is, it must not be based on past or current societal or economic conditions.
5. The fulfillment must be clear.
6. Are there predictions of future events in the Bible, and did they come true?

II. Some examples of fulfilled prophecy from the Bible.

A. At the height of Babylon's power as a world empire, Isaiah foretold its utter destruction.

1. Isaiah 13:17-22.
2. One hundred and fifty years after Isaiah spoke, Babylon was conquered by the Medes and the Persians. It has never been rebuilt!

B. Ezekiel predicted Egypt's fall from her place as one of the great nations of the world.

1. We all marvel at the grandeur that once characterized the Egyptian nation.
2. But no more, Ezekiel 29:13-15. Ezekiel spoke around 600 B.C.

C. When Jericho was destroyed, a prediction was made that it would be costly to rebuild.

1. Joshua 6:26-27.
2. Fulfilled: 1 Kings 16:34.

III. Perhaps most remarkable are the prophecies concerning the Christ, the Messiah.

A. Matthew 2-4 has five prophecies concerning Jesus that are fulfilled.

1. One writer suggests there are over 300 prophecies concerning Jesus.
2. How many are enough to prove the point?

B. But finally consider two passages in Isaiah.

1. Isaiah 7:14. Compare Matthew 1:18-25.
2. Isaiah 53.
3. These words written 700 years before Jesus' birth!

1. Just a few random predictions couched in some kind of code?
2. One of hundreds of predictions thrown out by good guesswork?
3. No! These are from the mind of God as He looked hundreds of years into the future and revealed events no man could have imagined.

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