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Biblical Prophecy II



Part 7 (960623AM)

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Isaiah 41

What is the simplest and yet most profound evidence the Bible offers? Fulfilled Biblical prophecy. What an irrefutable verification reserved to the Judeo-Christian Scriptures alone. Prophecy is the missing element in all other sacred scriptures of the world's religions, It is not to be found in them, by contrast prophecy comprises about one third of the Scriptures!

What Does the Word Prophecy Mean?

When we say PROPHECY we mean detailed, specific descriptions of future events.

- Not a few, hundreds.
- Not close calls, fulfilled to the letter.
- Not historical accounts as they unfolded, but prophecies written centuries, many centuries before they took place.

Because of the undeniable verification of history pre-written by God, may I impress upon your heart that the book you hold in your hands is unlike any other in the universe? And with that truth deeply upon our hearts, in the days ahead, shouldn't we treat it differently, read it diligently, wait before it expectantly, and from it learn to live triumphantly?

Last week we learned about PROPHECIES OF JESUS CHRIST. There are no less than 300 specific prophecies in the Scriptures about our Lord Jesus Christ.

But this week lets look at FIVE EVENTS GOD DIRECTED AND FORETOLD THAT CHANGED THE COURSE OF THE WORLD!

God writes history in advance. To get a frame of reference imagine with me that in 1700, somewhere in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, an unknown religious writer wrote about a future ruler. This ruler:

- Would come to power in Europe
- Would take control of a land called Germany [in 1700 it was called Prussia]
- Would be named Adolph Hitler
- Would conquer the continent
- And would be defeated by the Allied Forces

Now notice the year was 1700 and there was no

- Allied Forces, America was a Colony of Britain
- There was barely a Germany
- and Hitler was not to be born for 200 years!

Now, turn with me to Isaiah 41 to see why this description is so important. Look at another demonstration of the power of God as shown through His Word.

Isaiah 41:21 "Present your case," says the LORD. "Bring forth your strong [reasons,]" says the King of Jacob. (NKJV)

Now look at **Isaiah 40:8** The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." (NKJV)
God has staked His very character on the perfection and permanence of His Word! Look at His character revealed in v. 12-31. So God declared that:

- Because idols are foolish [Isaiah 40:18](#) To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? (NKJV)
- Because God is eternal and powerful [Isaiah 40:8](#) The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." (NKJV)
- Let me show you My power [Isaiah 41:21-23](#) "Present your case," says the LORD. "Bring forth your strong [reasons,]" says the King of Jacob. 22 "Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; Let them show the former things, what they [were,] That we may consider them, And know the latter end of them; Or declare to us things to come. 23 Show the things that are to come hereafter, That we may know that you [are] gods; Yes, do good or do evil, That we may be dismayed and see [it] together. (NKJV)

Declaring the future with precise details is a proof of God and His Divine Power! Now lets examine some of those precise details about the future He has written down for us.

THE REIGN OF CYRUS [written in 740 BC = 181 years before it happened in 559 BC]

This is the prophecy of Five that changed the course of the world, is about a future conqueror named by God two hundred years before His birth! Sitting at a desk in a small and obscure home in ancient walled Jerusalem a young prophet of the God of Israel named Isaiah did just that. Open with me please to [Isaiah 45:1-3](#)

"Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held -- To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut: 2 'I will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron. 3 I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I, the LORD, Who call [you] by your name, [Am] the God of Israel. (NKJV)

These words were inspired by God to Isaiah in about the year 740 BC. What are the specifics? First we will list them and then back up and see what exactly God is saying. Why don't you note them with me:

- A ruler not even born yet is coming. He will subdue nations and open doors for God. He is called by name - Cyrus (He was born in about 589 BC and reigned from 559 to 530 BC) nearly 200 years after these words were written.
- The Lord says he was an anointed servant doing the plan of God. Note that God has some very specific plans for him to carry out [Isaiah 44:28](#) Who says of Cyrus, '[He is] My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid."' (NKJV)
- Wait a minute. Isaiah is looking at the Temple on Moriah even as he writes these words. It is Solomon's and it is there in all its glory. The Babylonians don't destroy it for 154 more years in 586 BC.
- The Lord says:
The city of Jerusalem will be taken,
Temple will be destroyed,
A pagan ruler will command its reconstruction,
And all this at the hand of a God who declares it almost 200 years ahead of time!

So when Isaiah speaks of a future conqueror ordained of God he is demonstrating one of the claims of the Lord to His right to be worshiped. As God He WRITES THE FUTURE!

[Isaiah 41:23](#) Show the things that are to come hereafter, That we may know that you [are] gods; Yes, do good or do evil, That we may be dismayed and see [it] together. (NKJV). Here are the other elements of this prophecy.

1. **BABYLON WILL BE CONQUERED** Now look at [Isaiah 43:14-21](#) Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "For your sake I will send to Babylon, And bring them all down as fugitives -- The Chaldeans, who rejoice in their ships. 15 I [am] the LORD, your Holy One, The Creator of Israel, your King." 16 Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea And a path through the mighty waters, 17 Who brings forth the chariot and horse, The army and the power (They shall lie down together, they shall not rise; They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick): 18 "Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. 19 Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness [And] rivers in the desert. 20 The beast of the field will honor Me, The jackals and the ostriches, Because I give waters in the wilderness [And] rivers in the desert, To give drink to My people, My chosen. 21 This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise. (NKJV)
2. **IDOLS ARE FOOLISH AND IMPOTENT** [Isaiah 44:9-20](#)
3. **GOD ALONE IS MAGNIFICENT AND GLORIOUS AS CREATOR, REDEEMER AND SUSTAINER:** [Isaiah 44:24](#) Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: "I [am] the LORD, who makes all [things,] Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself; (NKJV)
4. **GOD CONFIRMED HIS WORD ABOUT EVENTS NOT YET EVEN HAPPENED** [Isaiah 44:26](#) Who confirms the word of His servant, And performs the counsel of His messengers; Who says to Jerusalem, 'You shall be inhabited,' To the cities of Judah, 'You shall be built,' And I will raise up her waste places; (NKJV) Jerusalem was not even destroyed when God promised her rebuilding!
5. **GOD NAMES THE TOOL THAT WILL DO ALL THIS** (conquer Babylon and rebuild Jerusalem) [Isaiah 44:28](#) Who says of Cyrus, '[He is] My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid."' (NKJV) HIS NAME IS CYRUS!

There are two parts to this story. First the fall of Babylon and second the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its Temple.

1. THE FALL

So, 200

years pass and Babylon sits proud, powerful and impregnable. The walls of the city are 30 stories (300 feet) high. They are 90 feet thick at the bottom and have a chariot road at the top that allowed 2 chariots to pass each other as they traveled around. But as g already said in chapter 13, Babylon will fall. And here is the name of the one who will do it - CYRUS. So, Cyrus is born, he leads the Persians, and on October 29th, 539 BC he enters Babylon, kills Belteshazzar (Daniel 5) and takes the city!

2. THE REBUILDING

Look with me at [Ezra 1:1-4](#) Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word

of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also [put it] in writing, saying, 2 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which [is] in Judah. 3 Who [is] among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which [is] in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (He [is] God), which [is] in Jerusalem. 4 And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which [is] in Jerusalem. (NKJV) Cyrus acknowledges God and decrees the rebuilding project. Wow. God said it in the writings of a prophet who wrote from 740 - 700 BC. Babylon would take Israel. Cyrus would take Babylon. Jerusalem and its Temple would be rebuilt at Cyrus' expense.

Well, 200 years pass and it all happens, just like God said. And that is why he is God, only God could do that.

1. THE DESTRUCTION OF TYRE:
2. THE DOWNFALL OF EGYPT
3. THE DOWNFALL OF BABYLON:
4. THE JUDGMENT UPON JERUSALEM:

Back to [Isaiah 41:17-20](#) "The poor and needy seek water, but [there is] none, Their tongues fail for thirst. I, the LORD, will hear them; [I,] the God of Israel, will not forsake them. 18 I will open rivers in desolate heights, And fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, And the dry land springs of water. 19 I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree, The myrtle and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the cypress tree [and] the pine And the box tree together, 20 That they may see and know, And consider and understand together, That the hand of the LORD has done this, And the Holy One of Israel has created it. (NKJV) Look at Him through Isaiah's eyes. Do you see the One who can be known?"

- **MEET HIM FIRST BY FAITH:** [John 17:3](#) "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (NKJV)
- **FIND HIM ENOUGH EACH MOMENT:** If so then you can find Him to be the ALL SUFFICIENT GOD WHO IS ENOUGH. Listen to [Isaiah 40:26](#) Lift up your eyes on high, And see who has created these [things,] Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, By the greatness of His might And the strength of [His] power; Not one is missing. (NKJV)

-You can trust His ALL SUFFICIENT WORD THAT IS ENOUGH [Isaiah 40:8](#) The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." (NKJV)

- And then wherever you are in the world,
- At whatever stage you are in life,
- At whatever level you are of need spiritually, emotionally or physically

1. Scroggie says that the Gospels total 3,779 verses. The words of Christ total 1,934 of them. Jesus quotes the Old Testament 180x so just under 10% of His recorded words are Old Testament quotes!
2. San Diego Union-Tribune, 11/5/93.
3. MacArthur, John F., The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.
4. Faith for the Family, 11/77, p.29.
5. Focus on Family Citizen, 1/20/92, pp. 13-15.
6. How old is the Universe, USN&WR, 5/20/96, pp.60-61.
7. 11/21/80, pp883-87.
8. 2/78, pp. 19-30.
9. MacArthur, John F., The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.
10. World that Perished, foreword.
11. MacArthur, John F., The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

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