

The Oologah Informer

Oct 8th, 2017

3 Good Reasons to Believe the Bible is from God Part 2 by Eric Lyons & Kyle Butt

REASON #1: PREDICTIVE PROPHECY (part 1)

On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, a horrible tragedy shocked the United States of America when terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Amidst the tragedy, a rumor circulated that Nostradamus, a supposed fortuneteller, had predicted the turn of events. Web sites with information on Nostradamus received thousands, even millions of hits. After all was said and done, the rumored prediction had been fabricated and misunderstood; Nostradamus had not predicted the future. But it was obvious from the public's response that anyone who can accurately predict the future is more than just a little special. The prophet Jeremiah wrote: "Who is he who speaks, and it comes to pass, when the Lord has not commanded it?" (Lamentations 3:37). The prophet's point was clear: no one accurately foretells the future unless God informs him of it. Therefore, if the Bible accurately predicts the future, we can know that it is from God.

The fact is, the Bible contains numerous prophecies that ancient history has shown to be perfectly fulfilled in every detail. Consider a few examples. [NOTE: For many other instances that space restraints will not allow in this article, please consult Apologetics Press's book Behold! The Word of God or visit the "Inspiration of the Bible" section of www.apologeticspress.org.]

The Fall of the City of Tyre

According to history, the Phoenician city of Tyre stood as one of the most ancient and prosperous cities in history. During a visit to the temple of Heracles in Tyre in the fifth century B.C., the historian Herodotus inquired about the age of the temple, to which the inhabitants replied that the temple was as old as "Tyre itself, and that Tyre had already stood for two thousand three hundred years" (Herodotus, 2:44). According to the early 20th-century Hebrew and Greek scholar, Wallace Fleming, in his book The History of Tyre, "As early as 1400 B.C., Tyre was not only a great city but was considered impregnable" (1966, p. 8).

In the early sixth century B.C., however, the prophet Ezekiel mentioned several events that were to occur in Tyre as punishment for the city's arrogance and merciless actions (26:1-14, 19-21). The prophet predicted: (1) Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, would build a siege mound against the city; (2) many nations would come against Tyre; (3) the city would be broken down, scraped like the top of a rock, and the stones, timber, and soil would be thrown in "the

Address
13800 S. 4080 Rd on Hwy
169 South of Oologah
P.O. Box 527 Oologah, OK
74053 (918) 443-2025

www.oologahcofc.org
oologahcofc@oologahcofc.org

facebook.com/oologahchurchofchrist
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Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Time to Come Home (Luke 15:17-19)

PM Sermon

Lessons in Bible History Lesson 5:
Departures from the N.T. pattern

Sunday AM Bible Class:

Paul Prashnik

Wednesday Bible Class:

Proverbs 5:12 – R. Earl

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midst of the water;" (4) the city would become a "place for spreading nets;" and (5) the city would never be rebuilt.

History reveals that everything Ezekiel prophesied about Tyre came to pass.

Nebuchadnezzar "besieged Tyre for thirteen years in the days of Ithobal, their king" (Josephus, 1.21). The king of Babylon severely damaged the mainland as Ezekiel predicted, but the island city remained primarily unaffected.

Regarding the prediction that "many nations" would come against Tyre, in 392 B.C., "Tyre was involved in the war which arose between the Persians and Evagorus of Cyprus" in which the king of Egypt "took Tyre by assault" (Fleming, p. 52). Sixty years later, in 332, Alexander the Great besieged Tyre and crushed it. In fact, Tyre was contested by so many foreign forces that Fleming wrote: "It seemed ever the fate of the Phoenician cities to be between an upper and a nether millstone" (p. 66). Thus, Ezekiel's prophecy about "many nations" remains as a historical reality that cannot be successfully gainsaid.

By 333 B.C., Ezekiel's 250-plus-year-old prophecy that Tyre would be destroyed and its building material cast into the midst of the waters had yet to materialize. But that situation was soon altered. Ancient historian Diodorus Siculus, who lived from approximately 80-20 B.C., wrote extensively of Alexander the Great's dealing with Tyre (see Siculus, 17.40-46). Secular history details Alexander's destruction of Tyre, which coincides precisely with Ezekiel's prophecy concerning what would happen to the city's building materials. As Ezekiel had predicted, the stones, timber, and soil of the mainland city were thrown into the midst of the sea in an unprecedented military maneuver (Fleming, p. 56), which allowed Alexander to create a land bridge upon which his army could come across to defeat the island city of Tyre. For Ezekiel to have accurately "guessed" this situation would be to stretch the law of probability beyond the limits of absurdity.

Ultimately, in A.D. 1291, the Sultan Halil massacred the inhabitants of Tyre and subjected the city to utter ruin. "Houses, factories, temples, everything in the city was consigned to the sword, flame and ruin" (Fleming, p. 122). After this major defeat in 1291, Fleming cites several travel logs in which visitors to the city mention that citizens of the area in 1697 were "only a few poor wretches...subsisting chiefly upon fishing" (p. 124).

Taking these accounts into consideration, it is obvious that many nations continued to come against the island city, that it was destroyed on numerous occasions, and that it became a place for fishing, fulfilling Ezekiel's prediction about the spreading of nets. Furthermore, it is evident that the multiple periods of destruction and rebuilding of the city have long since buried the Phoenician city that came under the condemnation of Ezekiel. The Columbia Encyclopedia, under its entry for Tyre, noted: "The principal ruins of the city today are those of buildings erected by the Crusaders. There are some Greco-Roman remains, but any left by the Phoenicians lie underneath the present town" ("Tyre," 2006).

So accurate were the prophecies made by Ezekiel that skeptics are forced to suggest a later date for his writings. Yet, such a later date cannot be maintained, and the admission of Ezekiel's accuracy stands as irrefutable evidence of the prophet's divine inspiration. With the penetrating gaze that can only be maintained by the Divine, God looked hundreds of years into the future and instructed Ezekiel precisely what to write so that in the centuries following the predictions, the fulfillment of every detail of the prophet's words could be denied by no honest student of history. "When the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the Lord has truly sent" (Jeremiah 28:9).

Continued next week