Glory of Fulfilled Prophecy

August 8, 2010 · PM · https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/2010/glory-of-fulfilled-prophecy/

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Matthew 24:14

Introduction:

A. If you love the creator God of heaven, Jehovah of the Bible, then you will love the fulfillment of prophecy.

B. The fulfillment of prophecy is one of the things that God Himself delights in and boasts about to all hearers.

C. How can you delight in God, if you do not delight in the thing in which He delights … fulfilled prophecy?

D. This past Wednesday night we studied Alexander the Great in light of prophecies by Daniel and Ezekiel.

E. Let us refresh our memories of the important role that fulfilled prophecy has for our faith and confidence.

F. The more you understand and consider the fulfillment of His past prophecies and promises, the more faith and confidence you will have in His future prophecies and promises e.g. second coming, heaven, eternal life, etc.

G. This sermon should result in provoking you to consider and delight in fulfilled prophecy by review and study.

H. The LORD Jehovah calls upon us to be His witnesses, for fulfilled prophecy declares Him alone to be God.

I. In light of the opening text above, are you a witness for Jehovah by knowing and declaring His fulfilled prophecies as you have opportunity (compare Matthew 24:14 … to Isaiah 43:9-12; 44:8-9 … to Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39,41; 13:31 I Cor 15:15)? Does your hope provoke questions (I Pet 3:15)?

J. The JW's, disciples of Charles Taze Russell and Judge Rutherford, who claim to be Jehovah's Witnesses, are truly the greatest deniers of Jehovah for their Legion of failed prophecies and denial of Jehovah in the flesh!

K. Jesus did not declare with great solemnity the promises of Matthew 24:34-35 to prove preservation of the scriptures, as some use them, but rather to stake His integrity and power on the coming prophetic fulfillment.

L. Matthew 21:33-46 and 22:1-7 are not cute stories, but rather powerful parables condemning His generation.

The LORD Jehovah Boasts of His Prophetic Power and Solitary Uniqueness

A. Since foretelling future events is proof of divine power, the LORD God Jehovah of the Bible appeals to men and gods to consider Him as the only true God on the basis of fulfilled prophecy.

B. In the passages that follow, there are more references to fulfilled prophecy than the selected verses.

C. Keep in mind that several passages declare the church as His witnesses of His predictive power, which puts a burden on us to know fulfilled prophecy and to declare it to others when appropriate.
D. Isaiah 41:21-26 mocks idolaters to bring their best evidence to verify their god's prophetic powers!
E. Isaiah 42:8-9 boasts of Jehovah's ability and glory alone in declaring future events before they come.
F. Isaiah 43:8-13 dares Jews and nations to consider the evidence He alone has in predictive power.
G. Isaiah 44:6-8 encourages God's people to faith based on His predictive power against any other god.
H. Isaiah 44:24-28 boasts of God's creative power and predictive power as worthy of our total trust.
I. Isaiah 45:1-7,11-13,18-21 boasts about 150 years before he was born and giving him his success.
J. Isaiah 46:9-11 calls on the Jews to remember how different He is from Babylon's gods by prophecy.
K. Isaiah 47:11-13 dares the Babylonians to gather their wise men to stop Jehovah's promises of evil.
L. Isaiah 48:3-8 boasts of God's purpose in declaring future things to confound faith in any other god.
M. Isaiah 48:12-15 calls the Jews to consider together Jehovah's unique creative and predictive powers.
N. Compare Matthew 24:32-35 and John 13:19 to the above passages for similarity. Jesus is Jehovah!
O. Matthew 16:27-28 is not just a general threat or reference to the distant day of judgment – its fulfillment is proof of the Son of man's integrity and authority.

The LORD Jehovah Has Many Other Prophecies As Well that Exalt Him

A. The LORD Jehovah has many prophecies, but the ones above He directed us to consider well.
B. Exodus 17:14-16 declares His certain ferocity against Amalek for not treating the church properly.
C. Isaiah 14:24-27 describes the thoughts of God about treading the Assyrian Empire under His feet, which were of great comfort and encouragement that He could destroy Babylon in context as well.
D. Isaiah 10:5-19 mocks Sennacherib king of Assyria for his vain thoughts before God destroyed him.

Fulfilled prophecy is the greatest evidence of God's existence and Bible inspiration.

A. Only an omniscient God knows the future with absolute detail and certainty to declare it in advance.
B. Only an omnipotent God can bring to pass what He has purposed and declared, so that He includes creation in some of the passages describing His predictive power (Is 42:5-9; 45:18-21; 48:12-15).
C. Man does not and cannot know the future, even for a day; so it is a proof of inspiration to know it.
D. It is a profane shame that Bible prophecies are generally emphasized for future speculation and entertainment, rather than for present confirmation of divine authority and Bible integrity. This is one of the faith-destroying consequences of futurism and its childish relegation of most prophecies to the end of the world in a spectacular science-fiction-like Star Wars finale.
E. The proof of a prophet of God is fulfilled prophecy (Deut 18:20-22) vs. the Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Harold Camping, and others who have proved themselves liars.

Jehovah desires us to compare Him with all other gods

A. The LORD Jehovah knows with certainty and glory the absolute outcome of any such comparisons.

B. Mohammed is esteemed the Great Prophet of Islam by 1.3 billion Muslims; but He could not and did not prophesy anything, even though that is the role, proof, and work of a prophet in any religion.

C. The leaders of the Mormons are called apostles, but they do not dare prophesy, for they cannot even tell if they will be alive tomorrow, who might stop by for supper, or if it is going to rain.

D. Satan can foretell limited future events e.g. Jeane Dixon and other soothsayers; but he is neither accurate nor consistent, for he is limited to that portion of the future God allows him to see. Most of Jeane Dixon's predictions did not occur, and she is now dead and no longer helped by her serpent.

E. William Miller and the Adventists exposed themselves as frauds by prophesying Jesus Christ's second coming on October 22, 1844. The "Great Disappointment" followed similar false predictions of April 3, 1843; July 7, 1843; and March 21, 1844.

F. Charles Taze Russell and the Witnesses have exposed themselves as frauds by many unfulfilled prophecies. Beginning in 1874 and continuing to the present day, some of their predictions were based on measurements of the Great Pyramid of Gaza. Their manmade religion, based on proven lies, is growing rapidly around the world, showing the proclivity of natural man to lies (John 8:45).

G. Jack Van Impe exposed himself as a fraud by his ridiculous unfulfilled prophecy of America's end on July 4, 1976 and doctrinal changes too numerous to list. His prophetic television program is one more reason for the horrible reputation Christians have before the world for his inane sensationalism.

H. Numerous Bible Fundamentalists, blinded by Jewish fables and a false interpretation of Matthew 24:34, predicted Christ's coming within 40 years of Israel's establishment as a sovereign state in 1948. But 1988 came and went, and the Lord Jesus Christ did not return.

I. Of course, the "day is a thousand years" prediction rule, abused foolishly from II Peter 3:8, was used by some to forecast the Lord's return simultaneous with a projected implosion of all computers on New Year's Day, 2000. Known as Y2K, more was spent on nothing than ever before. But nothing happened at all – nothing!

J. For further entertainment of false predictions, see the following links:
   - http://www.bible.ca/pre-date-setters.htm
   - http://carm.org/jehovahs-witnesses-and-their-many-false-prophecies
   - http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/completelist/0,29569,2072678,00.html

Bible prophecies were sometimes given to reveal the future for man's benefit.

A. God warned Pharaoh of a famine in order to make preparations, which Joseph did (Gen 41:1-36).

B. Daniel warned Nebuchadnezzar of judgment, if he did not repent, which did occur (Dan 4:1-33).

C. Jesus warned His disciples of false Christ's that would arise before Jerusalem's end (Mt 24:23-27).

D. Jesus warned disciples to flee Judea when Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem (Luke 21:20-24).

E. Peter warned the Jews at Pentecost of the same event and its danger to personally avoid (Acts 2:40).

Jehovah precisely defined a prime purpose of prophecy

A. Jesus foretold the time He would be in the grave as a sign to prove His identity, and the Jews used it at His crucifixion, as they did not understood His intent or the perfect truth of it (Matt 12:38-40).

B. Jesus foretold that His gospel, including warnings of Jerusalem's total destruction, would be preached to all the world as a testimony of His authority from God, before the armies he predicted would come and destroy Jerusalem as predicted (Mt 24:14).

C. Remember that the purpose of prophecy is to confirm or reprove us when the event occurs, rather than give us a vehicle for speculation (Isaiah 48:5; John 13:19; 14:29; 16:4).

D. The Futurists have created a blot on Christianity for their wild and fanciful schemes of coming events from obscure passages of the Old Testament and the book of Revelation.

E. William Miller of the Adventists disgraced Christianity with his "Great Disappointment" in 1844, when he had promised the second coming of the Lord to many naïve followers.

F. The speculations about the number of the Beast and the date of Christ's second coming are Legion, with the Russellites (Jehovah's Witnesses) leading the way with the most false predictions of all.

G. A wise Bible student will love the purpose of prophecy to glorify God, and he will learn it and use it for just that end (Is 14:24-27; 41:21-26; 42:8-12; 43:8-13; 44:6-9; 46:5-13; 48:1-8).

Jehovah gave several prophecies that were to prove His divine authority.

A. Jesus foretold His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, so that upon its fulfillment they would be further convinced He was the Messiah of God (John 13:19).

B. Jesus foretold the coming of the Holy Ghost, so that upon its fulfillment they would be further convinced He was the Messiah of God (John 14:29).

C. Jesus foretold the persecution of the disciples, so that upon its fulfillment they would be further convinced He was the Messiah of God (John 16:4).

Consider examples of prophecy fulfilled within the Bible to prove its divine origin.

A. The Bible has two sections – the Old and New Testaments. The O.T. was written over a 1000-year period from 1500 to 400 B.C. The N.T. was written over a 60-year period from 30 to 90 A.D.

1. The Jews were the most methodical record keepers in the world, ever. And they were the most virulent enemies of Jesus of Nazareth, ever. So they would not have allowed any corruption in the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah to facilitate their fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
2. The age of the Old Testament is authenticated by manuscript evidence, historical references, meticulous chronological data, and Jewish testimony that it was written from 1500 to 400 B.C.
3. The age of the New Testament is authenticated by manuscript evidence and external witnesses by commentators, hymn writers, historians, enemies, Roman officials, and other writers.
4. The 500-year gap between the two testaments validates and magnifies the value of O.T. prophecies fulfilled in the N.T.
5. The historical evidence confirming the Old Testament existed well before the events of the New Testament is sufficient, even to skeptics.
6. It is a given fact the Old Testament as we know it existed well before the birth of Jesus Christ, for there are extant manuscripts and other confirming evidence. For this reason, we appreciate the Dead Sea Scrolls.

B. Abraham knew 400 years early of Israel's exodus from Egypt (Gen 15:13-16). Give God the glory!
C. Jacob prophesied on his deathbed Jesus would come from Judah (Gen 49:10). And He surely did!
D. Isaiah foretold 200 years before the event how Cyrus would take the impregnable city of Babylon (Is 45:1). This is one of the great prophecies of the Bible, and used by the God of the Bible several times to promote His identity, and it is the primary theme of Isaiah chapters 41-48.
E. David identified the piercing of Jesus hands and feet in 1000 B.C. (Ps 22:16), which did occur!
F. Micah named Jesus' birthplace over 600 years before His birth (Micah 5:2), though insignificant.
G. Isaiah foretold Jesus' virgin birth over 600 years before His birth (Isaiah 7:14), and this was given as a sign to Israel – proof of God's identify and divine power.
H. Isaiah foretold Jesus being killed with common criminals, which He was (Isaiah 53:12).
I. Zechariah gave the betrayal amount over 500 years before Judas Iscariot conspired (Zec 11:12-13).
J. Daniel prophesied the kingdom of the God of heaven would come in the days of the Roman kings, which it did with the ministry of John the Baptist (Dan 2:44 cp Luke 3:1-3).
K. Prophecies similar to these, especially pertaining to the life, death, and character of Jesus of Nazareth, number in the hundreds at least, and are indisputable.

Consider examples of prophecy fulfilled outside the Bible to prove its divine origin.

A. The Arab's character, history, and location were foretold 2000 BC (Gen 16:12). This single verse of prophecy, viewed objectively in light of history, should be sufficient to establish the divine authority and integrity of the Bible. These people are still fulfilling this prediction made 4000 years ago.
B. Daniel prophesied of Alexander the Great in several specific details over 100 years before he was born (Dan 2:39; 7:6; 8:5-9,21-23; 11:1-4). Skeptics argue that Daniel had to have been written later – after the events – for these prophecies are too clear and accurate for their perverted hearts to accept.
C. How did Daniel know about the iron Roman Empire, even if we give the lying skeptics their late date for Daniel? He predicted the fourth empire, following Greece, would use iron, though Rome did not rule until 31 B.C., after defeating Greece in a naval battle at Actium, in Dan 2:40-45 and 7:7,19.
D. Daniel clearly foretold several of the main characters and of the wars between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic successors to Alexander the Great, including Antiochus Epiphanes, Mark Antony, Cleopatra, and Herod the Great (Daniel 11).
E. Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks of years (490 years) dating from Cyrus' command to rebuild Jerusalem to Messiah the Prince is exquisite in detail.
    1. Daniel's prophecies are so incredible that pagan skeptics have long scratched for every reason they could find to date the writing of Daniel after the events.
    2. But there is plenty of manuscript, linguistic, historical, and corroborating evidence to date Daniel in the fifth century B.C., just as he recorded the dates of his visions.
    3. This prophecy is so specific – timetable, starting event, ending event, and other details – as to deny any rejection.
    4. This prophecy was understood by saints in the New Testament, for the message of John the Baptist and Jesus was "the time is fulfilled," and Simeon waited for the kingdom of God.

5. It is said that Christ-hating scribes wondered why the Messiah had not appeared in the early part of the first century as they had expected.
6. The Dead Sea Scrolls by radiocarbon testing show Daniel older than 165 B.C.
7. The Septuagint shows Daniel existing before its own writing sometime prior to 250 B.C.
8. Josephus believed the book of Daniel was shown to Alexander the Great in 331 B.C.
9. Jewish tradition, the scribes of God's Word, admits the book of Daniel existed in 450 B.C.
10. Ezekiel is accepted as ancient, and it mentions Daniel (Ezek 14:14,20). Give God the glory!
11. Recent archaeological discoveries regarding the use of Imperial Arabic and Persian musical instruments during the Babylonian period have destroyed two very popular criticisms of Daniel's early date for writing.
12. For more on this prophecy and its wonderful fulfillment, see Philip Mauro's Seventy Weeks of Daniel, written in 1921, part one, chapters I-VII.

F. The detailed prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D. was foretold in 450 B.C. (Dan 9:24-27) and explained in considerable detail by Jesus in 30 A.D. (Matt 24:1-51; Mark 13:1-37; and Luke 17:20-37; 19:41-44; 21:5-36; 23:28-31).
    1. Jesus declared that this prophecy of His would be told throughout the world prior to 70 A.D., as a witness to His true identity (Matthew 24:14).
    2. The apostles treated this predicted event as one of the greatest facts of their ministries (Acts 2:40; I Thess 2:14-16; Heb 10:25-31; etc.).
    3. Compared to the unbeliever Josephus's eyewitness account, a most reputable Jewish historian employed by the Romans, the fulfilling events and character of Jerusalem's judgment are sufficient evidence by themselves of the divine inspiration of the Bible.
    4. For more on this remarkable prophecy and its wonderful fulfillment, see Philip Mauro's, Seventy Weeks of Daniel, part two, chapters XII-XVI.

G. The origin of the Popes of Rome following the demise of the Caesars was foretold first in 500 B.C. (Daniel 7), confirmed more specifically in 55 A.D. (II Thess 2), and detailed more carefully in approximately 70 A.D. (Revelation chapters 13 and 17).

H. What about Babylon (Isaiah 13 and 47), Nineveh (Nahum), Egypt (Ezek 29-32), Tyre (Ezek 26-28), and Edom (Ezek 28:20-24)? The Bible provides details about their sins and destructions past chance.

I. The heretical and damnable Catholic doctrines of celibacy and prohibition of meat (fish on Friday, etc.) were foretold about 55 A.D. (I Timothy 4:1-3).

J. The character of modern Christianity is perfectly described in the perilous times of the last days foretold by Paul around 60 A.D., with the information explosion and radio and television charlatan ministers included (II Timothy 3:1-7; 4:1-4).

K. Paul warned Timothy against "science falsely so called" (I Timothy 6:20), yet the rise of higher criticism and evolution – so-called sciences based entirely on naturalistic rationalism against God – would not occur for many centuries.

L. These examples could be further multiplied and have been by other authors.

How to Delight in Jehovah and Be a Witness of His Predictive Power

A. Without knowing fulfilled prophecies, you have little for your faith and little to witness to others.

B. Without knowing history, Bible prophecies have little value for those not living at their fulfillment.

C. Some do not like the burden to know a little world history to understand the Bible, but their resistance is no different than the modern man who refuses to improve his reading for the KJV.

D. Modern science often confirms Scripture, which gives Bible readers great pleasure, though they believed the Bible just as much before they knew the science (Gen 17:12; Amos 5:8; etc., etc.).

E. Bible prophecy may threaten, warn, and instruct a few that are the direct objects of the prophecy.

F. But Bible prophecy mainly proves God's glorious ability to predict and perform His purposes to others, who are not direct objects (Is 14:24-27; 41:21-26; 42:8-12; 43:8-13; 44:6-9; 46-5-13; 48:1-8).

G. The value of prophecy is its fulfillment, which may require history (John 13:19; 14:29; 16:4).

H. There are many Bible prophecies fulfilled within the Bible, but there are many that are not.

I. It is impossible to appreciate Genesis 16:12 without knowing a little about Arabian history.

J. It is impossible to appreciate Isaiah 44-45 without knowing a little about Cyrus the Persian.

K. It is impossible to appreciate Daniel 7:6 and 8:8 without knowing a little of Alexander the Great.

L. Daniel chapters 10-12 are incredibly confusing without knowing the Ptolemy-Seleucid wars.

M. II Thess 2:3-12; I Tim 4:1-6; and much of Revelation are obscure without knowing Catholicism.

N. And the many Bible prophecies about Jewish desolation are lost without learning about 70 AD.

O. Daniel is one of the best books of the Bible for apologetics or the defense of the Christian faith, both for personal faith building and for having a witness to build the faith of others. We reject scorners.

P. Studying prophecy can be a faith building experience and will always lead to delighting in God and glorifying His Son Jesus Christ, Who along with His people is always the object of prophecy.

For Further Study:

1. Sermon Outline: Witness of 70 A.D.
2. Sermon Outline: Making Sense of Daniel.
3. Book: Great Prophecies of the Bible
4. Presentation: Alexander the Great.
5. Sermon Outline: Cult Cheat Sheet