

I remember some time ago talking to a medical doctor who worked at the local hospital. We had a good discussion, and I recall he was sceptical about faith and belief in God. He disagreed with everything I said, and put forward a counter point to all of mine . . . until I started speaking about fulfilled prophecies. He could not argue with what I said, because examples of fulfilled prophecies offer reasons to believe.

Unlike that medical man, there are many who want to know about the future. They turn to all sorts of sources, including mediums, crystal ball readers, fortune tellers, and so on. One such enquirer I know tested clairvoyants and proved to his satisfaction that all the ones he visited were frauds.

One popular prophet some time ago was Nostradamus (1503-1566), who spoke in mystical terms.

His writings were referred to as *quatrains*. The challenge with Nostradamus is that his *quatrains* (4 lines of text) are so vague they are interpreted in any way that readers want.

On similar lines, I recall there was a clairvoyant who tried to predict the numbers of a lottery on a TV show. The point of having the mystic on was to demonstrate that it was impossible to predict the numbers. She was wrong every time.

Instead of turning to popular fortune tellers, mystics, and false prophets, people would do well to consult the Person who definitely knows the future. In the Bible, in Isaiah 46:9-10, we read,

'Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done.'

This reflects the classical understanding of prophecy as telling the future. But the Bible also offers a broader understanding of prophecy. We can see this in 1 Corinthians 14:3, where the person 'who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men'. *Edification* means revealing something about the present and the future. *Exhortation* encourages and urges the readers. And *comfort* reassures our hearts and minds.

The acid test for identifying a true prophet is recorded in Jeremiah 28:9:

'When the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the LORD has truly sent.'

With over 2,000 fulfilled biblical prophecies there is reason to believe. Let us consider a few fulfilled prophecies. For instance, Daniel 2 predicted the rise and fall of world empires, which historians attest to.

In thinking about another prophecy, let us consider Isaiah, who not only predicted the fall of Babylon, 180 years before the event (539 BC), but he also named King Cyrus, who would achieve it. Mighty Babylon, 196 miles square, enclosed by a moat and with a wall reputedly 330 feet high, and 90 feet thick, was said to be indestructible. Yet the Bible declared its doom:

'And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation; nor will the Arabian pitch tents there, nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there.' (Isaiah 13:19-20)

The Bible's description is a well-documented history of the famous citadel. Saddam Hussein tried to rebuild it, but the Gulf War ended his ambitions.

Prophecies about Jesus

Probably the greatest event in Christian history was the birth of Jesus Christ. There are numerous Old Testament prophecies that foretell the birth and life of Christ. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship at Pasadena City College took it one step further. They challenged a class of practical religion, asking:

'What is the statistical probability of just 8 unconnected Old Testament prophecies of the Advent of Jesus Christ being fulfilled in one person?'

The class concluded that the 8 prophecies were either given by inspiration of God or they were written randomly. In the latter case the prophets had just one chance in 10^{17} of getting it right (one in 100,000,000,000,000,000) – meaning it's virtually impossible they could accidentally come true in any one person. This affirms that the Bible accurately predicted the birth of Jesus.

Given that the Bible's prophetic reliability is well documented, there is every reason to believe that remaining prophecies of the end time will also be fulfilled. Key among these are the prophecies of Jesus' Second Coming. Since this event has not yet happened, accepting it is a matter of faith. Hebrews 11:1 tells us:

'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'

So there have to be substance and evidence for true faith. The substance is the reliability of the Bible, and the evidence is fulfilled prophecies.

With around 500 prophecies predicting the return of Jesus Christ to this earth, they are just too many to mention here. A good starter is Matthew 24:3-14. See if you recognise any signs. For a fuller discussion on this key topic please see the resources on back of this tract.

The book of **Revelation** (or the *Apocalypse*) outlines the future of our world. There is no need to fear it.

Watch a video series that takes you step by step from the past into the future, bringing **Hope, Meaning and Purpose.**



For further study of prophecies we recommend our course **Focus on Prophecy.**

It will help you to understand the current **signs of the times:** why Europe can't be united, why there are pandemics, wars and crises.



www.reflectinghope.org

Powered by AWR.

REFLECTING
hope

SEEING INTO THE
FUTURE

