

SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORD



by Bruce Woolard



WONDER 7: FULFILLED PROPHECY

One of the most remarkable factors supporting the authenticity and reliability of the Bible is the wonder of "Fulfilled Prophecy." In this study we will examine the ancient prophecies and their fulfilment.

THE PROMISE

In Genesis 3:15 a promise is made as to the Deliverer who will crush the serpents head. This prediction was fulfilled when Christ died on Calvary and the devils' rejoiced in their victory over the Messiah, the Son of God.

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

The bruising of the heel is an old expression that refers to death. But through His death and resurrection He crushed the head of the serpent and thereby turned the tables on Satan. The fulfilment is recorded in Galatians 4:4. In the original oracle God foretold the age long conflict which would be waged between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. This primitive promise indicates a struggle between the Messiah of Israel, on the one hand, and Satan the adversary of the human soul. It foretells complete victory. Eve most likely misunderstood this promise because according to Genesis 4:1 when Eve gave birth to her first son Cain she said, *"I have gotten a man from Jehovah."* She correctly understood a prediction but misapplied its interpretation. There are some commentators who believe that Eve understood that a son would be born from God who would save the human race. The New American Standard Bible renders Genesis 4:1, *"She said, I have gotten a man child with the help of the Lord."*

EVENT	PROPHECY	FULFILMENT
Born of a Virgin	<i>"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign; Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."</i> Isaiah 7:14	<i>"...She was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph ... kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus."</i> Matthew 1:18,24,25

The western mind thinks of a prophecy and its fulfilment as a final event. The eastern mind, and in particular the Jewish prophets, saw their prophecies as being fulfilled in multiple ways with an ultimate end fulfilment. For example, the promised seed born of a woman was Isaac, the righteous seed born of Sarah from which the Jewish nation would descend. We know Isaac was a fulfilment of the prophecy but not the ultimate fulfilment. Similarly, there have been many anti-Christ's (i.e. Caesar, Napoleon, Hitler, etc.) who have fulfilled the prophecy of the son of perdition as contained in 2 Thessalonians 2, but the ultimate anti-Christ will be the final fulfilment of the man of sin who will deceive the world.

PROPHECY OF A MESSENGER

Malachi 3:1 (425 BC): Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, says the LORD of hosts.

Malachi prophesied of the provision of a messenger to precede the Lord, to preach the good news and prepare the way for his arrival.

FULFILLMENT

Mark 1:2; [30 AD] - As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

Luke 1:76,77 [30 AD] And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.

Luke 7:27,28 (30 AD): This is he, of whom it is written, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you, among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

1. John the Baptist is shown to be the messenger before the Lord predicted by Malachi.
2. John prepared the way for Jesus Christ by calling the attention of the Jews to the need to repent.
3. John is stated to be the greatest of the prophets, but less than the least in the kingdom of heaven: showing that the greatest which man can do is far less than what God can do through man, or what we will be like in our future state (**1 Corinthians 15:22**).

Is there healing in the Atonement?

PROPHECY OF BEARING OUR SICKNESSES

Isaiah 53:4 (712 B C): Surely he has borne our grief, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

In this chapter in Isaiah we see portrayed the unique suffering and humiliation borne humbly by our Lord. Verse four deals with the ministry of the Lord prior to his crucifixion, and relates to the healing ministry of Jesus Christ as one of the signs of His Messiahship.

FULFILLMENT

Matthew 8:16,17(30AD) When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

1. Over 2 years before Jesus went to the cross, this passage in Matthew states that **Isaiah 53:4** was fulfilled during the healing ministry of Jesus.
2. The word "took" means to take it by the hand and lead it away, thus alleviation of suffering is in focus here, not the transfer of sickness to Christ.
3. On the cross, Jesus bore our sins, not our sicknesses (**1 Peter 2:24**). This fact is important as it clearly shows a Christian can be sick yet still in fellowship with God.
4. In **Isaiah 53:5** we are told that "by His stripes we are healed". The word for *healed*, in context, relates to the sewing together of a gaping wound inflicted in ancient battles. The two sides of the wound reflected the separation of God on one side from man on the other. By Christ's death on the cross the alienated sides of the wound are brought together, or reconciled. By Jesus' death we have peace with God (**Romans 5:1**).

NOTE: That the healing of Israel was to sew up the open wounds of rebellion.

See – **Isaiah 1:5-6** fulfilled (**Isaiah 53:5** *"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."*)

PROPHECY OF KINGSHIP

Psalm 45:6,7 (1000 BC) Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.

1. The office of kingship was common in the Middle East from the earliest times: the normal case being of a ruler who held sway over a settled region often centred on a city.
2. Unlike many of the Psalms which were written by the most famous of Jewish kings, David, the Psalm in which this reference occurs was written by the sons of Korah, who were sacred musicians. By the fact that the throne is forever and that His sceptre is one of righteousness, Jesus Christ the Son of God is indicated in this passage. This is confirmed by **Hebrews 1:8,9**.

FULFILLMENT

Hebrews 1:8,9 (Second Advent): But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.

1. As the sovereign of the universe, Jesus Christ always has been king. His characteristic has always been righteous and ever will be.
2. In the Scriptures, Jesus is called David's greater son who will inherit the throne of David, to reign on the earth for 1 000 years during the Millennium. This is the subject of the Davidic Covenant (**2 Samuel 7:8-16**).
3. Only once during His first advent was Jesus acknowledged as King of Israel. This was on His entrance into Jerusalem in the traditional manner of the early Jewish kings, of riding on a donkey (**John 12:13**). This enthusiasm soon evaporated however.
4. The fulfilment of this prophecy will commence physically on the earth at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ (**Revelation 20:1-6**). He will reign from Jerusalem over the whole world; the prince of this world, Satan, having been imprisoned.
5. The characteristics of His reign include:
 - (a) Universal peace (**Isaiah 2:4**)
 - (b) Universal prosperity (**Micah 4:4-7**)
 - (c) Righteousness and justice (**Psalm 72:2-7**)
 - (d) Glorious (**Psalm 72:17-19**)
 - (e) Everlasting (**Daniel 7:13,14**)
 - (f) Uplifter of the downtrodden (**Psalm 72:2-4**)
6. After His 1000 year reign Jesus Christ delivers the kingdom to the Father (1 **Corinthians 15:24**), thus commencing the eternal rule of God (1 **Corinthians 15:28**)

PROPHECY OF NO BROKEN BONES

Exodus 12:46 (1500 BC): In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

Psalm 34:20 (1000 BC): He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken.

FULFILLMENT

John 19:31 - 33,36 [32 AD] The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day (for that Sabbath day was a high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers and broke the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs. For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of Him shall not be broken.

FULFILLMENT..... continued

1. Ever since the Passover lamb ceremony had been instituted some 1500 BC, the children of Israel annually had killed the lamb on the 14th Nisan. They were instructed by Moses, just before leaving Egypt that great care should be taken that none of the bones of the Passover lamb be broken. In the Psalms, the promise that the bones would not be broken was again given.
2. The Passover lambs over the centuries were a picture of the death of Jesus Christ who, unlike the gangsters whose legs were broken to hasten their death by suffocation, died without a bone being broken.
3. It is also of interest that the religious leaders of the Jews who had conspired to murder the King of Glory, could not tolerate the bodies remaining on the crosses over the Sabbath, which shows the workings of the legalistic mind.

PROPHECY OF THE CRY FROM THE CROSS

Psalm 22:1 (1000 BC): My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

FULFILLMENT

Matthew 27:46 (32 AD): And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

1. During the six hours from 9am to 3pm on the day of His crucifixion, seven phrases were offered by the Lord.
2. The above prophecy was fulfilled with the fourth phrase. The cries from the cross were as follows:
 - a) Father forgive them for they know not what they do (**Luke 23:32-34**). Jesus had been treated totally unfairly yet He did not become bitter or resentful. He was about to be judged for these sins as well as all the other sins of the world, and in grace asked God the Father to forgive them. It is of importance to note that at this point He addresses the Father with the title 'Father'.
 - b) His second cry was a statement to the repentant gangster crucified next to him. Today shalt thou be with me in paradise (**Luke 23:43**).
 - c) His third phrase was addressed to Mary His mother – “Woman, behold thy Son.” Then said He to the disciple, Behold thy mother (**John 19:26,27**). Even in His extremity He provided for His family. In this case He handed over protection of Mary to John His disciple, under the concept of the fifth commandment to honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee (**Exodus 20:12**).
 - d) The fourth cry was one of great anguish, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (**Matthew 27:46**). No longer is it 'Father'. Jesus Christ cried with a loud voice, “My God, My God.” God had forsaken Him because He was being judged for the sins of the world at this point (**2 Corinthians 5:21**).
 - e) The fifth phrase completed another requirement of fulfilling prophecy when the Lord said, “I thirst” (**John 19:28**). This action confirmed the prophecy of Psalm 69:21.
 - f) The sixth cry was a shout of triumph: It is finished (**John 19:30**). Salvation was complete: the payment for sin had been made in full. The work that the Lord Jesus Christ had come to accomplish on earth was complete. Satan was a totally defeated foe.
 - g) The final phrase was: “Father into Thy hands I commit My spirit” (**Luke 23:46**). Again, the statement is addressed to God, using the title “Father”, showing that the close and intimate relationship between the Father and the Son had been restored.

ISRAEL

Israel's return to the Holy Land and the re-establishment of the nation in 1948 was the fulfilment of Ezekiel 36:24. Ezekiel 38 and 39 predicts a future war with Russia and her allies attacking Israel in Palestine.

