

EZEKIEL'S PROPHECY ABOUT TYRE

God supposedly gave the following revelation to the prophet Ezekiel. It is alleged to be an example of how God foretold the future.

Ezekiel 26. "Son of man, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha the gate of the peoples is broken, it has swung open to me; I shall be replenished now that she is laid waste', therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you O Tyre [This prediction is made to Tyre as it was then. It was relevant to Tyre as it was then. Why would God tell Tyre hundreds of years before Christ that it will come to a bad end centuries later? Yet religion says that is what God did - it only says that for that generation did not experience the fulfilment of the whole prophecy. The most important thing in interpreting anything is to try and read it as you would if it were written to you - in this case as if you were the inhabitant of Tyre during the time of Ezekiel], and will bring up many nations against you as the sea brings up its waves. [This text gives believers an excuse for arguing that many nations perhaps over many centuries would go against Tyre - if Ezekiel meant that then he was no prophet for same prediction could be made of any city. Why didn't he name at least some of the nations?] They shall destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers; and I will scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock [He says the enemies will demolish much of the city but says he will miraculously do the rest himself - that did not happen. Christians say he meant he would do it through the enemies but why did he switch then from they to I?]. She shall be in the midst of the sea a place for the spreading of nets; for I have spoken, says the Lord God; and she shall become a spoil to the nations; and her daughters on the mainland shall be slain by the sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord. [Why doesn't he say, "She shall be in the midst of the sea a place for the spreading of nets; for I have spoken, says the Lord God; and she shall become a spoil to the nations; Then they will know that I am the Lord. And her daughters on the mainland shall be slain by the sword." This arrangement avoids having a vague prophecy about the daughters being slain being counted as proof that God is speaking. The prophet is predicting something he knows has to happen some time so it cannot count as a prophecy or evidence that God is speaking] For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will bring upon Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, [interestingly Neb invaded just months after the prophecy. Or was the prophecy just written after the event? No wonder it gets that right and everything else wrong!] and with horsemen and a host of many soldiers. He will slay with the sword your daughters on the mainland; he will set up a siege wall against you, and throw up a mound against you, and raise a roof of shields against you. He will direct the shock of his battering rams against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. His horses will be so many that their dust will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of the horsemen and wagons and chariots when he enters your gates as one enters a city that has been breached. With the hoofs of his horses he will trample your streets; he will slay your people with the sword; and your mighty pillars will fall to the ground. They [the they here gives believers an excuse for saying that some other mob would continue the destruction. It is not an excuse for the they means Neb and co. The only reason they are messing around with words is because Neb did not throw the remains of the city into the sea. The they is imagined to mean Alexander the Great and his army who used the rubble to make a causeway] will make a spoil of your riches and a prey of your merchandise; [Ezekiel later admits in the book that they got nothing] they will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses; your stones and your timber and soil they will cast into the midst of the waters [There is no hint here that a causeway is meant. It just means the destruction of a city]. And I will stop the music of your songs, and the sound of your lyres shall be heard no more. I will make you a bare rock; you shall be a place for the spreading of nets; you shall never be rebuilt; for I the Lord have spoken, says the Lord God. [Tyre was rebuilt a number of times and is even better today than it was then]" Revised Standard Version.

But later on in the book, see Ezekiel 29:17-20, the "prophet" admits that his earlier prediction that Nebuchadnezzar would destroy the city of Tyre failed. The same chapter predicts the destruction of Egypt which never happened either.

"In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month on the first day, the word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon drove his army in a hard campaign against Tyre; every head was rubbed bare and every shoulder made raw. Yet he and his army got no reward from the campaign he led against Tyre. Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am going to give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will carry off its wealth. He will loot and plunder the land as pay for his army. I have given him Egypt as a reward for his efforts because he and his army did it for me, declares the Sovereign Lord." [It is horrendous and blasphemous that Christians regard that as a message from God in which he rewards a terrorist leader for looting Tyre and murdering its people! When we read that it should be enough to deny that Ezekiel really was a mouthpiece of God].

Created by freemason.com

The believers say that this agrees with the earlier prediction. Their argument is that just because Nebuchadnezzar got the city does not mean that it was a good thing for him. He wasted a lot of time and men's lives. But they believe no such thing for Neb destroyed a superpower. And what other reward would he have wanted? It was not about gold or anything else. It was about military might. They are trying to distract you from the fact that Ezekiel predicted that Neb would loot Tyre and take its riches and merchandise and here we are told that Neb needs to go to Egypt if he wants such goods for Tyre was a let-down.

Tyre did make a comeback - St Jerome wrote 400 AD that Tyre was "the noblest and most beautiful of the Phoenician cities and an emporium of commerce for almost the whole world" (Porter 1956: 3032). Doesn't sound like a hell hole fit only for the spreading of nets.

McDowell's revolting book, Evidence that Demands a Verdict asserts that this prophecy of Tyre, a prosperous city that was built on an island and also on the coast near the island, was fulfilled long after the book of Ezekiel was written. McDowell claims that Ezekiel predicted that Nebuchadnezzar would lay siege to and invade the city and slay many of the citizens and that Alexander the Great would attack Tyre after and throw the ruins his attack would leave into the sea and destroy Tyre thoroughly forever and ever. It will become a bare rock and fishermen will spread nets there and the debris will be thrown into the water and it will never be rebuilt and never be found again.

First, the Nebuchadnezzar bit could have been written after the event for there is no evidence that the book was written earlier for scholars believe that the book was written by people who respected Ezekiel (Bible Concordance, Ezekiel, Book of, NAB). Secondly, all seaside cities in those days had trouble from other nations at some stage. Thirdly, if Tyre was to be destroyed it was only natural that it would be like a bare rock for it was hard to rebuild when it was on a rocky island. It was a fishing area so there was no need for prophetic ability to see that nets would be spread there. Then we are told that it will never be rebuilt. That is only half true for a town stands in its place today. Fourthly, the prophecy says nothing at all about Alexander.

The fact that the prophecy makes a few predictions anybody could have made for they would have had to happen anyway proves that the prophet was only guessing. Even if he did make some good hits in the other things he was still only guessing and was just lucky.

Ezekiel stated that Tyre would never be found again and then we find references to the town of Tyre in the New Testament! Jesus was there.

The Evidence says that the baring of the rock was not fulfilled until the time of Alexander the Great despite the fact that the prophecy never hints that it meant anybody other than Neb would do it. McDowell is twisting what Ezekiel said to make it fit the facts. The believers say Alexander threw the debris in the water to make a causeway which is supposed to be another thing the prophecy predicts. The prophecy says nothing about that but only mentions the debris. Since the prophet said that the rock the city was on would be bared he had to say the debris would go into the sea so he did not necessarily have to have a causeway in mind. It has been forgotten that Alexander did not leave the rock bare for he built towers and forts on it (page 275, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Vol 1).

Steven Carr has pointed out this lie that the Christians like McDowell tell, which is that Alexander fulfilled the prophecy about the debris of the city part built on the rock being thrown into the sea when he made a causeway of the debris. The prophecy says the garbage thrown into the sea will be made of the walls of the city meaning the metropolis on the rock for it will be made bare after this operation but Alexander used the debris of the mainland city. Obviously he had to for it was easier to transport and move. The mainland is where he would have to work from. Contrary to the prophecy that Tyre would never be rebuilt, Tyre was rebuilt. McDowell answers that this does not refute the prophecy because it was built down the coast inferring it was too far away from the original site that Ezekiel was thinking of. But it's only 200 yards down the coast! (Critique of Josh McDowell's Non-Messianic Prophecies).

Steven Carr informs us that the modern town there of 15,000 people at most shows Ezekiel was wrong to say Tyre would be lost forever. He is right that the town shows that Ezekiel was wrong to predict that Tyre would not be rebuilt. I would add that that amount of people would mean that Tyre is now better than ever for it would have had less people in it than that in Ezekiel's day. What are towns nowadays were cities then.

The Evidence argues that the prophecy that Tyre will be sought but never be found again (v21) really means that Tyre will never again be restored to its former glory, the old Tyre is lost forever (page 279). I wonder. It is argued that the location of the city could not be lost as it was by the sea in a popular spot so the prophecy did not mean that it would be lost forever

or anything like that. But it probably did mean just that when it said about the bare rock and the remains of the city being lost in the sea. When a person says a city is lost they mean that its location cannot be found. The Christian interpretation is not straightforward and cannot be correct. Also, who would want to seek to rebuild Tyre when a lump of it was way out to sea? It would have been too expensive. It is understandable that the prophecy says Tyre will be obliterated even though the opposite happened. So the prophecy means look for by seek not seek to restore. They are twisting the prophecy to make it fit what happened after it was made.

Tyre was a city that was on the rock and on the mainland. The mainland part was only a suburb while the city itself was on the rock and was untouched so Ezekiel was indeed a false prophet for predicting that Neb would get the whole city. The fact that verse 8 says that Neb will slay the daughters of Tyre on the mainland does not refute this. People think that it does for it is saying what will happen on the mainland part of the city and does not say it has only the mainland part in mind.

The Christians will not tell you that Nebuchadnezzar was predicted to trample the streets of Tyre (26:11) meaning the city and since the city was on the rock Ezekiel got it all wrong. Several years later Ezekiel makes God say that Neb will have to attack Egypt for the crusade against Tyre failed for it was impregnable even after several years of siege (29:18 – read page 204-5, Theodore Parker's Discourses). It also proves that Ezekiel was not predicting before the event except where he was guessing. At least he admitted his prophecy about the city was wrong. It is probable that Neb never even captured the part of Tyre on the rock though the prophecy says he will tumble its mighty pillars. However, he did capture the part on the coast. Carr noted how McDowell pretended that the destruction of the mainland city is being described as what Neb will do because the part of Tyre on the mainland for the part on the rock thrived for many centuries after Ezekiel had turned to dust. So he pretends that Alexander would come many years after Neb to fulfil the rest of the prediction.

The fact that only part of the city was destroyed by Neb makes the prophecy a failure for Ezekiel was only guessing for all cities then had parts destroyed at some stage.

Dishonestly, the Christians say that the destruction of the rebuilt Tyre by the Moslems in 1291 AD fulfils the prophecy that says it will be destroyed forever. But verses 11-15 give the impression that Nebuchadnezzar will do this. Christians argue that the they in verse 12 refers to Alexander and Co but that flouts the rules of grammar completely. When we are not told who they is they has to be the gang led by Neb mentioned in the previous verse. This tells us that the prophecy failed. Christians are interpreting the prophecy by the future and that is not on for they are forcing it to fit what happened. In the bit that is supposedly about Alexander and his attack on the city we read that God says the lyre will never be heard there again or their songs. And then we read that Tyre will be a naked lump of rock. The order is very important. This tells us that the site will be desolate forever from the time Nebuchadnezzar will attack it. But Tyre was rebuilt though it was somewhat less powerful and wealthy after the destruction by Alexander (page 276). What we are not told by McDowell is that the city did become great in material goods and leadership after that conflagration (Prophecies: Imaginary and Unfulfilled). So even if you do pretend that it said that Alexander would bare the rock the prophecy was certainly wrong to say the city would be lost forever and never be found.

Ezekiel 12:21-28 presents God as saying that anything Ezekiel predicts in the name of the Lord God will be rapidly fulfilled and the delays in fulfilment are over. Christians however redefine rapidly here as meaning centuries! A cop out! It means rapidly as in soon. Hardly anything this prophet predicted came true that fast and most of his prophecies have not come true yet. So Ezekiel is shown to be false prophet. The revelation in 12 proves that the Christians have no business pretending that the prophecy about Tyre being attacked by Nebuchadnezzar implicitly refers to the later attack by Alexander as well which they only support because the old Neb never did half of what the prophecy said he would do leaving the rest of it for Alexander the Great.

Isaiah 17:1 predicts the everlasting destruction of Damascus. And the Nile drying up is predicted in Isaiah 19:5. These have not happened. So it is certain that because of that Isaiah can by no means be considered to be a true prophet. If the world goes on long enough Damascus will be destroyed and the Nile will dry up one day. False prophets will find it easy to make prophecies that will come true if the events they refer to could be thousands of years ahead. We can take it then that Isaiah meant for Damascus and the Nile to meet their end long before now which would indicate he was a false prophet.

Ezekiel was not a convincing prophet and yet his prophecy is touted by Christians as conclusive and one of the best proofs that God speaks and knows the future.

BOOKS CONSULTED

Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible, John W Haley, Whitaker House, Pennsylvania, undated

Are There Hidden Codes in the Bible? Ralph O Muncaster, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon, 2000
 Attack on the Bible, John R Rice, Sword of the Lord, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 1965
 Bible Dictionary and Concordance, New American Bible, Catholic Edition, CD Stampley Enterprises, Charlotte Enterprises, Inc, North Carolina, 1971
 Encyclopaedia of Bible Difficulties, Gleason W Archer, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982
 Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Vol 1, Alpha, Scripture Press Foundation, Bucks, 1995
 God's Word, Final, Infallible and Forever, Floydd C McElveen, Gospel Truth Ministries, Grand Rapids, 1985
 In Search of Certainty, John Guest, Regal Books, Ventura, California, 1983
 It Ain't Necessarily So, Investigating the Truth of the Biblical Past, Matthew Sturgis, Headline Books, London, 2001
 Jesus Hypotheses, V Messori, St Paul Publications, Slough, 1977
 Science and the Bible, Henry Morris, Moody Press, Bucks, 1988
 Science Speaks, Peter W Stoner, Robert C Newman, Moody Press, Chicago, 1976
 The Bible Code, Michael Drosnin, Orion, London, 2000
 The Case for Jesus the Messiah, John Ankerberg Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon, 1989
 The Hard Sayings of Jesus, FF Bruce, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1983
 The Late Great Planet Earth, Hal Lindsay, Lakeland, London, 1974
 The Signature of God, Grant R Jeffrey, Marshall Pickering, London, 1998
 The Truth Behind the Bible Code, Dr Jeffrey Satinover, Sidgwick & Jackson, London, 1997
 The Truth of Christianity, WH Turton, Wells Gardner, Darton & Co Ltd, London, 1905
 The Unauthorised Version, Robin Lane Fox, Penguin, Middlesex, 1992
 The Virginal Conception and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus, Raymond E Brown, Paulist Press, New York, 1973
 Theodore Parker's Discourses, Theodore Parker, Longmans, Green, Rader and Dyer, London, 1876
 Whatever Happened to Heaven, Dave Hunt, Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon, 1988

Back to top

THE WEB

www.awitness.org/essays/levjer.html, A Levite Scribe Pretends to be Jeremiah
www.geocities.com/Nashville/Opry/2092/False.html, Was Jesus Christ a False Prophet?
www.awitness.org/lostmess/fprophet.html, False Prophecy in the Prophets of the Bible
www.hotcc.com/users/shagbark/daniel.html, Kyle Williams, Daniel is False Prophecy
<http://cs.anu.edu.au/~bdm/dilugim/secrets.html>, Secrets of the Bible Code Invented, Brendan McKay
www.infidels.org/library/modern/richard_carrier/indef/4d.html, When is a Prophecy Miraculous? Richard Carrier
www.mindspring.com/~bab5/BIB/lessons.htm What the Heck is a Jesus Code? This tells us that the Bible Code has a lot of phrases of Satan, His Name is Jesus all through Isaiah 53.
www.infidels.org/library/magazines/tsr/1995/3/3proph95.html
 All Prophets Were False! Stephen Van Eck
www.skepticsannotatedbible.com/prophecy.html
 False Prophecies, Broken Promises, and Misquotes in the Bible
www.infidels.org/library/modern/steven_carr/non-messianic.html, Steven Carr, Critique of Josh McDowell's Non-Messianic Prophecies This Site cannot be overly recommended. It is superb.