

WHAT IS PROPHECY NEEDED FOR?

TOXIC SIDE OF PROPHETS AND PROPHECY

The Bible speaks of Jesus and Paul consciously fulfilling predictions. They took steps to make them happen. It is a sign of cheating when somebody fulfils a prophecy recorded after the event or when the fulfilment may be fiction.

Deliberately fulfilling prophecy is a bad thing. The trouble with this approach is that you end up thinking, "Okay nuclear war is predicted so I can make it happen. It is permitted then. It is not about hurting people but accepting the future." You have to permit a person to think that way.

Think of Noah who was told that the flood was going to kill everybody on earth unless he built an ark to keep a few designated people on. That meant he was refusing to save as many as he could. The privileged people were Noah's own relations. People equally good were left to drown. Better people were left to drown. If we are to believe that everybody was fit only for drowning but this few then clearly God must be a Calvinist God who sets people up to be good so its not just their free will. Liberal Christians and sometimes traditional ones lie that the Noahic flood was not meant to be understood as global. God is not going to promise never to kill the human race again by flooding unless it means by a worldwide flood. People have always drowned in floods. The text is clear that he made that promise.

An evil person can use prophecy of destruction to get people to think its fate.

THE ROLE OF PROPHECY

The book, Are there Hidden Codes in the Bible?, gives a strange answer to how we test for God having spoken. Miracles are rejected as a test for they can be faked by the Devil and the Bible says as much in some books and says the opposite in others. This eliminates the resurrection of Jesus which Jesus presented as his evidence for his claims. God says in Deuteronomy 18 and Isaiah 41:22, 23 (it says the pagan gods must prove they are gods by telling the future though Isaiah gave no impressive prophecies written before the events himself!) that the test is prophecy. Prophecy is foretelling the future with full accuracy by the power of God who alone knows what is yet to come, the book argues that prophecy alone is of any use. The fact that there is so much nonsense and repetition in the Bible where there could have been original prophecy and where there should have been for example in the Books of Chronicles proves that the Bible can't keep up to its own standard of testing. The Devil could make a prophecy without seeing the future and then do miracles to rig events so that the prophecy comes true. It comes true not because it was foreseen but because the Devil pulled some strings. So prophecy is a useless proof as well. The book says that there is no evidence that the Devil can see the future and that if he could gambling would not exist. The Bible does not say a lot of things and it simply does not say that he can't see the future. The Devil could predict the future sometimes by observing the present so he can make a guess that is guaranteed to be right. And the Devil would not want to eradicate gambling.

The Torah in Deuteronomy 18 claims that if a prophet predicts lots of things that come true and one thing that doesn't then God is only trying us out and the prophet is a false prophet and should not be listened to. This shows that a man can only be listened to if his predictions all come true and there is another condition that we will come to in a moment. We are not allowed to pay him any attention when that happens even in regard to the things that did come to pass (page 269, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Vol 1). It never occurred to Moses when he revealed Deuteronomy 18 that a prophet like him who never predicts the future has less right to be believed than one who does and is right a lot of the time. Yet he decreed with full bigotry in the name of God that any prophet contradicting him was a phoney (Deuteronomy 13). So Moses was to be the standard for future prophets. If Jesus really did away with the Law as most Christians believe then he did away with the standard by which he had to be measured and could not have been a real prophet. Jeremiah 23 gives out about false prophets as does Ezekiel 12-14.

Deuteronomy 13 warns that if a man comes and miraculously predicts the future perfectly and then says to the people that he would like them to adore other gods that man is a false prophet and to be slaughtered. It specifies that he is not to be listened to at all for God is only trying us out through him to see if we will remain faithful. This denies that miracles are evidence for the true faith. It means that a miracle should be dismissed just because it does not fit what Moses or the Law of Moses said. This raises the question why him and not some other prophet? This attitude is the very stuff out of which sectarian bitterness is born. The Christians say that Jesus was the son of God for he was prophesied in the Jewish Bible or the Old Testament while that same book says that prophecy alone proves nothing.

There is no evidence whatsoever for the existence of Moses at all. How can we depend on the Torah as if it were the word of God when the man who revealed it may have been a myth? When Jesus based his own work on the work of Moses and

treated Moses as his own doctrinal bedrock and the man whose teachings he had to fit in with in order to get credentials as a prophet of God it shows that he was a false prophet. When the standard for a prophet has to be perfect which is only natural if God comes first as both the Torah and the Gospels teach it follows that Jesus fell below his own standard. He was a fake and he must have known it.

One wonders why God chose to give his revelation through Hebrew and the Jews when the Hebrew tongue muddles or gives no clear distinction between the present and the future? Robin Lane Fox gives the example of “the Lord punishes” which might be taken to be, “the Lord will punish”. With that double-meaning it is no surprise if translators or even copyists make prophecy where there was no prophecy (page 319, *The Unauthorized Version*).

Often when a prophet fails and predicts something that never comes to pass his supporters say that he was just making a conditional prediction. But God can promise to do something bad to you if you won't obey him without looking into the future and without being specific. But he cannot tell you that if you do not go to Mass next Sunday you will lose your car for that is specific and is really a prophecy. If he promised to do that without looking into the future and influencing the future himself he would be guilty of promising something that might not fit into his plan. It might lead to a sequence of events that would produce the most evil so he would be evil for not keeping the promise and for not having made it responsibly in the first place. So all specific prophecies are NOT conditional. So anybody who makes vague prophecies is a false prophet and fails the standard set in Deuteronomy 18 as does the person who says his prophecies will be fulfilled but not necessarily soon or who blames his errors on prophecies being conditional. The excuse of prophecies being about the far distant future or being conditional gives a cover for a false prophet so if Deuteronomy 18 is to retain its integrity the excuses have to be dismissed.

An honest prophet would say if his prophecy was conditional. Anybody could be a convincing prophet if he could make predictions and disguise the failed ones as conditional.

All conservative Christians hate people saying that the book of Daniel was written after the prophecies it makes and that the gospel of Luke was written after the destruction of Jerusalem which it forecasts and accuse them of being biased against miracles and not really caring about history (eg Turton, *The Truth of Christianity*, page 127). But the charge would only be justified if these people disregarded the overwhelming evidence that the books were written before the event – evidence which does not exist. When there is a chance that a reported miracle is not real it should not be believed in for extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof.

Jeremiah predicted 70 years would pass when salvation from sin would come to Israel. Then God's saving plan will all be fulfilled. This did not happen.

So later the angel Gabriel appears to Daniel to explain this mistake. Read the book of Daniel. In an outlandish rationalisation – reliable angel that to announce the coming of Jesus! – he tells Daniel 70 years is a metaphor for seventy weeks of years or 490 years. Even worse is how there are subdivisions that Jeremiah never imagined such as seven weeks then sixty-two weeks and finally one week.

He comes up then with the number 483.

So we are told a decree is what we have to count these years from and predictably we are not told what decree the angel is thinking about.

It is argued by Christians that the decree to rebuild in the book of Ezra starts off the 483 years predicted by the angel in Daniel takes you to 26 AD. As there is no year zero you have to add on a year which leaves you with 27AD which is regarded as a plausible date for the start of the ministry of Jesus. One wonders if that was why the gospel writers when they invented their story placed it in that time period. It is a mistake but could still be a prompt.

The problem with Ezra is there is more than one decree. There are three.

Ezra 1:1-4 - 537 BC. This is not the right one for Cyrus did not command rebuilding the Temple and the City.

Ezra 6:1-12 - 518 BC – just a repeat of the one mentioned.

Ezra 7:11-28 458 BC - Artaxerxes commands rebuilding. This is the best candidate.

Nehemiah 1 is no good for it does not say a decree was issued but seems to refer to permissions at the very least. Daniel would not have been thinking of something so obtuse.

We end up with a date that is no good to Christians. 24 AD. It could however fit one of Josephus' messiahs who were active

in that time so it would amount to an elimination of Jesus' candidacy for Messiah or Son of God.

The stress on proving that Jesus was predicted by prophets that Christians make shows that Christianity is not as interested in morality as it is in setting up a religious divide between itself which it regards as the truth and other religions and non-religions. That is revolting. The Sermon on the Mount should be able to stand on its own two feet without supernatural wonders.

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