

WHY WE BELIEVE: The Bible *Isaiah 46:9–10; Jer. 50-51*

Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecies

1. **It was a clear Tuesday Sept 11, 2001, when Muslim terrorists hijacked commercial airplanes and flew them into the twin towers of World Trade Center in New York**
 - a. The Nation was in shock over the senseless violence.
 - b. But amid the tragedy of 9/11 there was one online search term that exceeded all others.
 - c. Not Osama Bin Laden, Mohammad Atta, or Saddam Hussien—but the name Nostradamus
 - d. Websites with information on Nostradamus received millions of hits because a rumor went viral that a medieval mystic from the 1500's had prophesied of the 9/11 attack.
 - e. In the End it was realized the rumor was false—Nostradamus had NOT predicted the future
 - f. But His writings are so vague that they can fit any number of different events in history:
[EX: “A power will rise in the east...”]
 - g. But it was obvious from the viral response that if someone had predicted the Future—it would be evidence of special super-natural inspiration!¹
 2. **Predictive Fulfilled Prophecy is one of the most amazing evidences of the Bible.**
 - a. It is what makes the Bible totally unique... of Divine, not human origin.
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I. FULFILLED PROPHECY

A. WHAT IS FULFILLED PROPHECY?

1. **If the Bible is the word of God in God's own words...
then we would expect Him to reveal things no one else would know.**
 - a) The Bible says: *“that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years,
and a thousand years as one day.” (2 Peter 3:8)*
2. **God is the Creator of Time and Space—so He is outside time and space...
God knows and declares the End from the Beginning.**
 - a) This makes the Bible totally unique above all other writing in Human History
3. **Over 2,700 times the Bible writers declared their writings were given by
inspiration of God... That is of Divine, not Human Origin.**
 - a) But the Bible doesn't just claim to be inspired—it proves it over and over
 - b) 27% of the Bible contains what was predictive prophecy at the time it was written

B. WHAT IS THE REASON FOR FULFILLED PROPHECY?

1. **To Show it is From God (Isa. 46:9-10)**
2. **To Show it is NOT From Idols (Isaiah 48:3–5)**
3. **To Show it is NOT from men (Isaiah 48:6–7)**
4. **To Show it is NOT by random chance, but for judgement (Isaiah 48:9–11)**
5. **To Show the Bible is the Word of God and can be trusted and believed.**
6. **To Show that God keeps His promises—and no one can stop His plans**

¹ Reasons to Believe, Eric Lyons & Kyle Butt, Apologetics Press, p.31

II. PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON THE GREAT

A. BABYLON THE GREAT

1. **Babylon was considered the Greatest City of Ancient Times...**

- a) **Herodotus** (484-425 bc), known as the father of ancient history visited Babylon:
“in magnificence there is no other city that approaches to it” (Histories I.178).

2. **The Construction of Babylon was Massive...²**

- The city was 196 Square Miles in size.
- Walls surrounding the city were 14 miles long in all directions.
- It's walls were 300 feet high (the height of a 30 story building).
- Walls were 87 feet wide (enough for 8 horse drawn chariots side by side along top).
- The Euphrates River also Surrounded the city as a Moat 260 ft wide...
- There were 100 gates of solid brass
- There were 250 watch towers that stood 100 feet higher than the 300 ft walls.
- The Famous Ishtar Gate was discovered and reassembled from the actual bricks found at it's ruins in the Pergamum museum in Berlin [image]
- The Euphrates River also Flowed Under the City Walls, Through the City
- Within it's Massive Walls were 2 of the 7 wonders of the world...

1—**Hanging Gardens of Babylon** Nebuchadnezzar built for his wife

2—The Great **Temple-Tower Ziggurat** dedicated for pagan idol worship

3. **Babylon was even described by the Prophets...**

- a) As the “glory of the kingdoms” (Isaiah 13:19)
b) the “golden city” & “lady of the kingdoms” (Isaiah 14:4; 47:5)
c) and the “praise of the whole earth” (Jeremiah 51:41)

B. BABYLON USED BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

1. **Israel & Judah had fallen away from God into idolatry (Jeremiah 25:1-7)**

2. **So God used Babylon to bring judgement on Judah**

- a) To purify and cleanse Israel from her immorality and idol worship (**Jer. 25:8-11**)

3. **But Then Babylon Would Also Be Punished (Jer. 25:12-14)**

for her idolatry and pride (Jer 50:17–18; 23-24; Is. 47:5–10)

- a) Babylon was not only a commercial center, but a religion one as well.
b) Babylon had over 1,000 temples and altars to idols like Marduk and goddess Ishtar

4. **Anytime a Nation or people become arrogant and turn to Idolatry, their days are numbered. Pride goes before the fall.**

III. PROPHECY 1: BABYLON TO BE TAKEN

A. PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON

1. **THE PROPHECY FROM ISAIAH (Isaiah 44:27-28; 45:1-7)**

- God Not Only Named The Invading Force—He Named **Cyrus** by name

² Josh McDowell, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, p.316, published 1972

- And He Declared It 150 years before Cyrus was born!
- That God would break the gates and empower Cyrus to become King
- That Cyrus would let God's people return to Jerusalem and rebuild temple

2. PROPHECY FROM JEREMIAH (51:11; 50:38; 51:36-39; 57)

- City would be taken by the "kings of the Medes" (Jer 51:11)
- "A drought" would be upon her waters (50:38)
- God would "dry up" her sea (51:36)
- Her guards would be "drunken" and "sleep a perpetual sleep" (51:39, 57)

B. FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECY

1. In 539 B.C. Cyrus Came Against the City of Babylon

a) Greek historian Xenophon recorded Cyrus' words "I am unable to see how any enemy can take walls of such strength and height by assault."

- (1) The Fortifications, Walls, Moat, all prevented a frontal attack
- (2) AND the Babylonian army would not come out of the city
- (3) AND the city had **20 years provisions** to withstand a siege...

b) Cyrus Devised an Ingenious Plan...

- (1) Seeing the Euphrates River run under the wall through the city, Herodotus recorded that Cyrus kept soldiers stationed near the city...
- (2) then had the rest of his army partially divert the river into a lake basin up stream
- (3) While the Inhabitants of Babylon were have a Drunken Feast Into the Night, Cyrus's army slipped under the walls of the city and overthrew Babylon before anyone knew their was an attack!

2. Remember the Details of the Prophecy (Isaiah 44:27-28; Jer. 51:39, 57)

C. CONFIRMED BY HISTORICAL RECORD

1. Confirmed by Ancient Historical Records:

- a) **Xenophon** said that "there was a festival in Babylon, in which all the Babylonians drank and reveled the whole night" (Cyropaedia VII.5.15).
- b) **Herodotus** recorded how Cyrus diverted the Euphrates to a dry lake basin and slipped under the walls into the city...
- c) And that the citizens of the central section of the city did not know that Babylon had fallen for quite a while because "they were engaged in a festival, continued dancing and reveling until they learnt the capture" (Ibid., I.191).
- d) **CYLINDER OF NABONIDUS:** reveals that Belshazzar was left to rule as king in Babylon while his father Nabonidus was away traveling.
- e) **BABYLONIAN CHRONICLES TABLETS:** Record the fall of Babylon by Cyrus the Persian and his general Darius the Mede.

2. Daniel the Prophet was in Babylon the Night it Fell! (Daniel 5:29-30 > 6:28)

- a) Isaiah named Cyrus by prophesy 150 years before he was born!
That he would dry up rivers! And Decree the Temple in Jerusalem to be Rebuilt
- b) Jeremiah said all of Babylon's princes and rulers and guards would be drunk and sleep a perpetual sleep (51:39)

IV. PROPHECY 2: BABYLON TO BE DESTROYED

A. PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON

1. PROPHECY FROM ISAIAH (Isaiah 13:17-22; 14:23; 25:12)

- Babylon would become desolate ruins like Sodom and Gomorrah
- It would be perpetually uninhabited
- The Arabians would not pitch a tent there or graze sheep there
- Wild beasts and animals would dwell in the palaces and houses.
- The city walls would be cast to the ground and become dust.

2. PROPHECY FROM JEREMIAH (50:12-13; 51:25-26; 51:36-37, 42)

- Babylon would become a dry land and desert
- It would be desolate and uninhabited
- The walls would be broken down and her stones not reused
- Her great mountain Ziggurat would be burnt
- Her once fertile valley would become dry and parched

3. Babylon would be Destroyed, Desolate and not be Rebuilt

B. FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECY

1. In Time the City Rebelled Against it's Rulers...

- a) Darius Hystaspes (Darius I, 521–486) Destroyed the City walls the Gates
- b) Later, Xerxes (485-465) Destroyed the City Even More

2. In the Meantime, the Euphrates River altered it's course...

- a) causing the moat to become a marsh While the river eventually dried up
- b) A Drought caused the little remaining water to become saline...
- c) The eroding bricks leached into the water killing the soil making it sterile

3. Alexander the Great made plans to rebuild Babylon as his capital city

- a) But he died the night he announced his grand plan to rebuild Babylon.³

4. Eventually the city was abandoned and crumbled to the sands of time.

- a) The ruins of this ancient city became so desolate that it was lost to time
- b) It wasn't discovered by Archeologists until the 1800's
- c) It was Over run by wild animals
- d) Nomadic Arab Herdsman avoided the ruins because of superstition!
- e) In 1899, Archeologist Robert Koldeway said that as he gazed over the ruins, he could only be reminded of (Jeremiah 50:39)

5. Saddam Hussein Declared He Would Rebuild the Ancient City

- a) He began to clear out the rubble and debris to rebuild the walls
- b) But He was Deposed by the U.S. Military - and found guilty of crimes against the Iraq people, was sentenced to death.
- c) Today It is Still Uninhabited even though Saddam had begun rebuilding.

6. Some Prophecies were not immediately fulfilled... All were totally fulfilled!

- a) "Though the mills of God's judgement grind slow, they grind exceedingly fine"

³ A.O. Schnabel, Has God Spoken? 5th Edition, p.84

C. MATHEMATICAL IMPROBABILITY

- 1. A Professor of Mathematics ran the numbers on Destruction of Babylon**
 - a) The Mathematical Probability of 7 prophecies of the destruction of Babylon to be fulfilled almost 2 centuries after they had been written: 1 in 5×10 to the 9th power.⁴
- 2. But if you add the first set of prophecies on the fall of Babylon to Cyrus**
 - a) Then you would easily have to double that statistical probability!
- 3. Add to that the fact that Alexander the Great and Saddam Hussein both tried to rebuild Babylon and were defeated... astronomical odds!**

D. A REFLECTION FROM THE RUINS

- 1. In 1966 an archeologist wrote to his wife from the ruins of Babylon...**
 - a) "This evening I made my usual pilgrimage to the mound covering the ancient temple tower... The large network of canals, which in ancient times distributed the waters of the Euphrates over all this land, is now represented by a series of small mounds of dirt, running in all directions. Even the Euphrates has abandoned this land by changing it's course..."
 - b) A Dead city! I have visited Pompeii and Ostia, and I have taken walks along the empty corridors of the Palatine. But those cities are not dead: they are only temporarily abandoned. The hum of life is still heard, and life blooms all around.
 - c) Here only is real death. Not a column or an arch still stands to demonstrate the permanency of human work. Everything has crumbled to dust... Nothing breaks the deathly silence.
 - d) But a certain fascination holds me here. I should like to find a reason for all this desolation. Why should a flourishing city, the seat of an empire, have completely disappeared? Is it the fulfillment of a prophetic curse that changed the superb temple into a den of jackals? Did the actions of the people who lived here have anything to do with this, or it is the fatal destiny of mankind that all it's civilizations must crumble when they reach their peak? And what are we doing here, trying to wrest from the past it's secrets, when probably we ourselves and our own achievements may become an object of search for peoples to come?⁵

- 2. The Judgement on Babylon is a lesson for us (Revelation 18:1-5; 21-24)**

CONCLUSION:

- 1. 2 Peter 3:3-4, 8-9 *"with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."* (2 Peter 3:8)**
- 2. What would it profit a person to gain the whole world but lose their very soul?**

Bill Turner 8/2026

⁴ Josh McDowell, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, p.319, published 1972

⁵ Edward Chiera, They Wrote on Clay: The Babylonian Tablets Speak Today, Univ. Chicago Press