

Re-Writing History

INTRODUCTION

- A. Dr. Charles C. Ryrie has pointed out that, by the law of chance, it would require two hundred billion earths, populated with four billion people each, to come up with one person who could achieve one hundred accurate prophecies without any errors in sequence.
- B. The Bible contains many prophecies which have come to pass.
- C. The Bible uses prophecy as a test of its truthfulness.
 - 1. If a prophet prophesies and his prophecy does not come to pass, the Hebrews knew he was not from God (Deut. 18:20-22).
 - 2. In Isaiah, God challenged the pagan gods to tell what would come in the future (Is. 41:21-24). The implication is that God can accurately describe the future.
- D. Let's examine some prophecies and their occurrence in history.

PROPHECY AGAINST MEMPHIS

- A. Ezekiel prophesied that God would destroy the idols in Memphis (Ez. 30:13).
- B. The prophecy's fulfillment--
 - 1. This prophecy was not fulfilled in the time of Jesus.
 - 2. However, in the 7th century AD, Muslims swept through the Middle East.
 - 3. They settled at an encampment just outside of Memphis.
 - a. This settlement became the city of Cairo.
 - b. Many families left their homes in Memphis and moved to Cairo.
 - 4. The people of Memphis tore down their altars to build Cairo, exactly as God had said.

PROPHECY AGAINST THEBES

- A. Ezekiel prophesied that No would be cut off (Ez. 30:14-16)—No is ancient Thebes.
- B. The prophecy's fulfillment--
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar and Cambyses both captured and burned the city, but the city was rebuilt.
 - 2. In 92 BC, Thebes withstood a three-year attack before the city was sacked and burned.
 - 3. The city recovered, and was ultimately destroyed by Cornelius Gallus during the reign of Augustus.
 - 4. Thebes never regained its status as a city, but a few villages do dot the area.

PROPHECY AGAINST TYRE

- A. Ezekiel prophesied against Tyre (Ez. 26:3-14).
- B. The prophecy's fulfillment--
 - 1. At the time of Ezekiel, Tyre was the greatest maritime city in the Mediterranean.
 - 2. Nebuchadnezzar took the mainland city in 573 BC after a thirteen-year siege; the city relocated on a nearby island.
 - 3. In 332 BC, Alexander the Great attacked Tyre on his way to Egypt.
 - 4. Alexander reached the new city by making a bridge with the ruins of the old city.
 - 5. Alexander attacked the city, but the city recovered.
 - 6. During the Crusades, the island city was fought over quite a bit.
 - 7. In AD 1291 the city was completely destroyed by the Muslims.
 - 8. In the late 1700's a small fishing village began on the island; today fishermen spread their nets to dry on the rocks there.

PROPHECY AGAINST SIDON

- A. Ezekiel prophesied against Sidon (Ez. 28:22-23).
- B. The prophecy's fulfillment--
 - 1. Sidon has been attacked and fought over repeatedly.
 - 2. The city rebuilt itself after each attack--Notice there is not mention of the city's being abandoned.

PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON

- A. There are two prophecies against Babylon--
 - 1. Isaiah prophesied against Babylon (Is. 13:19-22).
 - 2. Jeremiah also prophesied against Babylon (Jer. 51:26).
- B. The prophecies' fulfillment--
 - 1. When these prophecies were made (750-550 BC), Babylon was the largest city in the East.
 - 2. The city was involved in many struggles which took the city's strength.
 - 3. The city is abandoned today.
 - a. For superstitious reasons, Arabs do not live in the ruins.
 - b. However, desert animals do live in the ruins.
 - c. Nationals who vandalize the sight only take bricks; they burn the stones they find for lime.
 - d. The soil is so poor that there isn't enough grass to graze sheep.

PROPHECY AGAINST NINEVEH

- A. Zephaniah prophesied against Nineveh (Zeph. 2:13-15).
- B. In 612 BC, the combined forces of the Babylonians and the Medes came against Nineveh and completely destroyed the city.

PROPHECY CONCERNING THE GREEK EMPIRE

- A. Daniel prophesied concerning the Greek Empire (Dan. 8:1-14).
- B. The prophecy's fulfillment--
 - 1. The two-horned ram represented the kingdoms of the Medes and Persians; the male goat represented the Greek empire.
 - 2. Cyrus pushed his conquest westward to the Aegean Sea and northward toward Egypt.
 - a. The Persian empire extended from Ethiopia to India.
 - b. This empire controlled 127 provinces.
 - 3. The goat represented the Greek kingdom, and the horn represented Alexander the Great.
 - a. Alexander defeated the army of Darius the Mede (8:7).
 - b. Alexander died at age 33 (8:8).
 - c. His kingdom was divided into four segments (8:8).
 - 4. A "little horn" would rise which would be a vicious ruler.
 - a. This horn would exalt himself and the daily sacrifices would be taken away and the temple would be desecrated (8:11).
 - b. Antiochus Epiphanes invaded Egypt in the south, Persia in the east, and trampled Palestine in between his conquests.
 - c. Antiochus totally desecrated the temple.
 - 1) He placed a statue of Zeus in the Holy of Holies.
 - 2) He offered swine on the altar.
 - 5. This desecration would last 2,300 days.
 - a. In 167 BC the Maccabees declared war on Antiochus--they purged Jerusalem of paganism and restored the temple.

- b. The temple was rededicated on Dec. 25, 167.
 - 1) If one counts back 2300 days, he arrives at Aug. 5, 171.
 - 2) In 171 a series of aggression began against the Jews.

CONCLUSION

- A. God's word contains many accurate prophecies which came to pass.
- B. One prophecy remains unfulfilled, the Second Coming.
 - 1. We have the prophecy (1 Thess. 1:7-9).
 - 2. Just as the others, this prophecy will occur.
 - 3. Will you be ready?