

God Is!

(Source: A. O. Schnabel, "Has God Spoken," p. 70-87)

Isaiah 44:6-8

Introduction: In our scripture reading from Isa. 44:6-8, God declares to the Israelites that there is no other God than He. God states that He can prove His existence by "*the things that are coming and shall come.*" In other words, God can prove His existence through prophecy. In fact, God challenged those who were foolishly caught up in idolatry to prove the existence of their gods by the use of prophecy (Isa. 41:22-23).

Peter tells us that all prophecies are from God (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

Therefore, the fulfillment of a prophecy is proof that God IS!

We will look at the prophecies concerning the historical cities of Samaria, Edom, Gaza, Ashkelon, Babylon and Tyre as proof that God IS.

I. Samaria

A. Prophecy circa 750 B.C. (Micah 1:6).

B. In 1265 A.D. Moslems defeated Samaria and totally destroyed it. It has never been rebuilt.

C. In 1960 the Israeli government passed a law requiring that all land must produce a profit for taxes or the owner must give it up. Those who owned any part of the ancient site of Samaria cleared much of the city's ruins and converted it to agricultural land. In so doing, they dug up the old building foundations and roadways piling them up in heaps or pouring them down into the valleys.

D. Today grapevines and olive trees grow where Samaria once stood.

II. Cities of Edom

A. Prophecy circa 600 B. C. (Jer. 49:13, 17).

B. Prophecy circa 500 B.C. (Ezek. 25:13; 35: 3-9).

C. In 300 A.D. the major trade route known as the King's Highway that ran through Edom shifted north to a new route outside of Edom.

D. In 632 A.D. the Edomite city of Petra was destroyed by Mohammedans and disappeared for centuries. It was discovered in 1812 and is now an archaeological site.

E. In A.D. 1188, all the original cities in Edom between Teman and Dedan fell to Arab armies and laid waste to this day.

III. Gaza and Ashkelon

- A. Prophecy circa 800 B. C. (Amos 1:8).
- B. Prophecy circa 630 B. C. (Zeph. 2:4-6).
- C. Prophecy circa 600 B.C. (Jer. 47:5). This prophecy was made when the Philistines were one of the most powerful nations on earth.
- D. In 96 B.C. the Maccabees completely exterminated the Philistines in a series of battles.
- E. In 1270 A.D. Ashkelon was destroyed and never rebuilt.
- F. In 1921, the ancient city of Gaza was discovered under a large (bald) sand dune beside the Mediterranean Sea.
- G. Today, the Philistines are the only ancient race that no descendants are known to exist. The ancient remains of Ashkelon serve as shepherd hovels and sheep pens. The old city of Gaza remains covered by a big bald sand dune.

IV. Babylon

- A. Prophecy circa 700 B.C. (Isa. 13:19-22; 14:23; 25:12).
- B. Prophecy circa 600 B.C. (Jer. 50:12-13; 51:25-26, 36-37, 42).
- C. In 100 A.D., due to long periods of drought, the Euphrates River became saline and destroyed the fertility of the land for mile around Babylon.
- D. By 412 A.D., the networks of canals filled due to a lack of maintenance causing the whole area to become swampy.
- E. By 460 A.D., history records the city became deserted.
- F. By 1000 A.D., the Euphrates River changed course causing the place to dry up.
- G. In 1250 A.D. the city was utterly destroyed. The palace was partially underwater and infested with snakes and scorpions making much of it inaccessible.
- H. Today Babylon is desolate except wild animals which live in the ruins. The local Arabs won't even graze their flocks near it. None of the original building materials have been removed. Resent rising waters have covered a quarter of the city. Babylon remains a desolate monument to God's providence.
- I. Of note: Alexander the Great planned to rebuild Babylon but died the night he announced his plan. Saddam Hussein started to rebuild the city by spending over a billion dollars on the project and then was overthrown by the U.S.

V. Tyre

A. Prophecy circa 550 B. C. (Ezek. 26:3-14, 21).

B. In 586 B.C., King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Tyre as prophesied over a 13 year campaign. Some of the inhabitants of the city escape Nebuchadnezzar by building a smaller city a half mile off coast and only accessible by ship.

C. In 322 B.C., Alexander the Great attacked the new Tyre by using the ruins of the old Tyre to make a causeway in the sea. He took all the building materials, rocks and dirt from the old Tyre and made a half mile bridge in the sea to the new Tyre the width of two chariots.

D. Today fishermen use the site to spread and mend their nets.

Conclusion: The things that occurred to all these cities were not coincidental. They were prophesied events that only God could foretell. God is!!! Only a fool would say there is no God (Psm. 14:1; 53:1); especially, when you consider the fulfilled prophecies of these cities.

Do you believe in God?