

THE NON-PROPHET'S GUIDE™ TO PROPHECY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Written & Illustrated by
TODD HAMPSON



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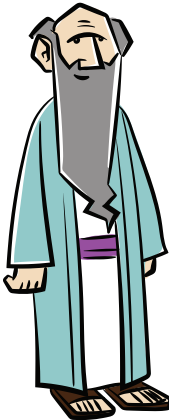
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CHAPTER 1

WHAT is BiBLE PROPHECY?

The Bible is the only religious book that has fulfilled prophecy or claims to be from God!

**guess
what?**





Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like me. Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish.

ISAIAH 46:9-10 NLT

Have you ever seen a movie you loved so much you couldn't wait to see it again? Maybe you told your best friend about it so you could watch it together. Even though you knew ahead of time what was going to happen, you loved watching the movie with your friend. If this has happened to you, I bet it was really tough to resist telling them what was about to happen in each scene. When you're excited about what's to come, it's hard to keep it to yourself!

God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and eternal. Since he is all-knowing, God has foreknowledge of what is to come in the future. Also, we live moment-to-moment in what we refer to as time. God, on the other hand, is eternal. He is not limited by time or space. Think of it like this: We live life as if we were seeing a movie for the first time, but God sees all of his history in advance—like a favorite movie he's already seen. Bible prophecy is really just history told in advance. You and I might read history books to learn what happened in the past. God sees the future as if it has already happened—as if it were already recorded in a history book! We can't fully understand how this works, but that's okay because we are not God. In fact, that's one of the reasons we worship God—he has qualities that are far beyond anything you and I can fully understand.

Definition

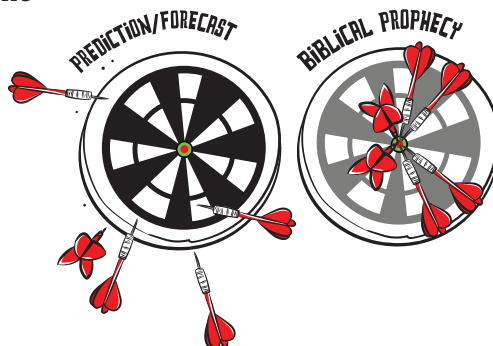
As you begin reading this book, let's begin with a working definition of what Bible prophecy is.

BiBLE PROPHECY DEFiNiTiON

A FORETELLING, PREDICTION, OR DECLARATION OF SOMETHING THAT IS CERTAIN TO COME. GOD HIMSELF IS THE AUTHOR OF BiBLE PROPHECY. GOD SPOKE THROUGH PROPHETS TO RECORD THE PROPHECIES IN THE BiBLE. BiBLE PROPHECY IS SIMPLY GOD TELLING HISTORY IN ADVANCE.

Prediction Versus Prophecy

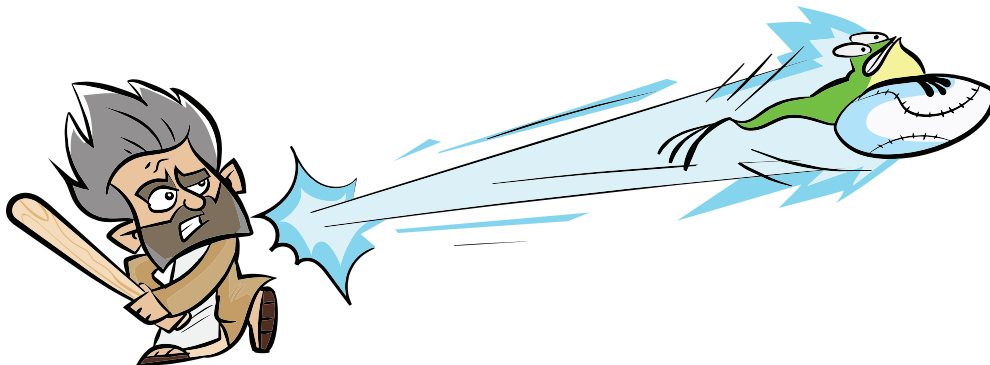
Have you ever heard someone make a prediction? Maybe a weather forecaster said it would rain the next day. Or perhaps a sportscaster was convinced that an underdog football team was going to win an upcoming game. Those are predictions, hunches, or educated guesses based on an analysis of facts and sometimes a gut feeling. Such predictions are impressive when they end up being correct, but often they are not. People's predictions are occasionally accurate, but they are never completely reliable—and



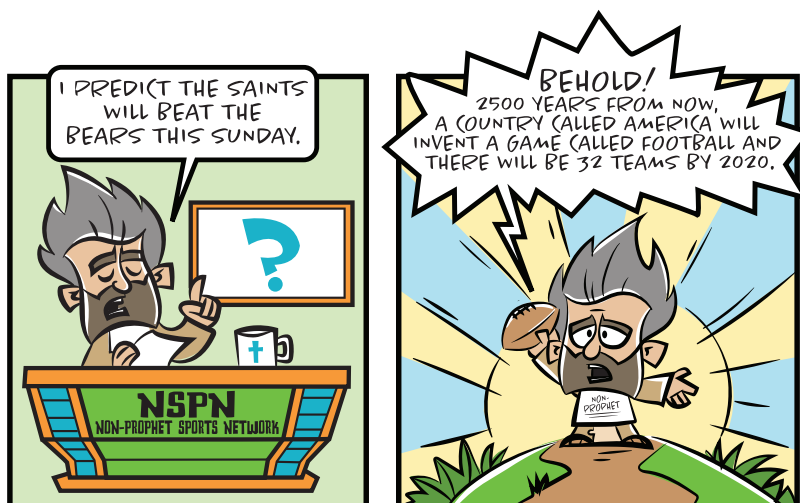


they usually have very limited outcomes to choose from to begin with. For example, if two teams are playing each other and a sportscaster picks a winner, he has a 50/50 chance of being right.

A Bible prophecy, on the other hand, is very different from a human prediction. Many of the Bible's predictions were given hundreds or even thousands of years in advance and involve many specific details. Most of the prophecies in the Bible have already happened—and they have a 100 percent accuracy record! These prophecies are not just about topics with only a few possible outcomes, such as the weather or a sporting event. Instead, they contain mind-blowing details about important historical events, conditions, and people. Every time a Bible prophecy has been fulfilled, each detail of the prophecy has been accurate. If Bible prophecy were a baseball player, it would hit a home run every single time at bat!



Imagine that someone gave you a comic book with you as the main character. You're so excited, you read the whole book in one sitting, and you count ten things that happen to you in the comic book. Then as you go about your day, the things you just read about happen to you exactly like you read in the comic book and in exactly the same order. By the afternoon, eight of the ten events happened just as seen in the comic book. Do you think that would give you confidence the final two events would also happen to you? That's what Bible prophecy is like. Roughly 80 percent of the prophecies have already happened. The remaining 20 percent have to do with Jesus's return at the end of the age.



PREDICTION VS. PROPHECY

Note: This is not a prophecy from the Bible, but a way to show the difference between a prediction and a prophecy.

The Central Nervous System

Now let's take a look at how much prophecy is in the Bible. There are more than 31,000 verses in the Bible, and 9,000 to 10,000 of those

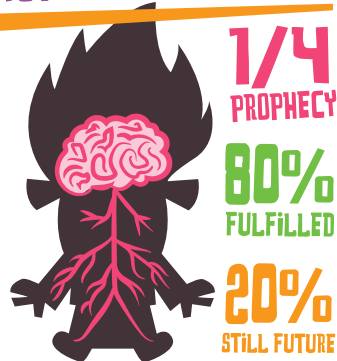
verses contain specific predictions about future events. Experts say that between 27 and 33 percent of the Bible is prophecy. Roughly 7000 of the verses that contain Bible prophecy (about 80 percent) have already been fulfilled. The remaining 20 percent of the prophecies of the Bible will happen at some time in the future. That means we can watch for them. Isn't that exciting?

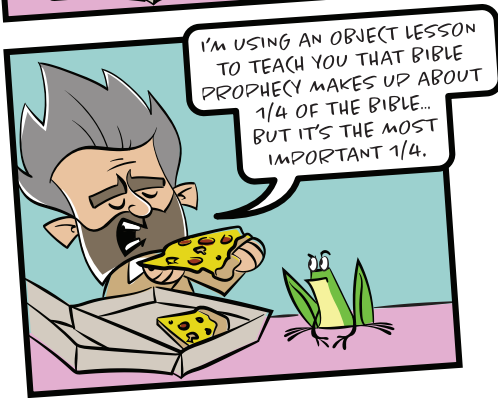
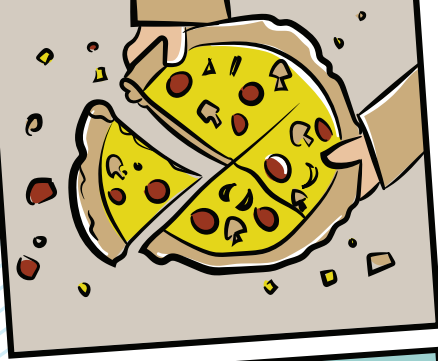
You've probably seen a textbook or a thick reference book that had a bunch of pages in the front for the table of contents, a preface, an introduction, and so on. And it probably had even more pages in the back for a glossary, a bibliography, endnotes, and other stuff. But the one-quarter to one-third of the Bible made up of prophecy isn't fluff or bonus content—it's the most important part! Bible prophecy is like the central nervous system of the Bible.

Biologists study systems in organisms—the digestive system; the cardiovascular system; the muscular system, and so on. None of those systems can work without the central nervous system. They are all connected to it and rely on it. Just as living things like humans and animals can't function properly without a healthy central nervous system, the Bible can't be accurately understood without the all-important feature of prophecy.

All key teachings (doctrine and theology), stories, people, and themes in the Bible are somehow connected to Bible prophecy. It is the electric current that brings the Bible to life, separating it from any other book ever written! This is because the Bible (though penned by at least 39 human

THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM OF THE BIBLE





writers on three different continents over a period of 1500 years) was inspired by God.

Second Timothy 3:16 tells us that the Bible was “God-breathed.” Second Peter 1:21 tells us that those who wrote prophecy “spoke from God” and were “carried along by the Holy Spirit.” In other words, God told them what to write. That is why the whole Bible tells one complete story. This story is tied together by prophecy, and it all ultimately points to Jesus!

Now that you know what prophecy is, let’s take a look at several amazing examples of fulfilled Bible prophecy.

Example 1—Prophecies About Jesus

During Christmas, you’ve probably seen a nativity scene depicting the birth of Jesus. We all know how special that moment was. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born in that manger, prophets recorded messages from God about the details of Jesus’s birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection.

These are known as *messianic prophecies* because they were prophecies about the coming Messiah. The word *messiah* means “anointed one,” so people use the word to describe a savior or deliverer. The Old Testament foretold that a Savior was coming to save the Jewish people and the whole world!

The Bible includes more than 300 prophecies about the first coming

of Jesus Christ. They include things like the virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14); where the Messiah would be born (Micah 5:2); what tribe he would come from (Genesis 49:10); that he would minister in Galilee (Isaiah 9:1-2); many details of his death, burial, and resurrection (Psalm 16:10; 22:16; 34:20; 41:9; Isaiah 50:6; 53:3-12; Zechariah 11:12-13); and lots of other facts.

In the early 1950s, a famous mathematician by the name of Peter Stoner wrote a book called *Science Speaks*. In this book, he calculated that for one person to fulfill just 8 of the more than 300 prophecies about Jesus's first coming would be as unlikely as the following scenario:

- **Mark a silver dollar with an X.**
- **Fill the state of Texas two feet deep with silver dollars.**
- **Randomly mix the single marked coin with the rest of the coins anywhere in the state.**
- **Blindfold a man and let him wander the state as long as he wants.**
- **Finally, give the blindfolded man one chance to reach in and pick up a coin.**

The chances of the man choosing the marked coin are the same as the chances of one man fulfilling just 8 of the prophecies about the Messiah. And there are more than 300! In other words, it is impossible for one man to fulfill more than 300 messianic prophecies by chance.

