

God gave many prophecies in the OT. He did not give prophecies simply to satisfy curiosity. He gave the prophecies in order to encourage the prophecies in order to encourage people to be true to Him. He gave them in order that they would put their trust in Him. He gave them at times in order to tell them what would be the proper procedure to follow in certain situations.

So we can see how God's people have been blessed by these prophecies through the ages. Naturally many of these prophecies are difficult to interpret in a later time, and many of them that would mean much to the people of that time are prophecies which would have been equally true if they had been applied in different ways than they were. They had a real purpose for their time. They are interesting to us in understanding what occurred. But they may not be necessarily a really strong evidence of the truth of the Word of God.

I believe we are justified, I believe it is right that we should examine such claims very very carefully. And that we should be careful not to make arguments which are based upon insufficient and carefess examination--such that they can easily be overthrown by the enemies of the truth. There are a few cases--I have not been able to find many--but I have found a few which I think are very very clear in which the prophecy was fulfilled long after the time when the prophecy was given. There is no question about a long period having intervened in between when the prophecy was given and when it was fulfilled.

When it was given in such a way that one could not at the time have had any idea perhaps thinking how it could be fulfilled. But that it was when you look back and see what happened. Or today have seen the effects of it. You can see how very exactly it has been fulfilled, and where it applied definitely to one particular situation, and if the terms had been changed it would be very obvious that the prophecy had not been fulfilled.

I'd like to call your attention this morning to three cases of this type. Three cases where I believe the marvellous knowledge of God in advance is very clearly demonstrated. First, I would call your attention to Jer. 51:43. Here we have a prophecy about Babylon. The v. before says, "The sea will rise over Babylon; its roaring waves will cover her." I read that v. only to show that Babylon is what is involved here. Because that is obviously I believe a figurative phrase. It could be used of a prediction of a new flood that would cover all the earth. It could be used in connection of tremendous change in the situation in the land. But it does not have to be interpreted that way. It is a figure rather common in Scripture of the ocean representing the great hoards of nations overcoming some nation and destroying it.

But the next v. is I believe quite literal. "Her towns(KJV cities--there's not the same distinction we have in Heb. as in English between a ~~town~~ town and a city) will be desolate, a dry and desert land, a land where no one lives, through which no man travels." That is a very remarkable thing to say. Very unusual thing.