

# The Divine Inspiration of the Bible CHAPTER FIVE: THE FULFILLED PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE BESPEAK THE OMNISCIENCE OF ITS AUTHOR

by A.W. Pink

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## Transcript

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CHAPTER FIVE:

THE FULFILLED PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE BESPEAK THE OMNISCIENCE OF ITS AUTHOR

In Isaiah 41:21-23 we have what is probably the most remarkable challenge to be found in the Bible. "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen; let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." This Scripture has both a negative and a positive value: negatively it suggests an infallible criterion by which we may test the claims of religious impostors; positively, it calls attention to an unanswerable argument for the truthfulness of God's Word. Jehovah bids the prophets of false faiths to successfully predict events lying in the far distant future and their success or failure will show whether or not they are gods or merely pretenders and deceivers. On the other hand, the demonstrated fact that God alone grasps the ages and in His Word declares the end from the beginning, shows that he is God and that Scriptures are His Inspired Revelation to mankind. Again and again men have attempted to predict future events but always with the most disastrous failure, the anticipations of the most far-seeing and the precautions of the wisest are mocked repeatedly by the bitter irony of events. Man stands before an impenetrable wall of darkness, he is unable to foresee the events of even the next hour. None knows what a day may bring forth. To the finite mind the future is filled with unknown possibilities. How then can we explain the hundreds of detailed prophecies in the Scriptures which have been literally fulfilled to the letter, hundreds of years after they were uttered? How can we account for the fact that the Bible successfully foretold hundreds, and in some instances thousands of years beforehand, the History of the Jews, the Course of the Gentiles, and the Experiences of the Church? The most conservative of critics, and the most daring assailants of God's Word are compelled to acknowledge that all the Books of the Old Testament were written hundreds of years before the incarnation of our Lord, hence, the actual and accurate fulfillment of these prophecies can only be

explained on the hypothesis that "Prophecy came not at any time by the will of men: but holy men of God, spake, moved by the Holy Ghost." The Inspirer of the Scriptures has told us that "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; where unto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place" (2 Pet. 1:19). In the limited space at our command we shall appeal to but a few from among the many fulfilled prophecies of God's Word, and shall limit ourselves to those which have reference to the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The cumulative force of these will be sufficient, we trust, to convince any impartial inquirer that none other but the mind of God could have disclosed the future and unveiled beforehand far distant events. "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy." The Lamb of God is the one great object and subject of the Prophetic Word. In Genesis 3:15 we have the first word about the Coming of Christ. Speaking to the serpent, Jehovah said, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." Note that the Coming One was to be the "woman's seed," the Miraculous Character of our Lord's Birth being thus foretold four thousand years before He was born at Bethlehem! In Genesis 22:18 we have the second distinct Messianic prophecy. Unto Abraham, the angel of the Lord declared, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Not only was the Saviour of sinners to be human as well as Divine, not only was He to be the "woman's" seed, but in the above Scripture it was declared that He should be a descendant of Abraham—an Israelite. How this was fulfilled we may see by a reference to the first verse in the New Testament, where we are told (Matt. 1:1) that Jesus Christ was "The Son of David, the son of Abraham." But still further was the compass narrowed down, for we have intimated in the Old Testament Scriptures the very tribe from which the Messiah was to issue—our Lord was to come of the Tribe of Judah (the "kingly" tribe). He was to be a descendant of David. Nathan the prophet was commanded by God to go and say to David, "I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will stablish His kingdom. He shall build an house for My name, and I will stablish the throne of His kingdom for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13). And again, in Psalm 132:11 David declares concerning the promised Messiah, "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; (He will not turn from it) Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. Not only was our Lord's nationality defined hundreds of years before His incarnation, but the very place of His birth was also given. In Micah 5:2 we are informed, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, but out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, and not only in one of the several villages which bore that name in Palestine, but Bethlehem of Judea was to be the birth-place of the world's Redeemer; and though Mary was a native of Nazareth (far distant from Bethlehem) yet through the providence of God, His Word was literally fulfilled by His Son being born in Bethlehem of Judea. Further, the very time of Messiah's appearing was given through both Jacob and Daniel (see Gen. 49:10 and Daniel 9:24-26). Now in order to appreciate the force of these marvelous, super-natural prophecies, let the reader seek to foretell the nationality, place and time of the birth of some one who shall be born in the twenty-fifth century A. D., and then he will realize that none but a man inspired and informed by God Himself could perform such an otherwise impossible feat. So definite and distinct were the Old Testament prophecies respecting the Birth of Christ, that the hope of Israel became the Messianic Hope; all their expectations were centered in the coming of the Messiah. It is therefore the more remarkable that their sacred Scriptures should contain another set of prophecies which predicted that He should be despised by His own nation and rejected by His own kinsmen. We can only now call attention to one of the prophecies which declared that the Messiah of Israel should be slighted and scorned by His brethren according to the flesh. In Isaiah 53:2-3 we read, "And when we (Israel) shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we

esteemed Him not!" We pause here for a moment to enlarge upon this strange and striking phenomenon. For more than fifteen centuries the Coming of the Messiah had been the one great national Hope of Israel. From the cradle the sons of Abraham were taught to pray and long for His advent. The eagerness with which they awaited the appearing of the Star of Jacob is absolutely without parallel in the history of any other nation. How then can we account for the fact that when He did come He was despised and rejected? How can we explain the fact that side by side with the intense longing for the manifestation of their King, one of their own prophets foretold that when He did appear men would hide their faces from Him and esteem Him not? Finally, what explanation have we to offer for the fact that such things were predicted centuries before He came to this earth and that they were literally fulfilled to the very letter? As another has said, "No prediction could have seemed more improbable, and yet none ever received a sadder and more complete fulfillment." We pass on now to those predictions which have reference to the death of our Lord. If it was wonderful that an Israelitish prophet should foretell the rejection of the Messiah by His own nation, what shall we say to the fact that the Old Testament Scriptures prophesied in detail concerning the manner or form of His death? Yet again and again we find this to be the case! Let us examine a few typical instances. First, it was intimated that our Lord should be betrayed and sold for the price of a common slave. In Zechariah 11:12 we read, "So they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver." Who was it that was able to declare, centuries before the event came to pass, the exact amount that Judas should receive for his dastardly deed? In Isaiah 53:7 we have another line in this marvelous picture which human wisdom could not possibly have supplied—"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." Who could have foreseen this most unusual sight, of a prisoner standing before his judges with his life at stake, yet attempting and offering no defense? Yet this is precisely what did happen in connection with our Lord, for we are told in Mark 15:5, "But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marveled." Again; who was it that knew seven hundred years before the greatest tragedy of human history was enacted that the Son of God, the King of the Jews, the gentlest and meekest Man who ever trod our earth, should be scourged and spat upon? Yet such an experience was foretold: "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting" (Isa. 50:6). Further; the form of capital punishment reserved for Jewish criminals was "stoning to death," and in David's time the experience of "crucifixion" was entirely unknown, yet we find in Psalm 22:16 that Israel's king was inspired to write, "They pierced My hands and My feet!" Again; what human foresight could have seen that in His thirst-agonies upon the cross our Lord should be given gall and vinegar to drink? Yet it was declared a thousand years before the Lord of Glory was nailed to the tree that, "They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." (Ps. 69:21). Finally; we ask, how could David foretell, unless he was inspired by the Holy Spirit, that our Lord should be taunted by His enemies and challenged to come down from the Cross? Yet in Psalm 22:7-8 we read, "All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him." Such examples as the above might be multiplied indefinitely, but sufficient illustrations have already been given to warrant us in saying that the fulfilled prophecies of the Bible bespeak the omniscience of its Author. Were it necessary, and had we the space at our command, scores of additional fulfilled prophecies relating to the History of Israel, the Course of the Gentiles, and the Experiences of the Church—prophecies just as definite, accurate, and remarkable as those relating to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ—could be given, but our present limits and purpose forbid us so doing. Having examined a few of the startling prophecies which treat of the Birth and Death of our Saviour, it now only remains for us to apply in a word the significance of this argument. Many have read over these Scriptures before and perhaps have regarded them as being wonderfully descriptive of the Advent and Passion of Jesus Christ,

but how many have carefully weighed the fact that each of these Scriptures were in indisputable existence more than five hundred years before our Lord came to this earth? Man is unable to accurately predict events which are but twenty-four hours distant; only the Divine Mind could have foretold the future, centuries before it came to be. Hence, we affirm with the utmost confidence, that the hundreds of fulfilled prophecies in the Bible attest and demonstrate the truth that the Scriptures are the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God.

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