



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#62)

The words of the prophets... fulfilled!

The book of ACTS *doesn't* give us ALL of the details about how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy.

★ IT DOESN'T NEED TO, because that information was already available.

- ✓ They had testimony of the still-living apostles and other disciples.
- ✓ Their accounts were beginning to be put into written form.

LUKE, THE AUTHOR OF ACTS, HAD ALREADY WRITTEN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE!

In my first book I told you about everything Jesus began to do and teach until the day he ascended to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions from the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:1b-2 (NLT)

HOWEVER, the book of ACTS *isn't* silent about it.

You will find:

- ✓ Many *general* statements about Jesus' fulfillment of what Scripture said.
- ✓ About 25 *specific* references to the Old Testament (mostly about Jesus).

A REMINDER ABOUT PROPHETS AND PROPHECY:

- ✓ The prophet's primary responsibility was "truth-speaking," not "future-telling."
- ✓ Time was not the issue. The truth they spoke could be related to the past, the present, or the future – or any combination of them.
- ✓ Though our focus here is mainly on the "future-telling" aspect, we must remember that it is only one aspect of their ministry.

A CONSTANT THEME IN THE BOOK OF ACTS:

"THE BIBLE (= OLD TESTAMENT) POINTS TO JESUS!"

THIS IS WHAT PAUL TAUGHT.

From morning until evening, Paul was explaining the kingdom of God to them. He was trying to convince them about Jesus from Moses' Teachings and the Prophets.

Acts 28:23b (GW)

THIS WAS THE RESULT OF ACCEPTING ALL THAT THE BIBLE (O.T.) SAID.

"I tell them only what the prophets and Moses said would happen." [= regarding the Messiah]

Acts 26:22b (GW)

THIS WAS THE RESULT OF ACCEPTING ALL THAT THE BIBLE (O.T.) SAID.

"I worship the God of our ancestors, and I firmly believe the Jewish law and everything written in the books of prophecy."

Acts 24:14b (NLT)

THIS IS WHAT PETER TAUGHT.

"Samuel and all the prophets who followed him spoke about these days.

Acts 3:24 (GW)

THIS IS WHAT PETER TAUGHT.

"All the prophets testify about [Jesus]."

Acts 10:43a (NIV)

"GOD USED THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT SCRIPTURE SAID WOULD HAPPEN!"

"In this way God fulfilled what he had predicted through all the prophets..."

Acts 3:18a (CSB)

The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath.

Acts 13:27 (NIV)

IN SAYING THESE THINGS, THEY WERE FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS!

And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, [Jesus] explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

Luke 24:27 (NASB)

WHAT DO THE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES SAY?

- ✓ There are about 25 *specific* passages quoted from the Old Testament.
 - **Many** pertain to Jesus – who he was and what he accomplished.
 - **A few** are related to other events associated with Jesus and the Good News.

EXAMPLES:

- ❖ His death, burial, resurrection.
- ❖ Light to the Gentiles.
- ❖ Scoffers will not believe the truth.
- ❖ People would hear but not accept the Good News.
- ❖ Led like a sheep to the slaughter
- ❖ The coming of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ Through Abraham, all nations would be blessed.
- ❖ The ultimate prophet.
- ❖ The people's rebellion.
- ❖ A replacement for Judas.

(AND MORE.)

Understanding the "prophecy" concept:

We need to deal with potential misconceptions about the nature of prophecy.



DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROPHECY GET FULFILLED IN DIFFERENT WAYS!



MOST PEOPLE TEND TO THINK OF PROPHECY AS BEING FULFILLED IN ONLY ONE WAY...

- ✓ The Jews in Jesus' day recognized that there were *different* types of prophecy, which were fulfilled in different ways.
- ✓ Today, we might not understand why a Scripture passage is said to be "fulfilled." But we can still *trust* what God says (and attempt to grow in our understanding of the topic).

DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROPHECY – SOME EXAMPLES

Seven examples are given, which represent most (if not all) of the prophecy types found in the New Testament. (These types can overlap.)

1. ONE PROPHECY... ONE FULFILLMENT.

- ✓ This is what people often think of, when they talk about prophecy.
- ✓ Example:

PROPHECY STATED:

Bethlehem Ephrathah,
you are small among the clans of Judah;
one will come from you
to be ruler over Israel for me.

His origin is from antiquity,
from ancient times.

Micah 5:2 (CSB)

PROPHECY FULFILLED:

So [King Herod] assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Messiah would be born.

"In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah:

Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Matthew 2:4-6 (CSB)

NEW TESTAMENT QUOTES OF OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES ARE NOT ALWAYS EXACT WORD-FOR-WORD TRANSLATIONS.

- The religious leaders did not give Herod an exact quote of Micah 5:2. They summarized what Micah 5:2 said, and added details from other Scripture passages. (The "shepherd" concept may be from 2 Samuel 5:2.)

- It was common knowledge among the Jewish people that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. [They did not realize that Jesus was born there, but knew only that he grew up in Galilee.]

But some [in the crowd] said, "Surely the Messiah doesn't come from Galilee, does he? Doesn't the Scripture say that the Messiah comes from David's offspring and from **the town of Bethlehem**, where David lived?"

John 7:41b-42 (CSB)

NEW TESTAMENT QUOTES MAY INCLUDE **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** TAKEN FROM OTHER OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES.

- EXAMPLES:
- ✓ Matthew 2:4-6 (on the previous page).
 - ✓ Mark 1:2-3 – Mark quotes Isaiah 40:3 in v. 3, but introduces it with a quote based on Malachi 3:1.
 - ✓ Matthew 27:9-10 – A quote based on Jeremiah (about buying a field), but also quoting Zechariah (about 30 pieces of silver).

2. ONE PROPHECY... TWO FULFILLMENTS.

- ✓ A prophecy about the Messiah may combine events that are separated by time.

PROPHECY STATED:

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God, ...

Isaiah 61:1-2a (NIV)

- Jesus quotes the Isaiah 61 passage (and applies it to himself), but he *omits* part of the verse. This is because the "day of vengeance" (Isaiah 61:2b) is a *future* event, and will occur when Jesus returns.

FULFILLMENT (PART 1):

**"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.**

**He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."**

... and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Luke 4:18-19, 21 (NIV)

FULFILLMENT (PART 2):
THIS WILL OCCUR WHEN
JESUS RETURNS.

... the day of vengeance of our God, ...

Isaiah 61:1-2a (NIV)

- ✓ Isaiah 9:6-7 is another example: A child will be born (= already fulfilled by Jesus)... who will rule forever (= a future event).

3. "NEAR" VS. "FAR" FULFILLMENT

- ✓ A prophecy may be partially fulfilled in a "present-day" event (i.e., during the lifetimes of the original hearers) *and* in a future event. The first fulfillment affirms or guarantees that the later fulfillment will take place.

INTRODUCTION TO JESUS' "END-TIMES" PROPHECY (which begins in v. 4):

PARALLEL PASSAGES: Mark 13 and Luke 21:5-36 also have this prophecy.

Jesus said to [the disciples], "You see all these [temple] buildings, don't you? I can guarantee this truth: Not one of these stones will be left on top of another. Each one will be torn down."

As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will this happen? What will be the sign that you are coming again, and when will the world come to an end?"

Matthew 24:2-3 (GW)

- The disciples asked three questions. They probably didn't realize that one would be a "near" event, and the other two would be "far" (fulfilled in the distant future).

NEAR – FULFILLED IN A.D.70

"Tell us, when will this happen? [= the destruction of the temple]"

FAR – TO BE FULFILLED WHEN JESUS RETURNS

What will be the sign that you are coming again, and when will the world come to an end?"

Matthew 24:3b (GW)

- ✓ The two events parallel each other. The first (destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70) foreshadows the second (events just before Jesus' return).
- ✓ A comparison of Matthew, Mark and Luke shows us that:
 - 1) Luke sometimes focuses on the "near" fulfillment (AD 70);
 - 2) Matthew and Mark sometimes focus on the "far" (still future) fulfillment.

- ✓ In a "near-far" prophecy, some parts of the prophecy may apply to only *one* of the fulfillments, and not to the other.

PROPHECY STATED: (HERE, GOD TELLS THE PROPHET NATHAN WHAT TO SAY TO KING DAVID)

"For when you die, I will raise up one of your descendants, and I will make his kingdom strong. He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will use other nations to punish him. But my unfailing love will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed before you. Your dynasty and your kingdom will continue for all time before me, and your throne will be secure forever."

2 Samuel 7:12-16 (NLT)

- This prophecy applied to *Solomon* and to *Jesus*.

"[The Lord] told me [= David], 'Your son Solomon will build my temple and my courtyards because I have chosen him to be my son. I will be his father.'"

1 Chron. 28:6 (GW)

IT APPLIED TO SOLOMON

And again God said, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son."

Hebrews 1:5b (NLT)

IT APPLIED TO JESUS

- Some parts could apply *only* to Solomon:

Example: "If [or "when"] he *sins*..." [Jesus did not sin.]
- Some parts could apply *only* to Jesus:

Example: The throne would be established *forever*. [Solomon died; the kingdom was later destroyed. Jesus is alive forever, and will rule forever.] Also, Jesus is the "Son" in a unique way that Solomon couldn't be.

4. MESSIANIC PSALMS.

- ✓ Some of the Psalms were written in such a way that they could apply to the situation at hand (not as prophecy), but also to the coming Messiah (as prophecy).
- ✓ Sometimes there were statements that could be "literally" fulfilled only by the Messiah (= Jesus). Any application to the original situation could only be figurative.

PROPHECY STATED:

... because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

Psalms 16:10 (NIV)

- Though originally written by David (about his experiences and God's protection), the whole passage has implications that go beyond David.

- Peter explained how this Messianic Psalm applied "literally" to Jesus... but *couldn't* apply that way to David.

PROPHECY FULFILLED:

NOT BY DAVID...

"Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch *David died and was buried*, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ [= Messiah], that *he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay*.

... BUT BY JESUS

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact."

Acts 2:29-32 (NIV)

(After this, Peter referred to Psalm 110, another Messianic psalm.)

5. THE SYMBOLISM OF OLD TESTAMENT RITUALS AND EVENTS

✓ Many Old Testament passages *symbolically show* what the Messiah would be like, or what he would accomplish.

EXAMPLE: THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE. You must have an unblemished animal, a year-old male; ... You are to keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembly of the community of Israel will slaughter the animals at twilight. They must take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses where they eat them. ... it is the LORD's Passover.
Exodus 12:5a, 6-7, 11b (CSB)

IT WAS A "PICTURE" OF WHAT JESUS DID. For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed.
1 Corinthians 5:7b (CSB)

The O.T. Passover sacrifice could not remove sins. But Jesus' sacrifice did. (See Hebrews 10.)

6. THE SYMBOLISM OF JESUS REPRESENTING ISRAEL

✓ In certain matters, Jesus did things as though he represented Israel.

EXAMPLE #1: JESUS' BAPTISM. (JESUS HAD NO SIN, AND DID NOT NEED A "BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE"!)

But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"
Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to **do this to fulfill all righteousness.**" Then John consented.
Matthew 3:14-15 (NIV)

EXAMPLE #2 JESUS IN ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

And out of Egypt I called My son.
Hosea 11:1b (NASB)

[Joseph] arose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed for Egypt; ... that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "**Out of Egypt did I call My Son.**"
Matthew 2:14, 15b (NASB)

7. THE FULFILLMENT OF SCRIPTURE CONCEPTS

✓ A few New Testament references to fulfilled prophecy do not "attach" to a specific Old Testament passage, but may be a reference to a general concept.

EXAMPLE: JESUS, LIVING IN NAZARETH [Joseph (and his family)] made his home in a city called Nazareth. So what the prophets had said came true: "He will be called a Nazarene."
Matthew 2:23 (GW)

- Nazareth was considered a small, "unimportant" town. Living there fulfilled (at least symbolically) various prophecies about Jesus being viewed as "nobody of importance." (See also John 1:45-46.)
- He was despised and rejected by men, ... He was like someone people turned away from; he was despised, and we didn't value him.
Isaiah 53:3 (CSB)

THERE IS VALUE IN KNOWING* THAT DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROPHECY EXIST!



WE CAN REJOICE IN THE FACT THAT JESUS DOES FULFILL OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE IN EVERY POSSIBLE WAY!

Those who hate the Bible may mock when prophecy doesn't get "fulfilled" the way they claim it should.

A FULFILLED PROPHECY? HAH! THE OLD TESTAMENT DOESN'T EVEN MENTION NAZARETH!

GOD IS SO WONDERFUL! HE FULFILLS PROPHECY IN SO MANY WAYS!

We can respond with praise that God's ways are so much greater than ours!

* [No need to memorize these methods, unless you want to. Just be aware that different methods of prophecy-fulfillment do exist!]

YOUR MISSION!



YOUR FAITH RESTS ON A FIRM FOUNDATION!

GET TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE FOUNDATION...

AND ABOUT THE GOD WHO PUT IT THERE!

Credits

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