

The Gospel of John

Behold the Lamb of God

John 1:29-34

INTRODUCTION:

We are going through the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John was written primarily to new believers and people who were seeking God. He recorded for us the reason for his Gospel.

³¹ but these (referring to the miracles he wrote about) have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. John 20:31 (NASB)

The Gospel of John was written to prove that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. John was an eyewitness to the love and power displayed in the miracles of Jesus. He wrote of these miracles so we could believe that Jesus was Who He proclaimed to be. In our text today he is going to refer to Christ as the "Lamb of God". This was, of course, referring to Jesus, the long awaited Messiah from Old Testament who among many other prophecies was "to take away the sins of the world".

Prophecies concerning a coming Messiah are found throughout the Old Testament scriptures. Written 2150 BC (Job) through 400 BC.

The Bible consists of 66 Books: 39 Old Testament Books (before Jesus' birth) and 27 New Testament Books (after Jesus' death and resurrection). The book of Job is considered by some to have been written as early as 2150 BC. The latest of the O.T. Books were written around 400 BC.

The New Testament books were all written after Christ's death. Revelation was the last book written around 95 AD.

Some of the most dramatic evidence that the Bible is a supernatural book and not a collection of stories and myths, is in the realm of fulfilled Bible prophecy. It has been estimated that there are some 2500 prophecies in the Bible, almost 2000 of which have been fulfilled to the letter. Some have identified over 450 prophecies concerning the Messiah in the Old Testament that are fulfilled by Christ. Clearly the fulfillment of all of them by one Man would be literally impossible based on chance alone.

All Stand and Read Scripture

John 1:29-34 (NASB)

²⁹ The next day he *saw Jesus coming to him and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is He on behalf of whom I said, 'After me comes a

Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’³¹ I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water.”³² John testified saying, “I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.”³³ I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’³⁴ I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God.”

Prayer

BODY:

I. O.T. Messianic Prophecies and Their Fulfillment.

In order to fully appreciate the magnitude of Christ's fulfillment of prophecy, we are going to do a little bit of math this morning.

ILLUSTRATION:

Probability is a branch of mathematics that measures the likelihood that a given event will occur. To begin, let's look at some interesting "odds". According to a mathematician, the following odds exist:

- Being struck by lightning within the year is 1 in 700,000. (700 Thousand)
- Becoming president is 1 in 10,000,000. (10 Million)
- A meteorite landing on your house is 1 in 180,000,000,000,000 (180 Trillion)

As you can see, the probability of being struck by lightning, becoming president, or having a meteorite land on your house, progressively increases, given the event; however, someone somewhere will meet that probability, and that someone could be you.

The odds of ever achieving just one these events is very unlikely. Consider how unlikely it would be to have all three events happen in your lifetime! The principle of probability states that if the chance of one thing happening is "1 in A", and the chance of another independent thing happening is "1 in B", then the chance that they shall both happen is "1 in (A * B)".

So the odds of being struck by lightning in a given year of your life, becoming president, and having a meteorite land on your house is 1 in (126 with 23 zeros behind it!).

The reason why prophecy is an indication of the divine authorship of the Scriptures, and hence a testimony to the trustworthiness of the Message of the Scriptures, is because of the minute probability of fulfillment.

Anyone can make predictions. Having those prophecies fulfilled is vastly different. In fact, the more statements made about the future, and the more the detail, then the less likely the precise fulfillment will be.

- For example, what's the likelihood of a person predicting today the **exact city in which the birth of a future leader would take place** hundreds of years from now? This is indeed what the prophet Micah did 700 years before the Messiah.

- Further, what is the likelihood of predicting the **precise manner of death** that this new, unknown religious leader would experience,
- Then predict a manner of **death presently unknown, and to remain unknown for hundreds of years?** Yet, this is what David did in 1000 B.C.
- Again, what is the likelihood of predicting the **specific date of the appearance** of some great future leader, hundreds of years in advance? This is what Daniel did, 530 years before Christ.

Some would claim that Christ just knew the Old Testament scriptures and just did the prophecies or that the New Testament writers just "fulfilled" them through their writings.

But you have to ask the question:

- How does someone "arrange" to be born in a specific family?
- How does one "arrange" to be born in a specified city, in which their parents don't actually live?
- How does one "arrange" their own death - and specifically by crucifixion, with two others, and then "arrange" to have their executioners gamble for His clothing (John 16:19; Psalms 22:18)?
- How does one "arrange" to be betrayed in advance?
- How does one "arrange" to have the executioners carry out the regular practice of breaking the legs of the two victims on either side, but not their own?

Then we must consider the even more difficult prophecies to fulfill!

- How would you "arrange" to be born of a virgin?
- How would you "arrange" to be God and also be man?
- How does one just decide to heal the lame and make the blind to see?
- How would you successfully live a sinless life?
- How does one "arrange" to be crucified on a cross, be buried, escape from the grave, and appear to many people after having been killed?

It may be possible for someone to fake one or two of the Messianic prophecies, but it would be impossible for any one person to arrange and fulfill all of these prophecies.

How true, then, it must be that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, if he had over 450 identifying characteristics well in advance, and fulfilled them all! In fact, what does the science of probability make of this?

A professor named **Stoner** and his students examined only eight different prophecies and conservatively estimated that the chance of one man fulfilling all eight prophecies was one in 10^{17} .

ILLUSTRATION:

To illustrate how large the number 10^{17} IS (a figure with 17 zeros), Stoner gave this illustration:

Suppose that we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They'll cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far

as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would've had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom.

But, of course, there are many more than eight prophecies. In another calculation, Stoner used 48 prophecies and arrived at the extremely conservative estimate that the probability of 48 prophecies being fulfilled in one person is the incredible number 10^{157} .

This is the result from considering a mere 48 prophecies. Obviously, the probability that over 450 prophecies (a number that we struggle to even identify and agree on) would be fulfilled in one man by chance is vastly smaller.

II. The Claims of Christ

Not only did Christ fulfill all of the Messianic prophecies, but he also claimed to be the Son of God, the Creator of the universe, the one and only way by which we can enter into Heaven. **These are high claims.**

John 1:1-3 (NASB)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

Here Christ is saying that He is the Son of God and has been with His Father eternally. He was involved in the entire creation!

Christ not only CLAIMED to be God, the Creator, and our Savior, but He backed it up with miracles. John was in prison and had heard of Christ's miracles and wanted to know for sure if Christ was the Messiah of the Old Testament prophecies.

Matthew 11:2-6 (NASB)

2 Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent *word* by his disciples **3** and said to Him, "Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?" **4** Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: **5** *the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.* **6** And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

III. The Confirmation By Miracles from God.

Not only did Jesus perform miracles, but God also performed miracles in front of men.

- God spoke in front of men saying at Jesus' baptism and transfiguration, "**This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!**"
- God caused darkness to fall upon all of the land for three hours when Jesus was crucified.
- At the crucifixion he also caused an earthquake that split rocks and caused the veil to the temple to be torn from top to bottom.
- When Christ died on the cross, God caused Christians who had died and were buried in Jerusalem to be resurrected from the grave and they appeared before many.

Matthew 27:52-54 (NASB)

⁵² The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³ and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

God and Christ used miracles to validate that what was happening was from God. Not only at the crucifixion, but also during Christ's ministry and during the growth of the early church through the Apostles and Christians who were given the power of the Holy Spirit through the apostles. To those who would listen and reason, there was no doubt that Christ was the Messiah.

CONCLUSION:

Another miracle. The moment that Jesus Christ's physical body died, he brought many dead people to life in the city of Jerusalem? It's true! The people were alive and healthy again. Many people saw them in the streets and homes of that great city and were glad to see them again. They had been dead, some perhaps for years, and now they were alive **because of Jesus' great power!**

Here is a fact that is even more amazing! *Everyone* who dies and is a true follower of Jesus Christ will experience this same, awesome, life-giving power. Jesus will give them a new body back again—alive, healthy and strong—a glorious body. The scriptures say it will happen in the twinkling of an eye. Won't that be wonderful! Millions and perhaps billions of people will be made alive again. Mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, grandparents—every person that is a true follower of Jesus will be alive again—forever to live in the presence of our Creator!

For all of us who are Christians, death is not permanent. When our loved ones in Christ die, we can know for certain that we will see them alive again.

You can be one of those people! If you haven't already done so. Admit that you are a sinner that deserves punishment and is lost without Christ. Accept His free gift of salvation and life. Become a faithful follower of Jesus Christ, the Lord and Giver of Life.

If you do not know Christ as your Lord and Savior, I invite you to come forward this morning and place your faith in Christ and be obedient to Christ through baptism. Don't wait until you have cleaned up your life. **You don't clean yourself up to come to the Christ; you surrender yourself to Christ, to let Him clean you up!**

I encourage you to allow Christ to make you righteous before God by stepping forward this morning during our invitation hymn.

This is the Day!