

## **Fulfillment of Prophecy: The Trump Card?**

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?  
For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground.  
He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.  
He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.  
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.  
Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.  
But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities;  
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, everyone, to his own way;  
and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

How many of you who have just read the passage above can identify the one of whom the author writes? Certainly, those who are familiar with the Bible will have little trouble identifying the character. But there may also be others that are not familiar with the Bible, who do not read it with any regularity, if at all, and even some who do not believe the Bible, that can identify the person in the passage as Jesus Christ, the One proclaimed by the Bible to be the Son of God and Savior of the human race. That is remarkable in itself. It is even more remarkable that Isaiah, the prophet who authored the words above, lived in excess of seven hundred (700) years before the time of Christ.

There are critics who claim the biblical prophecies in the Bible were written after the events. Such a view has been summarily dismissed by the discovery of the famous Dead Sea Scrolls. These ancient Jewish writings, discovered in the area of the Dead Sea in 1947, are thought to have been compiled by a group of Jewish ascetics known as the Essenes. The majority of the writings have been dated during the first two or three centuries before Christ. Fred P. Miller, writing for The Gnostic Society Library, attests that The Great Isaiah Text, the particular Dead Sea scroll that contains the passage above, is dated some one hundred years B.C. What could possibly account for such a clear description of Jesus Christ delivered seven centuries before His birth and confirmed by existent texts at least one hundred years prior to it? Nothing natural can explain it. The explanation has to be supernatural. Once again the Bible is shown to be a book of unparalleled uniqueness and possessing qualities that cannot be explained except by supernatural authorship.

Prophecy, and the fulfillment thereof, is one of the most powerful attestations to the authority of the Scriptures and adds one more enormous piece of evidence in support of the Bible's credibility. In order to appreciate the powerful testimony that fulfilled prophecy provides, we

need to consider the probability of its occurrence. Josh McDowell in *Evidence That Demands A Verdict* identifies sixty-one(61)Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah that were all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Peter Stoner, writing in *Science Speaks*, computed the probability that only eight prophecies would be fulfilled in one man as 1 in 10 to the 17th power. Try to imagine that. We are talking about one (1) chance in one hundred quadrillion (100,000,000,000,000,000) chances. To mentally grasp the size of this number we would have to picture the state of Texas covered to a depth of two feet with silver dollars. Then try to imagine the probability of choosing by random selection one silver dollar out of the total with a unique mark upon it. That represents the incredible power of testimony in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. There never has been, and never will be, a book like the Bible. Each of us must deal with the evidence that is placed before us.