

2 Timothy 3:16-17 — Can I Trust My Bible?

May 2, 2021

Pastor Adam Hamilton is a gifted writer. In the United Methodist Church, he pastors a large church and is very influential. He was featured on the United Methodist website to share what the Methodist Church



believes about the inerrancy of the Bible, that is, the trustworthiness of the Bible.

Let me paraphrase some of his answer.

People ask me if you have to read the Bible literally. That hinges on what parts of it you are reading. When you go to Genesis, Adam and Eve, and the Garden of Eden, those are archetypal stories. Those are not the stories of actual ancient people who lived thousands of years ago. They are trying to tell us about ourselves. We don't read those stories literally. We are Adam and Eve. We don't believe they are literally true... Take the story of Jonah being swallowed by a whale. That story is meant to be read prophetically, not literally. Did it really happen? I am ok if it did, but that is not the point of the story... When it comes to the gospels of Jesus, we read that more literally but even then we can't read the gospels completely literally... So depending on what part of the Bible we are reading, we read it more or less literally.¹

What do you think? Is he right? Should we take the Bible literally or should we just look for the truth in the story? Should we not consider biblical events as facts of history? Should we not consider biblical peoples, such as Adam and Eve, Noah, and Jonah as literal people from history? Today we are going to answer that question.

We are studying our way through 2 Timothy. Last week we finished up 2 Timothy 3. We finished with verses 16 and 17. These are important verses

¹ <https://www.umc.org/en/content/united-methodist-beliefs-is-the-bible-literal>

because they frame our Christian understanding of the Bible. Let me read them to you so we refresh our memory on what they claim.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV)

These verses claim that the entire Bible is literally spoken by God. This makes the Bible completely different from other books. This is such an important truth that even though we studied it last week, I told you we would return to these verses this morning and use them as a launching pad to look at what the rest of the Bible tells us about itself. Is Pastor Adam Hamilton right? Can we treat the words of the Bible as approximately true or should we treat them as the very words of God and consider them literally true?

To help us examine this topic, we are going to answer these questions. Let's begin with the first one.

What does it mean that all Scripture is breathed out by God?

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son... Hebrews 1:1–2 (ESV)

As we leave 2 Timothy 3:16, let's turn to the beginning of the book of Hebrews which tells us something similar. God spoke long ago. God has also spoken in the last days. God spoke long ago in many ways and at various ways through the prophets. In these last days God has spoken to us through his son. In simplest form, this tells us how God spoke to us in the Old Testament times and how he is now speaking to us in the New Testament times.

In the Old Testament days, God spoke through his prophets in different books, in different times, and in different ways. Sometimes God spoke through a

vision, sometimes by a prophecy, sometimes in a song, sometimes in a ceremony, and sometimes even in an audible voice. One time God spoke by literally writing with his finger on a tablet of stone.

The point is the Old Testament is not a collection of the wisdom of ancient men giving their opinions about God. The Old Testament is God speaking in a variety of ways to us, all of which were written down for us to follow.

Since the coming of Jesus, God is now speaking to us through his son. We see that in the Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the story of Jesus' life. Acts is the story of the spread of the message of Jesus. The epistles and letters are the story of the implication the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The New Testament is in every way, from corner to corner, about God speaking to us through Jesus.

The book of Hebrews then begins with a statement on the Bible. The Bible is from cover to cover God very words speaking to us. In the Old Testament, it was God speaking to us in a variety of ways through the prophets. In the New Testament it is God speaking to us through his son. We see the same truth of 2 Timothy 3:16 stated to us again in Hebrews. The Bible is God speaking to us.

What does the Bible claim about itself?

The Old Testament claims to be God's words.

The Bible's claim to be God's literal words spoken to us is not just found in 2 Timothy 3:16 and Hebrews 1:1. It is all over the Bible. More than 2,500 times in the Old Testament, the biblical writers claim God spoke what they were writing. Take this example from the book of Exodus.

Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." Exodus 24:3 (ESV)

Moses gave God's people God's laws. He didn't make them up. He received them from God. The people recognized them as the words of God.

Through the entire Old Testament, to believe the prophets was to believe God. To disobey the prophets was rebellion against God.

The New Testament claims to be God's words.

It is not just the Old Testament that claims to be the very words of God but we find a similar claim in the New Testament. The phrase "the Word of God" occurs more than 40 times in the New Testament.

When the New Testament refers to the Old Testament both Jesus and the apostles consistently claimed the Old Testament was the very word of God.

For example, when Jesus was speaking of the practice of Corban, which was a way some Jews tried to escape their obligation to honor the fifth commandment and care for their aging parents, Jesus said these words:

"But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, "What you would have gained from me is given to God," he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God." Matthew 15:5-6 (ESV)

Jesus claimed breaking the Old Testament law was breaking the very word of God.

Jesus claimed he spoke God's words.

Jesus didn't just claim the Old Testament was the very word of God but he took it up a notch and claimed when he spoke, he was speaking the very words of God.

For he whom God has sent utters the words of God... John 3:34 (ESV)

Jesus as the very Son of God was now speaking to people the very words of God, just like the prophets did in the Old Testament times.

The apostles claimed they wrote God's words.

It was not just Jesus in the New Testament that claimed to speak the very words of God but the apostles, when they were inspired by the Holy Spirit, were fully aware that at times God was speaking his very words to people through them, just like he did by the prophets in the past.

...which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. 1 Thessalonians 2:13 (ESV)

How did God put his words into the mouths of the biblical writers?

God put his words in the mouths of the biblical writers by carrying them along by the Holy Spirit.

...knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20–21 (ESV)

Let's look at the process God used to reveal himself to the prophets and the apostles when they wrote down God's Word.

Peter began by saying, "no prophecy of Scripture." When Peter used the word prophecy in this context, he was not just talking about predictions of the future. This word was being used in a more general sense. It is the message of the Scriptures. Essentially he was saying no message of the Scripture is a matter of one's own inspiration or interpretation. The Bible did not come out of over-caffeinated men who thought they were religious geniuses and spoke their own minds.

The Bible is not the product of men or created by the will of men but by men moved by the Holy Spirit with words spoke from God. Men spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. This term “carried along” is a sailing term. It refers to a sailboat whose sails are caught in the wind and the boat can’t help but go where the wind wants to take it. That is the way it worked for the writers of the Bible. The Holy Spirit carried them along so they would say exactly what the Holy Spirit of God wanted them to say. This is why under inspiration of God, their words at that time were God’s words. The Holy Spirit carried them along to say exactly what God wanted spoken.

What is amazing is that while God carried along the writers of the Bible, so they said exactly what God wanted them to say, God did not violate them as people. God incorporated their personalities, their backgrounds, their experiences into the Word of God. This is why God inspired David to write Psalm 23 --- he took David’s experiences as a shepherd and incorporated them into this Psalm. That is why the Bible has a tension of being the words of God, yet at the same time the words of men that reflect their background, experiences, and gifts. God just took people’s backgrounds, personalities, and experiences and used them to say exactly what he wanted to say through them under inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

We find God not just incorporating the biblical writers' personal backgrounds and experiences as he communicated exactly what he wanted to say to us, but God even incorporated world events into the message of his words. For instance, the slavery of God’s people in Egypt was used by God to

communicate a message. God's rescue of his people from slavery in Egypt and bringing them to the Promised Land was a foretaste of God rescuing us from a much greater slavery, slavery to sin. Just as the Israelites were powerless to free themselves from Egypt, we are powerless to free ourselves from sin. Just as the Israelites needed a deliverer, that God sent to them in Moses, we need a deliverer that God sent to us in Jesus. Just as God took his people to the Promised Land and they struggled along the way, God is taking us to the Promised Land of heaven, but we are struggling along the way. None of those parallelisms are by chance. They were all planned by God as he sought to communicate with us.

The idea of God putting his very words in the mouths of the prophets but not violating the background, experiences, and temperament of his prophets is illustrated by the prophet Jeremiah.

Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth." Jeremiah 1:9 (ESV)

"I will put my words in your mouth." That was the promise of the writers of Scripture.

God wrote the words of the Bible, not just the concepts in the Bible.

A common claim today by people such as Adam Hamilton is that God inspired the ideas in the minds of the biblical authors but they wrote those ideas down in their own words, so the words have error in them, but the idea the words convey is from God. To those who believe God only inspired biblical concepts, not words, I need to turn you to the Scriptures so we can see more about what the Bible says about itself.

The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times. Psalm 12:6 (ESV)

God's words in the Bible are entirely pure and entirely truthful. Psalms says the words of the Bible are without error and can be trusted. God wrote words through the biblical authors, not just conveyed concepts.

Look what Jesus said about the very words of the Old Testament.

For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Matthew 5:18 (ESV)

What was Jesus saying? An iota is the smallest consonant of the Hebrew alphabet. It is about the size of an apostrophe. A dot is the smallest vowel of the Hebrew alphabet. It is the size of a

period. Jesus claimed that the smallest consonant and the smallest vowel in every word of the Old



Testament was directly written by God. Every constant and vowel was spoken without error. None of the Bible will become obsolete until all of the Bible is accomplished and made obsolete.

According to Jesus, it is not just the concepts of the Bible that were written by God but the very words of the Bible, the very letters of the Bible, were directly written by God. He wrote all of them without error. That is a higher view of inspiration than most of us hold, yet it is the kind of confidence in our Bible that God wants us to have.

That brings me to one of my favorite topics. What was Jesus' view of the Old Testament? While some denominations are trying to discard the Old Testament, let's see what Jesus thought about the Old Testament. If I can trust

Jesus to save my soul, I better be able to trust what Jesus said about the trustworthiness and reliability of the Old Testament.

What was Jesus' view of the Old Testament?

As we see what Jesus said about the trustworthiness of the Old Testament, let me simply summarize it this way. In every reference Jesus made to the Old Testament, he claimed everything was 100 percent literal and 100 percent true.

Jesus affirmed the authority of the Old Testament.

When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, he rebuked Satan by quoting from the Old Testament. He claimed the words of Old Testament were so authoritative that he could send Satan running simply by quoting them.

When Jesus' disciples were charged with breaking the Sabbath, Jesus again quoted from the Old Testament as authoritative justification for why his disciples were allowed to eat grain on the Sabbath.

In Jesus' mind, it didn't matter if it was a demonic attack or human attack, the Old Testament was authoritative and powerful enough to quote and send his opponents running

Jesus claimed the Old Testament was written by both divine and human authorship. He recognized Moses, David, Isaiah, and Daniel as the human authors of those biblical books but he also claimed the Old Testament was written by God.

Jesus claimed every word of the Old Testament was flawlessly written by God.

In John 10:34-35, Jesus defended his claim to deity by directing his opponents to one phrase from Psalm 82:6 and reminding his opponents that the Scriptures cannot be broken.

...Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? John 10:33–36 (ESV)

When the Sadducees challenged Jesus on the subject of the resurrection because they claimed there was no such thing as life after death, Jesus defeated them by quoting one verse from the Old Testament. In that verse about the patriarchs, he pointed out that the tense of one verb in that verse was present tense. That means the patriarchs are still alive and there is life after death.

'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." Matthew 22:32 (ESV)

It is not "I was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." It is "I *am* the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." The patriarchs are still alive even though they are dead. These are the very words of God. They cannot be wrong. Jesus claimed that it is not just the words, consonants, and vowels of the Old Testament but also the very tenses of the verbs were written by God. They are completely authoritative and exactly what God wanted to say without error.

Jesus was so confident the words of the Old Testament were authoritative that when it came to the night of his betrayal, he told his disciples they would all fall away from him because God the Father had prophetically said that would

happen ahead of time in Zechariah 13:7. If God said it would happen that way, he knew it would happen that way.

Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ Matthew 26:31 (ESV)

Jesus claimed every person and event in the Old Testament was historically true.

Every time Jesus referenced an individual or event in the Old Testament, he claimed what the Old Testament said about them was 100 percent literal and accurate.

Jesus considered Adam and Eve to be historically true.

Jesus confirmed the historical account of the creation of Adam and Eve when he discussed the topic of divorce. Jesus rested his entire teaching on the nature and permanence of marriage by teaching about God’s creation of marriage in Genesis 1 and 2. Jesus treated Adam and Eve as real historical people and the creation account of Genesis 1 and 2 as a real historical event.

He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?” Matthew 19:4–5 (ESV)

God created Adam and Eve. God also created the institution of marriage. The state didn’t create the institution of marriage. In Genesis, God created the institution of marriage.

Jesus considered Noah, the ark, and the flood to be historically true.

Jesus affirmed the historicity of Noah and the flood and both of them as actual historical events, not myth or legend or a story of principle devoid of factual truth.

Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.
Luke 17:26–27 (ESV)

Jesus also referenced as real historical people Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Lot and his wife, Moses, David, Solomon, and Elijah --- just to name a few.

Jesus affirmed Jonah, and his three days in the belly of a fish, to be historically true.

Jesus also referenced Jonah as a real historical person. His being swallowed by a great fish and surviving in the belly of that fish for three days and nights Jesus considered an actual historical event.

But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.”
Matthew 12:39–41 (ESV)

Earlier we heard Adam Hamilton tell us that it doesn't matter if Jonah was swallowed by a great fish. Hamilton said it didn't matter if Jonah was a real historical person. Hamilton is dead wrong! It does matter! If Jonah wasn't a real historical person, Jesus was lying. If Jonah was not literally in the belly of a great fish for three days, then Jesus did not need to literally be in the heart of the earth for three days.

Remember that every reference Jesus made to every single person in the Old Testament, he considered historically true.

Amazingly, it is the most miraculous events, the ones we would consider least likely to be literal, that Jesus considered as definitely literal.

Jesus affirmed the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven to be historically true.

For instance, take the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah when God rained down fire from heaven because of the citizens' pursuit of homosexual relations. Many people today try to say fire from heaven on those two cities is just legend, not historical fact. Fire from heaven as judgment for sin didn't literally happen. Jesus didn't see it that way. He considered God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven to be literal.

Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town. Matthew 10:15 (ESV)

Jesus affirmed that God fed a nation for 40 years with bread from heaven to be historically true.

Sometimes we are told that the miraculous feeding of the Israelites by manna from heaven that came consistently for 40 years is just historical fiction. How could God bring bread from heaven for a nation six days a week but miraculously not provide any of it on the seventh day of the week? Modern biblical critics consider the six days on with one day off regarding manna from heaven to be legend. Not according to Jesus. According to Jesus, all of that is historical fact.

Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. John 6:49 (ESV)

Jesus claimed his words are no less authoritative than the words of the Old Testament.

Jesus claimed his own words were not just his own words but they were his Father's words. When he spoke, he spoke words given him by his heavenly father. He claimed his own words were no less authoritative than the Old Testament!

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. John 14:10 (ESV)

The Old Testament claimed that because it contained God's very words, it would endure forever.

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. Isaiah 40:8 (ESV)

Jesus made the same claim about his own words. They will last forever.

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. Mark 13:31 (ESV)

Jesus clearly viewed the Old Testament as God the Father's very words. He viewed it as completely accurate when it describes people --- all of them are historically true. When the Old Testament describes events, no matter how miraculous, Jesus considered all of them factually true. If we can trust Jesus to save our souls, we can trust what he said about the Bible.

Let's widen out the lens a bit. Instead of just looking at the way Jesus viewed the Old Testament, let's see how other New Testament authors viewed the Old Testament.

How did the other writers of the New Testament treat the Old Testament?

Paul considered Adam and Eve to be the first humans. He considered them specially created by God.

Paul shut down the possibility of evolution. Forget arguing about evolution from Genesis 1 and 2. Paul considered Adam and Eve as the first human beings. Paul considered Adam and Eve to be specially created by God, not evolved. Paul considered the creation story of Adam and Eve to be factual history, not pointless poetry.

For Adam was **formed** first, then Eve... 1 Timothy 2:13 (ESV)

Adam was made first by God. Eve was then made from Adam's side. According to Paul, that is factual history, not fictional history. In fact, the order in the creation story, according to Paul, has a great deal to say about the way a husband and wife are to relate to one another in marriage.

For man was not **made** from woman, but woman from man. 1 Corinthians 11:8 (ESV)

Again Paul affirmed a real historical Adam and Eve. They didn't evolve from apes. They were created by God. Eve was created in a separate special creation event from Adam's side. As the Bible says, for a while, Adam was alone. If you think any different, you are disagreeing with Jesus and the apostle Paul.

So many times in Christian circles I see Christians mired in debate over Genesis 1 and 2. They try to dumb down the plain text of the creation event to blend creation and evolution together. To them I would simply say, if Jesus and Paul considered the creation of Adam and Eve as special creation events and as separate creation events, and they considered the plain teaching of Genesis 1 and 2 to be literally true, why won't we accept the rest of the creation story as

literally true? Is it because we don't trust our Bible? Is it because we don't have the same confidence in the Bible as Jesus had, as Paul had?

They considered Noah and the flood to be historically true.

The writer of Hebrews treated Noah as a historically real person.

By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household... Hebrews 11:7 (ESV)

Peter, in his two letters, also saw Noah and the rest of his family as historically real people and the worldwide flood as a historical fact.

...God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. 1 Peter 3:20 (ESV)

...if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly... 2 Peter 2:5 (ESV)

Peter affirmed the Old Testament truth that at one time the entire human race was reduced to just eight people because of the flood.

They considered the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven to be historically true.

...if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly... 2 Peter 2:6 (ESV)

Peter considered the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from the heavens as a historical fact. The idea of being burned alive is an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly. Peter said that just as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah for their sin was a real historical fact, that is an example of the lake of fire where the ungodly will eternally face torment. Hell is just as real as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

So just as Jesus treated the people and the events of the Old Testament as 100 percent historically and literally true, the rest of the New Testament authors also treated the Old Testament people and events as historically and factually and trustworthy.

Can we trust the Bible not just when it speaks about the past but when it speaks about the future?

Since the Bible claims the people and events of the past are literally true, that means we should expect what the Bible says about the future to also be literally true.

When the Bible speaks of Jesus returning, we have every reason to be confident he will return. When the Bible speaks about a judgment of our works, we have every reason to believe that is true. When the Bible says our eternal state rests on how we respond to Jesus, we should be confident that is true.

If we can trust Jesus to save our souls, we should be able to trust what he said about the past and the future.

Since Jesus told us we can have complete confidence about what the Bible says about the past, we must also have complete confidence in what the Bible says about the future.

Since the Bible gives us prophecies that have already been accurately fulfilled in the past, we should be confident that what the Bible prophetically says about the future will also be accurately fulfilled.

To wrap up our study, rather than just showing you more biblical fact of biblical prophecy's fulfillment in the past, let me just unpack one of those prophecies for you to show you the accuracy and precision involved in the Bible's prophecies about the future. Let's look at one prophecy found in Ezekiel 26-28. It is the prophecy about the destruction of the city of Tyre. Tyre was a Phoenician

stronghold. Tyre was a significant city. It was a large city on the coast of Phoenicia, an area know today as Palestine. It was not just a coastal city but part of the city was an island a half mile off shore. Here is how the prophecy about its destruction begins.

“Son of man, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem, ‘Aha, the gate of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste...’ ” Ezekiel 26:2 (ESV)

In other words, because Tyre mocked Jerusalem when it went through hard times, God turned himself against Tyre and promised to destroy it.

...therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. They shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers, and I will scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock. She shall be in the midst of the sea a place for the spreading of nets, for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD. And she shall become plunder for the nations, and her daughters on the mainland shall be killed by the sword. Then they will know that I am the LORD. Ezekiel 26:3–6 (ESV)

God promised to bring many nations against Tyre, like the sea brings up its waves. He promised her walls would be destroyed. He promised her towers would be broken down. Her very soil would be scraped from her to make her a bare rock. She would be nothing more than a rock for fisherman to dry out their nets in the sea on. God continued, and he gave specific details about her destruction.

“For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, and with horsemen and a host of many soldiers. He will kill with the sword your daughters on the mainland. He will set up a siege wall against you and throw up a mound against you, and raise a roof of shields against you. He will direct the shock of his battering rams against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. His horses will be so many that their dust will cover you... Your stones and timber and soil they will cast into the midst of the waters... I will make you a bare rock. You shall be a place for the spreading of nets. You shall

never be rebuilt, for I am the LORD; I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD.
Ezekiel 26:7–14 (ESV)

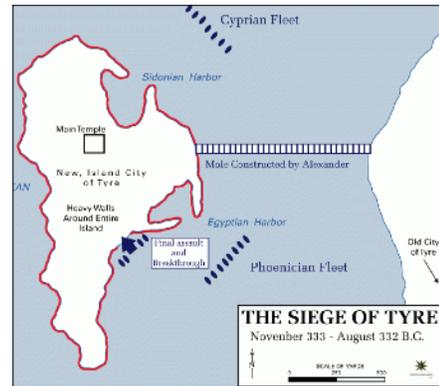
That is pretty detailed stuff. That is not a general prophecy. That is specific prophecy. God even named the king that would destroy her. The destruction of this city was hard to fathom. The walls around the city were 150 feet high and 15 feet thick.

Three years after this prophecy was given, Nebuchadnezzar began a 13-year siege of the city. He cut off everything going into and out of the coastal city to starve the people to death. After 13 years, the people finally surrendered. Nebuchadnezzar broke down the walls and destroyed the city, just like God prophetically said through Ezekiel.

The problem was when Nebuchadnezzar broke into the city, the treasures of the city were gone. The people relocated them to an island half mile off the coast to the island city of Tyre. Nebuchadnezzar didn't have a Navy so he was stuck. Half of the prophecy was fulfilled. The coastal city of Tyre was destroyed but the island portion of the city continued to flourish for the next 250 years. Did God's prophecy about the city's demise fail? Absolutely not.

After 250 years, a 24-year-old guy by the name of Alexander the Great came to the city. He had 33,000 infantry and 15,000 cavalry. He had just defeated the Persians and was on his way to Egypt. He asked the island city of Tyre for supplies for his horses and army. The people of Tyre refused to help him. They weren't worried about offending him. After all, Alexander the Great didn't have a Navy. There was no way he could attack their island city. If you know Alexander the Great from history, one thing you didn't want to do was get him

angry. He came up with a way to attack the island city that the people of Tyre didn't expect. He pushed all the rubble and earth from the destroyed coastal city on the mainland into the ocean, building a 200-foot wide by 2,000-foot long road from the main land to the island in the sea. In the process he scraped the destroyed



coastal city down to bare rock, just like God said would happen through Ezekiel. How would Alexander get over the walls of the island city that were 150 feet high? He built massive 165-foot-high towers on wheels that had a bridge on them. He pushed them on the causeway to the island, let down the drawbridge in the top of them and his soldiers walked right in. It only took him only seven months to capture the island city. He killed 8,000 while conquering the city. He executed another 7,000 once he went into the city. He sold the remaining 30,000 people into slavery. The he destroyed the island city, scraping it bare. The destruction of Tyre happed just as the Bible said it would, accurate in every detail.

That is only one Old Testament prophecy that was fulfilled in every detail. There are others, such as the prophecy about the destruction of Ninevah, the prophecy about the destruction of Babylon, and the prophecy about the destruction of Samaria. All of those prophecies were fulfilled in every detail.

My friends, if the Bible has never proven wrong when it has spoken prophetically about things that are now fulfilled in the past, there is no reason to

think the Bible will be wrong when it speaks prophetically about the way things will unfold in the future.

When the Bible tells us we are fully forgiven by Jesus, we know that is true. When the Bible tells us the most important thing in this world is how we respond to Jesus, we know that is true. We can trust our Bible. Adam Hamilton may claim some parts of the Bible are more true and other parts are less true. The Bible's claim about itself is that it is all true because it is the very words of God. The Bible has prophetically proven to be trustworthy from beginning to end.

Conclusion

In our lifetime, the average person will eat 150 head of cattle, 3,000 chickens, and 310 pigs — depending on how much you like bacon. This summer, while we are busy consuming BBQ, will you join me in eating this book?

As a church, we are taking the Eat This Book challenge. This month the challenge is to join your church family in reading the books of Hebrews and 1 and 2 Thessalonians five days a week. The reading plan cards are in your bulletin. Will you join us in reading, knowing, and loving the Word of God which is completely true?



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, and time with his family. Feel free to contact him at www.Christ2RCulture.com (www.c2rc.com)

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