The Accuracy Of Bible Prophecy

A Collection Of Excerpts
From The Writings Of
Various Authors
On The Accuracy Of Bible Prophecy

I wanted to present some facts about the accuracy of Bible Prophecy so that we understand that our faith is not a blind, emotional faith, but one that is based on the conviction of the truth of the witness of the Spirit in both our spirit and in factual evidence. Many others have already spent much time in collecting the information and researching the data so for time's sake I simply refer the reader to the comments of others on the Scriptures that are available for all to examine for themselves.   I do not know these authors, their personal testimonies or their other views on Bible doctrine.   I endorse their statements that I have printed in this booklet on the accuracy of Bible Prophecy.

**Many references are made to Peter Stoner's book,
"Science Speaks"**

Below are his credentials:

Peter Stoner, June 16, 1888 - March 21, 1980

PETER W. STONER, M.S.
Chairman of the Departments of Mathematics and Astronomy at Pasadena City College until 1953; Chairman of the science division, Westmont College, 1953-57; Professor Emeritus of Science, Westmont College; Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Astronomy, Pasadena City College.

The Accuracy of Prophecy
Dr. David Reagan
http://lamblion.com/articles/articles_bible6.php

The second section of Peter Stoner's book "Science Speaks," is titled "Prophetic Accuracy." This is where the book becomes absolutely fascinating. One by one, he takes major Bible prophecies concerning cities and nations and calculates the odds of their being fulfilled. The first is a prophecy in Ezekiel 26 concerning the city of Tyre. Seven prophecies are contained in this chapter which was written in 590 BC:

1. Nebuchadnezzar shall conquer the city (vs. 7-11).

2. Other nations will assist Nebuchadnezzar (v. 3).

3. The city will be made like a bare rock (vs. 4 & 14).

4. It will become a place for the spreading of fishing nets (vs. 5 & 14).

5. Its stones and timbers will be thrown into the sea (v.12).

6. Other cities will fear greatly at the fall of Tyre (v. 16).

7. The old city of Tyre will never be rebuilt (v. 14).

Four years after this prophecy was given, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Tyre. The siege lasted 13 years. When the city finally fell in 573 BC, it was discovered that everything of value had been moved to a nearby island.

Two hundred and forty-one years later Alexander the Great arrived on the scene. Fearing that the fleet of

Tyre might be used against his homeland, he decided to take the island where the city had been moved to. He accomplished this goal by building a causeway from the mainland to the island, and he did that by using all the building materials from the ruins of the old city. Neighboring cities were so frightened by Alexander's conquest that they immediately opened their gates to him. Ever since that time, Tyre has remained in ruins and is a place where fishermen spread their nets.

Thus, every detail of the prophecy was fulfilled exactly as predicted. Stoner calculated the odds of such a prophecy being fulfilled by chance as being 1 in 75,000,000, or 1 in 7.5×10^7. (The exponent 7 indicates that the decimal is to be moved to the right seven places.) Stoner proceeds to calculate the probabilities of the prophecies concerning Samaria, Gaza and Ashkelon, Jericho, Palestine, Moab and Ammon, Edom, and Babylon. He also calculates the odds of prophecies being fulfilled that predicted the closing of the Eastern Gate (Ezekiel 44:1-3), the plowing of Mount Zion (Micah 3:12), and the enlargement of Jerusalem according to a prescribed pattern (Jeremiah 31:38-40).

Combining all these prophecies, he concludes that "the probability of these 11 prophecies coming true, if written in human wisdom, is... 1 in 5.76×10^{59}. Needless to say, this is a number beyond the realm of possibility.

The Old Testament prophets indeed spoke some amazing predictions, and we will examine only a few of these in the following paragraphs.

In Jeremiah 25:9-13ff, the prophet Jeremiah predicted that Judah (the Southern Kingdom of Israel) would be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Furthermore, it was told that the land of Judah would be desolate, Judah would be destroyed, and its inhabitants would endure 70 years of Babylonian captivity. History has proven that each of these events came to pass in the fourth and fifth centuries, B.C., just as predicted.

In 1 Kings 22, the prophet Micaiah predicted that Ahab (the king of Israel, the Northern Kingdom of Israel) would be killed in battle. Jehoshaphat (the king of Judah, the Southern Kingdom of Israel) helped Ahab attack Assyria. 400 of Ahab's prophets said he would win. Micaiah said they would lose, and that Ahab would die, and that if these things did not happen, then he is a liar and not a prophet. Israel lost, as Micaiah predicted, but Ahab tried to trick Micaiah by disguising himself in Jehoshaphat's clothes. A soldier shot a random arrow which struck Ahab through a hole in his armor, and he died, as Micaiah had predicted.

In Isaiah 36, Hezekiah said that Senacharib would hear a rumor, return home, and be killed. Again, all of these events occurred.

In Isaiah 39:5-7, the Babylonian captivity was correctly predicted, 100 years in advance.

In Isaiah 12:19-21, 150 years in advance, Isaiah predicted that Babylon would be conquered by the Medes,

and that Babylon would never again arise as a world power. This was in spite of Babylon's having a tremendous civilization, including the hanging gardens, one of the seven wonders of the world. Babylon also had running water, paved streets, streetlights, and a 150-foot wall around the city which was wide enough for three chariots to race side-by-side on it.

Jeremiah also predicted 70 years of captivity in Babylon, and that Babylon would then fall, in spite of the protection offered by the great Euphrates River. To penetrate this otherwise safe fortress, the Medes devised a clever plan and diverted the river. They conquered Babylon, and all of these prophecies were fulfilled.

In Isaiah 44:28-45:4 and Ezra 1:1-11, two separate prophets correctly predicted that Cyrus would rebuild Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 26:3-14, 19 offers a truly amazing and detailed prophecy. The city of Tyre (also with 150-foot walls) would fall, the wall would be broken down, the city would be scraped clean like the top of a rock, and it would become a place for fishnets to dry. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it, but he didn't scrape it clean, so it appeared that the prophecy had been wrong. However, the survivors of the city fled to an island one-half mile off shore, called the new Tyre. When Alexander the Great set out to conquer the world, he saw the new Tyre out in the sea. Although he couldn't access it, he was determined to conquer it. He had his men throw the ruins of the old city into the sea, scraping it clean, and building a bridge to the new Tyre, and then he conquered it. On a map today, Tyre jets out into the sea. Today, Tyre is a place where fishnets are dried.

Jonah predicted that Nineveh would be destroyed. It was destroyed so completely that scientists refuted that there ever was a city of Nineveh, until the 19th century when archaeologists dug it up.

Statistics and Probability and the Bible
by John Funk
http://www.raptureready.com/featured/funk/statistics-probability.html

<u>Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled in One Person:</u>

1. Betrayed by a friend. (Psalms 41:9; Matthew 26:49).
2. Thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:15).
3. Betrayal money cast to the floor of the temple (Zechariah 11:13; Matthew 27:5).
4. Betrayal money used to buy the potter's field (Zechariah 11:13: Matthew 27:7).
5. Forsaken and deserted by his disciples (Zechariah 13:7; Mark 14:50).
6. Accused by false witnesses (Psalms 35:11; Matthew 26:59-60).
7. Silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 27:12).
8. Wounded and bruised (Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 27:26).
9. Hated without a cause (Psalm 69:4; John 15:25).
10. Struck and spat upon (Isaiah 50:6; Matthew 26:67).
11. Mocked, ridiculed and rejected (Isaiah 53:3; Matthew 27:27-31 and John 7:5, 48).
12. Collapse from weakness (Psalms 109:24-25; Luke 23:26).
13. Taunted with specific words (Psalms 22:6-8; Matthew 27:39-43).
14. People will shake their heads at Him (Psalms 109:25; Matthew 27:39).

15. People will stare at Him (Psalms 22:17; Luke 23:35).
16. Executed among "sinners" (Isaiah 53:12; Matthew 27:38).
17. Hands and feet will be pierced (Psalms 22:16; Luke 23:33).
18. Will pray for his persecutors (Isaiah 53:12; Luke 23:34).
19. Friends and family will stand afar off and watch (Psalms 38:11; Luke 23:49).
20. Garments will be divided and won by the casting of lots (Psalms 22:18; John 19:23-24).
21. Will thirst (Psalms 69:21; John 19:28).
22. Will be given gall and vinegar (Psalms 69:21; Matthew 27:34).
23. Will commit Himself to God (Psalms 31:5; Luke 23:46).
24. Bones will be left unbroken (Psalms 34:20; John 19:33).
25. Heart will rupture (Psalm 22:14; John 19:34).
26. Side will be pierced (Zechariah 12:10; John 19:34).
27. Darkness will come over the land at midday (Amos 8:9; Matthew 27:45).
28. Will be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60).
29. Will die 438 years after the declaration of Artaxerxes to rebuild the temple in 444 BC (Daniel 9:24).
30. Will be raised from the dead (Psalms 16:10; Acts 2:31), ascend to heaven (Psalms 68:18; Acts 1:9) and be seated at the right hand of God in full majesty and authority (Psalms 110:1; Hebrews 1:3).

Professor Peter W. Stoner who authored "Science Speaks" stated that the probability of just eight particular prophecies being fulfilled in one person is 1 in 10^{17}, i.e. 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000). The eight prophecies used in the calculation were:

1. Messiah is to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; fulfilled in Matt. 2:1-7; John 7:42; Luke 2:47).
2. Messiah is to be preceded by a Messenger (Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; fulfilled in Matthew 3:1-3; 11:10; John 1:23; Luke 1:17).
3. Messiah is to enter Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9; fulfilled in Luke 35-37; Matthew 21:6-11).
4. Messiah is to be betrayed by a friend (Psalms 41:9; 55:12-14; fulfilled in Matthew 10:4; 26:49-50; John 13:21).
5. Messiah is to be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; fulfilled in Matthew 26:15; 27:3).
6. The money for which Messiah is sold is to be thrown "to the potter" in God's house (Zechariah 11:13; fulfilled in Matthew 27:5-7).
7. Messiah is to be silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7; fulfilled in Matthew 27:12).
8. Messiah is to be executed by crucifixion as a thief (Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; Isaiah 53:5,12; fulfilled in Luke 23:33; John 20:25; Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:27,28).

This statement was validated by the American Scientific Affiliation. This number has been illustrated as follows:

If we take 1 X 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?

Professor Stoner went on to consider 48 prophecies and says, "… We find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10^{157}.

"This is a really large number and it represents an extremely small chance. Let us try to visualize it. The silver dollar, which we have been using, is entirely too large. We must select a smaller object. The electron is about as small an object as we know of. It is so small that it will take 2.5 times 10^{15} of them laid side by side to make a line, single file, one inch long. If we were going to count the electrons in this line one inch long, and counted 250 each minute, and if we counted day and night, it would take us 19,000,000 years to count just the one-inch line of electrons. If we had a cubic inch of these electrons and we tried to count them it would take us, counting steadily 250 each minute, 19,000,000 times 19,000,000 times 19,000,000 [nineteen million times nineteen million times nineteen million] or 6.9 times 10^{21} years.

This is approximately **the total number of electrons in all the mass of the known universe**. In other words the probability of Jesus Christ fulfilling 48 prophecies is the same as one person being able to pick out one electron out of the entire mass of our universe.

Such is the chance of any one man fulfilling any 48 prophecies. Yet Jesus Christ fulfilled not just 48 prophecies, not just 61 prophecies, but **more than 324 individual prophecies** that the Prophets wrote concerning the Messiah. I haven't been able to find the statistical projection representing the possibility of Jesus Christ fulfilling 324 prophecies but I really don't think it matters given the illustrations set forth above.

Does it really take faith to come to salvation through Jesus Christ? Absolutely but that faith is not a blind faith as some would want you to believe but instead, it is a faith based upon facts. How much faith? Maybe not very much if one really takes the time to look at the facts and take into consideration the statistics and probability of the prophecies concerning the Messiah.

When someone tries to tell you that Christianity is a religious faith based upon ignorant acceptance of certain precepts that have no basis in fact, they are sadly mistaken. Christianity only makes sense.

Given the odds, I wouldn't bet against it. Would you?