

Prophecy and Jesus—Statistical Probabilities

The Old Testament contains hundreds of references to the coming Messiah, all of which were written more than three centuries (and in some cases over 1,000 years) before His birth. Included in these are about 100 major, detailed prophecies relating such things as His place of birth (Micah 5:2), time of birth (Daniel 9:25; Genesis 49:10),

manner of birth (Isaiah 7:14), betrayal, manner of death, the people’s reactions, His piercing and burial. Now what are the chances that such predictions totally beyond the human control of Jesus could accidentally come true?

Josh McDowell in his book *Evidence That Demands A*

Verdict quotes a study of the probabilities published by Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks* to answer this very question. “...We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled [these] eight prophecies is 1 in 10¹⁷.” That is just

1 chance in 100,000,000,000,000,000.

NAVARRE MESSENGER

December 20, 2015



We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre. Call for directions and more information (850) 939-8109

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible Class for all ages_9:00 AM

Morning Worship Service_10:00 AM

Evening Worship Service_6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages_7:00 PM

This entire publication and previous issues are available online at

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Navarre church of Christ

8490 James M Harvell Rd
Navarre, FL 32566

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VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

by Doy Moyer

“In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 7:12).

Think about what this says

regarding “the Law and the Prophets,” then add to this that the Law and the Prophets hang on the two greatest commandments: love God and love others (Matt. 22:36-40).

However we understand the Law and the Prophets, we need to see them

through the interpretation given to them by Christ Himself. All the Law and the Prophets are summed up in the need to love God and to love and treat others properly. Any interpretation of the Law that does not take these into account will be flawed.

Does this include the issues of justice and restitution in the Law? Does this include the death penalty for particular crimes? Does this include various judgments upon the nations who refuse to repent?

Yes, for if the integrity of loving God and others is going to be kept intact, then the Law could not allow society to be held hostage to the crimes and violations of those who act contrary to the image of God in the furtherance of their own evil selfishness. If those who refuse to love God and others are allowed to do whatever they want to the detriment of those who desire to do what is right, then the entire system built on love and respect is undermined and will only deteri-

orate. Freedom is a prized ideal, but when it is used to violate others, then that freedom will either be forfeited to those who are selfish and evil, or it will be lost for those who desire to do good. Justice enacted upon the evildoers, therefore, preserves the integrity of a system built on treating others with love and respect.

Does the New Covenant incorporate these same ideals?

Yes, for Jesus is the fulfillment of all the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:44). The purpose of the Law and the Prophets was not to be an end in themselves, but rather to point to the Messiah who would complete the purpose. While we normally think of this in con-

nection with matters like the temple, the priesthood, and the sacrifices, we should also see the broader scope of what the Law was about. It was a way by which people could live together with honor for both God and fellow human beings. It was a way of life.

Jesus is the greatest example of what it means to love God and others. He is the epitome of the ideal for how to treat others. All that the Law and Prophets had to say about these matters is summed up in the attitudes and actions of Jesus. Notice how Paul points to Jesus as the ideal in his letter to the Philippians:

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind re-

gard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (2:3-5).

Paul then describes what Jesus did. He emptied Himself, took on the form of the servant, and died on the cross. Through Jesus’ humility, He demonstrated how to treat others and how to take the focus off of self. This is the very attitude disciples are to take upon themselves. The way to do this is to look to Jesus and imbibe His mindset.

Paul also writes, “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor

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has fulfilled the law. ... Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law” (Rom. 13:8-10).

The New Covenant carries forward the ideals of loving God and treating others as we want to be treated through love. This must be done freely, and, though freedom is so often abused, Christians especially need to see their actions as having a greater impact on those around them.

“Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it

as bondslaves of God. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king” (1 Pet. 2:16-17).

The greatest defense of the Lord that can be given will be found in the lives of the disciples who are determined to show love for God first, and love for others as a reflection of the love shown by Jesus. Yet, to show the kind of love Jesus exemplified also means that disciples will desire to spread the gospel message as much as possible. If we truly love others, if we really desire to treat others as we want to be treated, then we will pay attention to the need for forgiveness, salvation, and redemption, and we will share the hope of eternal life. “Everything” can be summed up in this.