

Today In Bible Prophecy

Episode 6

The Amazing Predictions Of The Fate Of The Nations

As we have seen in each episode, the evidence is clear that a God exists, the God of the Bible, who has supernaturally explained to us what has already happened in the past, what is taking place right now, and what we should expect in the future.

The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” (Luke 17:5 NIV)

We do all of this to increase your faith and confidence in the Word of God.

Why? So many people today are having a “crisis of faith.” They are either losing faith in the Lord or have lost faith altogether. We are doing these programs with a desire to prevent this from happening.

Christians should be the most confident, excited people in the world because we understand that things are going precisely according to the plan of God!

The following is found in my book *God Wants Us To Know The Future*, Question 1: What Is Bible Prophecy?

As always, this, as well as all of our other books, are available for free downloads at our website educatingourworld.com.

Understanding Bible Prophecy

What is a biblical prophet and what exactly is Bible prophecy? How should we understand these terms?

We can make the following observations:

1. A Prophet Speaks For Someone Else

The Hebrew word translated “prophet” occurs over 300 times in the Old Testament while the Greek word for prophet is used over 100 times in the New Testament.

The English word “prophet” comes from two Greek words *pro* meaning “before” or “in place of” and *pheme* meaning “to speak.”

A prophet, therefore, is someone who speaks in the place of another. The Bible says Aaron was a prophet to Moses:

And the LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet” (Exodus 7:1 ESV).

Moses told God that his lack of eloquence prevented him from being His spokesman. God then told Moses that his brother Aaron could accompany him and be his spokesman to the people as his prophet.

2. A Prophet Is A Spokesman For God

In the Bible, a prophet is a spokesman for God. In fact, God sent and commissioned a prophet so that the words of a prophet are the words of God.

As the priest represented the people to God, the prophet was God's representative to the people. The Bible is exceedingly clear that the words of the prophets were not the product of their own spirit, but came from a higher source—the One True God.

3. The Job Of A Prophet Is The Proclamation Of God's Word

A prophet's message was the proclamation of the Word of God to the people. They were essentially a preacher and a teacher—a person who relays a message from God to humankind. God told the prophet Jeremiah:

But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak . . . But you, dress yourself for work; arise, and say to them everything that I command you. Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them (Jeremiah 1:7,17 ESV).

Jeremiah was to speak those things which the Lord had commanded him to say. In doing so, he was not to be afraid.

Thus, the biblical prophet is one who fearlessly proclaims the Word of the Lord.

4. Prophecy Is Also Predictive

There is also the predictive element in Bible prophecy. If the people did not receive the message of the prophet, then the prophet would predict future events. These events would deal with God's program for His people, including judgment as well as a way to escape the judgment.

Jesus said one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit was to show believers "things to come." We read His words in John's gospel:

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come (John 16.13 ESV).

Bible prophecy, therefore, has both a local and future application. A biblical prophet was both a forthteller of local issues and foreteller of the future. The main message in these prophecies, whether predictive or not, was for the people to follow the Lord.

As we have mentioned, many of the predictions made by the biblical prophets have already been fulfilled in history. Therefore, Bible prophecy is not merely "last days" predictions! In fact,

predictions referring to the time of the end are only a portion of what the Scripture labels as “prophecy.”

Therefore, we should have an understanding of the predictions made and fulfilled in the past when we examine the subject of “last days” Bible prophecy.

This briefly summarizes the nature of Bible prophecy.

With these things in mind, let us now look at some ancient biblical predictions that have had a fulfillment in the past, as well as having a fulfillment in these “last days.”

We title this “The Amazing Predictions of the Fate of the Nations.” This is documented as Sign 2 in our book *25 Signs We Are Near The End*.

Sign 2 As Their Enemies Have Done To Israel So God Will Do To Them

As we have previously mentioned in passing, the Bible promises that the nation of Israel will exist until the time the Lord returns. Furthermore, Scripture also contains warnings for those who will attempt to destroy God’s chosen people.

The Lord has promised punishment, or a curse, upon those who have tried to annihilate Israel. Let’s look at this important passage:

The Lord said to Abram: Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you (Genesis 12:1-3 CSB).

These promises are very specific. Whoever blesses Israel will be blessed by God. On the other hand, if any nation or individual attempts to treat Israel with contempt, God will curse them.

Simply put, as their enemies have done unto Israel, so the Lord will do to them.

Consequently, we are going to look at seven specific predictions that Scripture makes referring to the nations, five of which have been fulfilled in the past and two of them are being fulfilled in our day.

These Predictions Have Been Literally Fulfilled

Again, we are not surprised that these predictions of God’s judgment upon those who have attempted to destroy Israel have literally been fulfilled in the past. This is further evidence that the Lord is in control of history.

Modern Day Warning

We will also discover that these warnings are still in effect to this day. In other words, any modern nation—or individual—that treats Israel with contempt, will be cursed by God.

Let's look at the biblical record...

Edom

The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the older brother of the patriarch Jacob. Historically, the descendants of Esau, the Edomites, have been constant enemies of the nation of Israel.

The Specific Promise Of Their Demise

God had foretold the destruction of the Edomites at the time of Ezekiel.

As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so will I deal with you—you will be desolate, Mount Seir, and all of Edom—all of it! Then they will know that I am the Lord (Ezekiel 35:15 NET).

Let us not miss this specific prediction. When the descendants of Esau cease to exist, then the people will know that the Lord is God.

To sum up, God predicted that the Edomites, the descendants of Esau who were endlessly at war with Israel, would cease to exist as a nation. This warning was literally fulfilled. Indeed, they have disappeared from history.

Ammon

The Ammonites were a Semitic people who were closely related to the Israelites. As we read the early history of Israel, we find a number of references to the Ammonite people. We can summarize what the Bible has to say about them as follows.

The Ammonites had their beginning with Lot, the nephew of Abraham. After Abraham and Lot separated, Lot settled in the city of Sodom. When God destroyed the evil cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness, Lot and his two daughters fled.

Lot's daughters, seemingly thinking they were the only people left on the earth, got their father drunk on two consecutive nights. Each had incestuous relations with him which produced children. The Bible says:

In this way both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father. . . . The younger daughter . . . gave birth to a son and named him Ben-Ammi. He is the ancestor of the Ammonites of today (Genesis 19:37-38 NET).

The Prediction Of The Destruction Of The Ammonites

After centuries of disobeying God, and trying to thwart Israel, the Lord predicted their destruction:

The word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, turn toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them. Say to the Ammonites, 'Hear the word of the sovereign Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says: You said "Aha!" about my sanctuary when it was desecrated, about the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and about the house of Judah when they went into exile. So take note, I am about

to make you slaves of the tribes of the east. They will make camps among you and pitch their tents among you. They will eat your fruit and drink your milk. I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a resting place for sheep. Then you will know that I am the Lord. For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced with intense scorn over the land of Israel, take note, I have stretched out my hand against you, and I will hand you over as plunder to the nations. I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from the lands. I will destroy you; then you will know that I am the Lord” (Ezekiel 25:1-11 NET).

The Ammonites gloated when the Temple was destroyed, the land of Jerusalem desecrated, and the people exiled to Babylon. Consequently, the Lord pronounced judgment upon them.

Again, we have very specific predictions that have been literally fulfilled. The last mention of Ammonites as a separate people was in the second century by Justin Martyr. Sometime during the Roman period, the Ammonites seem to have been absorbed into Arab society. They no longer exist as a distinct people with their own national identity.

In sum, we find another literal fulfillment of the prediction made to Abraham. The Ammonites, who constantly harassed Israel, cease to exist.

In 1839, Alexander Keith, made the following insightful observation.

The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. While the Jews, who were long their hereditary enemies, continue as a distinct people as ever, though dispersed among the nations, no trace of the Ammonites remains; none are now designated by their name nor do any claim their descent from them (Alexander Keith, *Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1839, p. 124).

As we shall see in our next episode, while the Ammonites no longer exist, the Jews, miraculously, are no longer dispersed among the nations.

Moab

Moab was also an offspring of Lot and one of his daughters.

In this way both of Lot’s daughters became pregnant by their father. The older daughter gave birth to a son and named him Moab. He is the ancestor of the Moabites of today (Genesis 19:37-38 NET).

Like the Ammonites, the Moabites were constant enemies of Israel. They did not help Israel when the nation was entering the Promised Land. Judgment was then announced upon them.

Moab Will Cease To Exist

After a long history of harassing Israel, the Lord issued the following judgment against Moab:

This is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘Moab and Seir say, “Look, the house of Judah is like all the other nations.” So look, I am about to open up Moab’s flank, eliminating the cities, including its frontier cities, the beauty of the land. . . I will hand it over, along with the Ammonites, to the tribes

of the east, so that the Ammonites will no longer be remembered among the nations. I will execute judgments against Moab. Then they will know that I am the Lord” (Ezekiel 25:8-11 NET).

The Lord promised to judge Moab. In fact, Moab was to become non-existent like Ammon. This was literally fulfilled when the nation passed out of existence during the Babylonian Exile.

To sum up, history shows us that none of these three nations, these people-groups, kept their national identity as modern-day authors testify.

By the time of Roman rule in the Levant around 63 BC, the people of Ammon, Edom and Moab had lost their distinct identities, and were assimilated into Roman culture (LaBianca, Oystein S.; Younker, Randall W. (1995). *The Kingdoms of Ammon, Moab, and Edom: The Archaeology of Society in Late Bronze/Iron Age Transjordan (Ca. 1400-500 BCE)* in Thomas Levy, *The Archaeology of Society In The Holy Land*, Leicester University Press).

As the Lord predicted, there is no more Ammon, Moab, or Edom!

Philistia

The Philistines were the “sea peoples” who lived on the coast of Israel. Like Edom, Moab, and Ammon, they too detested the Israelites and had continually sought to destroy them (see Judges 13-16; 1 Samuel 4).

The Lord Pronounces Judgment Upon Them

The Philistines also had God’s judgment pronounced upon them.

This is what the sovereign Lord says: “The Philistines have exacted merciless revenge, showing intense scorn in their effort to destroy Judah with unrelenting hostility. So this is what the sovereign Lord says: Take note, I am about to stretch out my hand against the Philistines. I will kill the Cherethites and destroy those who remain on the seacoast. I will exact great vengeance upon them with angry rebukes. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I exact my vengeance upon them” (Ezekiel 25:15-17 NET).

The Lord promised that He would take vengeance upon them for their treatment of His chosen people. They would know that the Lord was God when they experienced His judgment.

There is no record of the Philistines’ existence after the second century B.C., though the name of their cities remained.

Amalek

The Amalekites were a tribe first mentioned during the time of Abraham.

Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar (Genesis 14:7 NIV).

Their destruction was predicted long ago.

Then Balaam saw Amalek and spoke his message: “Amalek was first among the nations, but their end will be utter destruction” (Numbers 24:20 NIV).

Why? These evil people were responsible for the repeated destruction of the Israelites’ land as well as their food supply. Finally, the Lord had had enough. He told King Saul:

This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them (1 Samuel 15:2-3 NIV).

Interestingly, the last mention of an Amalekite is found in the book of Esther. His name was Haman. He was a descendant of the Amalekite king Agag. This evil man attempted to have all the Jews in Persia annihilated by the order of King Xerxes. The Bible records how God miraculously saved the Jews in Persia. In addition, evil Haman, his sons, and the rest of Israel’s enemies were themselves destroyed (Esther 9:5-10).

The Amalekites’ hatred of the Jews and their repeated attempts to eradicate the entire nation had led to their ultimate doom. Their fate should be a warning to all who would attempt to thwart God’s plan, or who would curse the people, Israel, whom God has blessed.

Summing Up The Biblical Predictions On These People Groups

The Bible specifically stated that these five particular people-groups continually harassed Israel. Indeed, each of these endlessly attempted to destroy God’s chosen people. After years and years of trying to thwart the plans of God, the Lord had had enough with each of them.

He predicted that each of them, as a group, would be destroyed. Their names would be obliterated from history.

And, as we observed, these specific predictions were literally fulfilled. Each of these five enemies of Israel have lost their national identity. In other words, they no longer exist as distinct peoples.

There is a valuable lesson in this for all of us. When an individual, or a nation, attempts to thwart the plan of God with respect to the nation of Israel, they will be punished.

Therefore, the Scripture gives us clear precedent that Israel is not to be trifled with.

An Exception: Egypt

Another miraculous prediction of the Bible has to do with the future of Egypt. As one reads the Old Testament, we find that Egypt has historically been an enemy of the people of Israel. Indeed, we read of the years of bondage and suffering Israel spent in Egypt before being set free in the Exodus. The Old Testament records other instances where Egypt warred with the people of God.

Yet, the Lord predicted that Egypt would exist at the time of the end. Moreover, the Bible says that many of the Egyptians will turn to Him in faith:

At that time there will be an altar for the Lord in the middle of the land of Egypt, as well as a sacred pillar dedicated to the Lord at its border. It will become a visual reminder in the land of Egypt of the Lord who commands armies. When they cry out to the Lord because of oppressors, he will send them a deliverer and defender who will rescue them. The Lord will reveal himself to the Egyptians, and they will acknowledge the Lord's authority at that time. They will present sacrifices and offerings; they will make vows to the Lord and fulfill them. The Lord will strike Egypt, striking and then healing them. They will turn to the Lord and he will listen to their prayers and heal them (Isaiah 19:19-22 NET).

Again, we should appreciate what is predicted here. At the time of the end, in the last days, this ancient nation of Egypt will still exist! Moreover, they will experience a time of spiritual revival. In fact, when they are oppressed by their enemies they will cry out to the Lord, and He will listen to their prayers and heal them!

As the Lord has promised, Egypt still does exist. Furthermore, the Christian influence remains in the country to this day. The predictions of the Bible have again been proven to be true.

A Warning For America

This may answer one of the questions that often gets asked about the Bible and the future—where is the United States of America in the last days?

One possible answer is that it will end up like these five enemies of Israel. In other words, it will cease to exist because of its treatment of Israel. While this is certainly not the only possible answer to the question to the future of America, it is something to be considered. We look at this question in more detail in Sign 11.

Summary Of Sign Two

In the first of our “25 Signs of the End,” we found that the Lord has promised Israel that they will always exist, and they still do exist to this day. On the other hand, the Lord also promised vengeance on those nations who would attempt to destroy Israel. All of these predictions of Scripture have been literally fulfilled with respect to the nations God has cursed.

There are at least three reasons as to why this sign is so important with respect to the last days.

First, it shows that when the Lord specifies certain nations for punishment, they will indeed be punished. There is no question about this.

In fact, we have given five examples of people-groups that have had judgment pronounced upon them, Edom, Philistia, Amalek, Moab, and Ammon. As Scripture predicted, none of these people-groups still exist. They have all lost their national identity. Furthermore, the Bible says that these predictions were made so that the world would recognize that the Lord was God.

Second, while Egypt has been a mortal enemy of Israel from the very beginning, the Bible says that they will not only exist in the last days, they will experience a national conversion. As the Bible predicted, Egypt does exist to this very day.

Thus, coupled with what we mentioned previously about Israel still existing in the last days, we find that of these seven nations mentioned in Scripture, two of them, Israel, and Egypt, as predicted, still exist at the time of the end.

On the other hand, these other five evil nations, as the Bible also predicted, no longer exist. This is not a coincidence.

Third, this warning about punishment of those nations, who attempt to destroy Israel, may help us explain why the United States is not a player in the “last days” scenario.

Indeed, if the United States turns its back upon Israel, to the place that it might cause their potential destruction, then the nation will be punished. This is one of the possible outcomes as to why we do not find the United States in Bible prophecy. Only time will tell.

As we have emphasized in our recent headline, unfortunately, the United States is on that path of self-destruction. We will have much more to say about this in future episodes.