

James Goll: Are These 129 Fulfilled Prophecies the Key to Revival?

As I compose this message, there is a growing conviction in my heart—the body of Christ needs a fresh reintroduction to Jesus as Messiah! In the church at large in recent years, there has been a good deal of necessary teaching about the Holy Spirit's gifts and empowering activity. There has also been a resurgence of amazing revelation of God as a good, good Father. My own life has greatly benefited from both of these revelations and teaching emphases.

But recently, my heart has been turned anew towards the man Christ Jesus—salvation, a burden for souls and the “great harvest.” Many charismatic churches do not even offer an invitation to meet Jesus anymore. Altar calls are given to get healed, be filled with the Spirit or receive a prophetic word. But if we are going to have another “Jesus Movement” and harvest of souls, it is vital that we talk about the centrality of Jesus, the completed work of the cross and the reality of eternity.

Did you know that there are at least 129 biblical prophecies concerning the first advent of Christ Jesus the Messiah, His coming to earth as a baby and his ministry? As Acts 3:24 accurately states, “Indeed, all the prophets since Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold these days.” Twice that number of additional Old Testament prophecies also talk about His Second Advent or coming.

Jesus, Fulfilling Messianic Prophecy

With this in mind, I want to take you on a quick journey through the scriptural promises about Jesus and how He

fulfilled a staggering number of Messianic prophecies.

Virgin Birth

Isaiah boldly prophesied that God would send a Son and that He would be conceived in the womb of a young woman who had never had sexual intercourse: “The Lord Himself shall give you a sign: The virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14). He got it exactly right.

What happened? A young woman—just a teenager really—named Mary in the town of Nazareth, betrothed to an older man named Joseph but still living with her parents, had a startling visit from the archangel Gabriel. The Son of God was born to a young woman who had never known a man, a virgin mother.

Born in Bethlehem

Even the name of the village where Mary would give birth to the Messiah appeared in prophecy. Micah got that one: “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, although you are small among the tribes of Judah, for you will come forth for Me one who will be ruler over Israel. His origins are from of old, from ancient days” (Mic. 5:2).

A Son Shall Be Born

The prophecies were detailed about everything; this baby would be born to a virgin and she would go into labor in the village of Bethlehem. And the baby would be a boy, a son. Prophets could have predicted that an angel would be coming to earth. But Isaiah narrowed it down to a male child, and he gave him many names to show His importance to the world: “for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

Slaughter of the Little Children

It wasn't long before Herod caught up with them—or thought he did. To eliminate any chance that a child could grow up to rival him, he sent soldiers to tear out of their mothers' arms all male babies under the age of 2 and to kill them with their blood-spattered swords.

By then, Jesus and his parents were far away in Egypt, Joseph having been warned in a dream to flee (See Matt. 2:13-14). But the weeping prophet's prophecy had been fulfilled: "Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they are no more" (Jer. 31:15).

Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from 2 years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi.

Messiah's Ministry of Teaching and Miracles

Moving on to prophecies concerning Jesus' ministry after He grew up, here again, I can only choose a representative sampling. Many, many prophecies speak in detail about His teaching and miracles. It always makes my heart melt with love for Him to read about His compassion toward people in need.

Healing Blind Eyes

In Isaiah's prophecy about the Messiah, he predicted, "the eyes of the blind will be opened" (a).

Jesus' followers recollected these words as His ministry got underway and the word started to see fulfillment. One of the most memorable healings occurred in Jericho, where a blind beggar named Bartimaeus learned that Jesus of Nazareth would be passing by. Somehow Bartimaeus knew that this was going to

be his big chance. Turning his sightless eyes in the direction of the road, he cried out,

When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Many ordered him to keep silent. But he cried out even more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. So they called the blind man, saying, "Be of good comfort. Rise, He is calling you." Throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

Jesus answered him, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

The blind man said to Him, "Rabbi, that I might receive my sight."

Jesus said to him, "Go your way. Your faith has made you well." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the way (Mark 10:47-52).

Blind Bartimaeus did not care what other people thought or said. He was going to grab healing while it might be available. He was going to shout loudly enough to be heard over the crowd's noise level. Beggars are never worried about social protocol. And his bold request was fully granted. From then on, I'm sure he never begged another day of his life.

Teaching in Parables

I have only begun to pull out the Old Testament prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. One that is mentioned less frequently than others is this one: "I will open my mouth in a parable" (Ps. 78:2a).

Who opened His mouth almost always in parables? The Messiah, Yeshua. After recording some of His teaching, Matthew

reported: "Jesus said all these things to the crowd in parables. And without a parable He did not speak to them, to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet" (Matt. 13:34-35a).

This was His ministry style, and it made Him able to teach truth with many layers of meaning that could reach many different people. By teaching in veiled parables, he creates an earnest longing in us to lure us into a passionate pursuit of God Himself.

Proclaiming the Good News

The prophets knew that the Messiah would proclaim the Good News, although nobody could anticipate what His complete message would entail. And they knew that someone special would appear beforehand to clear the way. Both Isaiah and Malachi spoke of this: The voice of him who cries out,

"Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low, and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rough places a plain" (Isa 40:3-4). "I will send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. He is coming, says the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. 3:1).

They pictured a forerunner, a messenger who would be long-expected (in part due to their prophecies) but who, when he appeared at last, would seem to have come suddenly out of nowhere. In the same way, the "Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple," as Malachi predicted. He did, and He still does.

Preaching to the Poor

When He appeared on the scene, where did Jesus go first? To the kings' palaces or governors' halls? No, He went wherever His feet could take Him, and he stopped along the way again

and again to bless the poorest and most helpless ones. He is the original one who stopped for the one. He expressed the Father's love to them in the most fitting and "real" ways, healing their diseases, feeding their hungry stomachs, binding up their broken hearts—just as Isaiah had prophesied 700 years earlier: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound" (Isa. 61:1).

He "proclaimed liberty to the captives" openly, in spite of the negative reactions of the authorities and of the ordinary people who were rattled by His unprecedented deeds. He was passionate about whatever He did during his ministry, and that's because He is such a *lover*. He loves people, especially downtrodden ones, the poor, the oppressed, the captives.

Riding on a Donkey

We are accustomed to hearing both the Gospel accounts about Jesus and the prophetic words that apply to Him, to the point that we fail to recognize how unusual some of the prophetic words are. For example, this one: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! And cry aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

See, your king is coming to you; he is righteous and able to deliver, he is humble and riding on a donkey, a colt, the offspring of a donkey" (Zech. 9:9).

Who would prophesy that a king (*the* King) would choose such a humble means of transport? This scene is always called the triumphal entry, but I think it should be called the humble entry. Conquering kings don't enter cities riding bareback on a young donkey. A king would parade through the city gate on the back of a stallion with trumpets sounding, wouldn't you expect? The entire life and ministry of Jesus went and still goes cross-current to the pompous ways of man—and we love Him for it.

Billion-Soul Harvest and Jesus People Movement

There are many more fulfilled prophetic words, about 300 altogether. Just reviewing this selection of prophecies about the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us makes me reflect with wonder and joy at the magnitude of God's plan. A whisper of gratitude rises from deep inside me and it grows into a shout of praise for this God—who makes Himself known to us in small and great ways every day of our lives.

Yes, Jesus is the Messiah and savior of the world. If the body of Christ is going to see a great billion-soul harvest and a new Jesus People Movement, we must reacquaint ourselves with the central figure, Jesus the Messiah!