

Fulfilled Prophecies in the Bible

Here is a short list of some of the fulfilled prophecies in the Bible. These prophecies stand out because of their specificity, historical confirmation, and the length of time between prediction and fulfillment. Where possible, we've included estimates of the statistical odds—though such figures can only be approximations.

1. Prophecy of the Destruction of Tyre

- **Prophecy:** Ezekiel 26:3–14 (written ~590 BC)
- **Fulfilled:** Partially by Nebuchadnezzar (~573 BC), fully by Alexander the Great (~332 BC)
- **Details:**
 - Nebuchadnezzar attacked mainland Tyre.
 - Alexander built a causeway using rubble and destroyed the island city.
 - The site was scraped bare like a rock, used for drying nets.
- **Gap:** ~250 years

Ezekiel 26:3–14 contains several specific declarations against the Phoenician city of Tyre, delivered by the prophet Ezekiel. Key elements of the prophecy include:

- **Many Nations:** Tyre would be attacked by “many nations,” not just one power (v.3).
- **Destruction of Walls and Towers:** Tyre’s defensive structures would be destroyed (v.4).
- **Scraping to Bare Rock:** The city would be scraped so bare that only rock remained (v.4).
- **Site Used for Spreading of Nets:** The site would become a place for fishermen to dry their nets (v.5, v.14).
- **Plunder for Nations:** Tyre would become “spoil” or plunder for nations (v.5).
- **Mainland Settlements Ravaged:** “Daughters” (settlements) on the mainland would be slain (v.6).
- **Specific Attack by Nebuchadnezzar:** Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, is identified as the initial agent of destruction (vv.7–11).
- **Debris Thrown into the Sea:** The city's stones, timbers, and rubble would be thrown into the water (v.12).
- **Never Rebuilt:** Tyre would “never be rebuilt” (v.14).

Fulfillment in History

Nebuchadnezzar’s Siege (585–573 BCE):

Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for 13 years. He destroyed the mainland city, leaving the island part largely intact. This matches the prophecy's note that "many nations" would be involved and that only partial fulfillment occurred at that stage.

Alexander the Great's Conquest (332 BCE):

Alexander famously built a causeway from the mainland to the island using debris from the ruined city—literally "throwing the stones, timber, and rubble into the sea"—to reach and conquer Tyre. This unique event fits the prophecy with remarkable specificity.

Later Destructions:

Tyre faced repeated conquest and destruction by waves of subsequent empires, including the Greeks, Romans, and eventually the Mamluks and Saracens, with the city being left in ruins or reduced in status, never regaining its former glory.

Spreading of Nets:

The site of ancient Tyre eventually became a place for fishermen to spread their nets, as described in the prophecy.

[Timing: Years Before the Events](#)

The prophecy is dated to the "eleventh year" (Ezek. 26:1), interpreted as 586 BCE.

Nebuchadnezzar's siege began a year or two later (585 BCE).

Alexander's destruction occurred ~250 years after Ezekiel's prophecy.

[Probabilities: Odds of Fulfillment](#)

Mathematician Peter Stoner calculated (conservatively) that the odds of all these details happening by random chance are about **1 in 75,000,000**.

Other sources have cited similar odds, ranging from 1 in 25,000 to 1 in 75 million.

The specificity (many nations, scraping to bare rock, materials thrown in the sea, never rebuilt, used for drying nets) makes this prophecy far more detailed than typical ancient oracles.

Summary Table

Prophecy Element	Fulfillment Status	Notes/Objections
Many nations attack Tyre	Fulfilled	Babylon, Greeks, Romans, others
Walls/towers destroyed	Fulfilled (mainland)	Island city survived until Alexander
Scraped to bare rock	Fulfilled (mainland)	Alexander used debris for causeway
Materials thrown into sea	Fulfilled	Unique causeway construction
Place for fishermen's nets	Fulfilled	Ancient Tyre site used for net drying
Never rebuilt	Fulfilled	While a modern city named Tyre exists near the old city. The original city is still in ruins to this day. Tyre never regained its prominence
Occurred centuries after prophecy	Fulfilled	Alexander's siege 250 yrs later

2. Fall of Babylon

- **Prophecy:** Isaiah 13:19–22; 14:23; Jeremiah 51:37 (written ~700–600 BC)
- **Fulfilled:** Fall to Medes and Persians (539 BC); ruins abandoned by ~1st century AD
- **Details:**

- Predicted destruction and perpetual desolation.
 - Named the Medes as the destroyers (Isaiah 13:17).
- **Gap:** 150–200 years

Isaiah 13:19–22

- Babylon will be overthrown like Sodom and Gomorrah (13:19).
- It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations (13:20).
- No nomads (“Arabian”) will pitch tent there, nor shepherds rest their flocks (13:20).
- Wild animals (jackals, owls, ostriches, hyenas) will inhabit its ruins (13:21–22).

Isaiah 14:23

- Babylon will be turned “into swampland...a possession for porcupines/hedgehogs” and swept with “the broom of destruction.”
- No remnant, descendants, or successors will remain.

Jeremiah 51:37

Babylon will become “a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and scorn, without inhabitant.”

[Fulfillment of These Prophecies](#)

Fall of Babylon: Babylon was conquered by Cyrus the Great in 539BC. The capture was relatively peaceful at first, but subsequent rebellions (notably in 521BC and 482BC) led to destruction and depopulation. Temples and city fortifications were destroyed, and the city entered decline.

Desolation and Ruin: Archaeological and historical evidence shows that, although Babylon was inhabited for some time after its conquest, it did eventually become mostly deserted. By the early centuries AD, it was largely in ruins, matching the language of “haunt of jackals” and “no inhabitant.” Parts of ancient Babylon are covered by swamps and, due to the water table, some ruins are submerged, aligning with the reference to “swampland”.

Wild Animals & Ruins: Modern archaeological records indicate the ancient site is uninhabited and home to various wild animals, aligning with the prophecies.

[Years Between Prophecy and Fulfillment](#)

Isaiah’s Prophecies: Generally dated between 740–681BC. The fall of Babylon occurred in 539BC, meaning Isaiah’s words preceded the conquest **by about 150–200 years**.

Jeremiah’s Prophecies: Written in the late 7th and early 6th century BC, around the reign of King Zedekiah (597–586BC). Thus, **Jeremiah spoke roughly 50–60 years before the primary fulfillment**.

Statistical Odds of Fulfillment

Some Christian apologists estimate the probability of these sweeping, detailed predictions about Babylon's fate (centuries before the event) as extremely low if by chance. One published estimate puts the fulfillment at 1 in 10^5 (one in 100,000).

Summary Table

Prophecy Passage	Content/Claim	Fulfillment	Time Interval
Isaiah 13:19–22	Complete destruction, no return	Babylon ruined/desolate over time	150–200 years
Isaiah 14:23	Swampland, wild animals	Ruins/swamps found at site	150–200 years
Jeremiah 51:37	Heap of ruins, no inhabitant	Ruined/uninhabited in later times	50–60 years

3. Cyrus the Great Named Before Birth

- **Prophecy:** Isaiah 44:28–45:1 (written ~700 BC)
- **Fulfilled:** Cyrus conquered Babylon (539 BC) and allowed Jews to return (Ezra 1:1–4)
- **Details:**
 - Named Cyrus over 150 years before he lived.
 - Described his decree to rebuild Jerusalem.
- **Gap:** ~150 years

Isaiah 44:28–45:1 contains a famous prophecy naming Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, as the instrument through whom God would restore Israel by allowing Jerusalem and the temple to be rebuilt after the Babylonian exile. The prophecy is often cited as one of the most precise and remarkable predictive prophecies in the Bible. Here are the key scholarly details:

Parts of the Prophecy

Isaiah 44:28 calls Cyrus “my shepherd” who will fulfill God’s purposes by ordering the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the laying of the temple’s foundation. Isaiah 45:1 refers to Cyrus as God’s “anointed,” stating God will empower him to subdue nations, including the defeat of Babylon, and remove obstacles for his conquests.

Key prediction components:

- **Cyrus will be the deliverer of Israel.**
- God's shepherd/anointed (a rare title not given to Gentile kings elsewhere).
- He will give the decree that enables Jerusalem to be rebuilt.
- He will allow the foundation of the temple to be laid.

Fulfillment of the Prophecy

The Persian king Cyrus, after conquering Babylon in 539 BC, issued a decree (recorded in Ezra 1:1–4) permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city and temple. This is widely recognized as a historical fact, corroborated by biblical and extrabiblical sources (including the **Cyrus Cylinder**, which attests to Cyrus’s policy of repatriation for various captive peoples).

How Many Years Before the Events Was It Prophesied?

Most conservative scholars date the writing of Isaiah to **between 740–680 BC**, meaning the prophecy was written about 150 years before Cyrus’s actions. Even critical scholars who propose a later “Deutero-Isaiah” view agree that the prophecy predates the return from exile, though they may place its composition in the late Babylonian or early Persian period.

Odds That the Prophecy Would Come True

The naming by Isaiah of Cyrus—by name—and predicting that he would both conquer mighty Babylon and liberate the Jews is considered extremely improbable by natural means:

- The precision of naming an eventual world ruler, plus his policies and title, centuries in advance, makes the odds of fulfillment by chance astronomically low. There were no “Cyrus” among kings or known prophecies in the ancient Near East fitting this description.
- The probability would further decrease when considering the specifics: defeat of Babylon, the policy to restore the Jews, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple—the convergence of these events by chance is all but incalculable.

4. Daniel's Four Kingdoms (and Greece)

- **Prophecy:** Daniel 2, 7, 8 (written ~530 BC)
- **Fulfilled:**
 - Babylon > Medo-Persia > Greece > Rome
 - Daniel 8:21 explicitly names Greece and describes Alexander the Great's rise and fall.
- **Gap:** 200–300 years
- **Odds:** 1 in 10^8 (accurately predicting world empires and divisions)

The prophecies in Daniel chapters 2, 7, and 8 outline a sequence of four major world kingdoms, their eventual replacement, and have been subject to extensive historical, theological, and critical analysis. Below is a scholarly overview of the parts of these prophecies, their historical fulfillment, the timespan between prophecy and fulfillment, the statistical odds of their accuracy, and major objections to their predictive validity.

Parts of the Prophecy Concerning the Four Kingdoms

Daniel 2 (Nebuchadnezzar's Dream—The Statue)

- **Head of Gold:** Babylonian Empire.
- **Chest and Arms of Silver:** Medo-Persian Empire.
- **Belly and Thighs of Bronze:** Greek Empire.
- **Legs of Iron, Feet partly of Iron and Clay:** Roman Empire (or, according to some, a divided/renewed Rome).
- **Stone that shatters the statue:** Divine, eternal kingdom established by God.

Daniel 7 (Vision of Four Beasts)

- **Lion with Eagle's Wings:** Babylon.
- **Bear Raised Up on One Side:** Medo-Persia (one side stronger—Persia dominates).
- **Leopard with Four Wings and Four Heads:** Greece (rapid conquest; later divided among four generals).
- **Dreadful Beast with Ten Horns:** Rome (or divided successors); little horn emerges, often seen as Antiochus Epiphanes or a final anti-messianic figure.

Daniel 8 (Ram and Goat)

- **Ram with Two Horns:** Medo-Persia (two horns signify Media and Persia).
- **Goat with a Prominent Horn:** Greece (notably Alexander the Great).

- **Four Horns Replace One:** Kingdom split among four generals post-Alexander.
- **Little Horn:** Generally identified with Antiochus IV Epiphanes, oppressor of the Jews.

Fulfillment of the Prophecies

- **Babylonian Empire:** Ruled from about 605–539 BC.
- **Medo-Persian Empire:** Conquered Babylon in 539 BC, ruled until 331 BC.
- **Greek Empire:** Alexander the Great's conquests (331–323 BC); then divided by his generals (the Diadochi), notably reflected in the prophecy of the four heads/horns.
- **Roman Empire:** Rose after Greek influence waned; ruled Judea from 63 BC, endured until AD 476 (West), and as Byzantium much longer.
- Daniel also predicts the succession of rulers, major conquests (e.g., Alexander), and the emergence of oppressive figures like Antiochus Epiphanes.

Dating: Years Between Prophecy and Fulfillment

Traditional View: Daniel lived in the 6th century BC, prophesying events centuries in advance (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome).

If Daniel was written c. 530 BC: The earliest fulfillments (Medo-Persia > Greece) were roughly **200 years after his time**; Rome's global dominion substantially later still.

Summary Table: Four Kingdoms in Daniel

Kingdom	Daniel 2 Symbol	Daniel 7 Beast	Daniel 8 Animal	Historical Empire	Main Fulfillment Date
Babylon	Head of Gold	Lion (w/ wings)	—	Neo-Babylon	605–539 BC
Medo-Persia	Chest/Arms Silver	Bear	Ram (2 horns)	Medo-Persian	539–331 BC
Greece	Belly/Thighs Bronze	Leopard	Goat (w/ 1 then 4 horns)	Macedonian/Greek	331–168 BC

Kingdom	Daniel 2 Symbol	Daniel 7 Beast	Daniel 8 Animal	Historical Empire	Main Fulfillment Date
Rome*	Legs Iron/Feet Clay	Terrible Beast	—	Rome (+ successors)	168 BC–AD 476 and beyond

5. Seventy Weeks Prophecy (Messiah's Arrival)

- **Prophecy:** Daniel 9:24–26 (written ~530 BC)
- **Fulfilled:** Jesus enters Jerusalem around 30 AD
- **Details:**
 - Predicts the Messiah's appearance "69 weeks" (~483 Jewish years) after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Artaxerxes' decree ~445 BC)
- **Gap:** ~500 years
- **Odds:** 1 in 10^7 (for accurate timing of Jesus' public ministry)

6. Jesus' Betrayal for 30 Pieces of Silver

- **Prophecy:** Zechariah 11:12–13 (written ~500 BC)
- **Fulfilled:** Matthew 26:14–15; 27:3–10
- **Details:**
 - Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 silver coins.
 - Money used to buy potter's field—exactly as Zechariah described.
- **Gap:** ~500 years
- **Odds:** 1 in 10^6

7. Jesus' Crucifixion Details

- **Prophecies:**
 - **Psalms 22** (~1000 BC): Pierced hands/feet, mocked, gambled clothing.
 - **Isaiah 53** (~700 BC): Silent before accusers, buried with the rich, bore sins.
- **Fulfilled:** All fulfilled during the crucifixion and burial (Matthew 27, John 19)
- **Gap:** 700–1000 years
- **Odds:**
 - Peter Stoner calculated odds of 8 specific messianic prophecies as **1 in 10^{17}** .

- For 48 fulfilled prophecies: **1 in 10¹⁵⁷**.

The prophecies concerning the crucifixion of Jesus in **Psalms 22 and Isaiah 53** are among the most detailed and striking biblical predictions attributed to the Messiah, written centuries before Jesus' lifetime. Here is a scholarly overview:

Parts of the Prophecy Concerning Crucifixion in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53

Psalms 22 (attributed to King David, about 1000 years before Christ) contains vivid descriptions of suffering closely matching Jesus' crucifixion:

- Verses 1: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" — **Words Jesus quoted on the cross** (Matt 27:46; Mk 15:34).
- Verses 7-8: Describes mockery and scorn from others, "All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads." This is parallel to the mocking Jesus endured (Matt 27:39-44).
- Verses 14-15: Physical suffering depicted as "I am poured out like water... my bones are out of joint... my heart is like wax." These describe the pain and dislocation consistent with crucifixion trauma.
- Verse 16: **"They have pierced my hands and my feet,"** a direct reference to the nails of crucifixion.
- Verse 18: "They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing," fulfillment seen in the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' clothes (John 19:23-24).
- Verse 21-22: Cry for rescue and a promise that God has not forsaken; parallels Jesus' trust in the Father despite suffering (Luke 23:46).

Isaiah 53 (dated by many scholars around 700-600 BCE) prophesies a suffering "Servant" who would bear the sins of many:

- Verse 3: "He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."
- Verse 4-5: "Surely he has borne our griefs... wounded for our transgressions... by his stripes we are healed." This relates to Jesus' atoning suffering.
- Verse 6: "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."
- Verse 7: He was oppressed and afflicted but did not open his mouth, aligning with Jesus' silent endurance (Matt 27:12-14).
- Verse 9: "They made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death," mirroring Jesus' burial in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb.
- Verses 10-12: Details of suffering leading to justification for many, indicating substitutionary atonement.

Fulfillment of These Prophecies

New Testament narratives claim direct fulfillment:

- Jesus quoting Psalm 22:1 on the cross.
- Mocking, physical torture, and crucifixion described in the Gospels align with Psalm 22 details.
- Casting lots for Jesus' garments (John 19:23-24).
- Jesus suffers and dies silently and willingly, consistent with Isaiah 53.
- Burial in a rich man's tomb fulfilled as per Isaiah 53:9.
- Early disciples and witnesses point to Isaiah 53 as fulfilled in Jesus (e.g., Acts 8:32-35).

Dating: How Many Years Before the Events?

Psalm 22 is traditionally dated to the time of King David (~1000 BCE), **approximately 1000 years before Jesus**.

Isaiah 53 is generally dated to the 8th century BCE (roughly 700-600 BCE), **about 600-700 years before Jesus**.

Odds of These Prophecies Coming True

Estimates often focus on combined probability of multiple Messianic prophecies fulfilled by one individual:

- For a cluster of messianic prophecies (including birthplace, manner of death, lineage), probabilities are estimated astronomically low. One claim is **roughly 1 in 10^{157} for 48 prophecies (not limited to just Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53)**.

Prophecy/Aspect	Text Reference(s)	Fulfillment in Jesus	Date of Prophecy (~Years Before Christ)	Estimated Odds
Piercing of Hands and Feet	Psalm 22:16; John 20:25	Jesus' crucifixion nails pierced hands and feet	~1000 BCE (Davidic Psalm)	Very low for accurate detailed prediction given Roman crucifixion (unknown in Old Testament era)

Prophecy/Aspect	Text Reference(s)	Fulfillment in Jesus	Date of Prophecy (~Years Before Christ)	Estimated Odds
No Bones Broken	Psalm 34:20; John 19:33	Jesus' legs not broken during crucifixion	~1000 BCE	Unlikely coincidence since breaking legs was common in crucifixions
Casting Lots for Garments	Psalm 22:18; Matthew 27:35	Roman soldiers cast lots for Jesus' clothes	~1000 BCE	Specific detail matching Roman practice unexpected
Suffering Servant	Isaiah 53:3-12	Jesus' rejection, suffering, and atoning death	~700-600 BCE	Extremely low for detailed predictive convergence of suffering, innocence, substitution
Buried with Rich	Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60	Jesus buried in tomb of Joseph of Arimathea	~700-600 BCE	Burial by wealthy man uncommon for criminals/slain
Resurrection: Body Not Decayed	Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:31; Luke 24:39	Jesus' resurrection bodily, no decay observed	~1000 BCE	Psalm 16:10 exact prophetic prediction seen as significant
Resurrection: On Third Day	Hosea 6:2; Matthew 12:40; Luke 24:7	Jesus rose on the third day after crucifixion	~700-600 BCE	Specificity of three days uncommon to general expectation

Prophecy/Aspect	Text Reference(s)	Fulfillment in Jesus	Date of Prophecy (~Years Before Christ)	Estimated Odds
Silent Before Accusers	Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 27:12-14	Jesus largely silent during trial	~700-600 BCE	Consistent behavioral prediction adds weight
Mocked and Scorned	Psalms 22:7-8; Matthew 27:39-44	Jesus mocked on cross	~1000 BCE	General prediction of mocking is common in prophetic literature
Darkness at Crucifixion	Amos 8:9; Matthew 27:45	Darkness covered land during crucifixion	~750 BCE	Specific cosmic sign linked to Messiah's death is rare
Triumphal Entry on Donkey	Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4-9	Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey	~520 BCE	Messianic symbol well known; specific mode significant

8. Destruction of the Second Temple

- **Prophecy:** Matthew 24:1–2; Luke 21:6 (Jesus predicts it ~30 AD)
 - **Fulfilled:** Romans destroy the temple in 70 AD
 - **Gap:** ~40 years
 - **Odds:** 1 in 10^4 (not merely destruction but “not one stone left upon another”)
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9. Scattering and Return of Israel

- **Prophecy:** Deuteronomy 28:64–68; Ezekiel 36:24–28
 - **Fulfilled:**
 - Scattered by Romans (70 AD & 135 AD)
 - Regathered and became a nation again in 1948
 - **Gap:** 1900+ years
 - **Odds:** 1 in 10^{15} or higher (nation survives, regains land, revives language)
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Summary Table

Prophecy	Gap (Years)	Odds Estimate
Destruction of Tyre	~250	1 in 10^7
Fall of Babylon	~200	1 in 10^6
Cyrus Named Before Birth	~150	1 in 10^9
Fall of Nineveh	~50	1 in 10^5
Daniel's World Kingdoms	~200–300	1 in 10^8
Daniel's 70 Weeks	~500	1 in 10^7
Judas' Betrayal for 30 Coins	~500	1 in 10^6
Crucifixion Prophecies (Psalm/Isaiah)	~700–1000	1 in 10^{17} (8 total)
Destruction of the Second Temple	~40	1 in 10^4
Scattering and Return of Israel	~1900	1 in 10^{15+}

Sources

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