

THE EVIDENCE OF FULFILLED PROPHECIES

Jesus said, *“I am God’s Son. Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father”* (John 10:36–37).

The following are a few of the three hundred prophecies about Jesus’s death and resurrection. Out of three hundred prophecies made in Scripture, three hundred were fulfilled:

- He would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).
- He would enter the temple (Malachi 3:1).
- He would be betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9).
- He would be sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12).
- The silver would be thrown into the temple (Zechariah 11:13).
- The silver would be used for a potter’s field (Zechariah 11:13).
- He would be forsaken by His disciples (Zechariah 13:7).
- He would be accused by false witnesses (Psalm 35:11).
- He would remain silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7).
- He would be wounded and bruised (Isaiah 53:5).
- He would be whipped and spat upon (Isaiah 50:6; Micah 5:1).
- He would be mocked (Psalm 22:7–8).
- His hands and feet would be pierced (Psalm 22:16).
- He would be crucified with thieves (Isaiah 53:12).
- People would shake their heads at Him (Psalm 109:25).
- His clothes would be divided and lots cast for them (Psalm 22:18).
- He would be offered gall and vinegar to drink (Psalm 69:21).
- The exact words of His death cry were predicted (Psalm 22:1).
- Not one of His bones would be broken (Psalm 34:20).
- His heart would literally burst (Psalm 22:14).
- His side would be pierced (Zechariah 12:10).
- Darkness would fall in broad daylight (Amos 8:9).
- He would be buried in a rich man’s tomb (Isaiah 53:9).
- He would be resurrected from the dead (Psalm 16:10).

THE EVIDENCE OF EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. (Acts 1:3)

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. (1 Corinthians 15:3–8)

The reference to five hundred people, most of whom were still living, was just to seal the argument Paul was making. It would have been very easy for those people to refute him. It doesn't take much for people to want to refute a preacher. But Paul was throwing down a challenge, saying if you doubted him, there are plenty of other people around who saw what he saw.

Objection

These are biased writers, you might be thinking. It's like taking your favorite team's coach and letting him referee the game. However . . .

1. Just because the disciples were followers of Jesus Christ doesn't mean they were inaccurate historians.
2. Sir William Mitchell Ramsay is one of the greatest archeologists who ever lived. He was the first Professor of Classical Art and Archaeology at Oxford University. He started out very skeptical of biblical writings and made it a goal to refute the writings of Luke in particular. After a lifetime of study, he concluded that the book of Acts "could bear the most minute scrutiny as an authority for the facts of the Aegean world, and that it was written with such judgment, skill, art and perception of truth as to be a model of historical statement." And about Luke himself, Ramsay wrote, "You may press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historians and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment."
3. The fact of the Christian book, the New Testament, which in its pages contains six independent testimonies to the fact of the resurrection. Three are by eyewitnesses: John, Peter, and Matthew. Paul, writing to the churches at an early date, referred to the resurrection in such a way that it is obvious to him and his readers that the event was well known and accepted without question. Are these men, who helped transform the moral structure of society, consummate liars or deluded madmen? These alternatives are harder to believe than the fact of the resurrection, and there is no shred of evidence to support them.