

The Importance of Prophecy Above All Other Miracles

(God, through Isaiah, is speaking directly to the idols right here) ... *“Present your case, says the LORD. Bring forth your strong reasons, says the King of Jacob. Let them [the idols] bring forth and show us **what will happen**; Let them [the idols] **show the former things, what they were**, That we may consider them, **And know the latter end of them**; Or **declare to us things to come**. **Show the things that are to come hereafter**, that we may know that you are gods; Yes, do good or do evil, That we may be dismayed and see it together. Indeed you are nothing, and your work is nothing; He who chooses you is an abomination”* (Isaiah 41:21-24).

God is challenging the idols to give us an accurate history of the past, before Isaiah’s day, and He is also challenging them to accurately predict the remote future. If they could do it, they would deserve our respect, admiration, and worship. But, of course, only God can do that. There are a number of statements in Isaiah 41-48 of the same sort. Let me give you one more example ...

*Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. **And who can proclaim as I do?** Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, **Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them.** Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one* (Isaiah 44:6-8).

How Does Prophecy Help to Accept Other Miracles?

There are many miracles in the OT that people either outright reject, or have serious doubts that the prophets meant them to be taken literally, such as: Joshua’s long day, the sundial going backward 10 degrees, or Jonah being swallowed by a great fish. The problem they have is that we live in a world where not only do those things no longer happen, but even we, who accept them, also agree that things like that do not happen anymore. To those who are skeptical, they think we “take these on faith.” By that, they think we blindly accept miracles without a shred of evidence. To add to the difficulty, the world we live in believes the very definition of faith is to accept the miraculous without any proof or evidence.

But the Bible defines faith as: “the substance of things hoped for, the **evidence** of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). In other words, we believe in that which we can’t see, not that which we can’t prove. So, why is it that we accept Jonah’s three day ordeal even though there are no eyewitnesses to the event, nor is something like that going to happen in today’s world?

Prophecy!

The importance of prophecy is that they are as incredible as the miracles just alluded to above. While it is true that we have no eyewitnesses to Lot’s wife turning into a pillar of salt, and we do, in a sense, “take that on faith,” the reason we do is because accurately predicting

the remote future, as Isaiah does, is just as hard to do, unaided by God, as stopping the sun in the sky. What makes prophecy so valuable is that **we can verify it!** We know when Isaiah lived and spoke. His prophecies were written down 700 hundred years before Christ came along to fulfill them.

So, if we have a book that accurately predicts so many details of the life of Christ, and we can verify that they were written that far in advance of Christ being born, we are now in a secure position to accept the other miracles which are not verifiable, such as the sun dial of Ahaz going backward 10 degrees (Isaiah 38). Add to that the fact that God doesn't lie, and we are confident from an intellectual standpoint that all of the physical miracles recorded in the OT happened just as the Bible records. One final thing ...

We really can't explain the origin of man without the miraculous. Since all human beings are born through the process of reproduction, it is logically necessary that the first human being could not have arrived here that way. There had to be an original "production!" We who believe in miracles accept the Genesis account as Moses recorded it. We sprang from Adam and Eve. But not all are so inclined to believe. Yet, here is their dilemma ...

If evolution were true and man evolved from a lower creature, then the following event **must have happened!** If evolution were true, something **non-human** gave birth to a human! And even if that did happen, where did that human find another human of the opposite sex in order to "reproduce" with it, and create the third human? But here's the point. Assuming it did happen, a non-human giving birth to a human, as evolution teaches, is as big a miracle as any recorded in scripture. They may protest to that statement, and call it "natural." **BUT I KNOW A MIRACLE WHEN I HEAR IT!** So if the very people who deny the reality of miracles can't even explain the origin of man without a miracle, I feel quite comfortable accepting the miracles of the Bible. And thanks to prophecy, which we can verify, I have no trouble accepting the other miracles which are not verifiable in the same way. Because of prophecy, we believe in miracles from an intellectual standpoint.