

“Is the Bible from God?” (Psalm 119: Part 3)

Verses to Remember: “May Your favor also come to me, LORD, Your salvation according to Your word; So that I will have an answer for one who taunts me, For I trust in Your word” (Psalm 119:41-42).

Is the Bible from God?

Fulfilled prophecies of Jesus

Jesus prophesied the total destruction of the Temple followed by the scattering and ultimate return of the Jews (Matt 24:1; Luke 21:24). He prophesied that he would be betrayed, that his disciples would scatter, that he would suffer at the hands of the religious leaders and be crucified during the Passover, and that he would be raised on the third day (Matt 26:21, 48-49, 31, 56; 16:21; 26:2). He prophesied Peter’s threefold denial (Matt 26:34; 26:74). He made grandiose prophecies that his words would last and spread to the whole world (Matt 24:35; 26:12).

Does the Bible falsely prophesy the timing of Christ’s return?

1 Peter 4:7, Romans 13:12, and 1 John 2:18 speak to the nearness of the return of Christ, but no dates are set and we need to keep in mind that for God a day can be like a thousand years (2 Peter 3:8). The nearness speaks to the fact that we are in the last “age” before the return of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom. And we are to be ready for his return at any point (Matt 24:42). Note that there were indications that there may be a ‘delay’ in his coming (2 Peter 3:9; Matt 24:48).

Does Jesus falsely prophesy the timing of his return?

- First, we should note that Jesus stated that, according to his human mind, he did not know the timing of his return (Matt 24:36). And when others asked about the timing, he directed them to what they should be doing instead of speculating on when it would happen (Acts 1:6-7). But doesn’t he prophesy in Matthew 16:28 that he will return while some of those standing in front of him were still (physically) alive? No, he did not. Rather, he made a promise to those standing there that if they took up their crosses and followed him (Matt 16:24) that they would not taste spiritual death before getting to see and be a part of his coming kingdom (Matt 16:28). Jesus defines true life as spiritual life within the very passage (Matt 16:25-26). He also uses the same language to speak about spiritual life in John 8:51-52, which the religious leaders mistook for him speaking about physical life. For a fuller written defense of this understanding of Matthew 16:28. please contact me for access to a journal article I wrote on the subject.