

Prophecy Through the Bible - History

Prophecy in the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth

The books of Joshua and Judges are the historical link between Moses and David. In the book of Ruth, we see the historical record of the descendant line of the Messiah heading up to David. The prophecies in these books are short and related to the narrative story line of the books.

Joshua 1:1-9 *After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: ² "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River **into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.** ³ I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. ⁴ **Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.** ⁵ **No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.** ⁶ **Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.***

*⁷ "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸ **Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.** ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."*

We see in this set of verses that God reaffirms the "land covenant" promises given to the patriarchs and Moses to Joshua. He also reaffirms the books of the Law given to the Israelites. This Law is what we call the Pentateuch or what Jews call the Torah. It is the first 5 books of the Old Testament. Note the conditional prophetic promise, "then you will be prosperous and successful".

These prophetic verses were partially fulfilled in Joshua's lifetime and the balance of the book of Joshua recounts the actual taking of the Land of Promise, although not the full extent of God's promised territory.

Along the way, Joshua is promised the city of Jericho and God gave him a specific promise as to the method of conquest, which Joshua followed and the city was conquered.

Joshua 6:1-5 *Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. ² Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. ³ March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. ⁴ Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. ⁵ When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in."*

You can read the balance of Joshua 6 and see the results, exactly as the Lord proclaimed in advance. By the obedience to the Lord and His command, Joshua was successful and this prophecy **was fulfilled literally and grammatically in the land**. If you have been to Jericho, you have noticed that it is not much of a town, with few structures other than homes and a monastery that remains. It is a Palestinian territory city and looks like

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all the other Palestinian territory. It is a wasteland compared to the Israeli cities that have been rebuilt and are thriving. Only Rahab the prostitute and her family are spared.

Joshua 6:26 Joshua pronounces a curse on Jericho after conquering it.

At that time Joshua pronounced this solemn oath: "Cursed before the LORD is the one who undertakes to rebuild this city, Jericho:

*"At the cost of his firstborn son
he will lay its foundations;
at the cost of his youngest
he will set up its gates."*

This was fulfilled as recorded in 1 Kings 16:34. (Ahab becomes King of Israel)

³⁴ *In Ahab's time, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, and he set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, **in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by Joshua son of Nun.***

Other prophecies relating to taking cities are pronounced and cities taken, as predicted, Cities of Ai, the land of the Gibeonites, and the Northern Kings in Joshua 11:1-15.

A summary of the conquest of Joshua is in Joshua 11:11-23, and it is clear that everywhere their foot stepped, God gave them the land.

Joshua 21:43-45 ⁴³ *So the LORD gave Israel **all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors**, and they took possession of it and settled there. ⁴⁴ The LORD gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their ancestors. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD gave all their enemies into their hands. ⁴⁵ **Not one of all the LORD's good promises to Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.***

Prophecy in the book of Judges

Victory over the Canaanites- Judges 1:1-4 *After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the LORD, "Who of us is to go up first to fight against the Canaanites?"*

² *The LORD answered, "**Judah** shall go up; I have given the land into their hands."*

³ *The men of Judah then said to the Simeonites their fellow Israelites, "Come up with us into the territory allotted to us, to fight against the Canaanites. We in turn will go with you into yours." So the Simeonites went with them.*

⁴ *When Judah attacked, the LORD gave the Canaanites and Perizzites into their hands, and they struck down ten thousand men at Bezek.*

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So we see that the pattern is when Israel and its leader consult God, and He gives them an instruction and plan...if they follow it, they are successful. God told Judah to go take their land, and they did. The capitol city of the Canaanites/Jebusites was Jerusalem, which the Jews destroyed by fire.

Judges 2:1-5 ² *The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, “I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land I swore to give to your ancestors. I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you, ² and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars.’ Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this? ³ And I have also said, ‘I will not drive them out before you; they will become traps for you, and their gods will become snares to you.’”*

⁴ *When the angel of the LORD had spoken these things to all the Israelites, the people wept aloud, ⁵ and they called that place Bokim.(weepers). There they offered sacrifices to the LORD.*

A message for them, and for us... The Lord not only keeps His promises of success, He also holds us accountable for the times we disobey Him. Unfortunately this began a pattern of behavior of reward and judgment for the Jews that is still in place today. We see the promises of God being fulfilled, along with the anguish of God withholding his Strong Arm.

Judges 2:20-23 *Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel and said, “Because this nation has violated the covenant I ordained for their ancestors and has not listened to me, ²¹ I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations Joshua left when he died. ²² I will use them to test Israel and see whether they will keep the way of the LORD and walk in it as their ancestors did.” ²³ The LORD had allowed those nations to remain; he did not drive them out at once by giving them into the hands of Joshua.*

This test is still going on with Israel today and with the Jews. Jews in other lands are being tested again as the anti-Semitism raises its ugly head, and the enemies all around Israel fight her at every step. Not only Israel and the Jews are being tested and judged, but those other nations are as well. Remember the prophecy that **“I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you”**. This prophecy has not been totally fulfilled since it is still in place with nations and people today, including America.

God sets up Judges in the land to deliver the Jews from their enemies and also to settle common disputes between them. These judges were before the times of the Kings of Israel and Judah. These are fascinating history of men and women called to step up for their people. We will look at a few of them.

Judges 4:1-14 Deborah (Bee) and Barak (lightening) were the fourth and fifth judges of Israel were promised a victory over Sisera, a powerful General for the Canaanites.

Deborah

⁴ *Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, now that Ehud was dead. ² So the LORD sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. Sisera, the commander of his army, was based in Harosheth Haggoyim. ³ Because he had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the LORD for help.*

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⁴ Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. ⁵ She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided. ⁶ She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, “The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. ⁷ **I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.**”

⁸ Barak said to her, “If you go with me, I will go; but if you don’t go with me, I won’t go.”

⁹ “Certainly I will go with you,” said Deborah. “**But because of the course you are taking, the honor will not be yours, for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.**” So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰ There Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali, and ten thousand men went up under his command. Deborah also went up with him.

¹¹ Now Heber the **Kenite** had left the other Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses’ brother-in-law and pitched his tent by the great tree in Zaanannim near Kedesh. *(Moses father in law Jethro was a Kenite, This was a clan of the Midianites who were advanced in the arts and crafts and lived in the very south of Judah)*

¹² When they told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, ¹³ Sisera summoned from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River all his men and his nine hundred chariots fitted with iron.

¹⁴ Then Deborah said to Barak, “**Go! This is the day the LORD has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the LORD gone ahead of you?**” So Barak went down Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men following him. ¹⁵ At Barak’s advance, the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword, and Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot.

¹⁶ Barak pursued the chariots and army as far as Harosheth Haggoyim, and all Sisera’s troops fell by the sword; not a man was left. ¹⁷ Sisera, meanwhile, fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, because there was an alliance between Jabin king of Hazor and the family of Heber the Kenite.

¹⁸ Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, “Come, my lord, come right in. Don’t be afraid.” So he entered her tent, and she covered him with a blanket.

¹⁹ “I’m thirsty,” he said. “Please give me some water.” She opened a skin of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him up.

²⁰ “Stand in the doorway of the tent,” he told her. “If someone comes by and asks you, ‘Is anyone in there?’ say ‘No.’”

²¹ **But Jael, Heber’s wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died.**

²² Just then Barak came by in pursuit of Sisera, and Jael went out to meet him. “Come,” she said, “I will show you the man you’re looking for.” So he went in with her, and **there lay Sisera with the tent peg through his temple—dead.**

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²³ On that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan before the Israelites. ²⁴ And the hand of the Israelites pressed harder and harder against Jabin king of Canaan until they destroyed him.

We see that God honors His promises and follows through on what He says He will do. ***Again literally, graphically, and grammatically fulfilled...*** Because of Barak's unwillingness to follow Deborah without demands, God did not deliver the commander to him but to a "woman". Of course in this patriarchal society this was a direct affront to his manhood. God does not concern Himself with these petty items. God chose Deborah to be the Judge and leader of Israel, and she was a prophet before ...which means when she tells history in advance, it is both true and will come to pass AND it is of the Lord.

Deborah is a strong leader because she followed the Lord and was able to see and think strategically and judge between the clans and the people. She was certainly a heroine and a role model.

Judges 6:11-24 The people of Israel were being persecuted and raided constantly by the Midianites and other tribes in the area. They were without food and livestock and pleaded to the Lord. He sent a prophet to tell them why they were being punished and we see the story of Gideon who also became a Judge over Israel.

*The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. ¹² When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, **"The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."***

¹³ *"Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."*

¹⁴ *The LORD turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. **Am I not sending you?**"*

¹⁵ *"Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."*

¹⁶ *The LORD answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive."*

¹⁷ *Gideon replied, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, **give me a sign** that it is really you talking to me."*

¹⁸ *Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you."*

And the LORD said, "I will wait until you return."

¹⁹ *Gideon went inside, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak.*

²⁰ *The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And Gideon did so. ²¹ Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And*

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the angel of the LORD disappeared. ²² When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, “Alas, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!”

²³ But the LORD said to him, “Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die.”

²⁴ So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD Is Peace. To this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Again, THE angel of the Lord is a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ. Gideon is dealing with the Creator God face to face. Yet He does not really understand that fully. He questions the Lord politely and wants to offer a sacrifice to Him, and the Lord agrees to wait, but shows Gideon a sign that proves He is from God...but Gideon is not finished with his questions.

Thought: Aren't we like that? We ask for a sign, and He provides it. But we are not really sure it is from God and we question and ask for other proof things. Thankfully God is willing to listen to us and guide us by His Spirit and His Word. We are so fortunate to have the Word of God to guide us daily, and to learn from the ones who have gone before us.

You know the rest of the story. Gideon asks for a dry fleece to be made wet, and then a wet fleece to be made dry to confirm (in his mind) that it is truly the Lord speaking to him and commanding his action. How many fleeces do we lay for the Lord to confirm His presence?

We are told that the sheep “**know His voice**”. If that is truly the case, we would not need multiple signs to confirm we are following Him. Sadly, most of us do not know Him well enough to recognize His voice and so we are looking for constant confirmation. Thankfully God will give us signs that confirm His guiding, if we will be alert and recognize them.

Judges 7:1-25 This is an interesting story of God fulfilling His promise and prophecy. 32,000 men gathered with Gideon and the Lord told him it was too many. It was pared down to 10,000 ...still too many, then the Lord pared it down to 300 by the way each drank from a river or spring that was there.

With 300 men, Gideon routed an army of at least 120,000 swordsmen and killed them and their kings. Pretty devastating story of conquest, but God promised Gideon a victory and pared down the army to that it would be clear to all, that God had done it, as He had promised.

Sometimes we don't think we have enough horsepower or manpower or intelligence or courage to do what the Lord has called us to do, but Gideon is proof that if the Lord is in it and willed it, it will happen as prophesied. God even gave Gideon encouragement along the way to see God's hand ahead of him clearing the way.

Sadly when time passes, the people forget what God has done and drift away from Him. This has been the history of God's people the Jews, and still is today. It is also the history of His “called out ones”, the church. This is all prophesied in the Bible and we are part of the great falling away taking place in Christianity today.

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There are two types of Apostasy. One is a “**moving away**” and is characterized by a lack of belief in once closely held truths of the faith. This is going on all across all denominations and is a New way to worship, or preach the gospel, or bringing the church into modern times. It is described many ways to make it palatable to weak Christians but it leads to sharp contrasts between the new belief and practice and the “Old way”.

The second type of Apostasy is the “**falling away**” from beliefs. This is characterized by **apathy** in the church. We say we believe certain things but our lives and actions deny that. This apathy leads to a gradual lack of belief and we find ourselves drifting away from church, the Bible, prayer, and active living of our faith.

Both of these patterns are alive and well in the “church” today and it is a strong sign from God that we are living in the last days.

In Judges 10:11-14 ¹¹ *The LORD replied, “When the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, ¹² the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites^[c] oppressed you and you cried to me for help, did I not save you from their hands? ¹³ But you have forsaken me and served other gods, so I will no longer save you. ¹⁴ Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble!”*

Because of their willingness to come back to God, God delivered a Judge to save them and deliver them from their enemies.

This means there is hope for America and the world, but we have to recognize or sin against god, confess it with a contrite heart and turn away (repent) from this sin and follow the Lord. We have prayed for a revival in our land and in our church. It has not happened. We are sliding faster and faster down the party to destruction. Each of us has to “wash our own garments”, and get ourselves ready to face the Lord. We need to prepare for the time at hand when the Lord will return and each of us will be individually judged by Him as to whether we are truly a Christian and our action and heart testifies to that.

Are we ready?