

35 JESUS' PROPHECIES FULFILLED! HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

Introduction: Here we have the prophecies of Jesus compared to reports from later portions of the the New Testament and Josephus. These are only a sampling.

1. EVIL GENERATION

JESUS' PROPHECY: "You testify to yourselves that you are children of those who killed the prophets... You serpents, you offspring of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna?" Mt. 23:31-33

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: "It is therefore impossible to go distinctly over every instance of these men's [zealots'] iniquity. I shall therefore speak my mind here at once briefly: – That neither did any other city ever suffer such miseries, nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was, from the beginning of the world. Finally, they brought the Hebrew nation into contempt.... They confessed what was true, that they were the slaves, the scum, and the spurious and abortive offspring of our nation, while they overthrew the city themselves...and did almost draw that fire upon the temple, which they seemed to think came too slowly..." Wars 5.10.5

2. WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS (before the Roman war)

JESUS' PROPHECY: "You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you aren't troubled, for all this must happen, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...." Mt. 24:6-7

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: "[Emperor Caligula] sent Petronius with an army to Jerusalem, to place his statues in the temple, and commanded him that, in case the Jews would not admit of them, he should slay those that opposed it, and carry all the rest of the nation into captivity." Wars 2.10.1

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: "Now the people of Cesarea had slain the Jews [of Cesarea]... in one hour's time above twenty thousand Jews were killed, and all Cesarea was emptied of its Jewish inhabitants... Upon which stroke that the Jews received at Cesarea, the whole nation was greatly enraged; so they divided themselves into several parties, and laid waste the villages of the Syrians, and their neighboring cities, Philadelphia, and Sebonitis, and Gerasa, and Pella, and Scythopolis, and after them Gadara, and Hippos; and falling upon Gaulonitis, some cities they destroyed there, and some they set on fire, and then went to Kedasa, belonging to the Tyrians, and to Ptolemais, and to Gaba, and to Cesarea; nor was either Sebaste [Samaria] or Askelon able to oppose the violence with which they were attacked; and when they had burnt these to the ground; they entirely demolished Anthedon and Gaza; many also of the villages that were about every one of those cities were plundered, and an immense slaughter was made of the men who were caught in them." Wars 2. 18.1

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: "And thus far the conflict had been between Jews and foreigners; but when they made excursions to Scythopolis, they found Jews that acted as enemies; for as they stood in battle-array with those of Scythopolis, and preferred their own safety before their relation to us [Jews], they fought against their own countrymen." Wars 2.18.3

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: "Besides this murder at Scythopolis, the other cities rose up against the Jews that were among them; those of Askelon slew two thousand five hundred, and those of Ptolemais two thousand, and put not a few into bonds; those of Tyre also put a great number to death...." Wars 2.18.5

3. FAMINES, EARTHQUAKES

JESUS' PROPHECY: "There will be famines, plagues, and earthquakes in various places. But all these things are the beginning of birth pains." Mt 24:7-8

N.T. REPORTS: "One of them named Agabus stood up, and indicated by the Spirit that there should be a great famine all over the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius." Acts 11:28

N.T. REPORTS: "Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were loosened." Acts 16:26

4. DISCIPLES PERSECUTED, ACCUSED IN SYNAGOGUES, IMPRISONED

JESUS' PROPHECY: "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you up to synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake." Lk 21:12

N.T. REPORT: "But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy, and laid hands on the apostles, and put them in public custody." Acts 5: 17-18

N.T. REPORT: "But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed at him [Stephen] with one accord. They threw him out of the city, and stoned him." Acts 7:57-58

N.T. REPORT: “Now about that time, King Herod stretched out his hands to oppress some of the assembly. He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword. When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This was during the days of unleavened bread.” Acts 12:1-3

5. FALSE PROPHETS/CHRISTS

JESUS' PROPHECY: “Many false prophets will arise, and will lead many astray. Because iniquity will be multiplied, the love of many will grow cold.” Mt. 24:11

JESUS' PROPHECY: “For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will lead many astray.” Mt. 24:5

JESUS' PROPHECY: “Then if any man tells you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or, 'There,' don't believe it. 24 For there will arise false christs, and false prophets, and they will show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the chosen ones. 25 "Behold, I have told you beforehand. 26 If therefore they tell you, 'Behold, he is in the wilderness,' don't go out; 'Behold, he is in the inner rooms,' don't believe it.” Mt. 24:23-26

N.T. REPORTS: “But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who used to practice sorcery in the city, and amazed the people of Samaria, making himself out to be some great one, 10 to whom they all listened, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is that great power of God." 11They listened to him, because for a long time he had amazed them with his sorceries. Acts. 8:9-11

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “There was...wicked men gotten together... deceived and deluded the people under pretense of Divine inspiration, but were for procuring innovations [war] and changes of the government; and these prevailed with the multitude... and went before them into the wilderness, as pretending that God would there show them the signals of liberty. Wars.” 2.13.4

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “But there was an Egyptian false prophet that did the Jews more mischief than the former; for he was a cheat, and pretended to be a prophet also, and got together thirty thousand men that were deluded by him; these he led round about from the wilderness to the mount which was called the Mount of Olives, and was ready to break into Jerusalem by force...” Wars 2.13.5

6. LOVE GROWN COLD

JESUS' PROPHECY: “Because iniquity will be multiplied, the love of many will grow cold.” Mt. 24:12

JOSEPHUS REPORTS. “... a company of deceivers and robbers got together, and persuaded the Jews to revolt, and exhorted them to assert their liberty, inflicting death on those that continued in obedience to the Roman government, and saying, that such as willingly chose slavery ought to be forced from such their desired inclinations; for they parted themselves into different bodies, and lay in wait up and down the country, and plundered the houses of the great men, and slew the men themselves, and set the villages on fire; and this till all Judea was filled with the effects of their madness. And thus the flame was every day more and more blown up, till it came to a direct war.” Wars 2.13.6

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “Nor was there any lamentations made under these calamities, nor were heard any mournful complaints; but the famine confounded all natural passions; for those who were just going to die looked upon those that were gone to rest before them with dry eyes and open mouths. A deep silence also, and a kind of deadly night, had seized upon the city...” Wars 5.12.3.

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “For no gentle affection could touch their [zealots'] souls, nor could any pain affect their bodies, since they could still tear the dead bodies of the people as dogs do, and fill the prisons with those that were sick.” War 5.12.4

7. GREAT TRIBULATION

JESUS' PROPHECY: “There will be great oppression, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be. Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved.” Mt. 24:21-22

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, are not so considerable as those of the Jews...makes it impossible for me to contain my lamentation.” Wars preface paragraph 4. Also, read the entire hideous and miserable account.

8. DAYS SHORTENED, FEW SAVED

JESUS' PROPHECY: “Unless the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would have been saved; but for the sake of the chosen ones, whom he picked out, he shortened the days.” Mk. 13:20

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “So all hope of escaping was now cut off from the Jews, together with their liberty of going out of the city. Then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged; the children also and the young men wandered about the market-places like shadows, all swelled with the famine, and fell down dead, wheresoever their misery seized them. As for burying them, those that were sick themselves were not able to do it; and those that were hearty and well were deterred from doing it by the great multitude of those dead bodies, and by the uncertainty there was how soon they

should die themselves; for many died as they were burying others, and many went to their coffins before that fatal hour was come.” Wars 5.12.3

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “However, when Titus [Roman General], in going his rounds along those valleys, saw them full of dead bodies, and the thick putrefaction running about them, he gave a groan; and, spreading out his hands to heaven, called God to witness that this was not his doing; and such was the sad case of the city [Jerusalem] itself... Titus, out of his commiseration of the people that remained, and out of his earnest desire of rescuing what was still left out of these miseries, began to raise his banks again... So Caesar [Titus] went his rounds through the legions, and hastened on the works, and showed the robbers [zealots] that they were now in his hands.” War 5.12.4

9. SLAUGHTER, TAKEN CAPTIVE, DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

JESUS’ PROPHECY: “For there will be great distress in the land, and wrath to this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled down...” Luke 21:23-24

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: Now the number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand; as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand, the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem], but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army... And now the Romans set fire to the extreme parts of the city, and burnt them down, and entirely demolished its walls. Wars 6.9.3-4

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done,) Caesar [Titus] gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison, as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations [war]; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind. Wars 7.1.1

10. SUDDEN DESTRUCTION OF SOCIAL/RELIGIOUS LIFE, LIKE FLOOD, LIKE SODOM

JESUS’ PROPHECY: “As it happened in the days of Noah, even so will it be also in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ship, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise, even as it happened in the days of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but in the day that Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from the sky, and destroyed them all.” Luke 17:26-29

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “Galilee was all over filled with fire and blood; nor was it exempted from any kind of misery or calamity.” Wars 3.4.1

JOSEPHUS REPORTS: “But as for John [a zealot leader], when he could no longer plunder the people, he betook himself to sacrilege, and melted down many of the sacred utensils... he emptied the vessels of that sacred wine and oil,* which the priests kept to be poured on the burnt-offerings, and which lay in the inner court of the temple, and distributed it among the multitude [zealots], who, in their anointing themselves and drinking, used [each of them] above an hin [5 ½ quarts] of them... And here I cannot but speak my mind, and what the concern I am under dictates to me, and it is this: I suppose, that had the Romans made any longer delay in coming against these villains, that the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening upon them, or been overflowed by water, or else been destroyed by such thunder as the country of Sodom perished by, for it had brought forth a generation of men much more atheistical than were those that suffered such punishments; for by their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed.” Wars 5.13.6

User friendly free access to “The Wars of the Jews”. This reference starts with book 2, after the death of Herod the Great. <https://onlineancientwitness.wordpress.com/josephus-jewish-war-book-2/#JJW-2.3>

See also fact sheet/video #26 for helps in reading Josephus.

* This could pertain to the warning in Revelation 6:6 “Don’t damage the oil and the wine!”—John’s irreverent distribution of the temple oil and wine among the zealots.