

“Before Bethlehem, Part 2”

Genesis 49:1, 8-10 ¹

When Matt and Anna lived in Beaufort, South Carolina, I was always interested by the Interstate sign that announced the town of Cayce, South Carolina, thinking that it must refer to the psychic Edgar Cayce. I’ve discovered that the town was actually named for a local businessman named William Cayce, but I’ve continued to think about Edgar.

As you may know, Edgar Cayce (1877-1945) was an American who claimed to be a psychic with the ability to channel answers to questions related to history, health, healing, and religion while in a self-induced trance. While skeptics have challenged the evidence for his clairvoyance, there are many who continue to be interested in his work.²

And you’ve probably heard of Michel de Nostredame (1503-1566), usually Latinized to Nostradamus, a reputed seer in the sixteenth century, whose book, *The Prophecies*, has rarely been out of print for nearly 500 years. While the popular press, including *The Discovery Channel*, frequently credits Nostradamus with predicting major world events, most experts contend that the associations made between world events and Nostradamus’s writings are largely the result of misinterpretations or intentional mistranslations. Indeed, no one appears to have ever been able to actually predict the future occurrence of any event using Nostradamus’s materials.³

Cayce and Nostradamus notwithstanding, we humans continue to have a great deal of interest in predicting the future. We’re routinely interested in predicting the weather, stock prices, commodity futures, and the outcome of athletic events. We pay special attention to the nuances of tone when the Chair of the Federal Reserve speaks. The Internet is constantly ablaze with hypotheses about “the next Big Thing”; and even the child’s play of pulling petals from daisies is anchored in trying to discern the future.

Beyond all this, there is seldom a time when someone is not predicting the imminent end of the world. When I Googled “the end of the world” this week, I got 570 *million* pages in response (up 479% from what I got just a few years ago), and some of the latest news of that sort is that some astronomers are currently predicting that an enormous asteroid will hit the Earth on August 26, 2032.

You probably also know that the Bible is no stranger to prophecy and prediction. While most biblical prophets were more concerned with God’s purposes for the persons to whom they were speaking than they were with events far in the future, the Bible does record a fairly amazing amount of material about the future. As just two examples, J. Barton Payne’s *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* catalogs nearly two thousand biblical predictions and their fulfillment,⁴ and Alfred Edersheim’s magisterial *The Life & Times of Jesus the Messiah* points out that the rabbis recognized 456 predictions related to the Messiah alone.⁵

While there are dangers in becoming so preoccupied with the future that we become useless in the present, the Bible certainly doesn’t shy away from giving attention to the future. Through Isaiah—the prophet who spoke most frequently about the future—God said, “Remember

¹ A sermon by David C. Stancil, Ph.D., delivered at the Columbia Baptist Fellowship in Columbia, Maryland on December 8, 2013.

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_Cayce

³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nostradamus>

⁴ J. Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy: The Complete Guide to Scriptural Predictions and Their Fulfillment* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980); this number includes every instance of a prediction, including repetitions in different books.

⁵ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* in two volumes, eighth edition, revised (New York: Longman, Green & Co., 1912), vol. 2, p. 710.

the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come” (Isaiah 46:9-10a).

Jesus told His disciples, “*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them*” (Matthew 5:17). And after His resurrection, “*Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*” (Luke 24:27, NLT).

During Advent, we tend to focus our attention on Bethlehem, and rightly so, but in order to understand Bethlehem we have to keep what happened before Bethlehem in focus as well. Last week we looked at who Jesus really is, as the pre-existent Son of the Father, through whom, by whom, and for whom everything exists that does exist. This morning our focus is on what God told us about the coming Messiah long before Bethlehem’s manger. We miss much of the magnificence of that moment if we fail to see how specifically it was foretold centuries before it happened.

On Monday evening, December 16th, we’re going to show the film, *The Star of Bethlehem*, which unlocks the mystery of the world’s most famous star.⁶ Acclaimed by NASA’s former Chief of Planetary Astronomy (who is also the Technical Editor for *Sky & Telescope*) as “well-researched and reasonable,” and described as “a compelling explanation” by NASA’s Chief Engineer for the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station, this hour-long film uses the best of faith-full scholarship to illumine the spine-tingling wonder of the sign that announced our Savior’s birth.

The background for this morning’s PowerPoint is actually the sky as the Wise Men saw it on the night of December 25th, 2 B.C. as they made their way from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. Plan now to watch how what the star actually was not only fulfilled nine specific prophecies, but also how that fulfillment was engineered into the very fabric of creation. Neither Jesus’ birth nor His death and resurrection were happenstance events!

This morning, I want to focus on some of the prophecies that not only foretold the Messiah’s coming, but that help us to positively identify Him when He appears in the fullness of time. The online version of this sermon will include a table that gives much more information than I can offer here.⁷

Before we begin, it’s important to know that the traditional date for the completion of what Christians call the Old Testament is 450 B.C. We know that the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, was completed about 250 B.C., so the Hebrew text has to be at least that old, and parts of it are hundreds of years older.

This means that the minimum distance between these Messianic prophecies and their fulfillment was 250 years, with that distance being more commonly nearly 600 years, and in some cases well over 1,000 years. So put on your seat belt and let’s launch into a survey of some of the more prominent predictions of the coming Savior.⁸

The very first prediction of the coming Messiah came in the Garden of Eden, shortly after sin had entered the world (1). The Bible tells us that while the Messiah will be the Son of God (3), He will have a human mother (1) who will become pregnant while still a virgin (2). Although

⁶ Rick Larson, *The Star of Bethlehem: Unlock the Mystery of the World’s Most Famous Star*, produced by Stephen McEveety, producer of *The Passion of the Christ* (MPower Pictures, 2009); www.bethlehemstar.net, www.bethlehemstarmovie.com.

⁷ As one might expect, the material presented here is generally accepted by Christians and generally rejected by Jews.

⁸ Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of this prophecy in the table that follows, where Scriptural references are given for both the prophecy and its fulfillment.

the Messiah will be born in time, He has existed before all time (4). He will be called Lord (5) and “Immanuel,” or “God, with us” (6).

When He comes, God’s Messiah will be a Judge and Prophet like Moses (7-8), a Priest like Melchizedek (9), and a King like David (10). He will be descended from Abraham (11), as well as from Isaac (12), Jacob (13), Judah (14), and Jesse, the father of David the King (15), and He will be the heir to David’s throne (17).

That genealogical material went by in a hurry, so let’s go through it again. You’ll remember that Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. The first prophecy about Isaac eliminated half of Abraham’s descendants from the line of the Messiah. Isaac also had two sons, Jacob and Esau. With the prophecy about Jacob, God eliminated half of Isaac’s descendants from the line of the Messiah.

Jacob had twelve sons, each of whom became the patriarch of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. In choosing Judah, God eliminated eleven-twelfths of Jacob’s descendants. Many generations later, when we eventually get to Jesse, we know that he had at least eight sons, all of whom but one—David—are now eliminated. The promises are becoming laser-like in their focus.

God foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (18), so now all the cities, towns, and villages in the world are eliminated, except one. When the Messiah is born, we’re told that He will be presented with unique gifts (19) and that a king will try to kill Him (21). He will flee from that king into Egypt, from which He will later return to Israel (20). Keep in mind that all of these events were predicted a minimum of 250 years before they happened

We’re told that the Messiah’s public ministry will be announced by God’s Messenger (22), and that this ministry will begin in Galilee (23). The Messiah’s ministry will be characterized by extraordinary spiritual power (24), by many miracles (26), and by the use of parables as teaching stories (27). When He comes, the Messiah will be a stumbling block to the Jews (30) but a Light to the Gentiles (31).

He will enter Jerusalem in triumph on a donkey (29), but will be rejected by His own people (33) and will then be betrayed by a friend (32). This betrayal will be for the amount of thirty pieces of silver (35), which will be eventually thrown down in God’s house (36) and then used to buy the potter’s field (37).

When He is betrayed, the Messiah’s disciples will abandon Him (38). He will be accused by lying witnesses (40), but He will say nothing in court in His own defense (41). He will be tried and condemned (39), mocked and insulted (44), wounded and bruised (42), beaten and spit on (43).

The Messiah will die by the method of crucifixion (46, 48) as a sacrifice for our Sin (45). He will collapse as He carries His cross (47), and He will be crucified with thieves (49). People will shake their heads at what happens to Him (52) and they will stare at Him as He dies (53). He will pray for those who kill Him (50) even as His friends watch His death from a distance (51).

He will be thirsty as He dies (55) and sour wine and vinegar will be offered for that thirst (56). As He dies, He will cry out in abandonment (57), while also committing Himself to God (58), even as soldiers gamble for His clothing (54). His bones will not be broken (59), but His heart will be (60).

The Messiah’s side will be pierced (61), unnatural darkness will attend His death (62), and He will be buried in a rich man’s tomb (63). He will rise from death (65) and will ascend back to Heaven (66), where He will be seated at God’s right hand (67) until His triumphal return to Earth in glory and power! (68).

Again, bear in mind that all of this was predicted a minimum of 250 years ahead of time, and some of it was predicted a thousand or more years ahead of time. **Jesus could have arranged for some of these things to happen, but most of them were beyond His control.**

My friends, there was no human engineering of the fulfillment of these prophecies. They were fulfilled according to God's sovereign prediction and promise, signs of that salvation that God prepared for us before the foundation of the world! (Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:20).

Well, thus far I've cited about 60 prophecies, and the handout that I'll post online with this sermon will list 68. *The Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* lists 96 prophecies of Jesus' Incarnation and 95 prophecies related to His Return.⁹

While I expect that these numbers could be contested, Peter Stoner, a long-time professor of mathematics and astronomy¹⁰ has famously calculated that "the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled [even] eight prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} ." In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrated it by suggesting that "we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep [that's 268,820 square miles of silver dollars].

"Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can walk as far as he wishes, but he must pick up just one silver dollar and [it must be] the right one. What chance would he have? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom."¹¹

Stoner then went beyond eight prophecies to consider 48, writing that "the chance that any one man fulfilled 48 prophecies [is] 1 in 10^{157} ." This is an unbelievably large number and it represents an extremely small chance . . . which is really no chance at all. According to Stoner, a silver dollar is entirely too large for trying to visualize this, so he suggested using an electron, which is one of the smallest objects in the universe.

"An electron," Stoner wrote, "is so small that it will take 2.5 times 10^{15} of them laid side by side to make a line one inch long. If we were going to count the electrons in this inch, counting 250 a minute, and if we counted day and night without stopping, it would take us 19,000,000 years to count that inch of electrons." But amazing as that is, it doesn't begin to address the magnitude of the problem.

As Stoner put it, suppose that we had this great amount of electrons, 10^{157} of them, and we were able to make 500 balls of electrons each minute, with each ball having the diameter of twelve billion light years. Even at 500 such unimaginable balls every minute, it would take 10^{10} times 6,000,000,000 years to use up such a number of electrons.¹²

I have no idea how to check Stoner's numbers, but if we were to imagine taking such a number of electrons, marking one and stirring it into the whole pile as we did with the silver dollars, then blindfolding a man and letting him try to find the right one, he would obviously have no chance at all of finding it; and Stoner's calculation has to do with the probability

⁹ Payne, pp. 665-670.

¹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Stoner

¹¹ Peter W. Stoner, *Science Speaks* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), p. 109.

Online edition, <http://sciencespeaks.dstoner.net/>;

PDF <http://covab.mak.ac.ug/downloads/covab3/Peter%20W%20Stoner-Science%20Speaks.pdf>, p. 50.

¹² Stoner, PDF, p. 52.

of any one man fulfilling just 48 prophecies, much less the 68 in the table attached with this sermon or the 456 identified by the ancient rabbis!¹³

My friends, I submit to you that for those who are willing to see it, Jesus of Nazareth is demonstrated by these prophecies to be the promised Messiah from God, and *because this is true*, **nothing in all the universe matters so much as to know Him and to be obedient to the guidance He has given us about God's purposes for our lives.**

The real question now is **how you will respond** to this Promised One

¹³ And Jewish folk would, of course, say that Jesus did not succeed in fulfilling most, if not all, of these.

PROPHECIES ABOUT JESUS & THEIR FULFILLMENT

Before we begin, you'd want to know that the traditional date for the completion of what we call the Old Testament is 450 B.C. We know that the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, was completed c. 250 B.C., so the Hebrew text has to be at least that old, and parts of it are hundreds and hundreds of years older. This means that the minimum distance between these Messianic prophesies and their fulfillment was 250 years, with that distance being more commonly nearly 600 years, and in some cases 1,500 years or more. So put on your seat belt and let's launch into a survey of some of the more prominent predictions of the coming Savior.

	Prophecy	"He" = "the Messiah"	Fulfillment
1.	The Messiah will have a Human Mother	Genesis 3:15	Matthew 1:20; Galatians 4:4
2.	She will become pregnant while still a Virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18, 24-25; Luke 1:26-35
3.	He will be the Son of God	2 Samuel 7:12-16; 1 Chronicles 17:11-14; Psalm 2:7; Mark 3:11	Matthew 3:17, 16:16; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35, 22:70; John 1:34, 49; Acts 13:30-33
4.	Although He will be born in time, He existed before all time	Psalm 102:25; Proverbs 8:22-23; Isaiah 9:6-7, 41:4, 44:6, 48:12; Micah 5:2	John 1:1-2, 8:58, 17:5, 24; Colossians 1:17; Revelation 1:17, 2:8, 22:13
5.	He will Be Called Lord	Psalm 110:1; Jeremiah 23:6	Luke 2:11, 20:41-44
6.	He will Be Immanuel (<i>God with Us</i>)	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23; Luke 7:16
7.	He will be a Judge	Isaiah 33:22	John 5:30; 2 Timothy 4:1
8.	He will be a Prophet like Moses	Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19	Matthew 21:11; Luke 7:16; John 4:19, 6:14, 7:40
9.	He will be a Priest like Melchizedek	Psalm 110:4	Hebrews 3:1, 5:5-6, 6:20, 7:15-16, 10:21
10.	He will be a King	Psalm 2:6; Zechariah 9:9; Jeremiah 23:5	Matthew 21:5, 27:37; John 18:33-38
11.	He will be Descended from Abraham	Genesis 12:2-3, 18:18, 22:18 ¹	Matthew 1:1; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:16
12.	He will be the Son of Isaac	Genesis 17:19, 21:12 ²	Matthew 1:2; Luke 3:23, 34
13.	He will be the Son of Jacob	Numbers 24:17; Genesis 35:10-12 ³	Matthew 1:2; Luke 1:33, 3:23, 34
14.	He will be from the Tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10 ⁴ ; Micah 5:2	Matthew 1:2; Luke 3:23, 33; Hebrews 7:14

¹ This is the only time that God swears by Himself in His relationship with the patriarchs.

² Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Now God eliminates one half of the descendants of Abraham.

³ Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. Now God eliminates one-half of the descendants of Isaac.

⁴ Jacob had twelve sons and each became a tribe of the Hebrew nation. Now God eliminates eleven-twelfths of the descendants of Jacob.

15.	He will be Descended from Jesse	Isaiah 11:1, 10	Matthew 1:6; Luke 3:23, 32
16.	He will be from the House of David	2 Samuel 7:12 – 16; Psalm 132:11; Jeremiah 23:5 ⁵	Matthew 1:1, 9:27; Mark 9:10, 10:47-48; Luke 3:23, 31, 18:38-39; Acts 13:22-23; Revelation 22:16
17.	He will be Heir to David's Throne	Isaiah 9:7	Matthew 1:1
18.	He will be Born at Bethlehem	Micah 5:2 ⁶	Matthew 2:1-6, 4-8; Luke 2:4-7; John 7:42
19.	He will be Presented with Gifts	Psalm 72:10; Isaiah 60:6	Matthew 2:1, 11
20.	He will Flee into Egypt	Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14
21.	A King will try to kill Him	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16
22.	He will be preceded by God's Messenger	Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1	Matthew 3:1-2, 3:3, 11:10; Luke 1:17; John 1:23
23.	He will begin His Ministry in Galilee	Isaiah 9:1	Matthew 4:12-13, 17
24.	He will have Extraordinary Spiritual Power	Psalm 45:7; Isaiah 11:2, 42:1, 61:1-2;	Matthew 3:16-17, 12:17-21; Mark 1:10-11; Luke 2:52, 4:15 -21, 43; John 1:32
25.	He will be passionate about God's Kingdom	Psalm 69:9	John 2:15-17
26.	He will do many Miracles	Isaiah 35:5-6a, 32:3-4	Matthew 9:32, 33, 35, 11:4-6; Mark 7:33-35; John 5:5-9, 9:6-11, 11:43, 44, 47
27.	He will teach using Parables	Psalm 78:2	Matthew 13:34
28.	He will Enter the Temple	Malachi 3:1	Matthew 21:12
29.	He will Enter Jerusalem in Triumph on a Donkey	Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:35, 36-37a; John 12:12-16
30.	He will be a stumbling block to the Jews	Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14, 28:16 ⁷	Romans 9:32-33; 1 Peter 2:7
31.	He will be a "Light" to the Gentiles	Isaiah 49:6, 60:3	Acts 13:47-48a, 26:23, 28:28
32.	He will be Betrayed by a Friend	Psalm 41:9, 55:12-14	Matthew 10:4, 26:14-16, 49-50; Mark 14:10; Luke 22:19-23; John 13:21
33.	He will be Rejected by His own People	Psalm 69:8, 118:22; Isaiah 53:1-3	Matthew 21:42-43, 26:3-4; John 1:11, 7:5, 48, 12:37-43; Acts 4:1-12
34.	He will be Hated without a Cause	Psalm 69:4; Isaiah 49:7	John 15:23-25
35.	He will be Betrayed for 30 Pieces of Silver	Zechariah 11:12	Matthew 26:15, 27:3

⁵ Jesse had *at least* eight sons (1 Samuel 16:10-11). Now God eliminates all of Jesse's sons except one, David.

⁶ God now eliminates all the cities in the world, except one, for the birth of His Son.

⁷ Remember, all of this was foretold at least 250 years ahead of time. Some of it goes all the way back to Genesis!

36.	The Betrayal Money will be Thrown in God's House	Zechariah 11:13b	Matthew 27:5a
37.	The Betrayal Money will Buy the Potter's Field	Zechariah 11:13b	Matthew 27:6-7
38.	His Disciples will abandon Him	Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31; Mark 14:27, 50
39.	He will be Tried & Condemned	Isaiah 53:8	Matthew 27:1-2; Luke 23:1-25
40.	He will be accused by lying Witnesses	Psalms 27:12, 35:11	Matthew 26:59-61
41.	He will say nothing in court in His own defense	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 26:62-63, 27:12-19; Mark 15:3-4; Luke 25:8-10
42.	He will be Wounded and Bruised	Isaiah 53:5; Zechariah 13:6	Matthew 27:26
43.	He will be Beaten and Spit on	Isaiah 50:6; Micah 5:1	Matthew 26:67, 27:30; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63
44.	He will be Mocked & Insulted	Psalms 22:6-8	Matthew 27:31, 39-44; Luke 23:11, 35
45.	He will Die as a Sacrifice for Sin	Isaiah 53:5-12	John 1:29, 11:49-52; Acts 10:43, 13:38-39; Hebrews 1:3, 2:14-15, 9:27-28, 10:12, 18
46.	He will Die by Crucifixion	Psalms 22:14-17	Matthew 27:31; Mark 15:20, 25
47.	He will collapse as He carries His Cross	Psalms 109:24-25	Matthew 27:31-32; Luke 23:26; John 19:17
48.	His Hands and Feet will be Pierced	Psalms 22:16; Zechariah 12:10	Luke 23:33; John 20:25, 27
49.	He will be Crucified with Thieves	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:27-28
50.	He will Pray for those who kill Him	Isaiah 53:12, Psalm 109:4	Luke 23:32-34
51.	His Friends will watch His Death at a Distance	Psalms 38:11	Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40; Luke 23:49
52.	People will shake their heads at what happens to Him	Psalms 22:7, 109:25	Matthew 27:39
53.	People will stare at Him as He Dies	Psalms 22:17	Luke 23:35
54.	Soldiers will gamble for His Clothes	Psalms 22:18	Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; John 19:23-24
55.	He will be thirsty as He dies	Psalms 22:15; 69:21	John 19:28
56.	Sour Wine (Gall) and Vinegar will be Offered to Him to Drink	Psalms 69:21	Matthew 27:34; John 19:28-30
57.	He will Cry Out in abandonment as He dies	Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46
58.	He will commit Himself to God as He dies	Psalms 31:5	Luke 23:46
59.	His Bones will not be Broken	Exodus 12:46; Psalms 34:20	John 19:31-36

60.	But His Heart will be Broken	Psalm 22:14	John 19:34
61.	His Side will be Pierced	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
62.	Unnatural Darkness will cover the land as He dies	Amos 8:9	Matthew 27:45
63.	He will be Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
64.	Judas will be Replaced Among the 12	Psalm 109:7-8	Acts 1:18-20
65.	He will Rise from the Dead	Psalm 16:10, 30:3, 41:10, 118:17; Hosea 6:2	Matthew 28:6-10; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:46; Acts 2:22-32, 13:33
66.	He will Ascend back to Heaven	Psalm 8:3, 68:18a	Acts 1:9, 18-20
67.	Where He will be Seated at God's Right Hand	Psalm 110:1	Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-51; Acts 2:34-35; Hebrews 1:3
68.	Until He Comes Again!	Matthew 24:26-27, 25:31	Luke 21:28; Romans 13:11 Stay Tuned

“We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled [even] eight prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} .” That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing “we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom.”

Stoner considers 48 prophecies and says, “we find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10^{157} . This is really a large number and it represents an extremely small chance. Let us try to visualize it. The silver dollar, which we have been using, is entirely too large. We must select a smaller object. The electron is about as small an object as we know of. It is so small that it will take 2.5 times 10^{15} of them laid side by side to make a line, single file, one inch long. If we were going to count the electrons in this line one inch long, and counted 250 each minute, and if we counted day and night, it would take us 19,000,000 years to count just the one-inch line of electrons. If we had a cubic inch of these electrons and we tried to count them it would take us, counting steadily 250 each minute, 19,000,000 times 19,000,000 times 19,000,000 years or 6.9 times 10^{21} years.

“With this introduction, let us go back to our chance of 1 in 10^{157} . Let us suppose that we are taking this number of electrons, marking one, and thoroughly stirring it into the whole mass, then blindfolding a man and letting him try to find the right one. What a chance has he of finding the right one? What kind of pile will this number of electrons make? They make an inconceivably large volume.”⁸

Such is the chance of any one man fulfilling 48 prophecies, much less 67!

How will you respond to this Promised One? Will you make Jesus LORD of your life?

⁸ Peter W. Stoner, *Science Speaks* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), p. 109.