

Advent 2 2019 - 700 years before, Isaiah 53

LOTTIE

One of the most compelling arguments for the authenticity of the bible is the stunning accuracy of its prophecies

There are 322 direct prophecies in scripture that describe for us the character, nature, life, and death of coming mess

These predictions are not like those of prophets we hear a lot about nowadays....Nostradamus gets a lot of credit for being a "prophet"have you ever read some of them...there are about 942 poetic quatrains predict future events

Its said, he would sit and burn periwinkle and bay leaves....then inhale the smoke while making his predictions....

When you read many of them what you find is that they are vague and nonsensical....lets try one: "Mars threatens us with the force of war and will cause blood to be spilt seventy times. The clergy will be both exalted and reviled moreover by those who wish to learn nothing of them"

Anybody wanna tackle that one? Even nostradamus' most ardent supporters admit that his prophecies are vague, often incoherent, and many have infinite interpretations and possibilities....

So what is different about the bible? Specificity....

The thing about prophecies in the bible is that often many of the prophecies were not understood until after fulfillment

You might ask then how is that specific and accurate? Lets take psalm 22.....at the time it was written it was interpreted to be a psalm of lament by David.....but a closer look shows that it is a detailed scene of the crucifixion

So what are the points of the prophecies? Why do we have them, and what do they matter?

The specificity of the prophecies of the messiah are meant to be a comfort to us, a confirmation of our faith....

What do we mean by specificity.....several years ago I went to the spy museum in DC....one of the things they highlighted was the specificity of commands that undercover agents go through in order to confirm intelligence...

The specificity of the prophecies concerning messiah serve the purpose of confirming our faith in times of doubt

Isaiah ch. 53 is one of those chapters....that require our study

When you google Isaiah 53 one of the things you will quickly find is that this is known as the forbidden chapter among messianic jews...

Why....b/c for the jew....much of their life, this chapter wasn't included in any of their readings....perhaps a reason?

I want you to see 4 things from this ch.

1. The gospel isn't beautiful because its attractive, the gospel is beautiful because of Christ.

v.1-3. when we think of the gospel, it is easy to think of it flippantly.....we avoid the idea that YOU and I have created the most grotesque horror story of all time....

I don't like horror stories.....we don't watch them in my family.....they give me nightmares....my family will tell you that I become a big fat cry baby.....

The worst and subsequently best....horror stories though, are the ones that could actually be real....

To often, we treat the gospel as a romantic comedy....where the good looking girl falls in love with the super attractive guywe cry when they overcome some great obstacle.....and we walk away feeling warm and fuzzy....

No, the story of our redemption is actually a horror story with an incredibly unexpected ending...
We didn't come to Christ because his message was beautiful and attractive.....he wasn't the cool pastor in skinny jeans...

2x Isaiah says....he was despised....what God does in order to redeem us is so grotesque that we have to turn our eyes

2. The greatest gift cost God everything to give

How many of you know a horrible gift giver....

What makes a horrible gift.....lack of thought, lack of awareness....there was no sacrifice...

Consequently....a great gift.....comes from great thought, and the greatest gifts come from the greatest sacrifice...

Here is the thing about the gospel.....it literally cost God everything.....his sacrifice is the gospel

Look at what he gave us.....v.4 – he took our griefs and our sorrows – the greatest of which was our separation from God

What did we do? We esteemed him stricken.....meaning....unlucky....or....unfortunate, not blessed by God....

Look further at the gift.....v.5 – he was pierced, he was crushed....FOR US.....he brought us peace, and healing....

HOW? By laying our iniquity on him.....literally.....he bore the punishment for our sin....

3. Only a perfect God can redeem a sinful people

People often ASK....why couldn't God just choose to forgive us and move on.....

Ultimately...the answer to that is.....it would have left us sinful....

The great mystery of the gospel is that eventually.....we will overcome our sinfulness and be made like him....

Someone had to die for us.....it would require someone special....perfect.....v.7-9

Some of you have loved ones who died this year.....and I am sure this time of year is hard for you.....but the greatest news of all time, is that when a believer dies.....we are made like Christ.....

If you have a loved one who died this year and they were a believer.....right now, they have overcome their sinfulness...

The only way that happens is through our redemption, and because someone paid the price for our sin....

4. God's will is perfect, even when he does the unimaginable

How many of you struggle to buy someone gifts b/c they seemingly have everything

So....imagine what do you get for a God who can literally speak anything into existence....

Let me help you out.....its YOU.....the one thing that God didn't have, that he was willing to go to the bloody cross to obtain.....was you¹

Read v. 10 – let me try to create for you what this is.....the wording is confusing.....but it's a word picture....& here it is

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, bruised, beaten battered, stabbed....he looked out and was able to see his offspring.....that offspring is YOU and I....

Now.....let me wrap up....b/c.....ive saved the best for last.....you have got to hear this.....

Isaiah just told us....he looked down from the cross.....and saw his offspring.....you and I....

But what did he think.....look at v. 11.....

Out of the anguish of his soul; he shall see (who?) and be satisfied.....

While hanging on the cross....he saw us.....and was not just willing to die for us.....his sacrifice, brought him ultimate satisfaction....

This morning, if you are looking for peace and hope.....God is the answer

¹ JD Greear