

formerly ran there is now only an empty channel through a very dry and parched region. Without the river for irrigation there is no possibility of a decent life in that area. Twenty miles away the great river runs through a new channel and along its course many new cities have come into existence.

Only God could know that hundreds of years after Jeremiah spoke these events would occur. Jeremiah could never have dreamed that such a situation as exists there today would thus be produced. It is living evidence of the fact that it was God who spoke.

If time permitted it would be interesting to look at similar instances in Phoenicia, in Egypt, and elsewhere, and see how God gave specific predictions of situations that would occur hundreds of years later, which no human being could possibly have guessed.

Instead I shall give an illustration of a remarkable New Testament prophecy. This is found in Luke 21:24. There Jesus predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and says: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Forty years after the crucifixion the Romans conquered Jerusalem. Most of its survivors were driven away or were sold into captivity. Sixty years later the Romans put down Bar Cochba's uprising in Palestine with great slaughter and made a law that no Jew could come within ten miles of Jerusalem on pain of death. Jerusalem was thus completely trodden down of the Gentiles during succeeding centuries. In the fourth century the emperor Constantine became a Christian and the Roman empire became, at least nominally, a Christian empire, making it easy, during the reigns of Constantine and his sons, for Christianity to spread more widely. Then a nephew named Julian, who hated Christianity, became emperor, and determined to bring back the old pagan religion. Knowing how the great persecutions had failed to destroy Christianity, he said, "If we persecute we will merely spread the knowledge of Christianity and cause more people to turn to it. Instead we must prove that Christianity is false. Jesus said that Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. I will prove that Jesus was a false prophet by rebuilding the Jewish temple in Jerusalem."

Julian sent out word that the temple was to be rebuilt and put the project in the hands of his trusted assistant, Alypius. Wealthy Jews from all over the empire provided great sums of money. Silver spades and pickaxes were brought for the start of the excavation. Edward Gibbon, one of the most famous of historians, and yet one who had a strong anti-Christian bias, says of the event: "The commands of a great monarch were executed by the enthusiasm of a whole people. Yet, on this occasion, the joint efforts of power and enthusiasm were unsuccessful; and the ground of the Jewish temple, which is now covered by a Mahometan mosque, still continued to exhibit the same edifying spectacle of ruin and desolation." Regarding the failure of the attempted rebuilding, Gibbon says: "An earthquake, a whirlwind, and a fiery eruption, which overturned and scattered the new foundations of the temple, are attested, with some variations, by contemporary and respectable evidence." Gibbon quotes what he calls "the unexceptionable testimony" of a highly respected contemporary pagan historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, as follows: "Whilst Alypius, assisted by the governor of the province, urged with vigour and diligence the execution of the work, horrible balls of fire, breaking out near the foundations, with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place, from time to time, inaccessible to the