

God's existence, power and greatness are manifest in all of creation. Man constructs barriers to keep him from realizing this fact and thus to make him feel freer to follow the sinful impulses of his heart. Man hides among the trees. These could not possibly hide him from God but he imagines God does not see him. Or even that God doesn't exist.

The function of apologetics is not so much to prove the existence of God as to remove the obstacles that may prevent man from seeing the clear evidence of God's existence and power. In a way every Christian should be a tree-cutter. He should cut down trees behind which other people are hiding so that they will look at the clear facts of the universe and see what their inner hearts knew all along, that there is a great God who has established and controls everything.

There are many places in the OT and NT where definite statements are made by God to some particular human being. At many points in these statements we can gather specific matters of a factual nature, but as I pointed out in connection with this first question, we must be very careful in so doing that we do not read into them something that was not intended to be there, but that we confine ourselves to the actual meaning of the words that God uses.

In general the emphasis of God's message was to tell God's will in the situation in which men found themselves. Thus God told Isaiah it was the Divine will to protect Jerusalem from Assyrian attack and Isaiah brought comfort and courage to Hezekiah and his associates by assuring them that they need not fear the Assyrian army. This is a theme that appears in a number of cases in the book of Isaiah, but I'd like to call your attention particularly to the passage in Isaiah 37:39 --

"This is what the Lord says concerning the king of Assyria. He shall not enter the city nor shoot an arrow here. He will not come before it with shield nor build a siege raft against it. By the way he came he will return, he will not enter this city declares the Lord. I will defend this city and save it for my sake and for the sake of David my servant.

You all know what followed in the account and how God miraculously destroyed the great Assyrian army which seemed absolutely certain to take over control of Jerusalem and destroy it and take the people into exile as he ~~had~~ had done before a few years before with the people of much larger cities of Samaria. But God gave specific information to Isaiah that the Assyrians would not conquer Jerusalem and the people would be safe. Here's a case where God gave specific information about future events to Isaiah, and where the specific promise he made was fulfilled.

We go now about a century after the days of Isaiah and we find Ananias the son of Azzur who is called a prophet in the OT and who gave substantially the same message. Nebuchadnezzar had attacked Jerusalem/ The people had asked for good terms, and had surrendered and he had taken many of the precious things out of the temple and left them a sort of vassal state. Then the people had become tired of the excessive taxation Nebuchadnezzar was