

A workbook to test the claims  
of Biblical prophecy fulfillment.

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Also by the author:

*Seeing Jesus*

A Disciple's Perspective

*How To Gain Victory Over Sin*

Knowing the Sanctification of the Holy Spirit

Fifty-Five Questions for Skeptics

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## Testing The Claim

### Testing The Claim

Hypothetical question: The Aztec empire flourished in the area of central Mexico until the Spanish conquistadors arrived in 1521. Today there are descendants of those same Aztecs living in Mexico. How likely do you think it would be for them to come together after 500 years to rebuild the Aztec empire? Or what about the Phoenicians? Do you think it possible for them to form a revived Phoenician state after 2300 years? More to the point, how would you determine the mathematical probability of such an event happening? Of course, the chances are extremely low, but *how low*?

Let's make it even more absurd. Supposing such an event did occur, what would be the chances that someone, hundreds of years earlier, had somehow accurately and plainly predicted it would happen. What would be the probability then? How would you estimate or determine the combined probability of the prediction with its fulfillment?

#### THE CLAIM

If these sound like silly questions to you, they're not, for such an event has happened in recent history. In 1948, after over 2500 years of captivity and dispersion around the world, the Jews descended from the ancient nation of Israel returned to their old homeland to become a modern state<sup>1</sup>. Like it or not, the independent state of Israel exists today, and is a central figure in the conflicts of the Middle East. That such an event happened is unprecedented, yet what is more amazing is that there are multiple direct predictions of this happening written thousands of years earlier, and those predictions accurately reflect the current conditions in Israel today.

By this point, you probably think this claim is completely ridiculous, made by some self-deceived religious wacko with his head in the sand. If there are prophecies, you're sure they're so vague, they can be interpreted to mean anything—and hence they mean nothing. But the predictions I'm talking about really are unambiguous,

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<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia defines a nation as "a stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, ethnicity or psychological make-up manifested in a common culture." A state is defined as "an organized community living under a single political structure and government, sovereign or constituent."

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obvious to anyone who will read them. You can read them for yourself. They are also specific in their details. Some even explain their own meanings in plain language.

Being somewhat skeptical by nature myself, I know I cannot convince you of this. But I think if you read the prophecies for yourself and do your own research, I won't have to. *You will convince yourself.*

This is a workbook to help you test the claims of the Bible using only personal investigation, logic, and a little mathematics. It consists of fifty-five straight-forward and impartial questions. Some are very simple, but others will require time and effort to research and answer. All of the questions are necessary, however, to determine the probabilities of the predicted events and test their claimed fulfillments. Since you will be comparing biblical prophecies with reality, some questions will require you to read those prophecies. I have included references to them so you can read them in any Bible of your choosing.

If you accept the challenge, you may use whatever sources you want to do your research: books, magazines, news articles, internet, encyclopedias, subject-matter experts, first-hand experience, and so on. You can do this study on your own or with others. The important thing is that, whether you earnestly want to know the truth or you intentionally try to prove me wrong, you do your own work, *sticking only with the facts*. I will not provide answers for you or try to indoctrinate you in any way. Instead, you will find the answers yourself, and when you're finished, you will come up with your own conclusions based solely on the facts you find.

What's the purpose of this challenge? To show, through your own research, the evidence that points to the existence of the God of the Bible, that the Bible is God's word, and what it has to say is of life-and-death importance for you. Right now you probably have the opposite belief. You've been told the Bible is full of fables, lies, and inaccuracies. You may even be able to list off what you think are some contradictions. Whatever you believe, you can only know the truth by doing your own investigation into the claims of the Bible, paying close attention to the meanings of words and the context.

The Bible contains many different prophecies. It even records some of their eyewitness fulfillments. But because those eyewitnesses are long dead, skeptics have come up with a standard list of excuses to avoid having to believe. You probably subscribe to one or more of these:

## Testing The Claim

1. "The prophecies were written after the events happened."
2. "The prophecies were written vaguely. They can be interpreted to mean anything."
3. "The fulfillments were coincidental, the result of random chance."
4. "The prophecies were purposely fulfilled to make the Bible seem true."
5. "The Bible writers lied about the fulfillments."

These seem like good points, but I have *never* seen them backed up with hard facts. They really only serve as an excuse to avoid the effort of looking at the evidence. It doesn't matter though, for none of these objections apply to the prophecies of restoration of the nation of Israel:

1. It is plainly evident that the prophecies were written before Israel became a state in 1948. There are still a large number of Bibles significantly older than modern Israel, and they all contain the prophecies. If you have access to one, I encourage you to use it. The older, the better.
2. By reading the Bible passages listed in this workbook for yourself, you will discover that the restoration of Israel (and the conditions within that restored nation) was directly predicted in multiple places. Far from being a vague interpretation, it is the only obvious interpretation.
3. The likelihood that all the prophecies were fulfilled by random chance is so small, it's more likely you'll win the lottery tomorrow. All of the questions in this booklet are worded to get you to think seriously about the probability of each aspect of each fulfillment, and then to think about their combined probability.
4. When you study history, especially of the period leading up to 1948, you will find Israel was not restored just to make the prophecies seem true. Nations don't return after hundreds or thousands of years just because they want to, otherwise we would see many ancient displaced peoples regain their homeland to form revived states. If you do your research, you will also see that the fulfillment happened as a result of non-Jewish causes.
5. Obviously, the Bible writers could not have lied about the fulfillment, because they didn't witness it—we did.

Your study will confirm that the standard skeptic excuses don't apply.

## **Fifty-Five Questions for Skeptics**

This is a quest for objective truth. Due to the effort involved, the fear of upsetting one's personal world-view, or a comfortable close-mindedness, I don't expect many will take this challenge... *but I hope you will.* Investigate this in minute detail. Look for evidence both for and against. Try to set aside your biases as much as possible.

You're welcome to come up with a theory to explain all this in a naturalistic manner, but make sure your theory also has supporting evidence.

As you seriously study this topic, I hope you will connect the facts and come to my conclusion, however uncomfortable it may be to you:

### **Fact 1:**

It is extremely unlikely for an ancient nation to be restored in modern times.

### **Fact 2:**

The ancient nation of Israel was restored to their homeland in 1948.

### **Fact 3:**

The Bible predicted God would restore Israel to their homeland.

### **Conclusion:**

God fulfilled his promises as he said. Therefore, he exists, and the Bible is true.



## The Questions

### *The Questions*

This first set of questions is to help establish a baseline for calculating the probabilities for Fact 1. To determine if the modern-day restoration of Israel is a result of natural causes or supernatural intervention, you need some global statistics to compare those events to. It may be difficult or impossible to find precise answers or numbers for some of these questions, but at least do the research to come up with a realistic estimate.

1. How many nations exist on earth today?
2. How many nations have existed in recorded history?
3. Besides Israel, how many groups of people have lost their independent state status, and then regained it after at least 10 years? after 100 years? after 1000 years?
4. What happens to the likelihood that a nation will regain its statehood over each of these time periods?
5. Other than Israel, how many scattered people groups have retained their national identity for at least 10 years? for at least 100 years? for at least 1000 years?

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6. Besides Israel, how many nations were removed from their homeland and scattered among many other nations before regaining their statehood?

The next two questions are optional, since we're focusing on Israel's return, not their dispersion.

7. (optional) Besides Israel, how many nations have had the loss of their statehood predicted at least 100 years in advance?
8. (optional) How many of these other nations have had the manner of that loss (i.e. how it would occur) predicted at least 100 years in advance?
9. How many of these nations, before they lost their statehood, were told beforehand they would be scattered around the world, yet would never lose their identity?
10. Besides Israel, how many nations have had the restoration of their statehood predicted at least 100 years in advance?
11. How many of these nations have had the future conditions within their restored nation predicted in detail?

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## The Questions

These next two questions pertain to Fact 2—that the nation of Israel was restored in modern times. It seems obvious, but let’s make sure of it anyway.

12. Is there a modern state of Israel today?
  
13. Are the Jewish inhabitants of today’s state of Israel descendants of the Jews of ancient Israel? What evidence is there (for or against)?

These next questions relate to prophecies about a small portion (a “remnant”) of the Jews surviving the fall of ancient Israel, suffering oppression as they were scattered in the world, yet still retaining their identity.

**EXHIBIT A:** Read Amos 9:7–10, Ezekiel 5:11–12, Hosea 9:17, Jeremiah 31:35–36, and Jeremiah 46:28.

14. What do these passages say God will do to his people?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
15. Do these passages say God would utterly destroy Israel down to the last person?

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16. According to Jeremiah 31:35–36, under what conditions will Israel cease to ever be a nation?

(See Genesis 1:14–15 for the ‘ordinances’ (purpose) of the sun, moon and stars.)

17. According to these passages, why would Israel be scattered among the nations?

Now we come to questions that deal with the biblical prophecies of Israel’s restoration (Fact 3). This first group of questions deal with the claims that Israel’s return was foretold before it happened. In these passages, note that Jacob is the original name of Israel (Genesis 32:28), and the tribe of Ephraim represents Israel because he received the birthright (preeminent position) from Jacob (Genesis 48:13–19, 1 Chronicles 5:1, Jeremiah 31:9).

**EXHIBIT B:** Read Isaiah 11:11–12, Jeremiah 3:18, Jeremiah 16:14–15, Jeremiah 23:7–8, Ezekiel 20:33–44, Ezekiel 36:1–12, Ezekiel 36:22–24, and Zechariah 10:6–8.

18. What is the common event that is going to happen in all of these passages?

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## The Questions

19. Is there a more obvious explanation of these passages that doesn't require Israel to be returned to their homeland?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
20. According to these passages, how certain is this event going to happen, and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
21. Where are the people of Israel returning from? Is this a return of Jews moving from one region to their homeland, or something larger?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
22. What does "they shall be as though I had not cast them off" (Zechariah 10:6) say about what you read earlier in Hosea 9:17?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
23. According to Ezekiel 36:12, once Israel returns to their land, will they ever be removed again? (see also Jeremiah 24:6, Amos 9:15.)

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**EXHIBIT C:** Read Deuteronomy 30:1–5. (If you have time, read chapters 28 through 30 for the full context, including the “blessing and the curse” of verse 1, and do the optional questions.)

24. Who is this passage written to? (See 27:11-14, 29:1-2, and 31:1)

25. Where will they be in chapter 30, verse 1?

26. (optional) According to 28:58-64, why will they be there?

27. What is going to happen to them in chapter 30?

28. According to verse 1, at what point in their history is this supposed to happen?

29. What will cause this to happen? What is the “driving force” to ensure that it happens?

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## The Questions

30. (optional) How does Deuteronomy 28:15–68 compare to the history of ancient Israel?
31. (optional) How does Deuteronomy 28 to 30 fit in with the exhibit A passages that you read earlier?
32. (optional) How old are the oldest known copies of Deuteronomy that we have today?
33. (optional) When was Deuteronomy 28:68 fulfilled? Was it before or after the prophecy was written?

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## Fifty-Five Questions for Skeptics

**EXHIBIT D:** Read Ezekiel 37. This is a prophetic vision with symbolic imagery, followed by the interpretation of the vision.

34. According to verse 11, what are the “bones” mentioned in this passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
35. According to verses 12 and 21, what are the “graves” mentioned in this passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
36. What is this prophecy about?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
37. According to these passages, what is the primary cause for this event happening?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
38. What do you think is the significance of the bones being “very dry” in verse 2?  
(What can you deduce about a dry bone when you see it?)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
39. The progress of moving from dry bones to a living army takes multiple stages. Do these stages imply anything about how the fulfillment will happen?

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## The Questions

40. Is there some other explanation for this passage that makes it irrelevant in regards to the modern day restoration of Israel? If so, what factual evidence do you have for the explanation?

These next questions are about what the Bible says the conditions will be like in the restored nation of Israel.

**EXHIBIT E:** Read Joel 3:1–2, Joel 3:17–21, Joel 2:23–26, and Amos 9:13–15.

41. What do these passages say the conditions will be like in the future land of Israel?

42. How do the conditions in the land of Israel today compare with the land of Palestine before Israel returned in 1948? (Research old photographs and eyewitness evidence.)

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**EXHIBIT F:** Read Isaiah 49:19–21 and Zechariah 10:9–10.

43. What do these passages say about the population density of Israel after it returns?

44. How much area does the state of Israel cover today, and what is its population?  
What is the average population density?

45. How does the population density compare to Japan?

46. How much of the land of Israel is inhabitable, and what does this say about the population density in the inhabitable parts?

**EXHIBIT G:** Read Zechariah 2:1–13.

47. According to verse 4, what will be the future condition of Jerusalem?

48. Does this reflect the condition of Jerusalem today?

49. When this prophecy was written, was it considered a good thing not to have a wall around Jerusalem (See Nehemiah 1:3, 2:17)? If not, why would this prophecy say it would be so?

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## The Questions

There are many more fulfilled prophecies relating to the restoration of Israel, but these should be sufficient for you to draw some kind of conclusion. These last set of questions address that conclusion, whatever it may be.

50. Do the claims given in the introduction (i.e. the third paragraph) accurately reflect what the Bible says? Why or why not?

51. Some of the prophecies you've read state God would be the one to bring Israel back to their homeland. Did Israel become a state solely as a result of its own effort?

52. How do you calculate the combined probability of multiple events? (For example, you know the chances that a tossed coin will land 'heads' is 50%. How do you calculate the odds that the next ten tosses will all result in 'heads?')

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## Fifty-Five Questions for Skeptics

53. Calculate the combined probability that all of the prophecies you've looked at were fulfilled by random chance. To calculate each probability, divide the number of nations that match the condition by the total number of nations in the group. For example, suppose 100 nations have been dispersed around the world. If 5 of those nations have retained their national identity after 2500 years, the probability would be:  $\frac{5}{100} = \boxed{0.05}$ .

\_\_\_\_\_ : the likelihood that an ancient people would retain their ethnic identity after 2500 years of captivity and dispersion around the world.

× \_\_\_\_\_ : that afterward, these people would regain their land and become a nation again,

× \_\_\_\_\_ : that these people would return to their original homeland from all over the world,

× \_\_\_\_\_ : that the conditions in their land would be accurately predicted,

× \_\_\_\_\_ : that their capital city would be inhabited without walls,

× \_\_\_\_\_ : that, of all the ancient nations that could have returned, it happened to the one prophesied to do so.

= \_\_\_\_\_ : Multiply all of the above to get the combined probability.

This answer only takes into account some of the fulfilled prophecies. There are many others I haven't included. You can investigate them for yourself and include them in your calculations if you desire. (Another factor you can include is that the Jews suffered many attempts over the centuries to annihilate them—in my opinion to prevent the prophecies from being fulfilled, yet they survived. This is implied in passages such as Deuteronomy 28:63–67 and Amos 9.)

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## The Questions

54. Now compare the combined probability of these prophecies being fulfilled by chance with the many statements in the Bible that say God would surely cause these prophecies to be fulfilled. What does this say about the likelihood that the God of the Bible exists? What does it say about his trustworthiness?
55. What significance does this have for you?

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### ***Postscript***

There are more fulfilled prophecies relating to Israel's return, but I don't want to tire you out looking up Bible passages and doing research. I hope by this point you've come to the same conclusion I have. If you still need to see more fulfilled prophecies, I recommend the book "*The Hand of God: Ancient Prophecies—Modern Miracles of Israel*", by Bill Heinrich (<https://www.scribd.com/document/183070987>). In it the author presents the details of many prophecies that were partially or completely fulfilled by the time of publishing, a few of which are:

- the eastern gate of Jerusalem being shut (happened in 1514 A.D. by the Muslims),
- the Hebrew language restored to everyday usage,
- the monetary unit of the restored nation being the shekel,
- the Gentiles helping to bring the Jews to their restored homeland,
- Jews being airlifted into the country,
- and the desert lands being inhabited.



The eastern gate of Jerusalem.

When you factor in these other prophecy fulfillments, the likelihood for a chance fulfillment shrinks even more rapidly. It's also fascinating to see these things happen practically before one's eyes!

I hope this workbook has given you a hunger to study the Bible for yourself. Claims that the Bible is unreliable are themselves unreliable. You can only know this by investigating for yourself.

Most importantly, I hope your study of the Bible will lead you to know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior from sin. Biblical prophecies were not given so we might know the future; they were given so that we might know God: that he is real and that he will do what he promised, no matter how improbable or impossible it might seem to us. This is seen in a phrase that occurs many times in connection with biblical prophecy: "...*Then you shall know that I am the LORD.*"

## Postscript

- In Exodus 6:7-8, God promised to rescue the Israelites from Egyptian slavery and bring them to the land he promised their forefathers. He told them, “*Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God...*”
- In 1 Kings 20:28, God promised Israel that he would deliver the Syrian army that had come against them in vast numbers into their hands, after which they “*shall know that I am the LORD.*”

God always does what he promises to do, but it is more beneficial to believe him before the prophecies are fulfilled. There are consequences to doubting God when it's too late.

The most important prophecy you must concern yourself with is that of the promised return of Jesus Christ to judge the world. The modern-day return of Israel is just one of the indicators pointing to this event. Another set of indicators is the fulfillment of prophecies about the condition the world is in today.<sup>2</sup> You may think Jesus Christ's return a fable, but it is as sure to happen as it was for Israel to return to their homeland. You need to be ready for his return, because when it happens, it will be too late to change your mind!

*The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked. But now he commands that all people everywhere should repent, because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained; of which he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17:30-31)*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God didn't send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him. He who believes in him is not judged. He who doesn't believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God. (John 3:16-18)*

If you want to study the Bible some more, I suggest beginning with the book of John, and then go on to Romans, paying attention to what these books say about Jesus Christ.

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<sup>2</sup> For some examples, see <http://dtjsoft.com/personal-apologetic#todayprophecies>.

## ***Appendix: Rationale for the Questions***

When calculating the probabilities of an event happening, you need to examine as many details as possible. If you never considered the chances for Israel to regain their homeland, you would likely say that, while the chances were low, they couldn't be too low because the event did happen. If I asked only a few questions, you would likely overestimate the probabilities of the events. You would be thinking in terms of generalities, not taking into account the specific details involved in the prophetic fulfillments. Only when you get into the details can you see how unlikely the event really was. These questions draw attention to the details so a more accurate assessment of the probabilities can be made.

There's nothing special about the number fifty-five. I could have asked many more questions about other aspects of Israel's prophetic fulfillment. But then you would be less willing to finish the investigation because of the work involved. I think these fifty-five questions strike a balance between the two extremes.

Here's the purpose for each of the fifty-five questions:

- 1, 2 To experimentally calculate the probability of the state of one thing in a set of things, you need to know the total number of things in the set and their states. Suppose you have a bag with five red and green M&M candies. If you take four out, of which two are red and the other two are green, the likelihood that the last one out will be red is 50%. However, if the bag had 100 M&Ms, of which 2 were red and 97 were green, the chances drop to about 2% that the last one will be red. The probability depends on the total number of items. Likewise, since you're looking at events relating to a single nation, you first need to know the total number of nations to determine the probabilities in the questions that follow. I decided to break this down into two questions. The first seems relatively easy, but is actually difficult to determine when you make the distinction between a nation and a state<sup>3</sup>. The second is likely impossible to discover. But regardless, you should be able to come up with some realistic minimum values.
- 3 You're attempting to determine if Israel's return is the result of supernatural intervention or natural causes. Israel is the test case, and all the other nations are the control group. Questions 3 through 11 are about the control group.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.quora.com/How-many-nations-are-there>



## Appendix: Rationale for the Questions

Israel lost and regained its statehood. How many other nations have lost and regained their statehood? A couple of examples are Lithuania and Estonia which have both recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of their restored statehoods.

- 4 You should find that as time goes on, the chances for a restoration decreases. Because some nations have returned to independent statehood, you may have enough data to estimate the chances for Israel's return after over 2500 years. For those mathematically inclined, here's one way to get a rough estimate:

	Value	Example
(a) Enter the shortest number of years for which you have data.	_____	100
(b) Enter the longest number of years for which you have data.	_____	200
(c) Enter the number of years you want to solve for.	_____	400
(d) Subtract (a) from (c).	_____	300
(e) Subtract (a) from (b).	_____	100
(f) Divide (d) by (e).	_____	3
(g) Enter the number of nations restored during the shortest time period.	_____	10
(h) Enter the number of nations restored during the longest time period.	_____	5
(i) Divide (h) by (g).	_____	0.5
(j) Raise (i) to the power of (f). (Use the $Y^x$ or $^$ button on your calculator.)	_____	0.125
(k) Multiply (j) by (g). This is the answer.	_____	<b>1.25</b>

In the example, 10 nations have returned after 100 years of dispersion, and 5 nations after 200 years. That's a 50% reduction in 100 years. So, in another 100

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years, we can estimate half of that to return (2.5 nations), and after another 100 years, half of that to return (1.25 nations).

Of course, these numbers are just an example. You'll need to use the figures you find from your own research. The more data you have and the greater the time span between the shortest ( $y_1$ ) and longest ( $y_2$ ) periods, the more accurate your result will be. (For more accurate results, you should do a trend analysis on all of the data you collected, but that is beyond the scope of this book.)

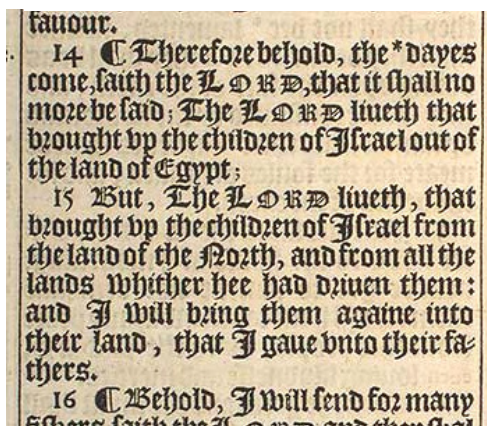
- 5 This question is about *scattered* people groups that have not necessarily regained their homeland but have retained their culture. By scattered, I mean the majority of the people do not live in their homeland. The Basques, for example, are a scattered people group that have retained their culture. Some still live in their homeland, but the majority live elsewhere. Likewise, Jews have lived in Palestine throughout the Diaspora, but the majority of them lived elsewhere.
- 6 This question is about *scattered* people that *have* regained their statehood. This happened to Israel. Has it happened to any other nation? If so, you may want to break this down by how long their Diaspora was (i.e. after 10 years, 100 years, and 1000 years).
- 7, 8 Now we get to questions relating to prophecy. Israel's scattering before their return was prophesied (as seen in exhibits A and C). These first two optional questions also figure into the overall probability. If you can find other nations that were told they would be scattered beforehand, you may be able to calculate the chances for Israel's scattering to be prophesied. Question 8 prepares for optional question 30.
- 9 The preservation of Israel's national identity during their Diaspora was foretold in advance. Did other scattered nations also have predictions about their preservation? This question prepares for question 16.
- 10 It was foretold thousands of years in advance that the Jews would return to their homeland and become an independent state. Are there any other nations of which this was predicted? This question prepares for questions 18 and following.
- 11 This is about one of the details of the prophecies. The agricultural and economic status of the restored Israel was predicted (see exhibits E, F, and G). Was this predicted about any other nation? This question prepares for questions 41 through 49.
- 12 Now that you have some statistics about the control group, it's time to move on to the test case. These next two questions are to verify the Israel of today is

## Appendix: Rationale for the Questions

- the same as the Israel of ancient times. If Israel does not exist as a state today, then the whole point of this workbook is moot.
- 13 If it can be proven that the Jews of today are not descendants of the biblical Israelites, then the prophecies have not been fulfilled. This also relates to question 16.
  - 14 This question is to get you to read and interpret the prophecies for yourself. The prophecies in exhibit A are about the destruction of ancient Israel and Judah (the 'divided kingdom'). This destruction was not to be a complete destruction: God would save some alive, although they would live in fear and suffer much.
  - 15 If the answer is yes, then again, the whole point is moot.
  - 16 This question relates to the promised surety of Israel's preservation throughout the Diaspora. The sun and moon still shine, the waves continue move, therefore Israel still exists.
  - 17 This question relates to the Deuteronomy 28 passage that will be presented later. While not directly related to the restoration of Israel, this question is to show that God scattered Israel for a reason. It was not a chance occurrence.

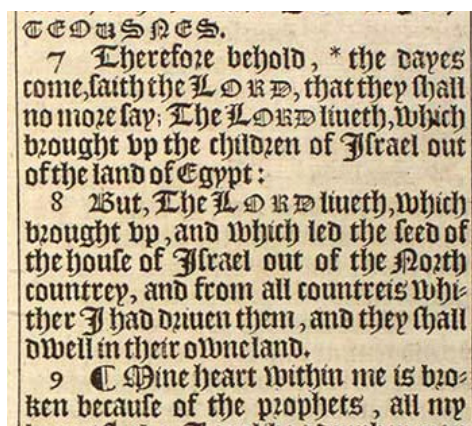
### Examples of Exhibit B from the first printing of the King James Version in 1611:

Jeremiah 16:14-15



- 14 Therefore behold, the dayes come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said; The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;
- 15 But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the North, and from all the lands whither hee had driven them: and I will bring them againe into their land, that I gave unto their fathers.

Jeremiah 23:7-8



- 7 Therefore behold, the dayes come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say; The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt:
- 8 But, The Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the North countrey, and from all countreys whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their owne land.

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- 18 These next questions relate directly to the claim of Fact 3 on page 4, that the Bible says the state of Israel will one day be restored. Read the Bible passages given in the exhibit to see if the claim is true. Is this what these passages say?
- 19 This question relates to skeptical claim #2 (page 3), to show how plain the language is in the given passages, that the interpretation is not subjective. I'm giving you an opportunity to come up with an alternative explanation.
- 20 Are these claims that something might happen, is likely to happen, or will happen? This question has to do with the surety of the promises in the prophecies. It is like having a bag of 100 M&Ms of unknown color, and after taking 99 out that are all red, predicting the last one out of the bag will *certainly* be blue.
- 21 This question is to distinguish this event from the Jews' return from the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.
- 22 The Hosea passage may seem to indicate God was done with Israel forever, but does it really say that? See also Hosea 1:8-10.
- 23 Like question 21, this also relates to Israel's modern return. When Israel returned from the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, it was only for a time, then they were dispersed around the world. Now that they have returned, if Israel is ever again removed from their homeland and scattered around the world, then the prophecy has failed.
- 24 - 33 Deuteronomy chapters 28 and 30 is a description of the history of Israel from the time of Moses until the modern time. In Chapter 28, God gave Israel a choice: blessings if they would obey, and cursings if they didn't. The rest of the Old Testament shows that, for the most part, they did not obey... so they received the cursings. This list of curses, beginning in verse 15, is a progression of things God would do to Israel. Each of these things happened, down to the last. Chapter 30 takes up where chapter 28 left off - it happens *after* the events of chapter 28. Question 24 is to verify that this chapter was given to Israel.
- 25 This question is about where the Jews are returning to Israel from. This also ties with Deuteronomy 28:64 which happened in 70 A.D.. This is distinct from 28:36 where God brings the Jews into captivity to a single nation.
- 26 This question is to show that this scattering was intentionally accomplished by God.
- 27 This is to show the meaning is obvious. This is the earliest example of the promise of Israel's return.
- 28 This is to show that there is a definite order to the events in the prophecy, which the real history of Israel follows.

## Appendix: Rationale for the Questions

- 29 This is the same 'force' that scattered Israel in verse 1. Israel's return will not be the result of random events but of God's purpose and power. God is in complete control of Israel throughout history.
- 30 This passage can be read as a list of prophecies that were all fulfilled in Israel's history. Most were fulfilled in Bible times. This is a good area for research.
- 31 The exhibit A passages show that even though God would destroy Israel, he would preserve a 'remnant.'
- 32 This is to show that the fulfillment happened after the prophecy was written. There are fragments of Deuteronomy among the Dead Sea Scrolls that date to 50 B.C. This question ties with the next.
- 33 This is to show that at least some of the Deuteronomy 28 prophecies were fulfilled after they were written. Dead Sea Scroll 4Q39, dated to 50 B.C., has a fragment of parts of this verse, showing it was not added after the fact.
- 34 - 36 These three questions show that the interpretation of the prophecy is obvious because the meanings of the symbols are explained.
- 37 Just as with question 29. Not only are the prophecies repeated in the Bible, the power behind the fulfillment is also repeated.
- 38 This question relates to the amount of time that Israel was dispersed among the nations. It should be easy to deduce that a long time is implied.
- 39 The return of Israel also takes place in stages. The primary prophecy has been fulfilled, but it is also continuing to be fulfilled. Many Jews have returned to their native land, but there are still plenty who haven't yet.
- 40 This question is to give an opportunity to give an alternate interpretation of the prophecy.
- 41 The first reference is to give the context for the other references: this is to happen when Israel is returned to their homeland. Joel 3:18 is about the fruitful abundance of the land in the future Israel.
- 42 This question is to get you to research the evidence for the prophetic fulfillments.
- 43 Prophecies about the population density of Israel in the last days is another area that can be verified.
- 44 - 46 These three questions are to get you to research the conditions in the state of Israel to see how it fits the prophecies.
- 47 This question is to show that God predicted Jerusalem would be wall-less in the last days.
- 48 A question to verify if the prophecy is true.

## Fifty-Five Questions for Skeptics

### Eyewitness descriptions of the land of Israel in the 1800's:

Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies. Where Sodom and Gomorrah reared their domes and towers, that solemn sea now floods the plain, in whose bitter waters no living thing exists—over whose waveless surface the blistering air hangs motionless and dead—about whose borders nothing grows but weeds, and scattering tufts of cane, and that treacherous fruit that promises refreshment to parching lips, but turns to ashes at the touch. Nazareth is forlorn; about that ford of Jordan where the hosts of Israel entered the Promised Land with songs of rejoicing, one finds only a squalid camp of fantastic Bedouins of the desert; Jericho the accursed, lies a moldering ruin, to-day, even as Joshua's miracle left it more than three thousand years ago; Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and their humiliation, have nothing about them now to remind one that they once knew the high honor of the Saviour's presence; the hallowed spot where the shepherds watched their flocks by night, and where the angels sang Peace on earth, good will to men, is untenanted by any living creature, and unblessed by any feature that is pleasant to the eye. Renowned Jerusalem itself, the stateliest name in history, has lost all its ancient grandeur, and is become a pauper village; the riches of Solomon are no longer there to compel the admiration of visiting Oriental queens; the wonderful temple which was the pride and the glory of Israel, is gone, and the Ottoman crescent is lifted above the spot where, on that most memorable day in the annals of the world, they reared the Holy Cross. The noted Sea of Galilee, where Roman fleets once rode at anchor and the disciples of the Saviour sailed in their ships, was long ago deserted by the devotees of war and commerce, and its borders are a silent wilderness; Caperna-

“3.—We went through a fine pasture country; immense straths; flocks of sheep and goats, and asses and camels, often came in sight. This is the very way up out of Egypt, little changed from the day that the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing, and Joseph and Mary carried down the babe from the anger of Herod. Little changed! did I say? it is all changed; no more is there one brook of water. Every river of Egypt—Wady, Gaza, Esheol, Sorek—every brook we crossed, was dried up, not a drop of water. The land is changed; no more is it the rich land of Philistia. The sand struggles with the grass for mastery. The cities are changed—where are they? The people are changed—no more the bold Philistines—no more the children of Simeon—no more Isaac and his herdsmen—no more David and his horsemen; but miserable Arab shepherds—simple people, without ideas—poor, degraded, fearful. Khanounes was the first town we entered—Scripture name unknown. The burying-ground outside the town. The well, and people coming to draw, were objects of great interest to us. The people were highly entertained with us in return. We sat down in the Bazaar, and were a spectacle to all. How much we longed to have the Arabic tongue, that we might preach the unsearchable riches of Christ in God's own land. Same evening we heard the cry of the wolf, and encamped two miles from Gaza. The plague was raging, so we did not enter, but spent a delightful day in comparing its condition with God's word concerning it—'Baldness is come upon Gaza.' The old city is buried under sand hills, without a blade of grass, so that it is bald indeed. The herds and flocks are innumerable, fulfill-

Andrew Bonar, *Memoir & Remains of Robert Murray McChevne* (1844)

Samuel Clemens, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869)

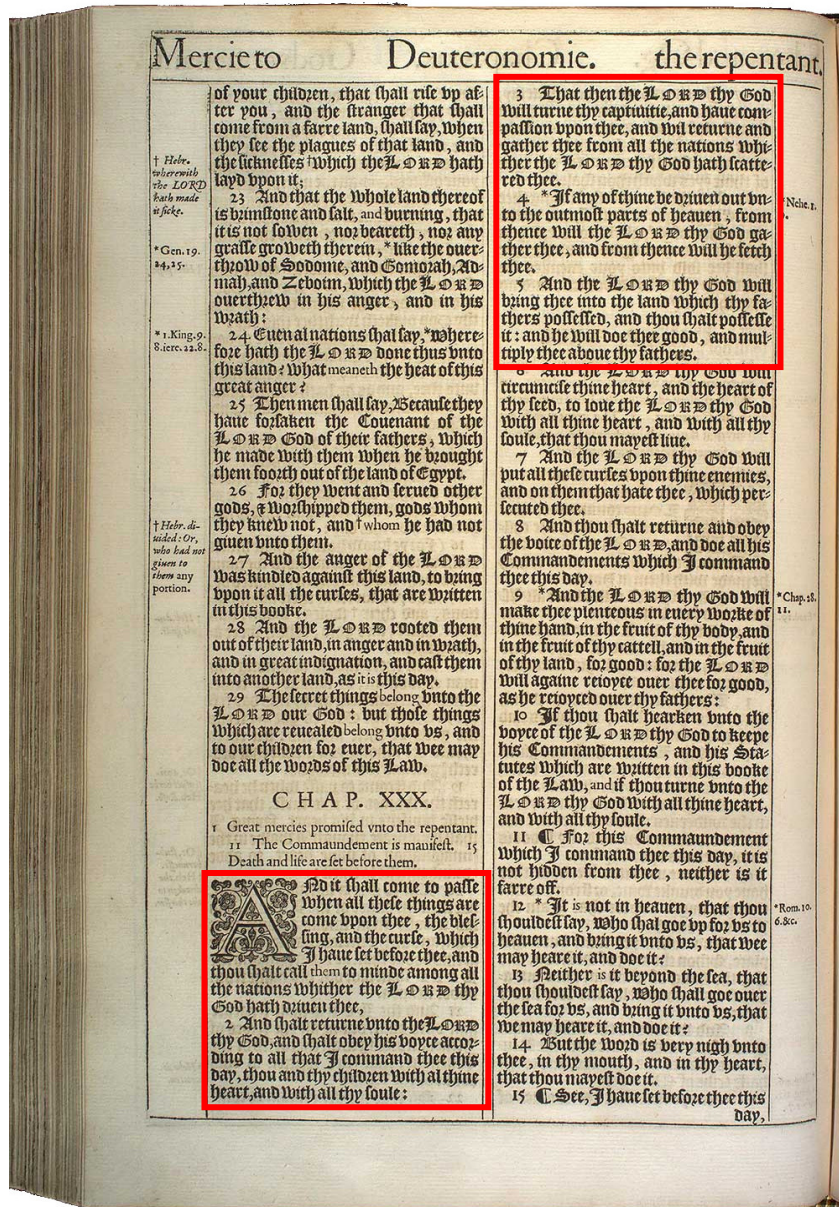
- 49 This question is to draw attention to why this prophecy is unusual. In Bible times, a city was supposed to have walls to protect it from attack. Having no wall around a city was shameful. Yet, the prophecy said that would be the condition of Jerusalem in the last days, and it would be normal. This was contrary to what people thought at the time the prophecy was written. If man made up this prophecy, he would have predicted a city with walls.
- 50 After looking at the evidence for prophecy fulfillment, you should be able to come to a conclusion about the truthfulness of the biblical claims.
- 51 This question is not just about other nations helping Israel to return, but God orchestrating the return.
- 52 This question prepares for the next where multiple probabilities are combined.
- 53 Since this is a workbook about probabilities, here's where you get to do the actual calculations to determine the chances for all the events happening as they did. I've only included the major aspects of the prophecies that were covered in the workbook.

## **Appendix: Rationale for the Questions**

- 54 The previous question was about the chances for various events happening. This question addresses why they happened, and how this points to the existence of God and the reliability of the Bible.
- 55 If you come to the conclusion that God exists and does what he promises, this must result in significant changes to your way of thinking and living. If you come to the opposite conclusion, no change is necessary.

## Fifty-Five Questions for Skeptics

Example of Exhibit C from the first printing of the King James Version in 1611:



- 1 And it shall come to passe when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing, and the curse, which I haue set before thee, and thou shalt call them to minde among all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,
- 2 And shalt returne unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voyce according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children with al thine heart, and with all thy soule:
3. That then the LORD thy God will turne thy captiuitie, and haue compassion upon thee, and wil returne and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
4. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heauen, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee.
5. And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possesse it: and he will doe thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.



