



A Ministry of the
Church of God (Seventh Day)

Jesus the Messiah: Prophecy Fulfilled



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Bible prophecies offer convincing evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Old Testament predictions about Jesus' birth, life, and ministry are quoted by New Testament writers to identify Him as the Messiah.

Ever since people were alienated from God by sin, they have looked for a deliverer — a Messiah. Ancients anticipated His coming. Men of God, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, revealed facts about Him. These Old Testament foresights later provided evidence of His identity when He appeared, enabling men and women of His own generation to recognize Him.

The same prophecies confirm our own recognition of and belief in Jesus as Messiah. In addition, we have the advantage of all the accumulated information available about Him. The purpose of this booklet is to review some of the more prominent prophecies that verify Jesus as “the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

Prophecies of Jesus Throughout the Bible

The final chapter of Luke's Gospel contains an informative statement about Jesus and prophecies concerning Him. When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, they didn't believe what they saw. They were startled, and frightened, so He showed them His hands and feet, ate in their presence, and He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the

Psalms” (Luke 24:44). In Jesus’ day the Law, Prophets, and Psalms were considered the entire Word of God. So from Jesus’ words, we understand that predictions about Him can be found throughout the entire Old Testament.

Bible prophecy about Messiah caused godly men and women to expect His coming at the time Jesus began His ministry. From the context of Luke 2:25, 36, saintly Simeon and Anna were expecting the Messiah to appear in their time. John 1:45 gives a strong impression that the Jewish people anticipated Messiah’s appearance. John the Baptist was asked if he was the promised Messiah (John 1:19-26).

Prophecy is important to the Gospel accounts of Jesus. All four Gospel writers weave prophecies about Messiah into their narratives and freely pronounce their fulfillment in the events of Jesus’ life and work.

First Promise of a Deliverer

The first promise of One who would deliver humanity from the deception of Satan is in Genesis, immediately after Adam and Eve sinned. God pronounced judgment upon the serpent, who personifies Satan:

Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:14, 15).

More important than the natural enmity between serpents and humans is the deeper meaning, which predicts the conflict between a coming Deliverer and Satan (the serpent, Revelation 12:9).

The phrase “he will crush your head” refers to the offspring (seed) of the woman destroying Satan’s hold on humanity. This prophecy was fulfilled when God sent Jesus Christ into the world as the child of a virgin. Bible commentators agree that the meaning of the offspring of the woman crushing the head of the serpent came to pass in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Through His life and ministry, Jesus, who was without sin (Hebrews 4:15), overcame the power of the serpent, the Devil. Through His death, Jesus broke Satan’s hold on humanity. He bridged the gap created by our forefathers’ sin and reconciled us to God.

If we believe that Jesus is the Christ, He has given us the power “to become the children of God” (John 1:12). Because the gospel of Christ has the power to release us from our bondage to Satan, Jesus commissioned Paul “to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me [Jesus]” (Acts 26:18).

Jesus’ death on the cross might be described as Satan striking the heel of Jesus. But Jesus triumphed over sin in the redemption of humanity and over death in His resurrection, thus crushing Satan’s head. When the seventy returned to Him, reporting their victories over Satan’s power, Jesus gave wit-

ness to Satan's defeat: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

Jesus: A Blessing to All People

As God called Abram to leave his home and kindred and go to a place He would show him (Genesis 12:1), He promised, "I will make you a great nation . . . and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (vv. 2, 3).

The apostle Paul applied this promise, declaring that through Jesus, a descendant of Abraham in the flesh, all nations are blessed: "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say 'and to seeds' meaning many people, but 'and to your seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ" (Galatians 3:16). Paul continued, "If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (v. 29). Abraham's seed will ultimately inherit the eternal kingdom of God. What a blessing!

Jesus' Ancestry

Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament predict that Messiah would come through Abraham's posterity and specifically through Jacob's son, Judah. On his deathbed, Jacob blessed Judah with these significant words: "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he [Shiloh, KJV] comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his" (Genesis 49:10). Shiloh in this verse refers to the promised Messiah, Christ.

Consider the next two prophecies together: “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his root a branch will bear fruit” (Isaiah 11:1. Jesse was the father of David.) “In those days, and at that time, I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is right and just in the land” (Jeremiah 33:15).

These are messianic prophecies predicting that a “righteous Branch” would come from Jesse through King David, his son. That righteous Branch is Jesus! Together, these three prophecies foretell that Jesus would come through Judah, Jesse, and King David.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke give the family lineage of Jesus. Matthew traces Jesus’ lineage back to Abraham through Joseph. Luke starts with Mary’s father and runs her genealogy all the way back to Adam.

Matthew 1 starts with Abraham:

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers . . . Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David . . . Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ (Matthew 1:2, 5, 6, 15, 16).

Luke 3 reports Jesus’ lineage: “Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, son [-in-law] of Heli, the son of Matthat . . . David, son of Jesse . . . Judah, son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham” (vv. 23, 24, 31-33). Heli was the

father of Mary, which made him the father-in-law of Joseph, Mary's husband. Thus, at the time of Jesus' birth, people thought of Jesus as the son of Joseph.

In Matthew, the royal line is passed through Joseph, Jesus' legal father, and in Luke Jesus' physical descent from David is through Mary's lineage.

Interestingly, while the Jewish leaders of Jesus' day challenged His messiahship, they never questioned His lineage. The reason for this is that a family lineage was well documented and preserved in Jewish culture. The records were there; Jesus could trace His ancestry back to David, Jesse, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham.

Time of Messiah's Appearance

New Testament writers give the impression that an air of messianic expectation existed among the godly people of Jesus' day. Texts like Luke 3:15 ("The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ") validate the anticipation of an emerging Messiah. Luke cited two incidents that verified that expectation. One concerned an aged saint named Simeon: "Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel . . . It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:25, 26).

The other incident involved the aged widow, Anna: "She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and pray-

ing. Coming up to them at that very moment [when Mary and Joseph were presenting Jesus at the temple, vv. 22, 39], she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem" (vv. 37, 38).

After Jesus' baptism, Jesus invited Philip to "follow me" (John 1:43). "Philip found Nathanael and told him, 'We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph'" (v. 45).

In what way might the prophets have caused the people to expect Messiah about this time in the saga of human history? The answer is in Daniel 9. It appears from this extraordinary prophecy that it is possible to anticipate the approximate time of the Messiah's coming. Gabriel told Daniel:

Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler comes, there will be seven 'sevens' [weeks], and sixty-two 'sevens' [weeks]' (Daniel 9:25).

These two periods add up to 69 "sevens" (weeks) between the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem by Artaxerxes I, King of Persia in 457 BC (Ezra 9:9), and the coming of Messiah (the Anointed One). In Bible prophecy, 69 weeks amounts to 483 years (69 weeks, times 7 days per week, equals 483), using the one-day-for-a-year principle.

The decree to rebuild Jerusalem was issued in 457 BC. The first period of seven weeks, or 49 years, ended in 408 BC. The period of 62 weeks, 434 years (when counted down from 408 BC), ended in AD 26. However,

a year must be added to AD 26 because there was no zero year between 1 BC and AD 1. Thus, Daniel's prophecy was to be fulfilled about AD 27, with the beginning of Messiah's ministry.

Luke specified the date that John the Baptist began "preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Luke 3:3). It was the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. If Luke used the Syrian method of reckoning time (being from Antioch himself), Tiberius' fifteenth year would have been from the fall of AD 27 to the fall of AD 28 (*Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 8). That appears to be about the time when Jesus came to John to be baptized and began His ministry (Luke 3:21, 22). Remember, John was six months older than his cousin, Jesus (Luke 1:35-38).

Jesus alone fulfills the prophecy in Daniel. He alone came and was recognized as Messiah, the Son of God, within this narrow window of time. His miracles, authoritative teaching, and life's work fulfilled this prophecy as well. Thus, godly men and women of that time had hope that Messiah would come. They were not disappointed!

Prophecies Concerning Jesus' Birth

Centuries before Jesus was born, a series of prophecies predicted several facts about His birth. We have already observed prophecies about Jesus' ancestry and an indication about when Messiah would appear. Now let us examine some prophecies related to our Savior's birth.

Birthplace

Micah prophesied in the eighth century BC that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem:

But you Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times (Micah 5:2).

The fulfillment of this prediction is reported in Matthew 2:1 (“after Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea . . .”) and in Luke 2:1, 3-7:

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. . . . And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up . . . to Bethlehem the town of David . . . with Mary, who . . . was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.

Virgin birth

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).

All of this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” — which means, “God with us” (Matthew 1:22, 23).

Escape from Herod’s destruction

When they [Magi] had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child

and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to kill him." So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son" (Matthew 2:13, 14).

This prophecy was given in Hosea 11:1: "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son."

Prophecies Concerning Jesus' Suffering and Death

Particularly startling are the detailed prophecies of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!" (John 1:29). Several are listed below.

Price of betrayal

The prophecy

I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12).

The fulfillment

Then one of the Twelve — the one called Judas Iscariot — went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins (Matthew 26:14, 15).

A friend's betrayal

The prophecy

Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me (Psalm 41:9).

The fulfillment

"I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me." Simon Peter motioned . . . and said, "Ask him which one he means." Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon Iscariot (John 13:21, 24-26).

Now Judas, who betrayed him . . . came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees . . . (18:2, 3).

The man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:47, 48).

Jesus' silence

The prophecy

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth (Isaiah 53:7).

The fulfillment

When he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?" But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge — to the great amazement of the governor (Matthew 27:12-14).

Death with transgressors

The prophecy

He poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors (Isaiah 53:12).

The fulfillment

They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left (Mark 15:27).

Hands and feet pierced

The prophecy

They have pierced my hands and my feet (Psalm 22:16).

The fulfillment

“Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself!” (Luke 24:38, 39)

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands” (John 20:27).

Scorned and mocked

The prophecy

All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: He trusts in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him, since he delights in him (Psalm 22:7, 8).

The fulfillment

Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads. . . . In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and

we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God'" (Matthew 27:39, 41-43).

Side pierced

The prophecy

They will look on me, the one they have pierced (Zechariah 12:10).

The fulfillment

One of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear (John 19:34).

Bones not broken

The prophecy

He protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken (Psalm 34:20).

The fulfillment

The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. . . . These things happened so that the scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken" (John 19:32, 33, 36).

Gall and vinegar

The prophecy

They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst (Psalm 69:21).

The fulfillment

There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it (Matthew 27:34).

Gambling for Jesus' clothing

The prophecy

They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing (Psalm 22:18).

The fulfillment

When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots (Matthew 27:35).

Rich man's tomb

The prophecy

He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death . . . (Isaiah 53:9).

The fulfillment

As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea . . . who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. . . . Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock (Matthew 27:57, 59, 60).

Prophecies Concerning Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension

Resurrection from the dead

The prophecy

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay (Psalm 16:9, 10).

The fulfillment

“Seeing what was ahead, he [David] spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact” (Acts 2:31, 32).

Ascension to heaven

The prophecy

When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train; you received gifts from men, even from the rebellious — that you, O Lord God, might dwell there (Psalm 68:18).

The fulfillment

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight (Acts 1:9).

Paul quoted from Psalm 68:18, applying it to Jesus: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men” (Ephesians 4:8).

Believing and Growing in Jesus

After Jesus’ resurrection, all the disciples struggled to accept that He had risen and was alive. Thomas needed to see Jesus personally before he could believe. But when he saw Jesus, he confessed, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen me and yet have believed” (John 20:28, 29).

We have the complete witness of God, first through His prophets and now through eyewitnesses, that Jesus is the Christ, the

Son of the living God. While we cannot see Him in person, we can claim this blessing by believing on Him as our Lord and Savior!

The prophecies quoted in this booklet are but a sampling of all that were made about Messiah and His birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension. They are sufficient to authenticate that Jesus truly is Messiah worthy of our faith, love, and service! These prophecies deal only with Jesus' first advent. Scores more predict His second coming and the establishment of His eternal kingdom.

All the predictions made about His first coming, hundreds of years before His birth, have been documented and fulfilled. Their fulfillment provides adequate reason to recognize Him as Messiah. He is obviously the Savior God predicted would come, as the seed of a woman, to crush the head of our adversary — the serpent, Satan.

But beyond fulfilling prophecy, Jesus Christ gave humanity the great, free gift of salvation. He Himself bore the penalty of our sins on Calvary's cross so we can be freed from the guilt of sin and its penalty and from our propensity to sin. We can experience this deliverance by believing in Jesus as Messiah and claiming His blood sacrifice for our sins. Further, we must follow our declaration of faith by repenting of our sins and resolving to turn from a life of sin to serve Jesus in obedience to God. After repentance, we should be baptized by immersion in water, in the name of Jesus Christ, to start a life of service to God.

Having taken these steps of faith, we must then nourish the new life in us by

taking in the Word of God: “Like newborn babies, crave the pure spiritual milk [of the Word, KJV], so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good” (1 Peter 2:2, 3). Regular Bible study should be accompanied by worship and fellowship with other Christians. Such devotions and Christian endeavors sustain spiritual life and growth.



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