

"Messianic Prophecies"

From ancient times, God predicted the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders; and this is a Bible study, "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're going to explore the Old Testament prophecies about Jesus Christ. You'll want to stay tuned for this study!

Hello, I'm Phil Sanders and we're here to search God's Word for the Lord's Way. We want to please God, because we love Him. Each week we look closely into the Bible, because we know that it has the words of eternal life. We want to share God's blessings with everyone. We hope our time together will build your faith and give you hope. We want to be part of your life each week.

Years before Jesus began His earthly ministry the Jews longed for a Messiah. They had studied the Old Testament Scriptures and knew that one day God would send to them His anointed One, a Messiah, the Christ. He would come as a prophet, a priest, and a king! He would set up a kingdom that would have no end and would extend to all nations. They knew that He would be a son of David. And they longed for the day when He would come to bring them the times of refreshing.

When Jesus came into the world, they began to see how He indeed fulfilled Moses and the prophets by His birth, His life, His death, and even His resurrection. They believed and preached Jesus as Christ and Lord. Throughout the New Testament the apostles appealed to two aspects in the life of Jesus in order to establish that He was the Messiah. They appealed to His resurrection and to His fulfillment of the messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The apostles appealed repeatedly to the Old Testament as God's Word to show Jesus is the promised prophet and Messiah. J. Barton Payne listed 191 Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. Alfred Edersheim, a Jewish Christian scholar, cited 456 Old Testament passages mentioned in 558 rabbinic writings referring to the Messiah and His time. Yes, the Jews knew a Messiah would come, and the disciples found Him in Jesus Christ our Lord.

If you want to study more about this topic, we offer the information on this program free. If you would like a printed copy or CD of our study, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, call our telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org. Well, the Edmond church will now worship in song, and then we'll read from Luke chapter 24, verses 44 to 48.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to Luke chapter 24, verses 44 to 48. "Now He said to them, 'These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations—beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.' " That is a reading from God's Holy Word. Let's pray together. Father, we are grateful that Your love has prepared for us a Messiah who came to save us and to be our Lord. Help us to follow Him all the days of our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!

In John chapter 4, Jesus had a discussion with a most unlikely person, a Samaritan woman who had been married five times and was living with a man. Men didn't usually speak to women in public, and Jews had almost nothing to do with Samaritans, but even this Samaritan woman knew something about the promised Messiah. "The woman said to Jesus, 'I know that Messiah is coming (that is He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak

to you am He' " [that is the Messiah] (John chapter 4, verses 25 and 6). Jesus confessed to this woman that He was indeed the Messiah!

These writings of Moses and the prophets did something that no other book in all antiquity ever did; they predicted the future. That their predictions came true was a sure sign that God was behind them. The Lord said in Isaiah 46, verses 9 to 10, "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.' "

In Isaiah 48 and verse 3 God said, "I declared the former things long ago And they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them. Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass." He explains in verse 5, "Therefore I declared them to you long ago, Before they took place I proclaimed them to you, So that you would not say, 'My idol has done them, or my graven image or my molten image have commanded them.' "

The Lord Jesus said to the Jews in John 5, verses 46 and 7, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me (the Lord said). But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" And the apostle Peter could proclaim in the temple to all in Jerusalem, "But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled" (Acts 3 and verse 18).

J. Barton Payne calculated that 27 percent of the entire Bible contains predictive prophecy. Norman Geisler observed that, "This is true of no other book in the world. And it is a sure sign of its divine origin (that is, the Bible's divine origin)." He added that, "The Bible is the only book in the world that has precise, specific predictions that were made hundreds of years in advance and that were literally fulfilled."

Now, contrasting the Bible with other holy books and the writings of the pagan religions, R. S. Foster said, "No well accredited prophecy is found in any other book or even oral tradition now extant, or that has ever been in existence in the world. The oracles of heathenism are not to be classed as exceptions. There is not a single one of them that meets the tests required to prove supernatural agency, which every Scripture prophecy evinces."

When you consider the predictions of God's Word from the beginning, they are marvelous. After Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God cursed the serpent and said in Genesis 3 and verse 15, "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." This must have been puzzling to Adam and Eve, but it set in motion God's plan for the ages to redeem mankind from sin. The seed of the woman would one day conquer the seed of the serpent.

As Genesis continues we learn from Genesis 12, verses 1 through 3, we learn that the seed of Abraham would bless all nations. In Genesis 21, we learn that the promise came through Isaac and in chapter thirty-five, he would come through Jacob. Genesis gets very specific in chapter 49, verse 10, "The scepter (the Bible says) shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples." The word Shiloh is a reference to Jesus Christ, who would be the King of Israel.

Moses revealed God's promise of a coming prophet in the book of Deuteronomy chapter 18, verses 15 to 19. The Bible says that, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, and you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of

the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' And the LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.' "

Unlike the powerful lightning and earthquake that took place on Mt. Sinai, God sent His Son Jesus as a baby into Bethlehem. He spoke with the authority of God, but appeared as a man like his countrymen. The Word became flesh, filled with glory and grace and truth. In Acts chapter 3, the apostle Peter pointed to Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Moses' prophecy. In John 1, verse 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

God also made a promise to David in 2 Samuel 7, verses 12 to 13 that, "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant (now that is in the singular) after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." Now, all the kingdoms of the earth come to an end, but this descendant of David would establish a kingdom that would have no end.

In Psalm 110, David prophesied of a coming Lord and king who would raise His scepter from Zion (that is Jerusalem). David wrote by inspiration in Psalm 110, verses 1 to 4 that, "The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.' The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, 'Rule in the midst of Your enemies.' Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew. The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, 'You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.' " Now, Moses spoke of the coming one as a prophet, and David said that He would be a king and a priest. And Jesus was all three: prophet, priest and king.

Isaiah in several passages tells us much about the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah 2, verses 1 through 4 reveals that the Messiah will come in the last days and His law will go forth to all nations from Jerusalem. Isaiah notes that His ways will bring peace. Isaiah 7 and verse 14 predicts, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel." This marvelous passage deserves a whole program. Jesus was indeed born of a virgin as Matthew 1:18 and Luke 2 and verse 7 reveal. The Lord Jesus is truly Immanuel, "God with us." Jesus was born of woman according to Galatians 4, verse 4 and was indeed the seed of the woman who would bruise the head of the seed of the serpent.

God predicted in Isaiah 9, verses 6 to 7, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. And the zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this."

It is in Isaiah that we learn the coming Messiah would also be a suffering servant. Isaiah 52, verse 13, continuing from there through Isaiah 53, verse 12 contains some very specific prophecies about the death of Jesus Christ. It reveals how He as the Lamb of God silently offered himself for our sins. Isaiah 53, verses 5 and 6 says, "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, and Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD

has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.” Only Jesus Christ could fit this prophecy. No one else in all of history died for the sins of mankind.

It was Daniel who predicted the Messiah would come and set up His kingdom that would last forever in the days of the fourth empire, the Roman empire and he mentioned this in Daniel 2 and verse 44. Then in chapter 9, verses 24 to 27, he predicted the year the Messiah would come, noting that He would come before the temple and the city were destroyed. Now, we know that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in 70 AD. The Messiah had to come before that time, and only Jesus fulfilled the prophecies. Now, let me encourage you who are still hoping for a future Messiah to take a second look at Jesus of Nazareth. You see, the Lord Jesus set up His kingdom in the first century according to the prophecy of Daniel, and that kingdom is the church. And that kingdom lasts forever.

The prophet Micah tells of the little village where the Messiah would be born. The Bible says in Micah 5, verse 2, “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be a ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.” This ruler to be born in Bethlehem was not simply a human baby. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity. Jesus is that Word that John spoke about. He was with God and was God (John 1 and verse 1).

You’ll remember the wise men came from the East following the star, to find the King of the Jews. They asked Herod to find the exact place of His birth. Herod called for the high priests and the scribes to answer the question, and they pointed to the prophecy of Micah 5 and verse 2. The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem of Judah, Bethlehem Ephrathah, and no place else. But Jesus fits this prophecy as well. Herod also took it so seriously that he sent his soldiers to kill every child from the age of two years old and under in the town of Bethlehem. And even this cruel act came as a fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah 31 and verse 15 of Rachel weeping for the children.

There are other prophecies pointing to Jesus. Isaiah 40 and verse 3 predicts, “A voice calling, ‘Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.’” Jesus said this voice refers to John the Baptist, who preached repentance, “for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” You see, he was preparing the way for the Lord, for God. He prepared the way for Jesus Christ our Lord.

Just as Isaiah 53 predicted Jesus’ death, so Psalm 16 prophesied His resurrection. The Bible says in Psalm 16, verses 8 to 10, “I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.” Jesus came forth from the dead on the third day; and God did not abandon Him to death but raised Him up. The apostle Peter quoted this passage and said that all the apostles were eyewitnesses of His resurrection. They saw its fulfillment and proclaimed at Pentecost to everyone that Jesus Christ was both Lord and Christ (Acts 2 and verse 36). Let’s pray together. Father, we are so grateful for all of those prophecies from Moses and the prophets that convince us that our Lord Jesus indeed is Lord and Christ. And it is through His name that we pray. Amen!

Some skeptics have suggested that Jesus of Nazareth, as a rabbi, naturally knew about these predictions and simply arranged the events of His life to fulfill these specific prophecies. But the predictions of Jesus would not be that easy to prearrange. How would you arrange to be born in Bethlehem? How would you manage to be born into the tribe of Judah? How would you make sure that the price of your betrayal would be precisely thirty pieces of silver? How would you arrange to be

crucified with thieves? How would a crucified man arrange to have his enemies gamble for his garments?

Grant Jeffrey observed, "The truth is that, if you could arrange all these details, you would have to be the Son of God." There is no way that Jesus as a man could have controlled these events necessary for the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah. Furthermore, Jesus Christ despised dishonesty and deception; it was contrary to his character to pretend as the hypocrites do. Jesus was indeed a sinless person in whose mouth was no deceit.

You can put your trust in Jesus as Lord and as the Messiah without fear. He is the only person in all of history who could be the Messiah. He fulfilled all the prophecies of the Old Testament. He came to bless all nations with salvation. And if we want to receive His blessing and follow Him, we must believe with all our hearts. We must repent of our sins, changing our hearts and lives. We must confess Him before others and be baptized. Baptism into Christ is an immersion in water for the forgiveness of our sins. Oh, be baptized into Christ and become a child of God and do it today.

We hope that today's study of Messianic prophecies has blessed you or challenged you to think. Now, if you want a free printed copy or CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send us an e-mail; send it to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now, our programs do appear on our website at www.searchtv.org. We offer Bible Correspondence courses that will help you learn more about God and His will for your life. Now if you would like to have one of these courses, just let us know. We also offer free study sheets that go with our programs. Now you can download them free at our website and you can do it before each program or you can call and request them. We won't ask you for money or put you on a list.

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