

Prophecy

Matthew 26:56a; John 5:39

“But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled” (Acts 3:18).

Those who do not want to believe have little interest in prophecy. *Think about it!* Prophecy is a powerful evidence to the integrity of the Bible. God kept every one of His promises. Floyd Hamilton noted that there are 332 fulfilled prophecies concerning Jesus in the Old Testament.¹ Some are very specific. No other religion has a prophesied founder and Savior!

It is not by chance that Jesus began His public ministry claiming to be the prophesied Messiah (Isaiah 61:1–3; Luke 4:16–27). The listeners did not misunderstand what He said. In anger they tried to kill Him (Luke 4:28–30). Men even tried to abort His ministry in His own hometown!

Consider the many prophecies Jesus fulfilled.² He was the seed of Abraham (Genesis 22:18; Acts 7:1–6; Romans

¹Floyd Hamilton, *The Basis of Christian Faith*, rev. and enl. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 160.

²See Hugo McCord, “Jesus: The Fulfillment of Prophecy in His Life,” in “Jesus Christ, the Divine Son of God,” *Truth for Today* (May 2000): 9–17.

4:13–25; Galatians 3:6–16), a prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15–22; Acts 3:22–26), and the seed of David (John 7:42; Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8). He spoke in parables (Psalm 78:2; Matthew 13:34, 35). He was the son of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23–25), a Galilean (Isaiah 9:1, 2; Mark 14:70; Luke 22:59), the light of the Gentiles (Isaiah 49:6; Acts 13:46, 47), a lowly king (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:1–8), the Branch (Jeremiah 23:5; Hebrews 7:14), called out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15), and a Nazarene (Matthew 2:23). He was declared to be our Savior before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:3, 4; 3:9–11; 1 Peter 1:20).

Some of these prophecies are given in generalities. However, especially in regard to the cross, there are several minute specifics: the manner of His death (Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; John 12:32), a public death (Deuteronomy 21:22, 23; Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24), betrayal by a friend for thirty pieces of silver (Psalm 41:9; Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:14, 15; 27:3–10), silence before His accusers (Psalm 38:13; Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 26:59–63; Mark 14:55–61; 1 Peter 2:23, 24), being with thieves (Isaiah 53:12; Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:28; Luke 23:39–43), and experiencing pierced hands and feet (Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; John 20:27). Lots were cast for His clothes (Psalm 22:18; Mark 15:24; John 19:23, 24), and none of His bones were broken (Psalm 34:20; John 19:36). He was offered gall and vinegar to drink (Psalm 69:21; Matthew 27:34; John 19:28–30), was forsaken by God (Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46), was buried with the rich (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57–60), and became the rejected cornerstone (Psalm 118:22, 23; Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; Romans 9:32, 33). On the Day of Pentecost, Peter declared that the lowly king who had come riding upon a donkey (Zecha-

riah 9:9; Matthew 21:1–11) was “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).

Isaiah is called the “Messianic Prophet” because of His numerous prophecies concerning the Messiah. His writings are quoted more than fifty times in the New Testament.³ Six hundred years before Christ, he was inspired by God to give a detailed picture of the Messiah. Isaiah 53 is the “Holy of Holies” in the Old Testament, the “Suffering Servant Song.” The Jews wanted a political, military victory. The idea of a suffering, dead Savior never crossed their minds. Be merciful with them. It is difficult to imagine the God of heaven dying upon a cross!

Phrases from Isaiah 53 are repeated at least six times in the New Testament!⁴ Philip told the Ethiopian nobleman that the Man of Isaiah 53 was Jesus (Acts 8:30–35).

All the verbs in Isaiah 53 are in the past tense. The future was being declared as history. God (Jesus) is the same yesterday, today, and forever. With God the past, present, and future are all the same in reality. God’s prophecies are so true that they could be recorded in the past tense. Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies made about Him. He prophesied His own death, burial, and resurrection and fulfilled these prophecies in detail.⁵ The life and death of Christ are the most certified facts on earth!

*The cross . . .
there is no other way!*

³Gleason L. Archer and Gregory Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 92–134.

⁴Ibid., 120–24.

⁵See Matthew 16:21 (and Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22); 17:22, 23 (and Mark 9:30–32; Luke 9:43, 44); 20:17–19 (and Mark 10:32–34; Luke 18:31–33); Luke 24:7, 44–46; John 13:19.