

Proof Jesus Is the Messiah

By Britt Gillette



Is there proof Jesus is the Messiah? Does believing in Him require “blind faith?” No. In fact, it's the exact opposite. Some people mock the idea of Jesus as Savior, calling it a “fairy tale crutch for the weak.” Others claim Jesus is nothing more than a mythical figure – a superstition no different than the Greek or Roman gods. Even worse, some people who do believe in Jesus say, “There’s no evidence to prove it’s true. You just have to accept it on faith.” But is that really the case? Absolutely not.

While faith is an essential element to following Jesus, Christian faith is more like trust than a blind belief with no evidence (Hebrews 11:1). There’s plenty of evidence Jesus is the Messiah, and some of the most convincing evidence is fulfilled prophecy. As we approach Easter, what better time to examine the prophecies fulfilled by the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus?

The Suffering Messiah

When Jesus came, His followers thought He would conquer Israel's earthly enemies and establish an everlasting kingdom. They were right. But they were wrong about the timing. First and foremost, Jesus came as a blood sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world. Had they known the following prophecies, perhaps they would have understood what Jesus meant when He said He would be killed and rise on the third day (Matthew 16:21).

Known as the prophecies of “the suffering Messiah,” these events were foretold hundreds of years before the crucifixion. In fact, these prophecies are so detailed and specific, you might think they're New Testament verses about the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus. Obviously, they're not. But they prove beyond all doubt who the Messiah is. Here are just a few of them:

Betrayed by a Friend – King David said a trusted friend would betray the Messiah. This would be a person so close they shared each other’s food (Psalm 41:9). This is exactly what happened to Jesus. A thousand years after David made this prophecy, Jesus dipped His bread in a bowl and handed it to Judas (John 13:21-30). Judas took the bread and left to betray Jesus.

Betrayed for 30 Pieces of Silver – When Judas betrayed Jesus, he did so for the exact sum of 30 pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14-15). Five hundred years earlier, the prophet Zechariah foretold this exact price. He said the Messiah would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12).

Thrown into the Potter’s Field – At the same time, Zechariah revealed another amazing detail. He said the 30 pieces of silver would be thrown in the potter’s field (Zechariah 11:13). In ancient times, the potter’s field was a graveyard for unknown people. People dug up clay to make pottery, and the leftover field was only useful as a burial ground. When Judas realized what he had done, he tried to give back the 30 pieces of silver. When the religious leaders refused it, Judas threw the money down in the Temple. Not wanting to put blood money in the Temple treasury, the leading priests used the money to buy a potter’s field for the burial of foreigners (Matthew 27:3-8). This decision fulfilled Zechariah’s prophecy.

Rejected – Hundreds of years before Jesus, Isaiah described the Messiah as “despised and rejected.” He said He would be a man familiar with the deepest sadness and people would turn their backs on Him (Isaiah 53:3). When Pilate presented Jesus to the people, he said, “Here is your king.” But the people demanded He be crucified. “Crucify your king?” Pilate asked. But the people said, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:14-15). They rejected Jesus as king. The leaders of His day despised Him. Yet Peter said, “the stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone” (Acts 4:11).

Silent in Front of His Accusers – Isaiah said the Messiah would be silent when faced by His accusers, much like a sheep is silent before the shearers (Isaiah 53:7). Jesus fulfilled this prophecy too. The high priest Caiaphas asked

Jesus, “What do you have to say for yourself? How do you answer these charges?” and Jesus was silent (Matthew 26:62-63).

Accused by False Witnesses – King David said false witnesses would accuse and slander the Messiah (Psalm 35:11). He said they would claim, “We saw Him do it with our own eyes” (Psalm 35:21). This also happened to Jesus. The religious leaders couldn’t find any evidence against Him. So false witnesses made up stories (Mark 14:56).

Pierced Hands and Feet – King David said the Messiah’s hands and feet would be pierced (Psalm 22:16). This also happened to Jesus. He was nailed to a cross (John 19:17-18). Crucifixion required the Roman soldiers to drive nails through His hands and feet. When King David made his prophecy, this method of execution didn’t exist. Nevertheless, the crucifixion of Jesus fulfilled this prophecy.

Given Vinegar to Drink – King David said the Messiah would be given gall (poison) for food and sour wine to quench His thirst (Psalm 69:21). This happened to Jesus. While He was being crucified, the soldiers gave Jesus wine mixed with bitter gall (poison). But when He tasted it, He refused to drink it (Matthew 27:34). Then someone filled a sponge with sour wine and held it up to Jesus on a stick so He could drink it (Mark 15:36).

His Clothes Divided – King David said others would cast lots for the Messiah’s clothes at His execution (Psalm 22:17-18). This also happened to Jesus. When the Roman soldiers crucified Him, they divided His clothes among themselves. But His robe was a single garment, and they didn’t want to tear it. So rather than tear it, they threw dice to see who would get it (John 19:23-24).

His Side Pierced – Five hundred years before the crucifixion, Zechariah said the people of Israel will look upon the Messiah they have pierced and mourn for Him as for an only son (Zechariah 12:10). This happened to Jesus as well. Checking to make sure He was dead, one of the Roman soldiers pierced Jesus with a spear (John 19:34).

Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb – Hundreds of years before Jesus, Isaiah said the Messiah would be treated like a common criminal and buried in a rich man’s tomb (Isaiah 53:9). The Bible tells us this happened to Jesus. After the crucifixion, a rich man named Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus’s body. Joseph wrapped the body in a clean sheet of linen cloth and placed it in the tomb he had prepared for himself. Then he rolled a boulder into the entrance to seal it (Matthew 27: 59-60).

Risen from the Dead – A thousand years before the resurrection, King David said the Messiah’s body would not be left among the dead. He said God would not allow His Holy One to rot in the grave (Psalm 16:10). And Psalm 49 said God will restore the Messiah’s life, saving Him from the power of the grave (Psalm 49:15). Three days and three nights after the crucifixion, Mary and Mary Magdalene went to see Jesus. When they arrived at His tomb, a great earthquake shook the ground. An angel rolled a rock away from the tomb’s entrance and told them Jesus had risen from the dead just as He had promised (Matthew 28:5-7).

Conclusion

These prophecies point to one man as the Messiah. Jesus. How can anyone read them and still reject Him as the Messiah? The odds of one person fulfilling all of these prophecies is beyond chance. How many people can claim specific details of their life were foretold hundreds of years before their birth? Jesus can. Yet many people still dismiss Him. They call Him a "good teacher," but say He was a mere man. That’s impossible. Jesus claimed to be God in the flesh – the Great I AM in the form of a man. If that’s not true, how is He a "good teacher"? Anyone who would lie about such a thing is evil. Such a person is not a “good teacher.”

But there’s no need to worry. Jesus didn’t lie. He was and is God in the flesh. Bible prophecy proves it. No other man in all of human history fulfilled the Messianic prophecies, and no other man can. The Messiah had to come at a specific time in history (Daniel 9:25). Jesus did. The Messiah had to be born in a specific place in a certain way (Micah 5:2, Isaiah 7:14). Jesus was. The Messiah had to be crushed and made an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:10). He had to overcome the power of the grave (Psalm 49:15). And He had to be the Savior of the world (Luke 2:11). Thank God Almighty, Jesus is!

About The Author

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