

The Case for Jesus the Messiah— Incredible Prophecies that Prove God Exists

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Preface

In an interview with famous scientist Albert Einstein in the *Saturday Evening Post*, October 26, 1929, we find the following dialogue:

To what extent are you influenced by Christianity?

As a child I received instruction both in the Bible and in the Talmud. I am a Jew, but I am enthralled by the luminous figure of the Nazarene.

Have you read Emil Ludwig's book on Jesus?

Emil Ludwig's Jesus is shallow. Jesus is too colossal for the pen of phrasemongers, however artful. No man can dispose of Christianity with a *bon mot* [a witty remark].

You accept the historical existence of Jesus?

Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life.¹

After the Holocaust Einstein wrote a letter to the Episcopal Bishop Edward R. Wells (reported in the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, April 13, 1979) in 1945 concerning the behavior of the Church during this time. He stated:

Being a lover of freedom... I looked to the universities to defend it, knowing that they had always boasted of their devotion to the cause of truth; but, no, the universities immediately were silenced. Then I looked to the great editors of the newspapers whose flaming editorials in days gone by had proclaimed their love of freedom; but they, like the universities, were silenced in a few short weeks. Only the church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing the truth. I never had any special interest in the church before, but now I feel a great affection and admiration because the church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom. I am forced to confess that what I once despised I now praise unreservedly.²

Jesus of Nazareth. He shattered the world. Never has there been a man like Him, and never will there be again. He is the subject of more books, more plays, more poetry, more films, and more worship than any man in human history.

Whatever good Christianity has done for the world has come only because of Jesus of Nazareth. But who was this man? The purpose of this book is to show how the Hebrew Scriptures predicted centuries in advance the coming of a divine Messiah for all mankind.

Some have claimed that these statements were made after Jesus lived, not before. Some claim the books of the Hebrew Scriptures were written close to the time of Christ and the Messianic prophecies were merely Christian inventions. But to make such a claim is impossible. The entire Hebrew Scriptures were completed by 400 B.C. and no matter what your view of the Hebrew Scriptures one fact is unassailable: the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the entire Hebrew Scriptures, was completed by 247 B.C.

Therefore, even critics must acknowledge that every prophecy we will discuss here, and many more, were in existence well in advance of the time Jesus lived—in fact, at least some 250 years before He was even born.

We will also show that the Messiah is spoken of in such specific detail in the Hebrew Scriptures that it is literally impossible to account for such predictions apart from the Bible being a divine revelation of God to man.

There are those today who reject this conclusion, but they refuse to consider the prophecies fairly and on their own merit. Often, they mistakenly dismiss them out of hand. But only a preexisting bias against supernatural prophecy itself (such as those holding a *rationalistic* world view) or a bias against these prophecies referring to the Person of Jesus can deter someone from accepting the Scriptures as Messianic prophecy.

We have written this book to set forth a small portion of the evidence found in the Hebrew Scriptures that predicted the coming of the Messiah. We believe God gave this evidence so that those who are willing to allow the facts to speak for themselves will be able to discover the truth.

Introduction

Is there evidence in history that God gave specific information hundreds of years in advance about a person He knew would live? What specific accounts are given and where can they be found? Did the people to whom the information came recognize that they had been given special information? Do these prophecies constitute solid evidence for us today? Is it possible for us to account for this information apart from the fact it must have come from God? Did the Jewish community before and after Christ believe these same Hebrew Scriptures pointed to a coming Messiah?

These prophecies are like clues in a mystery story. In this book we will try to gather enough clues to identify the special person who is talked about in the Hebrew Scriptures. As we shall see, the clues will lead us to ask:

- Who is the seed (offspring) of the woman who crushes the head of Satan?
- Who is the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that will eventually bless all the nations?
- Who is the “prophet like Moses” of whom God says, “You must listen to him”?
- Who is the One crucified?
- Who is David’s “Lord”?
- Who is the child that is God and will have an everlasting kingdom?
- Who was crushed and pierced for our transgressions? Upon whom did the Lord lay the iniquity of all mankind?
- Who is the righteous Branch, the wise King, who will be called “the Lord our righteousness”?
- Who is the “Anointed One” to be “cut off” after 483 years?
- Who is the One who is eternal, who will be the ruler over Israel, who is born in Bethlehem Ephrathah?
- Who is the King of Jerusalem, “righteous and having salvation” who comes “gentle and riding on a donkey”?
- Who is Jehovah, “the One they have pierced” for whom Jerusalem and all the nation of Israel will weep and mourn?
- When did God suddenly come to His temple? Who was the messenger He sent before Him to prepare the way?

The Bible claims to be the unique revelation of God:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

If you do not agree, the material discussed in this book should be of interest to you. The Bible's claim to uniqueness and the prophecies of a future Messiah go together. If the prophecies are truly fulfilled, then the Bible has given information about the future that could only have come from God. Our goal will be to examine a handful of the many prophetic statements and explain why anyone who looks at the clear meaning of the words will realize these verses all point to a future Person.

We will also explain the text and the context. After that, we will see if there is evidence that a number of Jewish rabbis accepted these passages as Messianic.

Finally, we will ask if this specific information finds fulfillment in any other person but Jesus Christ.

When examining this evidence we are aware that some people have applied different interpretations to these verses. We are aware of the disagreements but are convinced they are the result of misinterpretation or biased assumptions that will not allow the evidence to speak for itself.³ Finally, we will answer some of the frequent objections that have been made by scholars.

But before we examine the specific prophecies and answer the critics, we want to document the amazing fact that in the Bible God did promise to give information through His prophets concerning the future.

[Jesus said,] "How foolish are you, and how slow of heart to believe all that *the prophets* have spoken! Did not *the Christ [Messiah]* have to suffer these things and then enter His glory?" And beginning with *Moses* and *all the Prophets*, He explained to them what was said in *all the Scriptures* concerning Himself—Luke 24:25-27 (emphasis added).

[The Apostle Peter wrote,] "The things which *God announced* beforehand by the mouth of *all the prophets*, that His *Christ [Messiah]* should *suffer*, He has thus fulfilled"—Acts 3:18 (emphasis added).

[If we examine] those passages in the Old Testament to which the ancient synagogue referred as Messianic... [we find] upwards of 456... and their Messianic application is supported by more than 558 references to the most ancient rabbinic writings.... A careful perusal of their Scripture quotations show, that *the main postulates of the New Testament concerning the Messiah are fully supported by rabbinic statements*—Alfred Edersheim.⁴