THE RELIABILITY OF BIBLE PROPHECY


The Hebrew Scriptures Prove Jesus Is the True Messiah
Jesus the Messiah performed many great miracles among the Jewish People, uttered clear and accurate predictive prophecies, and fulfilled numerous detailed predictive prophecies written in the Hebrew Scriptures hundreds of years before his birth. Many of these Messianic Prophecies were totally out of Jesus’ human power to control.

The Prophet Isaiah who lived contemporaneously with King David prophesied that the Messiah would have a ministry of miracles:

Isaiah 35:4-6 “Say to those who are fearful hearted, Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing.”

Yahweh God came to save us through Jesus by miraculously healing the paralytic (Matthew 9:2-7), the leprous (Mark 1:40-42), the blind (Matthew 9:27-31), the deaf (Mark 7:31-37), the mute (Matthew 12:22), the crippled (Luke 13:11-13), and raising people from the dead (Luke 7:11-15 / John 11:1-44). Jesus further miraculously multiplied five loaves of bread and two fish to feed 5,000 men at one time (Mark 6:35-44) and on another occasion he fed 4,000 men, not including the thousands of women and children who were present (Mark 8:1-9).

Since the New Covenant Scriptures were written and circulated during the lifetime of the first century apostles it passes all boundaries of logic to think that the apostles invented miraculous events and wrote them down as New Testament Scripture. How could the apostles who were eyewitnesses to the events of Jesus’ ministry have circulated and recorded fables about his life during the lifetime of those who had accurate eyewitness knowledge of these events? Even the Jewish historian Josephus had to confess that Jesus worked miracles among the Jews. The ancient Babylonian Jewish Talmud also admitted the miraculous ministry of Jesus by calling Jesus a sorcerer.

A first century inhabitant of Jerusalem disbelieving the accuracy of the Gospel Narratives would be like someone living in New York City in the twenty first century claiming that the terrorist strikes on the twin towers never really happened. Anyone making such a false claim would be considered to be out of his mind. No logical person would believe lies about well known events occurring during his own lifetime. Nor would logical people living in Egypt during the Exodus believe fabrications like the plagues on Egypt if they never really occurred!
Can you imagine someone living in New York City telling other New Yorkers that God sent the ten plagues of Exodus upon the city when no such events ever really happened? Could you imagine an entire nation of people living during the time such claims were made actually believing detailed miraculous events if they were all false? Can you imagine an entire nation of eyewitnesses going along with imaginary events which never happened and then recording them in their publicly read religious book? That would be the equivalent of all New Yorkers believing that God has sent ten plagues like the plagues recorded in Exodus upon New York when everyone knows that no Biblical plagues have ever struck New York.

Since the Torah of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus were written during the lifetime of multitudes of eyewitnesses, these books must be considered historically trustworthy. Yet later Jewish or Christian books that claim to add historical or miraculous events to the past which were not already recorded in the lifetimes of the eyewitnesses of that generation cannot be considered reliable or trustworthy. An author must live contemporaneously with the people he is writing about to be considered a reliable source of historical data.

Most Pagan myths such as Greco-Roman literature about gods were not written by eyewitness accounts. They are mere traditions invented by centuries of tale bearers. There is no reliability to the alleged historic data because the data lacks eyewitness testimony. Moreover, Pagan literature does not contain detailed predictive prophecy like the Bible does!

Jesus the Messiah passed the test of a true prophet by accurately predicting the conditions of these last days: The rampant spread of Homosexuality and violence (Luke 17:26-30/See Genesis 6:5,11), the increase in the amount of world wide earthquakes, famines, and pestilences (Luke 21:11) [The Greek word “loimos” for pestilence also means sickness or disease which causes “trouble” or “a public menace”- So diseases such as AIDS and SARS can be included].

Jesus not only fulfilled many detailed predictive prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures, He also made many accurate predictions of His own.
as signs of the end time]. Jesus further predicted the drastic increase in hurricanes, tsunamis, and tornadoes causing “the sea and the waves” to “roar.” Luke 21:25) And the world wide fear caused by weapons of mass destruction - or possible meteorite impacts (Luke 21:26). Jesus predicted that the time of the end will be so scary that many people around the world will die from heart attacks: “Men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”

Jesus accurately predicted the destruction of the second temple (Matthew 24:1,2) and the subsequent dispersion of the Jewish People (Luke 21:24).

Luke 21:24 “And they [the Jews] will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles [Non Jews] until the time of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

Jesus further predicted the rebuilding of a third temple which would be desecrated by a future world leader [the Anti-Christ]:

Matthew 24:15 “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place . . . Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”

The second rebuilt temple was desecrated in 167 BC by Antiochus Epiphanies, the Greek ruler of Syria who set up an altar to Zeus in the sacred Jewish Temple. This desecration of the temple led to the Macabean revolt. Here Jesus goes on to predict a second desecration of a third rebuilt temple. When this happens the world will have another major predictive prophecy spoken by Jesus to prove he is the true Messiah foretold by the ancient Hebrew Prophets.

The rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem has already been planned by eager Israeli Zionists but the Islamic Dome of the Rock has been built on the site of the ancient ruins of the Temple. Only God knows how this prophecy is going to be fulfilled. Since other prophecies of Jesus have been fulfilled it makes sense that the Dome of the Rock will one day be destroyed and the Jewish Temple will be built again in its place. When Jesus’ prophecy of the third temples desecration by the Anti-Christ comes to pass then many more Jews will know that they missed their true Messiah about two thousand years ago.

Bible Scholars have counted as many as 332 Messianic Prophecies which were fulfilled in the life and ministry of the Prophet Jesus. Many of these prophecies are very graphic and detailed such as his birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), ministry of miracles (Isaiah 35:5,6), betrayal for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12), hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16), crucified with thieves (Isaiah 53:12), side pierced (Zechariah 12:10), and darkness over the land at his death (Amos 8:9).

Many of these prophecies were totally out of Jesus’ ability to control. No man has the ability to control or orchestrate the place of his birth: Micah 5:2 predicted he would be born in Bethlehem. No man has the ability to predict or plan with certainty the exact cause of his own death: Psalm 22:16 foretold that the Messiah’s hands and feet would be pierced and Zechariah 12:10 had foretold that his side would be pierced. The chances of any man fulfilling all of these detailed predictive prophecies in a single life are truly miraculous. How could Jesus not be the Messiah when he accurately fulfilled so many detailed Hebrew prophecies written between 400 to 1500 years before his birth? No other man but Jesus in all of human history has ever fulfilled all of these prophecies to qualify as the true Messiah and Savior of the World!

The testimony of history and scripture prove that Jesus was crucified under the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate and that a Roman Soldier thrust a spear in his side to make sure he was dead (John 19:34). If Jesus had failed to escape death by stoning on several occasions, his untimely death would have disqualified him from fulfilling predictive prophecies to qualify him as the true Messiah (John 8:59; 10:31). On several occasions some Jews who rejected Jesus attempted to stone him to death but he miraculously escaped. Had Jesus died by the common method of capital punishment employed by the Israelites [stoning] he could not have been the true anticipated Messiah. Yet even in death Jesus did fulfill all of the Hebrew prophecies in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets.

The Roman soldiers parted Jesus’ garments and cast lots for his vesture. King David had predicted this event as recorded in Psalm 22:18 one thousand years before it actually occurred. David further predicted the crucifixion of Jesus the Messiah and that the Messiah’s body would not decay, nor see corruption. If the Pharisees could have produced the body of Jesus they could have proved Jesus to be a false Messiah. But the Pharisees could not produce the body of Jesus because more than 500 witnesses actually observed Jesus ascend into heaven (Acts 1:9). According to the Law, it took only two or three witnesses to prove an event. The case for the resurrection and ascension of Christ is well established and would be very convincing in any court of law.

Here are a few examples of the many detailed predictive prophecies proving Jesus to be the anticipated coming Messiah as foretold by Moses and the Prophets:
There has never been a single man in all of human history who could have fulfilled all of the above Messianic Prophecies in the Hebrew Bible. Only Jesus Christ who was born at Bethlehem from the tribe Judah and died by crucifixion outside of Jerusalem under the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate has fulfilled all of the above Bible prophecies. How can anyone doubt that Jesus is the only way to everlasting life?
Those who reject Jesus as the true Messiah and the Savior of the World are rejecting over three hundred prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures that graphically contain detailed predictive prophecies in the life of Jesus recorded hundreds of years before his birth. The chances of any one man fulfilling all of these predictions without missing or erring in any of them is none other than a miracle sent from God. No man in human history other than Jesus Christ has ever been able to fulfill all of the Hebrew prophecies related to the coming of the Messiah as recorded in the Jewish Scriptures.

Some may claim that Jesus simply read the Biblical Prophecies concerning the Messiah and purposefully fulfilled these predictions. It is true that it is possible that Jesus could have fulfilled some prophecies in this manner. However, many Messianic prophecies were also totally out of Jesus’ control. For instance, Jesus could not have orchestrated the events of his own crucifixion. If Jesus had not escaped death by stoning on various occasions, his untimely death would have disqualified him from being the Messiah. For the scriptures had foretold by King David, in Psalm Chapter 22 that the Messiah would die for His people by the piercing of his hands and feet. The historical and scriptural records proves that this is exactly what happened to Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Here are some good examples of fulfilled Messianic prophecy which could not have been self fulfilled in Jesus’ own natural power:

1. His place of birth at Bethlehem
2. His time of birth
3. Being smitten and spit upon
4. His garments parted and lots cast for His vesture
5. Gall and vinegar offered Him to drink
6. Great darkness over the land at His time of death
7. Bones not broken
8. Side pierced

It was the enemies of Jesus who were the ones to smite and spit on Him. It was His enemies who parted His garments and cast lots for his vesture. It was His enemies, not his friends, who offered him gall and vinegar to drink. And it was His enemies who pierced his hands, feet, and side without breaking his bones. Since Jesus’ enemies certainly would not have ever listened to Him in performing any of these tasks, these events occurring in His life are truly miraculous. They could never have been orchestrated by Jesus or His followers so that He could claim to be the true Messiah.

These are just a few of the many Bible predictions which were fulfilled in the life of Jesus that were totally outside of Jesus’ natural ability to control.
Some may assert that these Bible Prophecies were written after these events had already taken place. Yet only those who are ignorant to documented records of history could hold such views today. The Septuagint is the title given to the Greek Translation of the entire body of the Hebrew Scriptures which were translated and completed in Egypt during the reign of King Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.). Therefore, we have historical proof that the entire Old Covenant Body of Scriptures were written and well known in the Alexandrian Library in Egypt at least 250 years prior to the events which occurred during the life of Jesus.

When one considers the hundreds of prophecies regarding the Messiah’s first coming which have been so accurately fulfilled in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, how can we doubt that Jesus Christ is coming again in power and glory according to the Messianic prophecies of his soon Second Coming?

The Angels of God said to over five hundred Jewish witnesses:
“. . . this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11
“. . . the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8

Bible prophecies were not given in human wisdom. They were given supernaturally by the only One True God so that all people of the earth everywhere would know for certain that there is only One True God and only one way of eternal salvation. Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father, but by Me.” John 14:6

The annals of history and modern archaeology has provided solid evidence proving that Jesus the Messiah was a real man of history who was crucified under the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate. Hundreds of witnesses actually observed Jesus ascend into heaven. Numerous prophecies recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures have been miraculously fulfilled in Jesus Christ which prove beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus has to be the true Savior of the world. No other world religion but Christianity can provide solid evidence to prove its miraculous origin! Jesus said that all must be born again to be saved, “Unless a man is born of the water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:3,5).” Every person must be born again to enjoy everlasting life. Obey Acts 2:38 and Acts 2:42 today!