

Partial List of Messianic Prophecies

by Sebastian R Fama

One thing that Jews and Christians agree on is that a passage of Scripture can have more than one level of meaning. It can apply to the event being described as well as to some future event. Jews refer to this method of interpretation as "midrash aggadah." Using this method, we can see many passages in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) that speak of the Messiah. When we compare them to New Testament accounts of Jesus' life, it becomes clear that Jesus is the promised Messiah. There are hundreds of prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) that speak of the Messiah. And Jesus fulfilled them all. Here are some of those passages:

1. The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem: "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days" (Micah 5:2).

Fulfilled: "And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (Luke 2:47).

2. He will be called Immanuel (God is with us): "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

Fulfilled: "And the angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God'" (Luke 1:35).

3. The Messiah would be God and man: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The Lord [Jehovah] is our righteousness'" (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

Fulfilled: "In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:1-3).

4. A prophet would come to prepare the way for the Messiah: "Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming" (Malachi 3:1).

Fulfilled: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light... John bore witness to him, and cried, this was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me'" (John 1:6-8, 15).

5. The Messiah is God and He will reign from David's throne forever: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore" (Jeremiah 9:6-8).

Fulfilled: "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:31-33).

6. The Messiah would heal the sick: “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy” (Isaiah 35:5-6).

Fulfilled: “And Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them’” (Matthew 11:4-5).

7. The Messiah would enter Jerusalem hailed as a king riding on an ass: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass” (Zechariah 9:9).

Fulfilled: “The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’ And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, ‘Who is this?’ And the crowds said, ‘This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee’” (Matthew 21:6-11).

8. The Messiah will make a new covenant with His people: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:31-32).

9. Melchizedek offered up bread and wine. The Messiah would be like him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchiz’edek’” (Psalm 110:4).

Eight and nine fulfilled: Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:26-28).

10. The blood of the lamb prevented temporal death: “The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt” (Exodus 12:13).

Fulfilled, the blood of the Lamb of God prevents eternal death: “He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:54).

11. A pure sacrifice will be made among the nations (Gentiles): “For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place, incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts” (Malachi 1:11).

Fulfilled: “And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me’” (Luke 22:19). As commanded by Christ, Catholics, to this day, continue to celebrate the last supper, which is a participation in the perfect offering or sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. This is done using bread and wine just as Jesus and Melchizedek had done.

12. The Messiah would be rejected by his own: “For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not” (Isaiah 53:2-3).

Fulfilled: “Again the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ And Jesus said, ‘I am; and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’ And the high priest tore his mantle, and said, ‘Why do we still need witnesses?

You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?' And they all condemned him as deserving death" (Mark 14:61-64).

13. God would provide a male lamb for sacrifice, a lamb that would have thorns on His head: "And Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'My father!' And he said, 'Here am I, my son.' He said, 'Behold, the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' Abraham said, 'God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.' So, they went both of them together... And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket [of thorns] by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son" (Genesis 22:7-8, 13).

14. The Messiah would be beaten and insulted: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isaiah 50:6).

Thirteen and fourteen fulfilled: "And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe upon him, and plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him they mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' And they spat upon him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe, and put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucify him" (Matthew 27:28-31).

Note: A ram is an adult male sheep. Jesus was an adult male. A lamb is a young sheep. There is no contradiction here. Jesus is called "The Lamb of God" because He submitted to his persecutors as a lamb would: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter..." (Isaiah 53:7). And of course, we see the fulfillment of that in Matthew 27:12-14: "But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?' But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge." Rams are known for their aggressive behavior. And so, the term "Ram of God," although proper in one sense, wouldn't convey the fact that Jesus chose to humble Himself.

15. Soldiers would gamble for His garments: "They divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots" (22:18).

Fulfilled: "And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots" (Matthew 27:35).

16. The Messiah would be challenged to save Himself: "All who see me mock at me, they make mouths at me, they wag their heads; 'He committed his cause to the Lord; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, for he delights in him!'" (Psalm 22:7-8).

Fulfilled: "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him; for he said, 'I am the Son of God'" (Matthew 27:42-43).

17. The Messiah would be pierced: "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and supplication, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a first-born" (Zechariah 12:10).

Fulfilled: "But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water" (John 19:33-34).

18. The sky would darken at the Messiah's death: "And on that day," says the Lord God, 'I will make the sun go down at noon, and darken the earth in broad daylight'" (Amos 8:9).

Fulfilled: "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour" (Matthew 27:45). Note: At the time Hebrews referred to the hours between sunrise and sunset as a day. Evidence of this is found in John 11:9 where Jesus says: "Are there not twelve hours in a day?" Therefore, the sixth hour would equal noon.

19. The Messiah would be resurrected from the dead: “For thou dost not give me up to Sheol, or let thy godly one see the Pit” (Psalm 16:10-11).

Fulfilled: “And he said to them, ‘Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).

20. The Messiah would be put to death before the destruction of the temple: “And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off [killed], and shall have nothing; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary [temple]” (Daniel 9:26).

Fulfilled: Jesus was crucified in 30 or 33 A.D. The temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. If Jesus is not the Messiah who is?

We need to focus on prophecy number two for a moment as there is much more to the story. Christian bibles would word Isaiah 7:14 a little differently. Most would render the verse as: “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: the **virgin** shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.” A Hebrew Bible would refer to her as merely a **young woman**.

So why the difference? The Septuagint version of the Jewish Bible records it as “virgin.” And given the context, that would seem most accurate. The Hebrew word (Almah) can mean; a lass, damsel, maid, or virgin. Given the times, they all seem to point in the same direction; a young unmarried woman. And, in ancient times, that would mean a virgin.

Also, the young woman in question was to be a sign. What kind of sign would a pregnant young woman be? Most young women got married. And soon after they would be with child. It was quite the common occurrence. In fact, if a pregnancy did not occur, it was viewed as a curse (Luke 1:24-25). A real sign would have to be something unique, something that would stand out and draw your attention.

Think of it this way. A friend invites you to his new home in the country. You ask for directions and he says, in part: “Once you get off the highway you will see a sign. There will be a tree by the side of the road.” But once you get off the highway, you see thousands of trees by the side of the road. Obviously, what your friend called a sign, was no sign at all. But what if he said: “Once you get off the highway you will see a sign, there will be a 1927 Rolls Royce in the front yard.” Now that would be an unmistakable sign. Likewise, a pregnant virgin would be an unmistakable sign. And as we noted earlier; Mary was that virgin and Jesus was that son.

In the year 70 A.D. the Romans destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. That was just a few decades after Jesus was crucified. The temple was an important part of Jewish worship and identity. No temple meant no more sacrifices, no more Holy of Holies, no ark of the covenant, and no high priest. Thus, the Jews were no longer able to worship in the manner that God had instructed them. Could it be that God allowed the temple to go out of existence because it was no longer needed? We were told above that the Messiah would make a new covenant with His people (Jeremiah 31:31-32). And that would make the old one obsolete.

And then there is the historical evidence. Dr. James Allen noted in 1926:

Nineteen centuries have come and gone
And today Jesus is the central figure of the human race
And the leader of mankind's progress
All the armies that have ever marched
All the navies that have ever sailed
All the parliaments that have ever sat
All the kings that have ever reigned put together
Have not affected the life of mankind on earth
As powerfully as that one solitary life