



PROPHECIES SPOKEN AND REVEALED

By Dr. Harold Bollinger

Introduction:

The Lordship of Jesus Christ is revealed through prophecies spoken in the Old Testament and revealed through the fulfillment of the New Testament.

The Old Testament was written over a period of approximately fifteen hundred years and bears prophecies concerning the birth of Jesus, as well as his nature, his ministry, his burial and resurrection.

Scholars throughout the ages have sought to learn the pages of the Old Testament. Others are convinced that we need only the New Testament.

The true understanding of the Bible, the word of God, is that to understand how the Old Testament and the New Testament work together to reveal the God's plan and his glory.

Many years ago, as a high school student, I felt a call to become a minister. I had read some of the Bible and knew by heart some Scriptures. At age 17, when given an opportunity to preach, I first preached on "The Lord is the vine, and we are the branches".

I continued to preach and pastor until I reached mid-life. I would find Scriptures and use them as a source we building a sermon. The use of the Word of God in this way was somewhat effective, and I supposed I would always preach in this way.

One day, the Lord spoke to my heart to read the Bible from the beginning of the Bible to the end of the Bible many times. I resigned the church, took a job as a teacher in an Alaskan village and began my pursuit of Bible reading. I found that from the Bible I had, I could read the Bible through each month, if I would read 40 pages each day.

I determined that I would try to do this. I could not read that many pages each day and teach five grades in a two-room school. I did, however average reading 20

pages or more each day. During the school year, I read the Bible through six times. I have read and listened to the Bible many times since that time.

One night as I was reading about 2:00 A.M., I kept falling asleep, and I asked to the Lord to show me something that would motivate me to read the Bible.

A picture came before me of a great crowd of people in a large auditorium. There was a minister in the center of the stage. I was standing some distance to his right. Another minister was standing some distance to his left. As he finished ministering, he said to me, "Harold, you pray for the needs of the people in the section before you", and to told the other minister to pray for the people in his section.

As I looked at this great crowd of people, I saw that everyone standing there were sick or needed help in some way. Some had physical needs; some had emotional or financial needs. I said, "Oh Lord, I don't know what to say"

The Spirit of the Lord asked me a question. The question was: "Do you think you can heal them"? I replied: "No Lord I cannot heal them" Then I heard the Spirit of the Lord say: "You are so full of the Word of God, all you need to do is to speak the word, and they will be healed".

When I heard this, I was determined to be filled with the Word of God. I had to know the entire Bible, not a segment of the Bible.

You too, can be healed as you read this book.

A passion for the word of God is an absolute requirement for effective ministry.

Table of Contents:

Introduction		2
Chapter 1	Prophecies concerning the birth Of Jesus	4
Chapter 2	Prophecies concerning the birth Of Jesus continued	10
Chapter 3	Prophecies concerning the birth Of Jesus Continued	14
Chapter 4	Prophecies concerning the nature Of Jesus	18
Chapter 5	Prophecies concerning the nature Of Jesus continued	23
Chapter 6	Prophecies concerning the ministry Of Jesus	26
Chapter 7	Prophecies concerning the ministry Of Jesus continued	30
Chapter 8	Prophecies concerning events after His burial	34
Chapter 9	Prophecies fulfilled in one day	37
Chapter 10	Prophecies fulfilled in one day	42
Chapter 11	Prophecies fulfilled in one day	47
Chapter 12	More prophecies fulfilled in one day	52

Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled Concerning Jesus Birth

Chapter 1

1. (Prophecy) **Born of the seed of a woman:** Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Adam and Eve learned by painful experience that because God is holy and hates sin, he must punish sinners. The rest of the book of Genesis recounts painful stories of lives ruined as a result of the fall. Disobedience is sin, and it breaks our fellowship with God. But, fortunately, when we disobey, God is willing to forgive us and to restore our relationship with him.

Satan is our enemy. He will do anything he can to get us to follow his evil, deadly path. The phrase “you will strike his heel” refers to Satan’s repeated attempts to defeat Christ during his life on earth. “He will crush your head” foreshadows Satan’s defeat when Christ rose from the dead. A strike on the heel is not deadly, but a crushing blow to the head is. Already God was revealing his plan to defeat Satan and offer salvation to the world through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus was born of the seed of a woman as revealed in the following Scriptures:

all our thoughts, feelings, and needs. He has been where we are now, and he has the ability to help.

(Fulfillment) **Galatians 4:4-5**

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

“When the time had fully come,” God sent Jesus to earth to die for our sins. For centuries the Jews had been wondering when their Messiah would come—but God’s timing was perfect.

We may sometimes wonder if God will ever respond to our prayers. But we must never doubt him or give up hope. At the right time he will respond. We must be willing to wait for God's timing? Trust his judgment and trust that he has our best interests in mind.

Jesus was born of a woman—he was human. He was born as a Jew—he was subject to God's law and fulfilled it perfectly. Thus Jesus was the perfect sacrifice because, although he was fully human, he never sinned. His death bought freedom for us who were enslaved to sin so that we could be adopted into God's family.

Because Jesus lived as a man, we know that he fully understands our experiences and struggles (Hebrews 4:15-16). Because he is God, he has the power and authority to deliver us from sin (Colossians 2:13-15).

2. (Prophecy) Jesus was born of a virgin: Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Fulfillment Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. [19] Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. [20] But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

(24) Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: [25] And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.

Joseph changed his plans quickly after learning that Mary had not been unfaithful to him. He obeyed God and proceeded with the marriage plans. Although others may have disapproved of his decision, Joseph went ahead with what he knew was right. Sometimes we avoid doing what is right because of what others might think. Like Joseph, we must choose to obey God rather than seek the approval of others.

The virgin birth is important to the Christian faith? Jesus Christ, God's Son, had to be free from the sinful nature passed on to all other human beings by Adam. Because Jesus was born of a woman, he was a human being; but as the Son of God, Jesus was born without any trace of human sin. Jesus is both fully human and fully divine.

In order to be saved, one must confess that Jesus is the Son of God.
Romans 10:9-10,13 that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine hearts that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. [10] For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
[13] For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

3. (Prophecy) Jesus is the Son of God Psalm 2:7

I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

God is all-powerful. He created the world, and knew about the empires of the earth long before they came into being (Daniel 2:26-45). But pride and power cause nations and leaders to rebel against God and try to break free of him. Our world has many leaders who boast of their power, who rant and rave against God and his people, who promise to take over and form their own empires. But God laughs because any power they have comes from him, and he can also take it from them. We need not fear the boasts of tyrants—they are in God's hands.

Fulfillment Matthew 3:17

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"

The doctrine of the Trinity means that God is three persons and yet one in essence. In this passage, all three persons of the Trinity are present and active. God the Father speaks; God the Son is baptized; God the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus. God is one, yet in three persons at the same time. This is one of God's incomprehensible mysteries. Other Bible references that speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-13; 2 Cor. 13:14; Ephes. 2:18; 1 Thes. 1:2-5; and 1 Peter 1:2.

4. (Prophecy) The Messiah was to be the seed of Abraham.

Genesis 22:18

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Abraham received abundant blessings because he did not hold back, but obeyed God. First, God gave Abraham's descendants the ability to conquer their enemies. Second, God promised Abraham children and grandchildren who would in turn bless the whole earth. People's lives would be changed as a result of knowing of the faith of Abraham and his descendants. Most often we think of blessings as gifts to be enjoyed. But when God blesses us, his blessings are intended to overflow to others.

(Fulfillment) Matthew 1:1

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, is the son of Abraham.

Matthew opens his Gospel with a genealogy to prove that Jesus is the descendant of both King David and Abraham, just as the Old Testament had predicted. Jesus' birth didn't go unnoticed, for both shepherds and magi came to worship him. The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah to appear. Finally, he was born, but the Jews didn't recognize him because they were looking for a different kind of king.

Presenting this genealogy was one of the most interesting ways that Matthew could begin a book for a Jewish audience. Because a person's family line proved his or her standing as one of God's chosen people, Matthew began by showing that Jesus was a descendant of Abraham, the father of all Jews, and a direct descendant of David, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah's line. The facts of this ancestry were carefully preserved. This is the first of many proofs recorded by Matthew to show that Jesus is the true Messiah.

More than 400 years had passed since the last Old Testament prophecies, and faithful Jews all over the world were still waiting for the Messiah (Luke 3:15). Matthew wrote this book to Jews to present Jesus as King and Messiah, the promised descendant of David who would reign forever (Isaiah 11:1-5). The Gospel of Matthew links the Old and New Testaments and contains many references that show how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy.

Jesus entered human history when the land of Palestine was controlled by Rome and considered an insignificant outpost of the vast and mighty Roman empire. The presence of Roman soldiers in Israel gave the Jews military peace, but at the price of oppression, slavery, injustice, and immorality. Into this kind of world came the promised Messiah.

In the first 17 verses we meet 46 people whose lifetimes span 2,000 years. All were ancestors of Jesus, but they varied considerably in personality, spirituality, and experience. Some were heroes of faith—like Abraham, Isaac, Ruth, and David. Some had shady reputations—like Rahab and Tamar. Many were very ordinary—like Hezron, Ram, Nahshon, and Akim. And others were evil—like Manasseh and Abijah. God’s work in history is not limited by human failures or sins, and he works through ordinary people. Just as God used all kinds of people to bring his Son into the world, he uses all kinds today to accomplish his will. And God wants to use you.

Galatians 3:16

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

God kept his promise to Abraham (Genesis 17:7-8)—he has not revoked it, though thousands of years have passed. He saved Abraham through his faith, and he blessed the world through Abraham by sending the Messiah as one of Abraham’s descendants. Circumstances may change, but God remains constant and does not break his promises. He has promised to forgive our sins through Jesus Christ, and we can be sure that he will.

CHAPTER 2

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE BIRTH OF CHRIST CONTINUES TO BE FULFILLED.

5. (Prophecy) The Messiah was to be a descendent of Isaac.

Genesis 21:12

And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Who could believe that Abraham would have a son at 100 years of age—and live to raise him to adulthood? But doing the impossible is everyday business for God. Our big problems won't seem so impossible if we let God handle them. After repeated promises, a visit by two angels, and the appearance of the Lord himself, Sarah finally cried out with surprise and joy at the birth of her son. The promise of a redeemer through Abraham came through his son Isaac.

(Fulfillment) Luke 3:34

Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,

Matthew's genealogy goes back to Abraham and shows that Jesus was related to all Jews (Matthew 1). Luke's genealogy goes back to Adam, showing that Jesus is related to all human beings. This is consistent with Luke's picture of Jesus as the Savior of the whole world.

6. (Prophecy) The Messiah was to be a descendent of Jacob.

Numbers 24:17

I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

The star out of Jacob is often thought to refer to the coming Messiah. It was probably this prophecy that convinced the Magi to travel to Israel to search for the baby Jesus (see Matthew 2:1-2). It seems strange that God would use a sorcerer like Balaam to foretell the coming of the Messiah. But this teaches us that God can use anything or anyone to accomplish his plans. By using a sorcerer, God did not make sorcery acceptable; in fact, the Bible condemns it in several places (Exodus 22:18; 2 Chron. 33:6; Rev. 18:23). Rather, God showed his ultimate sovereignty over good and evil.

Fulfillment Luke 3:34

We must again use this Scripture to also verify that Jesus was a descendent of Jacob, as well as his father, Isaac, “which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,”

Prayers throughout the Bible make request unto the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God honors those who acknowledge God’s blessing to the lineage of Abraham.

7. (Prophecy) The Messiah would come through the tribe of Judah.

Genesis 49:8-10

Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. [9] Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down. He couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? [10] The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Why was Judah—known for selling Joseph into slavery and trying to defraud his daughter-in-law—so greatly blessed? God had chosen Judah to be the ancestor of Israel’s line of kings (that is the meaning of “the scepter will not depart from Judah”). This may have been due to Judah’s dramatic change of character (Genesis 44:33-34). Judah’s line would produce the promised Messiah, Jesus.

Fulfillment Luke 3:23

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

Luke 3: 33

Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,

Heli may have been Mary’s father. If that were the case, this would be Mary’s genealogy that Luke may have received personally from her. It is fitting that Luke

would show Mary's genealogy because of the prominence he gives women in his Gospel.

Matthew's genealogy goes back to Abraham and shows that Jesus was related to all Jews (Matthew 1). Luke's genealogy goes back to Adam, showing that Jesus is related to all human beings. This is consistent with Luke's picture of Jesus as the Savior of the whole world.

8. (Prophecy) Jesus is born through the family line of Jesse, and through the line of David.

Isaiah 11:1

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

Assyria would be like a tree cut down at the height of its power (Isaiah 10:33-34), never to rise again. Judah (the royal line of David) would be like a tree chopped down to a stump. But from that stump a new shoot would grow—the Messiah. He would be greater than the original tree and would bear much fruit. The Messiah is the fulfillment of God's promise that a descendant of David would rule forever (2 Samuel 7:16).

Jeremiah 23:5

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

Jeremiah contrasted the present corrupt leaders with the coming Messiah, the perfect King who would come from David's line to reign over Israel. The King is called a righteous Branch because he will sprout up from the stump of David's fallen dynasty (Isaiah 11:1). This new growth will have God's own characteristics. Like the Creator, the Branch will be righteous.

Fulfillment Luke 3:23,31-32

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, (31) which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of

Nathan, which was the son of David, [32] Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,

Imagine the Savior of the world working in a small-town carpenter's shop until he was 30 years old! It seems incredible that Jesus would have been content to remain in Nazareth all that time, but he patiently trusted the Father's timing for his life and ministry. Thirty was the prescribed age for priests to begin their ministry (Numbers 4:3). Joseph was 30 years old when he began serving the king of Egypt (Genesis 41:46), and David was 30 years old when he began to reign over Judah (2 Samuel 5:4). Age 30, then, was a good time to begin an important task in the Jewish culture

It is clearly seen how Jesus Christ came into the world to fulfill the many prophecies given in the Old Testament.

Chapter 3

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE BIRTH OF CHRIST CONTINUES TO BE FULFILLED.

9. (Prophecy) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem

Micah 5:2

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Ephrathah was the district in which Bethlehem was located.

This ruler is Jesus, the Messiah. Micah accurately predicted Christ's birthplace hundreds of years before Jesus was born. The promised eternal King in David's line, who would come to live as a man, had been alive forever—"from of old, from ancient times." Although eternal, Christ entered human history as the man, Jesus of Nazareth.

(Fulfilment) Now God eliminates all the cities in the world, except one. That city was Bethlehem.

Matthew 2:1

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

The likelihood of anyone meeting all the prophecies except Jesus cannot be found. Jesus is the true Messiah.

10. (Prophecy) The Messiah would be presented with Gifts.

Psalms 72:10

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

Isaiah 60:6

The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.

The places mentioned belonged to obscure tribes in the Arabian Desert hundreds of miles from Israel. All people would come to Jerusalem because God would be living there and they would be attracted to his light. Don't be discouraged when you look around and see so few people turning to God; one day people throughout the earth will recognize him as the one true God.

Fulfillment Matthew 2:1,11

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

The land of Israel was divided into four political districts and several lesser territories. Judea was to the south, Samaria in the middle, Galilee to the north, and Idumea to the southeast. Bethlehem of Judea (also called Judah, Matthew 2:6) had been prophesied as the Messiah's birthplace (Micah 5:2). Jerusalem was also in Judea and was the seat of government for Herod the Great, king over all four political districts. After Herod's death, the districts were divided among three separate rulers (see the note on +Matthew 2:19-22). Although he was a ruthless, evil man who murdered many in his own family, Herod the Great supervised the renovation of the temple, making it much larger and more beautiful. This made him popular with many Jews. Jesus would visit Jerusalem many times because the great Jewish festivals were held there.

Not much is known about these Magi (traditionally called wise men). We don't know where they came from or how many there were. Tradition says they were men of high position from Parthia, near the site of ancient Babylon. How did they know that the star represented the Messiah? (1) They could have been Jews who remained in Babylon after the exile and knew the Old Testament predictions of the Messiah's coming. (2) They may have been eastern astrologers who studied ancient manuscripts from around the world. Because of the Jewish exile centuries earlier, they would have had copies of the Old Testament in their land. (3) They may have had a special message from God directing them to the Messiah.

Some scholars say these Magi were each from a different land, representing the entire world bowing before Jesus. These men from faraway lands recognized Jesus as the Messiah when most of God's chosen people in Israel did not. Matthew pictures Jesus as King over the whole world, not just Judea.

The Magi traveled thousands of miles to see the king of the Jews. When they finally found him, they responded with joy, worship, and gifts. This is so different from the approach people often take today. We expect God to come looking for us,

to explain himself, prove who he is, and give *us* gifts. But those who are wise still seek and worship Jesus today, not for what they can get, but for who he is.

The Magi said they saw Jesus' star. Balaam referred to a coming "star. . . out of Jacob" (Numbers 24:17). Some say this star may have been a conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars in 6 B.C., and others offer other explanations. But couldn't God, who created the heavens, have created a special star to signal the arrival of his Son? Whatever the nature of the star, these Magi traveled thousands of miles searching for

The Magi gave these expensive gifts because they were worthy presents for a future king. Bible students have seen in the gifts symbols of Christ's identity and what he would accomplish. Gold was a gift for a king; incense, a gift for deity; myrrh, a spice for a person who was going to die. These gifts may have provided the financial resources for the trip to Egypt and back.

The Magi brought gifts and worshiped Jesus for who he was. This is the essence of true worship—honoring Christ for who he is and being willing to give him what is valuable to you. Worship God because he is the perfect, just, and almighty Creator of the universe, worthy of the best you have to give.

11. (Prophecy) Herod Kills Children.

Jeremiah 31:15

Thus saith the Lord; "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not".

Rachel, Jacob's favorite wife, was the symbolic mother of the northern tribes, who were taken away by the Assyrians as slaves. Rachel is pictured crying for the exiles at Ramah, a staging point of deportation. This verse is quoted in Matthew 2:18 to describe the sadness of the mothers of Bethlehem as the male children were killed. The weeping was great in both cases.

(Fulfillment) Matthew 2:16

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all

the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

Herod, the king of the Jews, killed all the boys less than two years of age in an obsessive attempt to kill Jesus, the newborn King. He stained his hands with blood, but he did not harm Jesus. Herod was king by a human appointment; Jesus was King by a divine appointment. No one can thwart God's plans.

Herod was afraid that this newborn king would one day take his throne. He completely misunderstood the reason for Christ's coming. Jesus didn't want Herod's throne; he wanted to be king of Herod's life. Jesus wanted to give Herod eternal life, not take away his present life. Today people are often afraid that Christ wants to take things away when, in reality, he wants to give them real freedom, peace, and joy. Don't fear Christ—give him the throne of your life.

CHAPTER 4

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE NATURE OF CHRIST

12. (Prophecy) the pre-existence of Christ

Micah 5:2

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Ephrathah was the district in which Bethlehem was located.

This ruler is Jesus, the Messiah. Micah accurately predicted Christ's birthplace hundreds of years before Jesus was born. The promised eternal King in David's line, who would come to live as a man, had been alive forever—"from of old, from ancient times." Although eternal, Christ entered human history as the man, Jesus of Nazareth.

Fulfillment John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

In this Gospel, John provides clear evidence that Jesus is the Son of God and that by believing in him we may have eternal life. John also provides unique material about Jesus' birth. He did not come into being when he was born, because he is eternal.

What Jesus taught and what he did are tied inseparably to who he is. John shows Jesus as fully human and fully God. Although Jesus took upon himself full humanity and lived as a man, he never ceased to be the eternal God who has always existed, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and the source of eternal life. This is the truth about Jesus, and the foundation of all truth. If we cannot or do not believe this basic truth, we will not have enough faith to trust our eternal destiny to him. That is why John wrote this Gospel—to build faith and confidence in Jesus Christ so that we may believe that he truly was and is the Son of God (John 20:30-31).

John wrote to believers everywhere, both Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles). As one of Jesus' 12 disciples, John was an eyewitness, so his story is accurate. His book is not a biography (like the book of Luke); it is a thematic presentation of Jesus' life. Many in John's original audience had a Greek background. Greek culture encouraged worship of many mythological gods, whose supernatural characteristics were as important to Greeks as genealogies were to Jews..

What does John mean by the Word? The Word was a term used by theologians and philosophers, both Jews and Greeks, in many different ways.

In Hebrew Scripture, *the Word* was an agent of creation (Psalm 33:6), the source of God's message to his people through the prophets (Hosea 1:2), and God's law, his standard of holiness (Psalm 119:11). In Greek philosophy, *the Word* was the

principle of reason that governed the world, or the thought still in the mind, while in Hebrew thought, *the Word* was another expression for God.

John's description shows clearly that he is speaking of Jesus (see especially John 1:14)—a human being he knew and loved, but at the same time the Creator of the universe, the ultimate revelation of God, the living picture of God's holiness, the One in whom "all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). To Jewish readers, "the Word was God" was blasphemous. To Greek readers, "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14) was unthinkable. To John, this new understanding of the Word was gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:17

And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

God is not only the Creator of the world, but he is also its Sustainer. In him, everything is held together, protected, and prevented from disintegrating into chaos. Because Christ is the Sustainer of all life, none of us is independent from him. We are all his servants who must daily trust him for protecting us, caring for us, and sustaining us.

13. (Prophecy) He shall be called Lord Psalm 110:1

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

This is one of the most-quoted psalms in the New Testament because of its clear references to the Messiah. In Matthew 22:41-45, Jesus recited the words of this verse and applied them to himself. Psalm 110:1, 6 look forward to Christ's final and total destruction of the wicked (Rev. 6-9); Psalm 110:2 prophecies of Christ's reign on the earth (Rev. 20:1-7); Psalm 110:3-4 tell of Christ's priestly work for his people (Hebrews 5-8); and Psalm 110:5-6 look forward to the final battle on earth when Christ will overcome the forces of evil (Rev. 19:11-21).

Many people have a vague belief in God, but refuse to accept Jesus as anything more than a great human teacher. But the Bible does not allow that option. Both the Old and New Testaments proclaim the deity of the One who came to save and to reign. Jesus explained that this psalm spoke of the Messiah as greater than David, Israel's greatest king (Mark 12:35-37). Peter used this psalm to show that Jesus, the Messiah, sits at God's right hand and is Lord over all (Acts 2:32-35).

You can't straddle the fence, calling Jesus "just a good teacher," because the Bible clearly calls him Lord

Fulfillment Luke 20:41-44

And he said unto them, how say they that Christ is David's son? [42] And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, [43] Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. [44] David therefore called him Lord, how is he then his son?

The Pharisees and Sadducees had asked their questions. Then Jesus turned the tables and asked them a question that went right to the heart of the matter—what they thought about the Messiah's identity. The Pharisees knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but they did not understand that he would be more than a human descendant—he was God in the flesh. Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1 to show that David knew that the Messiah would be both human and divine. The Pharisees expected only a human ruler to restore Israel's greatness as in the days of David and Solomon.

The central issue of life is what we believe about Jesus. Other spiritual questions are irrelevant unless we first decide to believe that Jesus is who he said he is. The Pharisees and Sadducees could not do this. They remained confused over Jesus' identity.

14. (Prophecy) He shall be called Immanuel ("God with us")

Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

(Fulfillment) Matthew 1:23

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

15. (Prophecy) He shall be a Prophet. Deut. 18:15,18

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

Who is this prophet? Stephen used this verse to support his claim that Jesus Christ is God's Son, the Messiah (Acts 7:37). The coming of Jesus Christ to earth was not an afterthought, but part of God's original plan.

(Fulfillment) Matthew 21:11

And the multitude said, "This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee".

16. (Prophecy) He shall be a priest Psalm 110:4

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

This is one of the most-quoted psalms in the New Testament because of its clear references to the Messiah. In Matthew 22:41-45, Jesus recited the words of this verse and applied them to himself. Psalm 110:1, 6 look forward to Christ's final and total destruction of the wicked (Rev. 6-9); Psalm 110:2 prophecies of Christ's reign on the earth (Rev. 20:1-7); Psalm 110:3-4 tell of Christ's priestly work for his people (Hebrews 5-8); and Psalm 110:5-6 look forward to the final battle on earth when Christ will overcome the forces of evil (Rev. 19:11-21).

(Fulfillment) Hebrews 5:5-6

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. [6] As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

This chapter stresses both Christ's divine appointment and his humanity. The writer uses two Old Testament verses to show Christ's divine appointment—Psalm 2:7 and Psalm 110:4. At the time this book was written, the Romans selected the

high priest in Jerusalem. In the Old Testament, however, God chose Aaron, and only Aaron's descendants could be high priests. Christ, like Aaron, was chosen and called by God.

Melchizedek was a priest of Salem (now called Jerusalem)

Chapter 5

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE NATURE OF CHRIST

17. (Prophecy) He shall be a judge, our Lawgiver and King.

Isaiah 33:22;

For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.

These people realized that they could not live in the presence of the holy God, for he is like a fire that consumes evil. Only those who walk righteously and speak what is right can live with God. Isaiah gives examples of how to demonstrate our righteousness and uprightness: we can reject gain from extortion and bribes, refuse to listen to plots of wrong actions, and shut our eyes to evil. If we are fair and honest in our relationships, we will dwell with God, and he will supply our needs. Everyone will stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

(Fulfillment) John 5:30

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father that hath sent me.

Those who have rebelled against Christ will be resurrected too, but to hear God's judgment against them and to be sentenced to eternity apart from him. There are those who wish to live well on earth, ignore God, and then see death as final rest. Jesus does not allow unbelieving people to see death as the end of it all. There is a judgment to face.

18. (Prophecy) He shall have Special anointing of the Holy Spirit

Isaiah 11:2;

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

Assyria would be like a tree cut down at the height of its power (Isaiah 10:33-34), never to rise again. Judah (the royal line of David) would be like a tree chopped down to a stump. But from that stump a new shoot would grow—the Messiah. He would be greater than the original tree and would bear much fruit. The Messiah is the fulfillment of God's promise that a descendant of David would rule forever (2 Samuel 7:16).

(Fulfilment) Matthew 3:16,17

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: [17] And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The doctrine of the Trinity means that God is three persons and yet one in essence. In this passage, all three persons of the Trinity are present and active. God the Father speaks; God the Son is baptized; God the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus. God is one, yet in three persons at the same time. This is one of God's incomprehensible mysteries. Other Bible references that speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:4-13; 2 Cor. 13:14; Ephes. 2:18; 1 Thes. 1:2-5; and 1 Peter 1:2.

19. (Prophecy) He will have a zeal for God Psalm 69:9;

For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

When devastated by death or tragedy, Jesus did not collapse or despair, but continued to have a zeal for God.

The Pharisees and Sadducees had asked their questions. Then Jesus turned the tables and asked them a question that went right to the heart of the matter—what they thought about the Messiah's identity. The Pharisees knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but they did not understand that he would be more than a human descendant—he was God in the flesh. Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1 to show that David knew that the Messiah would be both human and divine. The Pharisees expected only a human ruler to restore Israel's greatness as in the days of David and Solomon.

The central issue of life is what we believe about Jesus. Other spiritual questions are irrelevant unless we first decide to believe that Jesus is who he said he is. The Pharisees and Sadducees could not do this. They remained confused over Jesus' identity.

Fulfillment John 2:15-17

And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; [16] And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. [17] And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

People who had turned it into a marketplace were misusing God's temple. They had forgotten, or didn't care, that God's house is a place of worship, not a place for making a profit. Our attitude toward the church is wrong if we see it as a place for personal contacts or business advantage. Make sure you attend church to worship God.

Jesus was obviously angry at the merchants who exploited those who had come to God's house to worship. There is a difference between uncontrolled rage and righteous indignation—yet both are called anger. We must be very careful how we use the powerful emotion of anger. It is right to be angry about injustice and sin; it is wrong to be angry over trivial personal offenses.

Jesus made a whip and chased out the moneychangers. Does his example permit us to use violence against wrongdoers? Certain authority is granted to some, but not to all. Jesus had God's authority, something we cannot have.

Chapter 6

Prophecies Concerning the Ministry of Jesus

20. (Prophecy) He would be preceded by a messenger Isaiah 40:3;

The book of Isaiah makes a dramatic shift at this point. The following chapters discuss the majesty of God, who is coming to rule the earth and judge all people. God will reunite Israel and Judah and restore them to glory. Instead of warning the people of impending judgment, Isaiah here comforts them. Isaiah 40 refers to the restoration after the exile. Cyrus is the instrument of their deliverance from Babylon. Secondly, it looks to the end of time when "Babylon"—the future evil world system—will be destroyed and the persecution of God's people will end.

Preparing a straight highway means removing obstacles and rolling out the red carpet for the coming of the Lord. The desert is a picture of life's trials and sufferings. We are not immune to these, but they need not hinder our faith. Isaiah told people to prepare to see God work. John the Baptist used these words as he challenged the people to prepare for the coming Messiah (Matthew 3:3).

(Fulfilment) Matthew 3:1,2

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, [2] And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. [3] For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

The prophet quoted is Isaiah (Isaiah 40:3), one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament and one of the most quoted in the New. Like Isaiah, John was a prophet who urged the people to confess their sins and live for God.

Both prophets taught that the message of repentance is good news to those who listen and seek the healing forgiveness of God's love, but terrible news to those who refuse to listen and thus cut off their only hope.

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. People who do not know Jesus need to be prepared to meet him. We can prepare them by explaining their need for forgiveness, demonstrating Christ's teachings by our conduct, and telling them how Christ can give their lives meaning. We can "make straight paths for him" by correcting misconceptions that might be hindering people from approaching Christ. Someone you know may be open to a relationship with Christ. What can you do to prepare the way for this person?

21. (Prophecy) His Ministry to begin in Galilee Isaiah 9:1,2

Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

This child who would become their deliverer is the Messiah, Jesus. Matthew quotes these verses in describing Christ's ministry (Matthew 4:15-16). The territories of Zebulun and Naphtali represent the northern kingdom as a whole. These were also the territories where Jesus grew up and often ministered; this is why they would see "a great light."

The apostle John also referred to Jesus as the "light" (John 1:9). Jesus referred to himself as "the light of the world" (John 8:12).

In a time of great darkness, God promised to send a light who would shine on everyone living in the shadow of death. He is both "Wonderful Counselor" and "Mighty God." This message of hope was fulfilled in the birth of Christ and the establishment of his eternal kingdom. He came to deliver all people from their slavery to sin.

(Fulfillment) Matthew 4:12,13,17

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew features Jesus' sermons. The record of Jesus' actions is woven around great passages of his teaching. This section of Matthew, then, is topical rather than chronological. Matthew records for us the Sermon on the Mount, the parables of the kingdom, Jesus' teachings on forgiveness, and parables about the end of the age.

Jesus moved from Nazareth, his hometown, to Capernaum, about 20 miles farther north. Capernaum became Jesus' home base during his ministry in Galilee. Jesus probably moved (1) to get away from intense opposition in Nazareth, (2) to have an impact on the greatest number of people (Capernaum was a busy city and Jesus' message could reach more people and spread more quickly), and (3) to utilize extra resources and support for his ministry.

Jesus' move fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2, which states that the Messiah will be a light to the land of Zebulun and Naphtali, the region of Galilee where Capernaum was located. Zebulun and Naphtali were two of the original 12 tribes of Israel.

22. (Prophecy) He would have a ministry of miracles

Isaiah 35:5

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

This chapter is a beautiful picture of the final kingdom in which God will establish his justice and destroy all evil. This is the world the redeemed can anticipate after the judgment when creation itself will rejoice in God. Isaiah 34 spoke of great distress when God will judge all people for their actions. Isaiah 35 pictures the days when life will be peaceful at last and everything will be made right. Carmel and Sharon were regions of thick vegetation and fertile soil. They were symbols of productivity and plenty.

(Fulfilment) Matthew 9:35

The good news of the kingdom was that the promised and long-awaited Messiah had finally come. His healing miracles were a sign that his teaching was true.

Ezekiel also compared Israel to sheep without a shepherd (Ezekiel 34:5-6). Jesus came to be the Shepherd, the One who could show people how to avoid life's pitfalls (see John 10:14).

23. (Prophecy) He would teach in parables Psalm 78:2;

I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

The people of Israel rebelled and were not faithful to God (Psalm 78:8); forgot about the wonders God had done (Psalm 78:11-12); put God to the test by making demands from him (Psalm 78:18); lied to him and tried to flatter him (Psalm 78:36); and continued to turn away from him even after he did great works on their behalf (Psalm 78:42-56)

(Fulfilment) Matthew 13:34

All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

Jesus always used stories and illustrations like these when speaking to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables. [35] This fulfilled the prophecy that said,

"I will speak to you in parables. I will explain mysteries hidden since the creation of the world." (NT)

Chapter 7

More Prophecies Concerning the Ministry of Jesus

24. (Prophecy) He was to enter the temple Malachi 3:1

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

There are two messengers in this verse. The first is usually understood to be John the Baptist (Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:27). The second messenger is Jesus, the Messiah, for whom both Malachi and John the Baptist prepared the way.

In the process of refining metals, the raw metal is heated with fire until it melts. The impurities separate from it and rise to the surface. They are skimmed off, leaving the pure metal. Without this heating and melting, there could be no purifying. As the impurities are skimmed off the top, the reflection of the worker appears in the smooth, pure surface. God says that leaders (here the Levites) should be especially open to his purification process in their lives. Launderer's soap was alkali used to whiten cloth. It is also used here as a symbol of the purifying process.

(Fulfillment) Matthew 21:12

And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

This is the second time Jesus cleared the temple (see John 2:13-17). Merchants and moneychangers set up their booths in the court of the Gentiles in the temple, crowding out the Gentiles who had come from all over the civilized world to worship God. The merchants sold sacrificial animals at high prices, taking advantage of those who had come long distances. The moneychangers exchanged

all international currency for the special temple coins—the only money the merchants would accept. They often deceived foreigners who didn't know the exchange rates. Their commercialism in God's house frustrated people's attempts at worship. This, of course, greatly angered Jesus. Any practice that interferes with worshiping God should be stopped.

25. (Prophecy) He was to enter Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

The Triumphal Entry of Jesus riding into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-11) was predicted here more than 500 years before it happened. Just as this prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus came to earth, so the prophecies of his second coming are just as certain to come true. We are to be ready for his return, for he is coming!

(Fulfillment) Luke 19:35-37

And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. [36] And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. [37] And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

Christians celebrate this event on Palm Sunday. The people lined the road, praising God, waving palm branches, and throwing their cloaks in front of the colt as it passed before them. "Long live the King" was the meaning behind their joyful shouts, because they knew that Jesus was intentionally fulfilling the prophecy in Zech. 9:9: "See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." To announce that he was indeed the Messiah, Jesus chose a *time* when all Israel would be gathered at Jerusalem, a *place* where huge crowds could see him, and a *way* of proclaiming his mission that was unmistakable. The people went wild. They were sure their liberation was at hand.

26. (Prophecy) He would be a stone of stumbling to the Jewish Nation.

Psalm 118:22;

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

Jesus referred to this verse when he spoke of being rejected by his own people (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10-11; Luke 20:17). Although he was rejected, Jesus is now the “capstone,” the most important part of the church (Acts 4:11; Ephes. 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-7).

(Fulfilment) 1 Peter 2:7

Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto those that be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

Peter portrays the church as a living, spiritual house, with Christ as the foundation and cornerstone and each believer as a stone. Paul portrays the church as a body, with Christ as the head and each believer as a member (see, for example, Ephes. 4:15-16). Both pictures emphasize *community*. One stone is not a temple or even a wall; one body part is useless without the others. In our individualistic society, it is easy to forget our interdependence with other Christians. When God calls you to a task, remember that he is also calling others to work with you. Together your individual efforts will be multiplied. Look for those people and join with them to build a beautiful house for God.

27. (Prophecy) He would be a light to the Gentiles Isaiah 60:3

The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

As we read these promises, we long for their fulfillment. But we must patiently wait for God’s timing. He is in control of history, and he weaves together all our lives into his plan.

(Fulfilment) Acts 13:47,48a

For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. [48] And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

Chapter 8

Prophecies Concerning Events After His Burial

28. (Prophecy) His resurrection Psalm 16:10;

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

David stated confidently that God would not leave him in the grave. Many people fear death because they can neither control nor understand it. As believers, we can be assured that God will not forget us when we die. He will bring us to life again to live with him forever. This provides real security. For other passages about resurrection, see Job 19:25-26; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2, 13; Mark 13:27; 1 Cor. 15:12-58; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:11-21:4.

Fulfillment Acts 2:31

He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Peter quoted from Psalm 16:8-11—a psalm written by David. He explained that David was not writing about himself, because David died and was buried (Acts 2:29). Instead, he wrote as a prophet (Acts 2:30) who spoke of the Messiah who would be resurrected. The audience understood “decay” (Acts 2:27) to mean the grave. The emphasis here is that Jesus’ body was *not* left to decay but was in fact resurrected and glorified.

28. (Prophecy) His ascension (Psalm 68:18)

Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

This verse, quoted in Ephes. 4:8, is applied to the ministry of the ascended Christ. It celebrates his victory over evil. It assures all of us who believe in Christ that by trusting him, we can overcome evil. God sets his people free and crushes his enemies. Salvation is freedom from sin and death. Those who refuse to turn to God will be crushed by sin and death. They will be trapped by the sin they loved and destroyed by the death they feared.

Ephes. 4:8 wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Fulfillment Acts 1:9

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

29. (Prophecy) Seated at the right hand of God (Psalm 110:1)

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

This is one of the most-quoted psalms in the New Testament because of its clear references to the Messiah. In Matthew 22:41-45, Jesus recited the words of this verse and applied them to himself. Psalm 110:1, 6 look forward to Christ's final and total destruction of the wicked (Rev. 6-9); Psalm 110:2 prophecies of Christ's reign on the earth (Rev. 20:1-7); Psalm 110:3-4 tell of Christ's priestly work for his people (Hebrews 5-8); and Psalm 110:5-6 look forward to the final battle on earth when Christ will overcome the forces of evil (Rev. 19:11-21).

Fulfillment Hebrews 1:3

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

The relationship of Christianity to Judaism was a critical issue in the early church. The author clears up confusion by carefully explaining how Christ is superior to angels, Moses, and high priests. The new covenant is shown to be far superior to the old. This can be of great encouragement to us and help us avoid drifting away from our faith in Christ.

The book of Hebrews describes in detail how Jesus Christ not only fulfills the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, but how Jesus Christ is better than everything in the Jewish system of thought. The Jews accepted the Old Testament, but most of them rejected Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. The recipients of this letter seem to have been Jewish Christians. They were well versed in Scripture, and they had professed faith in Christ. Whether through doubt, persecution, or false

teaching, however, they may have been in danger of giving up their Christian faith and returning to Judaism.

God used many approaches to send his messages to people in Old Testament times. He spoke to Isaiah in visions (Isaiah 6), to Jacob in a dream (Genesis 28:10-22), and to Abraham and Moses personally (Genesis 18; Exodus 31:18). Jewish people familiar with these stories would not have found it hard to believe that God was still revealing his will, but it was astonishing for them to think that God had revealed *himself* by speaking through his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment and culmination of God's revelation through the centuries. When we know him, we have all we need to be saved from our sin and to have a perfect relationship with God.

Not only is Jesus the exact representation of God, but he is God himself—the very God who spoke in Old Testament times. He is eternal; he worked with the Father in creating the world (John 1:3; Col. 1:16). He is the full revelation of God. You can have no clearer view of God than by looking at Christ. Jesus Christ is the complete expression of God in a human body.

The book of Hebrews links God's saving power with his creative power. In other words, the power that brought the universe into being and that keeps it operating is the very power that removes (provides purification for) our sins. How mistaken we would be to ever think that God couldn't forgive us. No sin is too big for the Ruler of the universe to handle. He can and will forgive us when we come to him through his Son. That Jesus sat down means that the work was complete. Christ's sacrifice was final.

Chapter 9

Prophecies Fulfilled In One Day

The following 29 prophecies from the Old Testament, which speak of the

betrayal, trial, death and burial of Jesus, were spoken at various times by many different voices during the five centuries from 1000-500 BC, and yet all of them were literally fulfilled in one twenty-four hour period of time in Jesus' life.

30. Prophecy Betrayed by a friend Psalm 41:9;

Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

This verse is viewed in the New Testament as a prophecy of Christ's betrayal (John 13:18). Judas, one of Jesus' 12 disciples, had spent three years learning from Jesus, traveling and eating with him (Mark 3:14-19), and handling the finances for the group. Eventually Judas, who knew Jesus extremely well, betrayed him (Matthew 26:14-16, 20-25).

Fulfillment Matthew 10:4

Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot also betrayed him.

Simon the Zealot may have been a member of the Zealots, a radical political party working for the violent overthrow of Roman rule in Israel.

30. Prophecy Sold for 30 pieces of silver Zechariah 11:12

And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

To pay this shepherd 30 pieces of silver was an insult—this was the price paid to an owner for a slave gored by an ox (Exodus 21:32). This is also the amount Judas received for betraying Jesus (Matthew 27:3-10). The priceless Messiah was sold for the price of a slave

Fulfillment Matthew 26:15

And said unto them, what will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

31. Prophecy Money to be thrown down in God's house

Zech. 11:13

And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

Potters were in the lowest social class. The “handsome price” (a sarcastic comment) was so little that it could be thrown to the potter. It is significant that the 30 pieces of silver paid to Judas for betraying Jesus were returned to the temple and used to buy a potter’s field (Matthew 27:3-10).

Fulfillment Matthew 27:5

And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

According to Matthew, Judas hanged himself. Acts 1:18, however, says that he fell and burst open. The best explanation is that the limb from which he was hanging broke, and the resulting fall split open his body.

32. Prophecy Price given for potter's field (Zechariah 11:13b;)

And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

Potters were in the lowest social class. The “handsome price” (a sarcastic comment) was so little that it could be thrown to the potter. It is significant that the 30 pieces of silver paid to Judas for betraying Jesus were returned to the temple and used to buy a potter’s field (Matthew 27:3-10).

Fulfillment Matthew 27:7

And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

These chief priests felt no guilt in giving Judas money to betray an innocent man, but when Judas returned the money, the priests couldn't accept it because it was wrong to accept blood money—payment for murder! Their hatred for Jesus had caused them to lose all sense of justice.

33. (Prophecy) Betrayed by a friend for 30 pieces of silver

Zech. 11:12

And I said unto them, If ye think well, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

In this message, God told Zechariah to act out the roles of two different kinds of shepherds. The first type of shepherd demonstrated how God would reject his people (the sheep) because they rejected him (Zech. 11:4-14). The second type of shepherd demonstrated how God would give over his people to evil shepherds (Zech. 11:15-17).

Fulfillment Matthew 27:5

And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

According to Matthew, Judas hanged himself. Acts 1:18, however, says that he fell and burst open. The best explanation is that the limb from which he was hanging broke, and the resulting fall split open his body.

34. Prophecy Money used to buy potter's field Zech. 11:13

And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:7

And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

These chief priests felt no guilt in giving Judas money to betray an innocent man, but when Judas returned the money, the priests couldn't accept it because it was wrong to accept blood money—payment for murder! Their hatred for Jesus had caused them to lose all sense of justice.

35. Prophecy Forsaken by His disciples (Zechariah 13:7)

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

Just before his arrest, Jesus quoted from this verse, referring to himself and his disciples (Matthew 26:31-32). He knew beforehand that his disciples would scatter when he was arrested. The Roman “sword” was the military power that put Christ to death.

Fulfillment Mark 14:50

And they all forsook him, and fled.

Just hours earlier, these disciples had vowed never to desert Jesus (Mark 14:31).

False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.

David could not understand why he was forced to flee from men who were unjustly seeking to kill him. He was God's anointed king over a nation called to annihilate the evil people of the land. (2) David's call for justice was sincere; it was not a cover for his own personal vengeance. He truly wanted to seek God's perfect ideal for his nation. (3) David did not say that *he* would take revenge, but he gave the matter to God. These are merely his suggestions. (4) These psalms use hyperbole (or overstatement). They were meant to motivate others to take a strong stand against sin and evil.

Cruelty may be far removed from some people's experience, but it is a daily reality to others. God promises to help the persecuted and to bring judgment on unrepentant sinners. When we pray for justice to be done, we are praying as David did. When Christ returns, the wicked will be punished.

Fulfillment Matthew 26:59-61

Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; [60] But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, [61] And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

The Sanhedrin was the most powerful religious and political body of the Jewish people. Although the Romans controlled Israel's government, they gave the people power to handle religious disputes and some civil disputes, so the Sanhedrin made many of the local decisions affecting daily life. But a death sentence had to be approved by the Romans (John 18:31).

The Sanhedrin tried to find witnesses who would distort some of Jesus' teachings. Finally they found two witnesses who distorted Jesus' words about the temple (see John 2:19). They claimed that Jesus had said he could destroy the temple—a blasphemous boast. Actually Jesus had said, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." Jesus, of course, was talking about his body, not the building. Ironically, the religious leaders were about to destroy Jesus' body just as he had said, and three days later he would rise from the dead.

Chapter 10

Prophecies Fulfilled In One Day Continued

37. Prophecy Mute before accusers Isaiah 53:7;

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

In the Old Testament, people offered animals as sacrifices for their sins. Here, the sinless servant of the Lord offers himself for our sins. He is the Lamb (Isaiah 53:7) offered for the sins of all people (John 1:29; Rev. 5:6-14). The Messiah suffered for our sakes, bearing our sins to make us acceptable to God. What can we say to such love? How will we respond to him?

Fulfillment Matthew 27:12-19

And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. [13] Then said Pilate unto him, Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee? [14] And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly. [15] Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. [16] And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. [17] Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ?

[18] For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. [19] When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

38. Prophecy Wounded and bruised Isaiah 53:5

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

This chapter continues to speak of the Messiah, Jesus, who would suffer for the sins of all people. Such a prophecy is astounding! Who would believe that God would choose to save the world through a humble, suffering servant rather than a glorious king? The idea is contrary to human pride and worldly ways. But God often works in ways we don't expect. The Messiah's strength is shown by humility, suffering, and mercy

There was nothing beautiful or majestic in the physical appearance of this servant. Israel would miscalculate the servant's importance—they would consider him an ordinary man. But even though Jesus would not attract a large following based on his physical appearance, he would bring salvation and healing. Many people miscalculate the importance of Jesus' life and work, and they need faithful Christians to point out his extraordinary nature.

This man of sorrows was despised and rejected by those around him, and he is still despised and rejected by many today. Some reject Christ by standing against him. Others despise Christ and his great gift of forgiveness. Do you despise him, reject him, or accept him?

How could an Old Testament person understand the idea of Christ dying for our sins (our transgressions and iniquities)—actually bearing the punishment that we deserved? The sacrifices suggested this idea, but it is one thing to kill a lamb, and something quite different to think of God's chosen servant as that Lamb. But God was pulling aside the curtain of time to let the people of Isaiah's day look ahead to the suffering of the future Messiah and the resulting forgiveness made available to all mankind.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:26

Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

In making no decision, Pilate made the decision to let the crowds crucify Jesus. Although he washed his hands, the guilt remained. Washing your hands of a tough situation doesn't cancel your guilt. It merely gives you a false sense of peace. Don't make excuses—take responsibility for the decisions you make.

39. Prophecy Smitten and spit upon (Isaiah 50:6; Micah 5:1)

Isaiah 50:6

I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

Micah 5:1

Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

This ruler was probably King Zedekiah, who was reigning in Jerusalem when Nebuchadnezzar conquered the city (2 Kings 25:1-2). Zedekiah was the last of the kings in David's line to sit on the throne in Jerusalem. Micah said that the next king in David's line would be the Messiah, who would establish a kingdom that would never end.

Jerusalem's leaders were obsessed with wealth and position, but Micah prophesied that mighty Jerusalem, with all its wealth and power, would be besieged and destroyed. Its king could not save it. In contrast, Bethlehem, a tiny town, would be the birthplace of the only king who could save his people. This deliverer, the Messiah, would be born as a baby in Bethlehem (Luke 2:4-7), and eventually would reign as the eternal King (Rev. 19-22).

Fulfillment Matthew 26:67

Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,

40. Prophecy He was mocked Psalm 22:7,8

All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head saying, [8] He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:31

And after they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

41. Prophecy He fell under the cross Psalm 109:24;

My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh fails of fatness.

Fulfillment John 19:17 Luke 23:26

And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

Luke alone mentions the tears of the Jewish women while Jesus was being led through the streets to his execution. Jesus told them not to weep for him but for themselves. He knew that in only about 40 years, the Romans would destroy Jerusalem and the temple.

42. Prophecy Hands and feet pierced Psalm 22:16;

For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked has enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

Fulfillment Luke 23:33

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

The place called the Skull, or Golgotha, was probably a hill outside Jerusalem along a main road. The Romans executed people publicly as examples to the people.

When James and John asked Jesus for the places of honor next to him in his kingdom, he told them they didn't know what they were asking (Mark 10:35-39). Here, as Jesus was preparing to inaugurate his kingdom through his death, the places on his right and on his left were taken by dying men—criminals. As Jesus explained to his two position-conscious disciples, a person who wants to be close to Jesus must be prepared to suffer and die. The way to the kingdom is the way of the cross.

43. Prophecy Crucified with thieves Isaiah 53:12;

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:38

Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

People often make fun of Christians for their faith, but believers can take courage from the fact that Jesus himself was mocked as greatly as anyone. Taunting may hurt our feelings, but we should never let it change our faith (see Matthew 5:11-12).

Chapter 11

Prophecies Fulfilled In One Day Continued

44. Prophecy: Made intercession for His persecutors Isaiah 53:12

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

In the Old Testament, people offered animals as sacrifices for their sins. Here, the sinless servant of the Lord offers himself for our sins. He is the Lamb (Isaiah 53:7) offered for the sins of all people (John 1:29; Rev. 5:6-14). The Messiah suffered for our sakes, bearing our sins to make us acceptable to God. What can we say to such love? How will we respond to him?

“My righteous servant will justify many” tells of the enormous family of believers who will become righteous, not by their own works, but by the Messiah’s great work on the cross. They are justified because they have claimed Christ, the righteous servant, as their Savior and Lord (see Romans 10:9; 2 Cor. 5:21). Their life of sin is stripped away, and they are clothed with Christ’s goodness (Ephes. 4:22-24).

Fulfillment Luke 23:34

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

Jesus asked God to forgive the people who were putting him to death—Jewish leaders, Roman politicians and soldiers, bystanders—and God answered that prayer by opening up the way of salvation even to Jesus’ murderers. The Roman centurion and soldiers who witnessed the crucifixion said, “Surely he was the Son of God” (Matthew 27:54). Soon many priests were converted to the Christian faith (Acts 6:7). Because we are all sinners, we all played a part in putting Jesus to death. The gospel—the Good News—is that God is gracious. He will forgive us and give us new life through his Son.

Roman soldiers customarily divided up the clothing of executed criminals among themselves. When they cast lots for Jesus’ clothes, they fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 22:18.

45. Prophecy: Rejected by his own people Isaiah 53:3

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

This man of sorrows was despised and rejected by those around him, and he is still despised and rejected by many today. Some reject Christ by standing against him. Others despise Christ and his great gift of forgiveness. Do you despise him, reject him, or accept him?

Fulfillment John 7:5,48

For neither did his brethren believe in him.

Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

Jesus' brothers had a difficult time believing in him. Some of these brothers would eventually become leaders in the church (James, for example), but for several years they were embarrassed by Jesus. After Jesus died and rose again, they finally believed. We today have every reason to believe because we have the full record of Jesus' miracles, death, and resurrection. We also have the evidence of what the gospel has done in people's lives through the centuries. Don't miss this opportunity to believe in God's Son.

The Jewish leaders saw themselves as an elite group that alone had the truth, and they resisted the truth about Christ because it wasn't *theirs* to begin with. It is easy to think that we have the truth and that those who disagree with us do not have any truth at all. But God's truth is available to everyone. Don't copy the Pharisees' self-centered and narrow attitude.

46. Prophecy: Hated without a cause Psalm 69:4

They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

David cried out until he was physically exhausted, with a parched throat and blurred vision. Yet he still trusted God to save him. When devastated by death or tragedy, we need not collapse or despair because we can turn to God and ask him to save us and help us. The tears will still come, but we will not be crying in vain.

Fulfillment John 15:25

But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, they hated me without a cause.

Once again Jesus offers hope. The Holy Spirit gives strength to endure the unreasonable hatred and evil in our world and the hostility many have toward Christ. This is especially comforting for those facing persecution.

Jesus uses two names for the Holy Spirit—Counselor and Spirit of truth. The word Counselor conveys the helping, encouraging, and strengthening work of the Spirit. Spirit of truth points to the teaching, illuminating, and reminding work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit ministers to both the head and the heart, and both dimensions are important.

47. Prophecy: Friends stood afar off Psalm 38:11

My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.

It is extremely difficult to be silent when others tear us down because we want to protect our reputation. We find it difficult to do nothing while they assault something so precious to us. But we don't need to lash back in revenge or justify our position; we can trust God to protect our reputation. Jesus was silent before his accusers (Luke 23:9-10); he left his case in God's hands (1 Peter 2:21-24). That is a good place to leave our case too!

Fulfillment Luke 23:49

And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy and honored member of the Jewish Council. He was also a secret disciple of Jesus (John 19:38). The disciples who had publicly

followed Jesus fled, but Joseph boldly took a stand that could cost him dearly. He cared enough about Jesus to ask for his body so he could give it a proper burial.

48. Prophecy: People shook their heads Psalm 109:25

I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:39

When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

49. Prophecy: Stared upon Psalm 22:17

I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

Fulfillment Luke 23:35

And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

Both Jewish and Roman authorities tried Jesus six times,, but he was never convicted of a crime deserving death. Even when condemned to execution, he had been convicted of no felony. Today, no one can find fault in Jesus. But just like Pilate, Herod, and the religious leaders, many still refuse to acknowledge him as Lord.

50. Prophecy: Garments parted and lots cast Psalm 22:18

They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

It is a great insult to human dignity to rob a person of everything, even his clothing, leaving him naked and destitute. Jesus the Messiah would suffer this humiliating experience on the cross (Matthew 27:35). Most of us will never know the shame and suffering of being penniless and virtually naked in a public place, as many of the Jews experienced during the Nazi holocaust or even the homeless on

the streets of our cities today. But most of us would feel equally exposed and naked when some sin, secret or not-so-secret, would be uncovered. At that time, we will need to cry out with David, “O my strength, come quickly to help me” (Psalm 22:19)

Fulfillment John 19:23,24

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. [24] They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

Roman soldiers in charge of crucifixions customarily took for themselves the clothes of the condemned men. They divided Jesus’ clothing, casting lots to determine who would get his seamless garment, the most valuable piece of clothing. This fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 22:18.

Chapter 12

More prophecies fulfilled in a day.

51. Prophecy: Suffered thirst Psalm 69:21

They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Fulfillment John 19:28

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

52. Prophecy: Gall and vinegar offered Him Psalm 69:21

They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:34

They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

Wine mixed with gall was offered to Jesus to help reduce his pain, but Jesus refused to drink it. Gall is generally understood to be a narcotic that was used to deaden pain. Jesus would suffer fully conscious and with a clear mind.

53. Prophecy: His forsaken cry Psalm 22:1

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

David gave an amazingly accurate description of the suffering the Messiah would endure hundreds of years later. David was obviously enduring some great trial, but through his suffering he, like the Messiah to come, gained victory. Jesus, the Messiah, quoted this verse while hanging on the cross carrying our burden of sin (Matthew 27:46). It was not a cry of doubt, but an urgent appeal to God.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Jesus was not questioning God; he was quoting the first line of Psalm 22—a deep expression of the anguish he felt when he took on the sins of the world, which caused him to be separated from his Father. *This* was what Jesus dreaded as he prayed to God in the garden to take the cup from him (Matthew 26:39). The

physical agony was horrible, but even worse was the period of spiritual separation from God. Jesus suffered this double death so that we would never have to experience eternal separation from God.

54. Prophecy: Committed Himself to God Psalm 31:5

Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

We say we have faith in God, but do we really trust him? David's words, "Into your hands I commit my spirit," convey his complete trust in God. Jesus used this phrase as he was dying on the cross—showing his absolute dependence on God the Father (Luke 23:46). Stephen repeated these words as he was being stoned to death (Acts 7:59), confident that in death he was simply passing from God's earthly care to God's eternal care. We should commit our possessions, our families, and our vocations to God. But first and foremost, we should commit *ourselves* completely to him.

Fulfillment Luke 23:46

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

55. Prophecy: His bones not broken Psalm 34:20

He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

This is a prophecy about Christ when he was crucified. Although it was the Roman custom to break the legs of the victim to speed death, not one of Jesus' bones was broken (John 19:32-37). In addition to the prophetic meaning, David was pleading for God's protection in times of crisis.

Fulfillment John 19:33

But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

Roman soldiers in charge of crucifixions customarily took for themselves the clothes of the condemned men. They divided Jesus' clothing, casting lots to determine who would get his seamless garment, the most valuable piece of clothing. This fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 22:18.

56. Prophecy: His heart broken Psalm 22:14

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

Fulfillment John 19:34

The blood and water that came from Jesus' pierced side are evidences that the heart had literally burst.

They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

57. Prophecy: His side pierced Zechariah 12:10

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

The Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, 50 days after Christ's resurrection (see Acts 2). Zechariah calls the Spirit "a spirit of grace and supplication." It is this Spirit who convicts us of sin, reveals to us God's righteousness and judgment, and helps us as we pray. "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express" (Romans 8:26). Ask God to fill you with his Spirit.

Eventually *all* people will realize that Jesus, the man who was pierced and killed, is indeed the Messiah. There will be an awakening, with sorrow for sin and genuine revival. The crucified Messiah will be clearly revealed (Phil. 2:10; Rev. 5:13).

Fulfillment John 19:34

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

These Romans were experienced soldiers. They knew from many previous crucifixions whether a man was dead or alive. There was no question that Jesus was dead when they checked him, so they decided not to break his legs as they had done to the other victims. Piercing his side and seeing the sudden flow of blood and water (indicating that the sac surrounding the heart and the heart itself had been pierced) was further proof of his death. Some people say Jesus didn't really die, that he only passed out—and that's how he came back to life. But we have the witness of an impartial party, the Roman soldiers, that Jesus died on the cross (see Mark 15:44-45).

58. Prophecy: Darkness over the land Amos 8:9

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

The people had no appetite for God's word when prophets like Amos brought it. Because of their apathy, God said he would take away even the opportunity to hear his word. We have God's Word, the Bible. But many still look everywhere for answers to life's problems *except* in Scripture. You can help them by directing them to the Bible, showing them the parts that speak to their special needs and questions. God's Word is available to us. Let us help people know it before a time comes when they cannot find it.

Fulfillment Matthew 27:45

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

We do not know how this darkness occurred, but it is clear that God caused it. Nature testified to the gravity of Jesus' death, while Jesus' friends and enemies alike fell silent in the encircling gloom. The darkness on that Friday afternoon was both physical and spiritual.

59. Prophecy: Buried in a rich man's tomb Isaiah 53:9

And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

In the Old Testament, people offered animals as sacrifices for their sins. Here, the sinless servant of the Lord offers himself for our sins. He is the Lamb (Isaiah 53:7) offered for the sins of all people (John 1:29; Rev. 5:6-14). The Messiah suffered for our sakes, bearing our sins to make us acceptable to God. What can we say to such love? How will we respond to him?

“My righteous servant will justify many” tells of the enormous family of believers who will become righteous, not by their own works, but by the Messiah's great work on the cross. They are justified because they have claimed Christ, the righteous servant, as their Savior and Lord (see Romans 10:9; 2 Cor. 5:21). Their life of sin is stripped away, and they are clothed with Christ's goodness (Ephes. 4:22-24).

Fulfillment Matthew 27:57-60

When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: [58] He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. [59] And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, [60] And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

Joseph of Arimathea was a secret disciple of Jesus. He was a religious leader, an honored member of the Sanhedrin (Mark 15:43). In the past, Joseph had been afraid to speak against the religious leaders who opposed Jesus; now he was bold, courageously asking to take Jesus' body from the cross and to bury it. The disciples who publicly followed Jesus had fled, but this Jewish leader, who followed Jesus in secret, came forward and did what was right.

The Honest Skeptic's Worksheet

The Historical Reliability Of The New Testament

Know Why You Believe by Paul Little

10 Reasons To Believe (<http://www.gospelcom.net.rbc/10rsn.home/>)

Dave Arch. "Old Testament Prophecies

Holy Bible: Kings James Version

Life Application Bible New Testament Commentary

Harold Bollinger serves as a Bible Instructor for Great Commission On-line Bible College. He has pastored churches in the Midwest for many years. Through the Internet, he has international contact through lesson instruction in more than 90 countries. Harold and his wife, Wilburta, have one daughter, Crystal, and one grandson, Jereme.

