

Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc.

1789 Iglehart Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104-5215 Info: (651) 283-0568 www.dtminc.org dantrygg@msn.com

Converging Prophecies Point to Jesus

by Dan Trygg

“O foolish people and slow of heart to believe in *all that the prophets have spoken!* ²⁶ Was it not *necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things* and to enter into His glory? ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.”

Luke 24:25-27

While soothsayers, mediums, astrologers and spiritists may *claim* to know the future, and while many have *claimed* to have received special knowledge of future events, **only the Bible actually has numerous examples of very specific prophetic words which have been fulfilled in great detail.** People talk of this kind of thing happening, but only the scriptures actually have numerous written examples of them which were fulfilled centuries later. Many *claim* to be able to see into the future, but they do not demonstrate the clarity and accuracy over long periods of time that the Bible does. **Prophecy is a true gifting from God, which the enemy has often attempted to counterfeit. Only God truly knows the future. He makes this a clear mark of distinction between Himself and other, so-called “gods”.** Speaking of vain idols, He says, “Tell us what is to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods...” (Isa 41:23; cf. 44:6,7; 46:9-11). **One of the marks of a true prophet of God, is that he or she will never be wrong** when speaking in God’s name and by His Spirit (Deut. 18:21,22). No one else can claim this kind of an accurate and clear track record.

Another important use of the gift of prophecy was to lay out a foundation describing God’s plan for saving the world, especially to describe and identify who the Messiah would be. Not only do we have information given that narrows down the Messiah’s ethnic and family background, we are also given information regarding where He would be born, what He would do, how He would die, and that He would be raised from the dead. We are told that He would reign over a Kingdom that will fill the earth, and that countless millions from every heritage and family background would be blessed through Him. **The scope and detail of these prophecies are truly amazing, and can only conceivably point to one person, who fulfilled them in detail, Jesus of Nazareth.**

We are not talking about predicting trends or extrapolating probabilities from data or current events to anticipate future events a few decades in the future. **We are talking about information given to people by God (that was their claim) that speaks of events happening centuries in the future,** events certainly far beyond their ability to control or manipulate. The fact that the Bible was written by over 40 authors, most of whom were widely separated by distance and centuries of time, **excludes any possibility of collusion or conspiracy** in the reception and recording of these prophecies. As you read through the Bible, you find this prophetic information sprinkled throughout, but there seems to have been no one clinging to these prophecies as something they were to try to bring about. God was telling His people what *would happen*, not encouraging them to try to *make it happen*. In fact, **much of this information was not even fully recognized as being about the Messiah, until after He came.** Although there are a great number of prophetic clues given, it took the risen Jesus Himself to open the minds of His followers to see the extent and significance of these passages. “He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.”

There is no easy way to list all of these passages in a short space. I will state what the prophecy is about, followed by the OT reference and then the NT fulfillment in parentheses. To get the full impact, you should look up each reference. First, we are told that ¹the one who would crush the head of the serpent would be “the seed of the woman” (Gen. 3:15; Gal.4:4). He would be ²“the seed of Abraham” (Gen.12:3; 22:18; Matt. 1:1; Gal. 3:16), ³descended through Isaac (Gen. 17:19; Lk. 3:34), ⁴a king descended from Jacob (Num. 24:17; Matt. 1:2) and ⁵Judah (Gen. 49:10; Lk. 3:33). These statements narrow the scope. The unfolding of God’s redemptive plan has narrowed to one ethnic group on the planet, the Jews, and a king will arise from one tribe of that larger nation, the tribe of Judah. These statements were written by Moses, well over a thousand years before Christ. These five statements already exclude over 99% of those who ever have lived. Beyond being from Judah, however, we are told that ⁶God would establish a descendant of David on an eternal throne (II Sam. 6:12-16; Isa. 9:7; Lk. 1:32,33; 3:31). ⁷This ruler would be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2; Lk.2:4), yet ⁸His origin is from long ago, from the days of eternity (Mic. 5:2; Jn. 8:56-58). He would be ⁸born of a virgin (Remember “seed of the woman?”), and ⁹would be called “Immanuel” (meaning, “God with us”) (Isa. 7:14; Lk. 1:26-35; Matt. 1:18-23). These additional statements were all written before 700 B. C., seven centuries before the events would take place. ⁹The weeping near Bethlehem (site of Rachel’s tomb – Gen. 35:19) over the loss of children is prophesied in Jer. 31:15, and fulfilled in Matt. 2:16-18, as Herod ordered Bethlehem’s infant boys to be killed in an attempt to cut off the young Messiah. God warned Joseph to flee, so ¹⁰He went to Egypt, until an angel told him to return, since Herod was dead, unknowingly fulfilling another prophecy (Hos.11:1; Matt. 2:14,15). The family relocated to Nazareth in Galilee.

Nazareth is from the Hebrew “netser”, which means “branch” or “sprout”, a common Messianic title from the OT (Isa. 11:1; Cf. Isa. 4:2; 11:10; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12). Because He grew up there, ¹¹throughout His life Jesus was literally called “Jesus the Nazarene”, or “Jesus the Sprout/Branch” (Matt. 2:22,23). Even His first name, Jesus, was prophecy being fulfilled. It means “Yahweh saves” or “the salvation of Yahweh”. Jesus’ name literally meant “Yahweh’s salvation, the Branch”. Jesus was the Messiah hidden in plain sight! Even His enemies repeatedly said these words, but had no understanding of what they were calling Him.

It was prophesied that ¹²God would send a forerunner before Him (Mal. 3:1; Lk. 7:24,27). Isaiah had spoken that ¹³a voice would cry out in the wilderness, calling people to prepare the way for the Lord (Isa. 40:3-5; Lk. 3:3-6). After the appearance of this forerunner, ¹⁴“the glory of the Lord will be revealed” (Isa. 40:5; Jn. 1:14-18). It was also said that ¹⁵Elijah would come before the coming of the Lord (Mal. 4:5,6; Lk. 1:17; Matt. 11:13,14). ¹⁶God even revealed that the Messiah would show up 483 years after a decree to rebuild Jerusalem. This works out to be 26 A.D. from the time that the Persian King, Artaxerxes, commissioned Ezra’s return (457 B.C.), which is also the date that Luke documents as the beginning of Jesus’ ministry (Dan. 9:24-26; Ezr. 7:8; Lk. 3:1). What other possible explanation could there be for this, that would take seriously that this is an actual prophecy? How many possible decrees to rebuild and restore Jerusalem have there been? What other historical figures 483 years after any of these decrees have ever been thought by anyone to be the Messiah? Could this just be coincidental, or “rigged”? No way! The Dead Sea scrolls prove that Daniel’s prophecy existed long before Jesus was born. It defies the imagination that someone could simply dismiss such a clear, powerful indicator of when God’s Messiah would show up on the scene! ¹⁷God would even call Him “the Son of God” (Psa. 2:7; Matt. 3:17).

¹⁸Isaiah said that the people of the spiritually darkened area of Galilee would see a great light, and that “He will make it glorious” along “the way of the sea” (name of the caravan route along the sea of Galilee). Jesus concentrated much of His ministry in *this very region* and displayed the glory of God through signs and wonders, preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God (Isa. 9:1,2; Matt. 4:13-16). ¹⁹It was said that He would speak in parables (Psa. 78:2-4; Matt. 13:34,35). ²⁰He would preach good news to the afflicted, and bind up the brokenhearted (Isa. 61:1,2; Lk. 4:18,19). ²¹As the introducer of the Messianic age, He will open the eyes of the blind, heal the lame, restore hearing to the deaf, enable the dumb to speak (Isa. 29:18,19; 35:5,6; Matt. 11:2-5). ²²He will be a light to the nations (Isa. 49:6; Jn. 8:12). ²³He is to bring salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa. 49:6; Jn. 12:32; Matt. 28:18-20). ²⁴Moses prophesied that God would raise up a prophet like him, one who would speak God’s words with authority (Deut. 18:15; Matt. 21:11; Lk. 7:16; Jn. 7:16; 12:47-49; Acts 3:19-26). ²⁵He would be a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:5,6). ²⁶He would come into Jerusalem as a King, riding on a donkey (Zech. 9:9; Mk. 11:7-11). ²⁷He would be honored and praised by infants and small children (Psa. 8:2; Matt. 21:15,16).

²⁸He would not be believed (Isa. 53:1; Jn. 12:37,38). ²⁹He would be despised and rejected (Isa. 49:7; 53:3; Jn. 1:11; Lk. 23:18). ³⁰He would be betrayed by a close friend (Psa. 41:9; Jn. 13:21-26). ³¹He would be sold out for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12; Matt. 26:15). ³²His disciples would scatter upon His arrest (Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31,56). ³³He would be hated without reason (Psa. 35:19; Jn. 15:24). ³⁴He would be accused by false witnesses (Psa. 35:11; Mk. 14:57,58). ³⁵He would be silent before His accusers (Isa. 53:7; Mk. 15:4,5). ³⁶He would be considered as a criminal (Isa. 53:12; Mk. 15:27,28). ³⁷He would be spat on and beaten (Isa. 50:6; Matt. 26:67). ³⁸He would be whipped (Isa. 53:5; Jn. 19:1). ³⁹They would pierce His hands and His feet (Psa. 22:16). ⁴⁰They would sneer at Him and mock Him (Psa. 22:7,8; Lk. 23:35). ⁴¹He would be insulted (Psa. 69:9; Rom. 15:3). ⁴²They would gamble for His clothing (Psa. 22:17; Matt. 27:46). ⁴³He would suffer as a sacrifice for the sins of others (Isa. 53:5; Rom. 5:6,8). ⁴⁴He would be forsaken by God (Psa. 22:1; Matt. 27:35,36). ⁴⁵None of His bones would be broken (Psa. 34:20; Jn. 19:32,33,36). ⁴⁶He would be pierced, however (Zech. 12:10; Jn. 19:34). ⁴⁷He would be buried in a rich man’s tomb (Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60). ⁴⁸He would rise from the dead (Psa. 16:10; 49:15; Mk. 16:6,7). ⁴⁹He would ascend into heaven (Psa. 65:18; Acts 1:3-11). ⁵⁰He will sit at God’s right hand, until all His enemies are subjected to Him (Psa. 110:1; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20).

Again, all of these prophecies were made *hundreds* of years before Jesus’ birth. There is not even the slightest question that some of them could have been written after the fact. Copies of the entire OT, except the book of Esther, have been found among the Dead Sea scrolls, many of which predate Christ. The original prophecies *themselves* had been written 450-1450 years earlier. How can you possibly account for the incredible detail of these prophecies? **As far as helping to identify who the Messiah would be, can you possibly think that all of these examples apply to any other person who ever lived on this planet? Only Jesus can possibly fit all of these God-given clues!** Do we have anything like this in *any* other religion? Is there any other person set apart and identified by any god, anywhere, marked out in such a way, in any other religious tradition? I know of none. Nothing comes even *remotely* close! These are only 50 of more than 300 prophecies about Jesus in the Bible. This paper is compelling in itself. *Another five pages of specific examples* like these, would be truly mind-boggling! **Can you honestly doubt that this is the handiwork of God? Can you doubt that Jesus is the person referred to in these prophecies?**