Messianic Prophecy

**Introduction:** Christians claim that Jesus is the Messiah. The word Messiah references the one chosen by God to save mankind. (cf. Genesis 12:1-3). The Greek term is *christos*, translated as the “Anointed” or the “Christ.” Matthew records the promise from the angel, *“And she* [Mary] *will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus* [Savior], *for He will save His people from their sins”* (Matthew 1:21).

The Jews looked for the promise Messiah. They had been promised his eventual coming. There were many details about His person, life, death, resurrection that had been explicitly predicted in the Hebrew scriptures. These prophecies, and their fulfillment are strong evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah (cf. 1 Peter 1:10-12)

**A Note Concerning Probability**

* Some claim that Jesus fulfilled certain prophecies by mere coincidence.
* Consider the following quote (taken from article by Harry Osborne, *Truth Magazine*, 7/96)

“Taking just these eight specific prophecies concerning the *Messiah [****Note:*** *the 8 prophecies under consideration are listed below, SC],* Peter Stoner wrote in his book, *Science Speaks*, to show that mere coincidence cannot explain all of these being fulfilled in one man. He applied the science of probability to show the chance that all eight prophecies would be fulfilled in one man. That probability was calculated to be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000! [100 quadrillion]. When Stoner's calculations were submitted to the American Scientific Affiliation for verification, both a committee of review and the Executive Council found them "dependable and accurate in regards to the scientific material presented"

* Regardless of whether the exact number is accepted, the claim that Jesus could have coincidentally fulfilled these, and the multitude of other predictions regarding the Messiah is **not** a tenable one.

**The eight prophecies about Jesus referenced in the quote**

* The Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:1-7).
* The Messiah was to be preceded by a messenger (Isaiah 40:3 & Malachi 3:1; Luke 3:1-6).
* The Messiah was to enter Jerusalem riding a donkey (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:1-11).
* The Messiah was to be betrayed by a friend who ate with him (Psalm 41:9; Matthew 26:14-25).
* The Messiah was to be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:14-16).
* The money was to be thrown into God's house & used for a potter's field (Zech. 11:13; Matt. 27:3-10).
* The Messiah was to stand silent before his accusers (Isaiah 53:7; Mark 14:55-62).
* The Messiah was to die by crucifixion (Psa. 22:16; Zech. 12:10; Isa. 53:12; Matt. 27:32-38; Jn. 20:24-29).

**Other considerations regarding Messianic Prophecy**

* It has been estimated that there are well over 300 distinct prophecies concerning the Christ, each one of them fulfilled in Jesus. The eight above are only a percentage of 60 major prophecies about Him.
* The last prophecies penned at 450 B.C. at the latest. Septuagint translation in 250 B.C.
* Jesus referenced the fulfilled prophecies at His ascension (Luke 24:44-49).
* Fulfilled prophecy indicates that it has emanated from God (cf. Deuteronomy 18:20-22).
* Because of prophecy we can say like Andrew, “We have found the Messiah” (John 1:41).

**Conclusion:** The Bible bears the mark of Deity on every page. Its testimony concerning the Christ is clearly fulfilled in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. While other evidences will be supplied to bolster the conclusion, fulfilled prophecy is sufficient in and of itself in affirming that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.