

Introduction to Lesson 2

Prophecies of the Messiah

Biblical Prophecy is connected with the purposes of God

All Biblical prophecy is in some way connected with the purposes of God in and through Jesus Christ. The prophecies of the Messiah are a major link between the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament predicts the coming of the Messiah as Savior. Jesus Christ in the New Testament fulfills the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah as Savior.¹

Jesus Christ is the Focus of Prophecy

Christ (Messiah) has the central place in prophecy. In both the Old and New Testaments, Christ's person and work are focused on two points, His first and second comings.²

Jesus Christ was Pre-announced

Jesus Christ was the only person in history that had been pre-announced. None of the other founders of the world's great religions were ever pre-announced. In this lesson we will learn that the Messiah was pre-announced, not only in the Old Testament, but in secular records as well. The world was looking and longing for a savior.

God Became Incarnate

God appeared on earth in the flesh. God's incarnation was pre-announced, something that no other religion in the world can say of its founder. God's Holy Scriptures are full of the evidence that this event was pre-announced, and that the life of Jesus of Nazareth fulfills more than 300 prophecies regarding His claim to be the Jewish Messiah, and that He was God in the flesh, Emmanuel (God with us).

Looking For Messiah

In this lesson we will take a journey through the secular sources to see that the savior was expected even by ancient secular writers and thinkers. We will examine the Old Testament and sample many of the more than 300 prophecies that announce and identify the Messiah. We will also see that the exact time of His coming was prophesied and fulfilled to the very day. We will also see the fulfillment of the many prophecies in the New Testament. We will see that the fulfillment of these prophecies was accomplished by only one Man in history, the Lord Jesus Christ. Pointing to the prophetic Scriptures that point to Him, Jesus said that Moses prophesied of Him. Look at Jesus own words:

¹ John Walvoord, THE FINAL DRAMA, 14 Keys to Understanding the Prophetic Scriptures, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993, p. 20.

² John Walvoord, THE FINAL DRAMA, 14 Keys to Understanding the Prophetic Scriptures, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993, p. 21.

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John 5:39 Search **the scriptures**; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and **they are they which testify of me.**

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

41 I receive not honour from men.

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: **there is one that accuseth you, even Moses**, in whom ye trust.

46 For **had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.**

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

What did Moses say?

Deut 18:15 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;

The world has no excuse.

For your further study, the following are some additional prophecies of the Messiah not specifically covered in the lecture part of this lesson:

- Jesus was accused by false testimony (Psa 35:11; Mark 14:57).
- Jesus refused to answer the false accusations (Isa 53:7; Mark 15:4-5).
- Christ was to be the ultimate vicarious sacrifice for our sins (Isa 53:5; Rom 5:6-8).
- Messiah was to be crucified with transgressors (Isa 53:12; Mark 15:27-28).
- Messiah would be pierced through hands, feet, and side (Psa 22:16; Zec 12:10; Joh 19:34, 20:27).
- Not a bone would be broken (Psa 34:20; John 19:32-33, 36).
- Messiah would be removed from the cross and buried with the rich, but death would not hold Him in the grave (Isa 53:9; Mat 27:57-60).
- Jesus rose from the dead as prophesied (Psa 16:10, 49:15; Mar 16:6-7).
- Jesus ascended to heaven in plain sight of His disciples as prophesied (Psa 68:18; Mar 16:19; 1 Co 15:4; Eph 4:8; Act 1:9-11).
- He will be a miracle worker (Isaiah 35:5, 6 and 32:3, 4);
- He will teach in parables (Psalms 78:2);
- He will be a "stone of stumbling" to Jews (Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14, 28:16);
- He will be a "light" to Gentiles (Isaiah 49:6, 60:3).

The Seventy Sevens

One major prophecy that is covered in the lesson is the prophecy of the seventy-sevens found in Daniel 9:24-27. The prophecy is a truly remarkable prophecy pointing to the exact date of the appearance of Israel's Messiah on the historical scene. The prophecy is vast in scope and is a key to understanding the seven-year duration of a future time of great tribulation known as the time of Jacob's trouble, or more commonly referred to as the Tribulation. One question that is not addressed in the lesson is the details of the determination of the unfulfilled 70th week as referring to the future seven-year Tribulation. The question can be posed this way:

What Scriptural support is there for a pause (the Church Age) between Daniel's 69th week and the 70th week in the prophecy of the Seventy Sevens and its relevance to the future Tribulation?

Dan 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

What the Passage Reveals

Within this passage of Daniel we find a sweep of history beginning back at the end of the Babylonian captivity less than 500 years before Christ was born. This prophecy moves very rapidly forward pointing to the exact date that Messiah would be rejected and killed, and then with a broad stroke sets the stage for the Antichrist and the seven-years Tribulation. The prophecy pointing to the Messiah and His crucifixion are dealt with in the lesson in some detail (vs. 24-26), and so will not be repeated here.

In verse 26, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple is foretold. Since we know that this occurred in 70 AD by the Romans, we can glean that the Antichrist ("the prince that shall come") will come out of these people who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple ("the people of the prince that shall come"). "Messiah the Prince" (v.25) is clearly not "the prince that shall come" (v.26) since Messiah is not of "the people" that destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple.

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With this information we can also see that it was not the Antichrist that originally destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple, but that he would “come” later.

The prophecy then shifts to that future time when this prince (Antichrist) will appear on the scene. He then confirms a covenant for seven years that will begin the Tribulation. He then breaks this covenant at the mid-point after precisely 3-1/2 years.

The cutting off (killing) of the Messiah took place as scheduled, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed in 70 AD, but the appearance of the prince and the covenant has not yet occurred.

The point is that the complete fulfillment of the prophecy has a built-in pause that allows for the Church Age of undetermined length before the beginning of the 70th week. This prophecy leads you to the First Coming of Christ and brings you to the very door of His Second Coming after the 70th week runs its course. Likewise, the book of Revelation goes into considerable detail regarding the condition of the Church in the first few chapters of Revelation, but, the Church is no longer mentioned after chapter 3 after which the Tribulation events begin to unfold into a final seven years before Christ’s Second Coming.

Some Other Considerations Pointing to a Gap

A similar gap occurs in Isaiah 61:2 that allows for the Church Age.

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

Jesus uses these verses in exactly that way by indicating a partial fulfillment, allowing for a gap of nearly 2000 years to this day. Jesus ended His announcement at “To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” leaving off the remainder regarding “the day of vengeance” as a future event.

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Matthew 24:15 anticipates this gap with reference to the future coming of the “abomination of desolation” in reference to Daniel 9:27.

Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 When ye therefore shall see **the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet**, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

This clearly indicates that the 70th week occurs at a date distant from the first 69 weeks.