

How Do We Know That Jesus is the Messiah?

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Scripture Galatians 4:3-5 9 (NIV)

³ So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces of the world.

⁴ But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

⁵ to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.”

Introduction

The business season has come, shop decorations are up, specials are being advertised and Christmas music is being played. The greatest need is revenue; money.

The social season has come, year-end functions are held and people are getting together to party. The greatest need is to socialize.

The holiday season has come and people are scaling down their regular activities. The greatest need is to rest and recover.

The Christmas season has come in the church, the pastor is preaching Christmas and attendance numbers are starting to drop as everyone goes on holiday. The greatest need is to preach Jesus.

But for many people, Christmas never really comes. I am not saying that December 25th won't come, it probably will come. I am saying that Christmas won't really come into the hearts and lives of many people because they don't stand in a personal relationship with Jesus, and to them, Christmas is merely a calendar event, not a deep appreciation and celebration of God becoming man.

Jesus is the Messiah and He has come to us, continues to come to us and is coming again for us. In Him, we live, move and have our being.

Let's look at some of His credentials.

Statistics

Harold Hartzler of the American Scientific Affiliation made some interesting sums. He chose 8 of the 61 major prophecies about Christ. Let's set aside the other major prophecies for now and work with the 8 identified by Hartzler:

1. Born at Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 – Matthew 2:1.
2. Preceded by a messenger. Malachi 3:1 – Matthew 3:1-2.
3. Enter Jerusalem on a donkey. Zechariah 9:9 – Luke 19:35-37.
4. Betrayed by a friend. Psalm 41:9 – Matthew 10:4.
5. Sold for 30 pieces of silver. Zechariah 11:12 – Matthew 26:15.
6. Money to be thrown into God's house & price given for potter's field. Zechariah 11:13 – Matthew 27:5.
7. Silent before accusers. Isaiah 53:7 – Matthew 27:12.
8. Crucified with thieves. Isaiah 53:12 – Matthew 27:38.

Your chance of winning the Powerball is 1 in 42 375 200. Your odds at winning the Lotto is better at 1 in 20 358 520.

By comparison, the chance that any man might have lived to the present time and fulfilled all 8 prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} . That is 1 followed by 17 zeros: 1 in 100 000 000 000 000 000. Do yourself a favour and write this number down.

If you take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them face down over Texas, you should cover Texas 60cm deep. Now mark one of the dollars, mix al 10^{17} thoroughly and scatter. Then, blindfold a man, tell him he may only pick up one dollar, but it must be the right dollar on his first pick. Also tell him that if he picks the wrong one, all of humanity, because of sin, is still doomed; un-reconciled from God.

Jesus met all messianic requirements

There are several things that the Jews expected the Messiah to be.

1. The Messiah would be a Hebrew man (Isaiah 9:6).

He was Hebrew because He was born from the tribe of Judah (Luke 3:30).

2. The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

He was born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:4–7).

3. The Messiah would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14).

Mary was a virgin ((Luke 1:26–27).

4. The Messiah would be a prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:18).

Jesus and Moses knew God face to face. But Jesus is even greater than Moses. Moses delivered Israel from slavery, but Jesus redeemed us from the law (death). Moses took Israel to the promised land, but Jesus takes us into eternity to be with Him.

5. The Messiah would be a priest in the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4).

Levites were priests, and Jesus was not a Levite. But He is a priest in the order of Melchizedek (Genesis 14; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 6:20).

Melchizedek blessed Abraham (the greater blesses the lesser Hebrews 7:7) and Abraham gave Melchizedek a tithe. Therefore, Jesus as a priest in the order of Melchizedek is greater than Abraham (John 8:58) and the Levitical priesthood. Jesus is a priest who permanently removes sin, not just temporarily covering it.

6. The Messiah would be a king (Isaiah 11:1–4).

Jesus was born from the tribe of Judah (Luke 3:30), the kingly tribe. When He was born, wise men went looking for the King of the Jews (Mathew 2:1-2). Jesus Himself said that He would one day sit on a throne (Matthew 19:28 & 25:31). Many in Israel saw Jesus as their King who would immediately set up His rule (Luke 19:11). Jesus's only word before Pilate

was to answer affirmatively when asked if He was King of the Jews (Mark 15:2).

7. The Messiah would be the Seed of David (2 Samuel 7:12-16).

There are 17 verses in the Old Testament that describe Jesus as the son of David. Matthew chapter 1 gives genealogical proof the Jesus is a descendant of Abraham and David through Joseph, Jesus' legal father. Luke 3 trace His genealogy to David through Mary. So by blood (Mary) and adoption (Joseph), Jesus is a descendent of David.

Furthermore, Jesus was referred to as the son of David during His ministry (for example Matthew 15:22, 20:30 and 21:15).

In Revelation 22:16, Jesus is more than the son of David, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

8. The Messiah would suffer before entering His glory (Isaiah 53).

The suffering servant of Isaiah 53 would be despised and held in low esteem (verse 3). The servant would be wounded (verse 5) and oppressed and afflicted (verse 7). He would make his grave with the wicked and the rich in his death (verse 9). After death, the servant would be resurrected (verse 11). Finally, the servant would glorify God (verse 12).

On the cross, Jesus was wounded (John 19:34) and despised and held in low esteem oppressed and afflicted (Hebrews 12:2). He died with thieves (Mark 15:27) and was buried in a rich man's tomb (Matthew 27:57-60). He was resurrected (1 Corinthians 15:4) and glorified God (John 17:1-3).

Conclusion

About 500 before Jesus was born, Buddha came along and established the religion Buddhism. Many people still gather and try and live by his teaching. But, before he was born, nobody said, "Someone from the following family is going to come along and this is how you will know who he says he is."

About 500 years after Jesus was born, Mohammed came along and established the religion,

Islam. Many people still gather and try and live by his teaching. But, before he was born, nobody said, “Someone from the following family is going to come along and this is how you will know who he says he is.”

Buddha and Muhammad came into the world unannounced. There were no prophecies, no signs and wonders, no miracles, just their own word.

Long before Jesus was ever born, God put His stamp of approval on Him. All of the Old Testament looked forward to the birth of this one little boy in Bethlehem. And because of that one Child’s birth – miracles of salvation have taken place in the lives of millions of men and women.

All other religions insist on man reaching up to the god and grasping hold of Him through their own efforts. Christianity is the only religion where God reaches down to man.

Other religions are systems of do’s and don’ts to please their god. Christianity is about the love of God, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

But when the right time finally came, God sent his own Son. He came as the son of a human mother and lived under the Jewish Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might become God's children (Galatians 4:4-5).

My question to you this morning is: “Are you standing in a living relationship with Jesus Christ, is He your personal Lord and Saviour?”

Amen.