

## WAS JESUS PROPHESED BY THE OLD TESTAMENT?

The four gospels "are not history remembered but prophecy historicized" - John Dominic Crossan, (Jesus, 145)

The Christians claim that the main events in the life of Jesus Christ were predicted by God in the Old Testament before they happened and show that Jesus was indeed the Son of God to whom we owe absolute obedience for only God knows the future. Jesus claimed the same thing himself. He went as far as to say that anybody who disputed that the prophecies were about him was stupid (Luke 24:25-27). Most of the prophecies about Jesus were not prophecies at all. However, we will focus on the most important and seemingly impressive ones that he supposedly fulfilled. If the major events of Jesus' life were not predicted then there is no point in even thinking about the rest for anybody could fulfil them assuming they are prophecies at all.

Moses spoke of a prophet who would come after him. Jesus explicitly claimed to be that prophet. If we read the prophecy of Moses that a prophet would come in Deuteronomy 18 an interesting picture comes to our minds. There we read that the people were scared of God appearing in fire or speaking directly to the people and requested that he use a prophet to give his message instead. God said that their request was sensible and that he would send the prophet. These people were speaking for themselves of their fear. The solution was to send them a prophet like Moses. It was a solution for the generation living then. The prophet was not Jesus who came centuries later. If Jesus claimed to be God then he was guilty of leading Israel astray by getting much of it to worship him. Nothing in the Old Testament says the prophet or Messiah will be God. The prophecy of Moses explicitly says that the prophet will not teach false doctrine or support any new God.

Jesus never showed any capability of foretelling the future. He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and his own death by crucifixion but these were written down after the events. This obvious example of cheating doesn't faze the Christians! The Old Testament is clear that the saviour has to be a prophet or predictor first and foremost. Jesus couldn't do forecasts of the future in any evidently miraculous way therefore he was not the one predicted even if he was able to match the prophecies in everything else.

It seems to bother nobody that Matthew wrote that Jesus was descended from a man whose line God cursed and God said that the Messiah could never come from that man (Jeremiah 22:30).

Isaiah 7:14 was claimed by the Church and the Gospel of Matthew to predict that Jesus would be born of a virgin. But we have no firsthand testimony that this virgin birth took place. If you can do without that then prophecies don't mean anything. Also, the Hebrew says maiden not virgin. Even if it did say a virgin would conceive and have a baby like Matthew said, clearly it doesn't say any more than that she will conceive as a virgin which is possible. She might not be a virgin by the time she gives birth. Also the context of the prophecy says it was addressed to King Ahaz not to the generation of Jesus which came about centuries later.

Psalm 22 seems to predict the crucifixion of Jesus. In the Hebrew original, the author says he is surrounded by dogs who have pierced his hands and his feet and he can count all his bones. That is poetry. He has the image of dogs biting at his hands and his feet as dogs do. Moreover, if the psalmist had meant Jesus he would not have written as if he wrote about himself. The psalm doesn't even mention death and we are expected to consider it to predict the cross of Jesus. It says that all who see this victim laugh at him and say that he trusted in God and God isn't helping him. This contradicts commonsense if you take it as true that the Jews mocked Jesus on the cross. They were not going to say he trusted in God and then laugh at God not helping him for that is extreme blasphemy and they wouldn't wish to say that Jesus really trusted God. When Jesus called My God My God why have you abandoned me they pretended to think that he was calling on Elijah. It looks as if though the gospels present the Jews as mockers that the real story may have been that they didn't want people to think he was saying God abandoned him. This would indicate that they were his friends not his enemies.

Isaiah 53. All this says is that some good man will suffer for the salvation of others and as an offering for sin. It doesn't mention a violent death or say that his tribulations will kill him. There is a tomb among the rich for him but that doesn't indicate any different. God promises him a reward for pouring out his soul to death. The passage is so vague it could be referring to a king who was driven to an early grave by helping and loving the people. If God predicted the death of Jesus he would have stated clearly the time limit for putting no limit allows anyone to claim that he is the character in Isaiah 53. It could even be Padre Pio.

After the resurrection, Peter lied to a gullible crowd about Psalm 16 that said that God will not abandon his beloved to decay saying it was a prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It only says that someone will be saved from death. It is too vague to read a resurrection into it and there is no need to. Remember, stick to the simplest interpretation. Jesus certainly agreed with this interpretation for he said that his resurrection was forecasted and there was nothing else in the

Old Testament that came close to predicting it.

Daniel 9 is supposed to predict when the Messiah saviour would be on the earth. In it, 69 weeks are often interpreted as meaning 483 years. The prophecy says to start counting after a unspecified decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Christians choose the decree of Artaxerxes in 444 BC for adding on 483 years assuming that Daniel means years of 360 days gives 33 AD when Jesus was allegedly crucified. First of all Artaxerxes made no such decree. He only gave permission to rebuild the city. Secondly, Daniel told us he was reading Jeremiah and God gave a decree in it so that is the decree he means for otherwise he said decree and it could be any decree. The decree was made in 587 BC meaning Jesus came too late to be the Messiah in the prophecy.

Jesus was not prophesied by the Old Testament.

When Critics Ask, Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, Victor Books, Illinois ,1992