

## Is Jesus the Promised Messiah?

*The Layman's Bible Encyclopedia* has this to say about the promised Messiah: "During the period between the writing of the Old and New Testaments, the term, 'Messiah' or 'Christ,' came to be applied to a hoped-for ruler would deliver Israel from her enemies and restore the former glory of the Kingdom of David. The messiahship of Jesus was unlike that which the Jews had expected, and throughout his ministry, the exact nature of his mission was understood, even by his disciples, only obscurely."

The first question that needs to be asked is, did Jesus, himself, believe that he was the hoped-for Messiah that the Jews were looking for? John 4:1-26 tells the story about Jesus when he met a Samaritan woman at a well in the town of Sychar in Samaria. After a brief conversation where the woman came to realize that Jesus was a prophet having special insight, she said to Jesus in verses 25 and 26, **"I know that the Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."**

**Jesus then declared, "I who speak to you am he."**

The knowledge that Jesus believed that he was the Promised Messiah brings up the second question, did Jesus, in his short life recorded in the New Testament, fulfill all of the many prophecies recorded in the Old Testament that were written? Let's look at the following thirty two prophecies that are recorded in the Old Testament and see if they are fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament. Note that after each prophecy is identified, the progressive odds of the prophecies materializing will be listed utilizing a simple method allowing for each prophecy to have one chance in two—yes or no—of happening. An example of this method is like a "heads or tails" coin flip where the chance of getting only heads while flipping a coin four times is one in sixteen ( $1/2 \times 1/2 \times 1/2 \times 1/2 = 1/16$ ). The odds can also be calculated on most scientific calculators by using the equation,  $2^Y$  to the X power, where the number 2 represents the odds of a single flip (one chance in two) and the X represents the number of successful, consecutive flips.

### **1. The Messiah will be a descendent of Abraham:**

Genesis 22: 15-18—**The Angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven and said..."Because you have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky...and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed..."**

*The Matthew Henry Commentary* says that, "the promise in these verses undoubtedly points to the coming Messiah, and the grace of the gospel."

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling this one prophecy is 1 chance in 2.

### **2. The Messiah will be a descendent of Isaac:**

Genesis 17:19—**Then God said [to Abraham], "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac, I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him."**

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*The Layman's Bible Encyclopedia* refers to the everlasting covenant as, “a covenant of the spirit, not the letter, mediated through the blood of Jesus [the Messiah], once for all offered on the cross for the sins of all mankind.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all two of these prophecies is 1 chance in 4.

### **3. The Messiah will be a descendent of Jacob:**

Numbers 24:17—**I see him, but not now; I behold him but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter [a royal or imperial authority] will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab the skulls of all the sons of Sheth.**

Jacob is a descendent of Abraham and Isaac. *The Layman's Bible Encyclopedia* says that, “Israel is a name given to Jacob and applied to his descendents,”

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote says that the “star...scepter is perhaps fulfilled initially in David in bringing victory over the enemies of his people, but ultimately fulfilled in the coming Messianic ruler.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all three of these prophecies is 1 chance in 8.

### **4. The Messiah will be from the Tribe of Judah:**

Genesis 49:10—**The scepter [a royal or imperial authority] will not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from beneath his feet until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for that verse says, “Though difficult to translate, this verse has been traditionally understood as Messianic. It was initially fulfilled in David, and ultimately in Christ.”

The following genealogies from Matthew 1: 1-16 and Luke:23-38 (shown on pages 3 and 4) are the New Testament counterpoint verses for the four above Old Testament prophecies:

The verses in Matthew 1:1-17 represent the complete genealogy of Jesus—forty-two generations—starting with Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, and proceeding through Isaac, Jacob, Judah, King David, and Joseph (Jesus' legal father and the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born).

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Matthew 1:16 says, “Matthew does not say that Joseph was the father of Jesus, but only that he was the husband of Mary, and that Jesus was born of her. In the genealogy, Matthew shows that although Jesus is not the physical son of Joseph, he is the legal son and therefore a descendent of David.”

The verses in Luke 3:21-38 represent the complete genealogy of Jesus—seventy seven generations—in reverse order starting with Joseph (Jesus' legal father) and proceeding through King David, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham, going all the way back to Noah

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and Adam, showing Jesus' relationship to the whole human race. Note that from Abraham to King David, the genealogies of Matthew and Luke are almost the same, but from David on, they are different, probably because Matthew follows the line of Joseph (Jesus' legal father), while Luke emphasizes that of Mary (Jesus' blood relative).

### Matthew - Chapter 1 (King James Version)

<u>Verse No.</u>	<u>Verse</u>
1:	The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
2:	<b><u>Abraham</u></b> begat <b><u>Isaac</u></b> ; and Isaac begat <b><u>Jacob</u></b> ; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;
3:	And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;
4:	And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;
5:	And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;
6:	And Jesse begat <b><u>David the king</u></b> ; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias;
7:	And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;
8:	And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;
9:	And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;
10:	And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;
11:	And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:
12:	And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;
13:	And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;
14:	And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;
15:	And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;
16:	And Jacob begat <b><u>Joseph</u></b> the husband of <b><u>Mary</u></b> , of whom was born <b><u>Jesus</u></b> , who is called Christ.
17:	So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

The verses in Luke 3:23-38 represent the complete genealogy of Jesus—seventy seven generations—in reverse order starting with Joseph (Jesus' legal father) and proceeding through King David, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham, going all the way back to Noah and Adam, showing Jesus' relationship to the whole human race. Note that from Abraham to King David, the genealogies of Matthew and Luke are almost the same, but from David on, they are different, probably because Matthew follows the line of Joseph (Jesus' legal father), while Luke emphasizes that of Mary (Jesus' blood relative).

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### Luke - Chapter 3 (King James Version)

<u>Verse No.</u>	<u>Verse</u>
21:	Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,
22:	And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.
23:	And <b>Jesus</b> himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of <b>Joseph</b> , which was the son of Heli,
24:	Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph,
25:	Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge,
26:	Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda,
27:	Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri,
28:	Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er,
29:	Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi,
30:	Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim,
31:	Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of <b>David</b> ,
32:	Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,
33:	Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of <b>Judah</b> ,
34:	Which was the son of <b>Jacob</b> , which was the son of <b>Isaac</b> , which was the son of <b>Abraham</b> , which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,
35:	Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala,
36:	Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of <b>Noah</b> , which was the son of Lamech,
37:	Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,
38:	Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of <b>Adam</b> , which was the son of God.

As complicated as these two separate genealogies are, they both attest to the fact that Jesus was indeed a descendent of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and was from the Tribe of Judah as prophesied in the Books of Genesis and Numbers.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all four of these prophesies is 1 chance in 16.

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### **5. The Messiah will be the heir of the throne of David:**

**Old Testament Verse:** Isaiah 9:7—**Of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.**

**New Testament Verses:** Luke 1:32, 33—**He [Jesus] will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Isaiah 9:7 says this about 'David's throne,' 'righteousness' and 'forever:' In spite of the sins of the sons of kings like Ahaz, Christ will be a descendent of David who will rule in righteousness forever.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all five of these prophecies is 1 chance in 32.

### **6. The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem:**

**Old Testament Verse:** Micah 5:2—**But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah [the region in which Bethlehem was located], though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times.**

**New Testament Verse:** Matthew 2:1,2—**After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?"**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Micah 5.2 says, "ultimately Christ will rule, as his beginnings were much earlier than his human birth."

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Matthew 2:2 says, "the words, 'king of the Jews,' indicates that the Magi were gentiles, showing that all nations acknowledged Jesus as the 'King of the Jews.'"

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all six of these prophecies is 1 chance in 64.

### **7. The Messiah will be born of a virgin and be called Immanuel:**

**Old Testament Verse:** Isaiah 7:14—**Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.**

**New Testament Verse:** Matthew 1:18, 21, 23—**This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins... and they will call him Immanuel —which means, "God with us."**

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*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Isaiah 7:14 says, “the Hebrew word for virgin, ‘alma,’ refers to a woman about to be married. Matthew 1:23 apparently understood that the woman mentioned in Isaiah 7:14 was to be a type (foreshadowing) of the Virgin Mary.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all seven of these prophecies is 1 chance in 128.

### **8. Innocent children will be slaughtered in an attempt to kill the Messiah as a child:**

**Old Testament Verse: Jeremiah 31:15—This is what the Lord says: “A voice heard in Ramah [a town five miles north of Jerusalem], mourning and great weeping, Rachel\* weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are no more.”** (\*refers to the symbolic mother of the Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseth).

**New Testament Verses: Matthew 2:16, 17—When Herod realized that he had been out-witted by the Magi, he was furious, and gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said from the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: “A voice heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”**

Why was the name Rachel mentioned in Jeremiah 31:15? Rachel, Jacob’s favorite wife, gave birth to two of Jacob’s sons, Joseph and Benjamin. When Jacob was told that his son Joseph’s robe was covered with blood as if some ferocious animal had devoured him (see Genesis 37:29-35), like the mothers in Jerusalem, he also refused to be comforted.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all eight of these prophecies is 1 chance in 256.

### **9. As a child, the Messiah will be forced to flee to Egypt.**

**Old Testament Verse: Hosea 11:1—When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.**

**New Testament Verses: Matthew 2:13-15—When they [the Magi] had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet [Hosea]: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Matthew 2:13-15 says that “the quotation from Hosea originally referred to God’s calling the nation of Israel out of Egypt in the time of Moses. But Matthew, under the inspiration of the Spirit, also applies it to Jesus...Just as Israel, as an infant nation, went down into Egypt, so the child Jesus went there. And as Israel was led out of Egypt, so was Jesus.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all nine of these prophecies is 1 chance in 512.

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### **10. The Messiah will be called a Nazarene and be despised by men.**

**Old Testament Verses:** Isaiah 53:3, 4—“**He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces. He was despised and we esteemed him not.**”

Psalm 22:6—“**But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads.**”

**New Testament Verses:** Matthew 2:19, 20, 23—**After Herod died, an angel from the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead...and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.”**

Mark 15:29—**Those who passed by him [Jesus as he was being crucified] hurled insults at him, shaking their heads...**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Matthew 2:23 says that, “The word, “Nazarene” is not found in the Old Testament.” It should be noted here that although the word “Nazarene” sounds similar to the word “Nazarite” which is found in Numbers 2:6 and Judges 13:7 in the Old Testament, there is no actual relation to the two words. A “Nazirite” is defined as a person, such as Sampson, who took a vow of consecration to God to abstain from drinking alcohol or wine, leaving their hair uncut for a time, and having no contact with the dead. Although both Samson and Jesus consecrated themselves to God—Samson dieing to save Israel and Jesus dieing for the redemption of man, it would seem to be a stretch to use those two Old Testament verses as a prophecy to the Matthew 2:19, 20, 23 verses.

However, *The NIV Study Bible* footnote continues on by saying the word, “Nazarene,” as it is used in Matthew 2:19, 20-23, “Probably refers to several Old Testament announcements and/or predictions (note the plural, “prophets”) that the Messiah would be despised. In Jesus’ day, the word, “Nazarene,” was virtually a synonym for ‘despised,’” and directs us to Isaiah 53:3, 4 and Psalm 22:6 as written above. *The Matthew Henry Commentary* says that, “To be called a Nazarene, was to be called a despicable man, a man to whom no good was to be expected, and to whom no respect was to be paid.”

The New Testament words in Mark 15:29, “hurled insults at him, shaking their heads...,” mirror the Old Testament words found in Psalm 22:6, thus forewarning how the coming Messiah was to be despised, rejected, and face suffering like no other man in history. And, with the exception of a precious few followers, Jesus was most certainly esteemed not!

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all ten of these prophecies is 1 chance in 1,024.

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### **11. The Messiah's coming will be announced by a voice in the desert.**

**Old Testament Verses:** Isaiah 40:3-5—**A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall be made level, the rugged places a plain. And the Glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."**

**New Testament Verses:** Matthew 3:1-3—**In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near. This is he who was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, prepare the way for the Lord [Jesus Christ], make straight paths for him."**

Luke 7:27—Jesus spoke to a crowd about John the Baptist: **"This is the one about whom it is written: I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way for you."**

John 1:23—John [the Baptist] replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, **"I am the voice of one calling in the desert, make straight the way for the Lord."**

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 11 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 2,048.

### **12. The Messiah will speak to the people in Parables.**

**Old Testament Verses:** Psalm 78: 1- 4—**O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old—what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from our children: we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.**

**New Testament Verses:** Matthew 13:34, 35—**Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet; "I will open my mouth in parables, I Will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."**

It should be noted here that there are forty different parables that Jesus told that are recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 12 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 4,096.

### **13. The Lord will declare the Messiah as his Son.**

**Old Testament Verse:** Psalm 2:7—**I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."**

**New Testament Verses:** Acts 13:32-33—**We tell the good news. What God promised our fathers, he has fulfilled for us their children, by raising Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."**



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Hebrews 1:5—**For to which of his angels did God ever say “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Psalm 2:7 says, “with regard to the words, ‘son...father,’ in the ancient Near East, the relationship between a great king and one of his subject kings who ruled with his authority and owed him allegiance, was expressed not only by the words, ‘lord’ and ‘servant,’ but also by ‘son’ and ‘father.’”

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Hebrews 1:5 says that the passage in Psalms 2:7 is quoted in Acts 13:32-33 as fulfilled in Christ’s resurrection. Jews acknowledged Psalm 2:7 to be messianic in their ultimate application.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 13 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 8,192.

### **14. The Messiah will be a prophet raised up by God.**

Old Testament Verses: Deuteronomy 18:15—**The Lord your God will raise up for you [Moses] a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.**

New Testament Verse: Acts 3:20, 22—**And that he may send the Christ who has been appointed for you... For Moses said, the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to every thing he tells you.**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Deuteronomy 18:15 says, “this is a collective reference to the prophets who will follow. As such, it is also the basis for Messianic expectation and receives a unique fulfillment in Jesus.”

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Acts 3:22 says, “Christ was to be a prophet like Moses, Abraham and David, and is the fulfillment of the prophecies relative to them.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 14 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 16,384.

### **15. The Messiah will heal the blind, the deaf and the lame.**

Old Testament Verse: Isaiah 35:4, 6—**...Be strong, do not fear; God will come... He will come to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer and the mute tongue shout for joy.**

New Testament Verses: Matthew 11:4, 5—After Jesus’ disciples asked if he was the promised Messiah, Jesus replied, **“Go back and report to John [John the Baptist] what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.”**

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It should be noted here that the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John records the many miracles of Jesus—35 healings, three raising of the dead and ten instances where Jesus demonstrated his power to overturn the laws of nature.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 15 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 32,768.

### **16. The Messiah will make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a colt of a donkey.**

Old Testament Verse: Zechariah 9:9—“**Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion [The personification of Jerusalem and its inhabitants]! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**”

New Testament Verses: John 12:12-15—“**The next day the great crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel! Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, ‘Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see your king coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.’”**

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 16 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 65,536.

### **17. The Messiah will be betrayed by a friend.**

Old Testament Verse: Psalm 41:9—“**Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel [turned his back] against me]**”

New Testament Verses: Mark 14:17-20—“**When evening came, Jesus arrived with the twelve. While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me. They were saddened, and one by one said to him, “Sure not I?” “It is one of the Twelve,” he replied, “one who dips bread into the bowl with me.**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Psalm 41:9 says, “In fulfilling the role of his royal ancestor as God’s anointed king over Israel, the great Son of David also experienced the hostility of man and the betrayal of a trusted associate and thus fulfilled his forefather’s lament.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 17 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 131,072.

### **18. The friend that betrayed the Messiah will soon die in a field purchased by the thirty pieces of silver gained as a result of his betrayal, and his position will be taken by another person.**

Old Testament Verses: Zechariah 11:12—“**I told them, if you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it. So they paid me thirty pieces of silver.”**

Psalm 69:25—**May their place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in their tents.**

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Psalm 109:7, 8—**When he is tried, let him be found guilty, and may his prayers condemn him. May his days be few; may another take his place of leadership.**

New Testament Verses: Acts 1:18-20—**With the reward he got for his wickedness, [The thirty pieces of silver] Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language, Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood, “For,” said Peter, “ it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘May this place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,’ and, ‘May another [Matthias] take his place of leadership.’**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Zechariah 11:12 says that the words “give me my pay” refers to the severance of the relationship. Thirty pieces of silver represented the price of a slave among the Israelites in ancient times, indicating a trifling amount of money.

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Acts 1: 18 gives us some interesting insights concerning Judas’ death by saying, **“Judas bought the field indirectly: The money he returned to the priests was used to purchase the potter’s field (Mt. 27:7). Mt. 27:5 reports that Judas hanged himself. It appears that when the body finally fell, either because of decay or because someone cut it down, it was in a decomposed condition and so broke open in the middle. Another possibility is that ‘hanged’ in Mt. 27:5 means ‘impaled.’”**

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 18 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 262,144.

### **19. The Messiah will be accused by false witnesses.**

Old Testament Verse: Psalm 27:12—**Do not turn me over to the desires of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, breathing out violence.**

New Testament Verses: John 2:19—When asked by the Jews to show a miraculous sign to demonstrate his authority to drive the money changers from the temple, Jesus answered them, “[you] **Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.**”

Matthew 26:59-61—**The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false witness against Jesus so that they could put him to death. But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy this temple and rebuild it in three days.’”**

*The Matthew Henry Commentary* says that in John 2:19, “Jesus is foretelling his death by the Jew’s malice in the words, ‘destroy this temple,’ and foretelling his own resurrection by his own power in the words, ‘I will raise it again in three days.’”

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for John 2:19 says that, “the Jews thought Jesus was referring to the literal temple and then intentionally distorted the fact that Jesus would rebuild the temple that the Jews were about to destroy—his body—into saying that Jesus himself would destroy the temple as told in Matthew 26:59.”

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Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 19 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 524,288.

### **20. The Messiah was led like a lamb to the slaughter and yet remained silent.**

**Old Testament Verse:** Isaiah 53:7—**He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.**

**New Testament Verses:** Acts 8:30-35—**Then Philip ran up to the chariot and the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked. “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.” The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.**

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 20 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 1,048,576.

### **21. The Messiah will be Crucified among transgressors.**

**Old Testament Verse:** Isaiah 53:12—**...He poured out his life unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors...**

**New Testament Verses:** Mark 15:27, 28—**They crucified two robbers with him, one on the right hand and one on the left. And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And he was numbered with the transgressors.”**

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 21 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 2,097,152.

### **22. Soldiers will gamble for the Messiah’s clothes at his Crucifixion.**

**Old Testament Verses:** Psalm 22:17, 18—**I can count all my bones [I am stripped of my garments]; People stare and gloat over me. They divide my garment among them and cast lots for my clothing.**

**New Testament Verse:** Matthew 27:35—**When they had Crucified him, they [the soldiers] divided up his clothes by casting lots.**

The NIV Study Bible footnote for Psalm 22:17 says that the phrase, “I can count all my bones” is perhaps better said, ‘I must display all my bones,’ as if he were attacked and stripped by highway robbers or enemy soldiers.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 22 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 4,194,304.

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### **23. The Messiah will be forsaken by God.**

**Old Testament Verse:** Psalm 22:1—“My God My God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?”

**New Testament Verses:** Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:33, 34—**About the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani—which means—“My God My God, why have you forsaken me?”**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Psalm 22:1 says, “No other Psalm fitted quite so aptly the circumstances of Jesus at his crucifixion.”

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Mark 15:34 says, “The spoken words reveal how deeply Jesus felt his abandonment by God as he bore the sins of mankind.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 23 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 8,388,608.

### **24. The Messiah will commit his spirit to God.**

**Old Testament Verse:** Psalm 31:5—**Into your hands I commit my spirit: redeem me, O Lord, the God of truth.**

**New Testament Verse:** Luke 23:46—**Jesus called out in a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Psalm 31:5 says, “The climactic expression of trust in the Lord...his Spirit represents his very life.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 24 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 16,777,216.

### **25. None of the bones of the Messiah will be broken at his crucifixion.**

**Old Testament Verses:** Psalm 34:19, 20—**A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.**

**New Testament Verse:** John 19:31, 36—**...because the Jews did not want the bodies [Jesus and the two robbers] left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man that had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs...This happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.”**

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 25 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 33,554,432.

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### **26. The Messiah's side will be pierced at his crucifixion.**

**Old Testament Verse:** Zechariah 12:10—**And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look at me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child.**

**New Testament Verse:** John 19:34, 37—**...one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. And as another Scripture says, "They will look upon the one they have pierced."**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for John 19:34 says, "...Pierced to make doubly sure that Jesus was dead...the blood and water was the result of the spear piercing the pericardium (the sac that surrounds the heart) and the heart itself."

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 26 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 67,108,864.

### **27. The Messiah will suffer punishment and death on the cross in order to bear the sins of his people.**

**Old Testament Verses:** Isaiah 53:4-6—**Surely, he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

**New Testament Verse:** 1 Peter 2:24—**He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed,**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Isaiah 53:4-6 says, "The sins of the world weighed heavily upon him. The human sacrifice was just as the priests in the Old Testament did when they laid hands on the scapegoat and symbolically put Israel's sin upon it."

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for 1 Peter 2:24 says, "Christ, like the sacrificial lamb in the Old Testament, died for our sins, the innocent for the guilty."

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 27 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 134,217,728.

### **28. On the day of the Messiah's Crucifixion, God will darken the earth for a period of three hours.**

**Old Testament Verse:** Amos 8:9—**"In that day," declares the sovereign Lord, "I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight."**

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New Testament Verse: Matthew 27:45—**From the sixth hour until the ninth hour [on the day that Jesus was crucified], darkness came over all the land.**

*The Matthew Henry Commentary* notes that, “It was proper that an extraordinary darkness should notify Jesus’ death, for he is the light of the world.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 28 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 268,435,456.

### **29. Although the Messiah’s grave was assigned to the wicked, he would be buried with the rich.**

Old Testament Verse: Isaiah 53:9—**His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet he was with a rich man in his death, because he had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth.**

New Testament Verses: Matthew 27:57-60—**As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away.**

Paraphrasing from the *Mathew Henry Commentary* and the *NIV Study Bible* footnotes for Matthew 27:57-60, it is mentioned that Jesus was crucified between two thieves—as if he had been the worst of the three—and yet, unlike the two thieves, he was given an honorable burial by a rich man.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 29 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 536,870,912.

### **30. When the Messiah’s earthly ministry is completed, he will send the Holy Spirit for all mankind.**

Old Testament Verse: Joel 2:28—**And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.**

New Testament Verses: Acts 2:16, 17—After the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, Peter addressed the crowd, **“This is what was spoken by the Prophet Joel: In the last days God says that I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”**

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 30 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 1,073,741,824.

### **31. The Messiah will be resurrected from the dead.**

Old Testament Verses: Psalm 16:10—David said, **“Because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your holy one decay. You have made known to me the**

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**path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence with eternal pleasures at your right hand,”**

New Testament Verses: Mark 16:6-7— A young man in a white robe said these words to Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome as they entered the tomb to anoint Jesus dead body with spices: **“Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, he is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.”**

Acts 2:24 & 27-28—Peter stood up with the disciples and addressed the crowd with these words: **But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him...“You will not abandon me to the grave, nor let your holy one see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnote for Psalm 16:10 says, “These words of assurance is the confidence that, with the Lord as his refuge, even the grave cannot rob him of life. If this can be said about David, how much more can it be said of David’s promised Son!”

*The Matthew Henry Commentary* says this about Psalm 16:10: “Psalm 16 has something of David in it, but much more of Christ. It begins with such expressions of devotion as may be applied to Christ; but concludes with such confidence of a resurrection as must be applied to Christ alone.”

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 31 of these prophecies is 1 chance in 2, 147,483,648.

### **32. The dates of the Messiah’s birth and death are prophesied:**

Old Testament Verse: Daniel 9:25, 26—**Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed one, the ruler comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the anointed one will be cut off and will have nothing.**

New Testament Verse: Matthew 2:1, 2—**After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the time of King Herod [the Great], Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We saw the star in the east and have come to worship him.”**

*The NIV Study Bible* footnotes for Daniel 9:25, 26 say that the time between the decree authorizing the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the death of the Messiah was to be 483 years. Why didn’t they just say 483 years instead of using the words, **seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens?’** The footnote goes on to say that the first **seven ‘sevens,’** may refer to a period of 49 years to complete the restoration of Jerusalem while the second **sixty-two**



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‘sevens’ refers to year the Messiah would be “cut off” or killed. There are other theories as to the meaning of this wording, but they go beyond the depth of this study.

What decree is Daniel 9:25, 26 referring to? The same Daniel 9:25, 26 footnotes refer us to Ezra 7:11, which tells about the decree given to Ezra the priest that was written by King Artaxerxes, the Ruler of the Persian empire in his seventh year [Ezra 7:8] of his reign from 465- 424 B.C., or the year 458 B.C. The footnote for that Ezra 7:11 verse says that many regard that date as the starting point of Daniel’s 69 “sevens,” the 483 year period mentioned in Daniel 9:25, 26’s prophecy.

*The Layman’s Bible Encyclopedia* suggests that “Jesus birth took place in approximately 4 B.C. While this date seems strange, it is explicable by the fact that modern scholarship has shown ancient chronological schemes to have been in error and it has been less difficult to speak of Jesus’ having been born in 4 B.C, than to re-date the rest of history.”

Matthew 2:1, 2 says that Jesus was born during the time of King Herod the Great who died in the year 4 B.C. Since Herod gave the order in Matthew 2:16 to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and younger, the date of Jesus’ birth would have been prior to 4 B.C. by about two years, establishing the date around the year 5 or 6 B.C. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John collectively establish the date of Christ’s Crucifixion in the year 30 A.D. Let’s add up the following dates to determine how close the date of Jesus’ death compares to the 483 year period prophesied in Daniel 9:25, 26:

Year of the start of Daniel’s prophesy in verses 9:25, 26:	458 B.C.
Year of Jesus’ death as recorded in the Gospels:	+30 A.D.
	488 Years

Although the number of years in this scenario is five years more than the prophesied 483 year number, one must admit that, considering the difficulty of synchronizing the dates in the ancient world that utilized varying primitive record systems during that five century time period —solar, lunar, etc.,—they are remarkably close. Surely the prophesy of Daniel 9:25, 26 points to Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah especially in the light that no other name has ever been suggested as being the promised Messiah during that time period. The focus of this scenario points primarily to the year of Jesus’ death, but counting back some 33 plus years from the 30 A.D. date of Jesus’ death gets one very close to the 4 B.C. birth date which is a widely accepted date in religious and secular history.

Note that the odds of a person fulfilling all 32 of these prophesies, utilizing this “one chance in two” simplified method, is 1 chance in 4,294,967,296—over four billion to one!

We’ve just identified thirty-two Old Testament prophesies that were fulfilled by Jesus. How many actual prophesies are found in the Old Testament that point to Jesus as the promised Messiah? The website, [bibla.com/jesusbible/prophecies.htm](http://bibla.com/jesusbible/prophecies.htm), says that they

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have found a total of 1,083. What are the odds one person fulfilling that many prophecies? My scientific calculator will only handle 332 prophecies—99 zeros—before it goes “tilt.”

How important was it for Jesus’ life and ministry to fulfill all of the Old Testament prophecies? The following verses from the Gospel of Luke give us a pretty good idea:

Luke 24: 44, 46-49—Shortly before his ascension into heaven, Jesus told his disciples these words: **“This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms...This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sin will be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised [The Holy Spirit].”**

Jesus believed that he was the promised Messiah, and the Bible points to Jesus as being the promised Messiah. Surely, Jesus *is* the promised Messiah!