



Are there really any Old Testament Scriptures in the book of Zechariah which foretell or relate to the First Coming of Jesus Christ?

There are indeed numerous Scriptures in the Old Testament, including in the book of Zechariah, which give precise details on the appearance of the Messiah about 2,000 years ago. As those passages can be found throughout the pages of the Old Testament, this fact alone proves the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

For instance, we find literally dozens of biblical references to Christ's First Coming in the book of Isaiah. We are just quoting a few selected examples:

Isaiah 7:14 states that "the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel (which means, literally, God with us.)" This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus, as Matthew 1:18-23 tells us. Isaiah 6:9-10 foretells the fact that the people would not listen to the Messiah's preaching and warnings (compare Matthew 13:14-15). Isaiah 9:1-2 states that the Messiah would stay temporarily in the land of Zebulon and Naphtali (compare Matthew 4:13-16). Isaiah 11:1 foretold that the Messiah would be a descendant of Jesse and David (compare Matthew 1:5-6, 25; Luke 3:23, 31-32). Isaiah 29:13 foretold that the people had rejected the commandments of God and replaced them with the traditions of men (compare Matthew 15:7-9). Isaiah 42:1-4 foretold the exact manner of the Messiah's preaching (compare Matthew 12:16-21). Isaiah 49:8-9 [and also Isaiah 61:1-2] foretold that the Messiah would preach the gospel and proclaim spiritual liberty (compare Luke 4:16-19).

Isaiah 50:6 prophesied that Christ would be beaten and spit on (compare Matthew 27:26, 30). Isaiah 53:1 prophesied that the people would not believe the report or warning message brought by the

Messiah (compare John 12:37-38). Isaiah 53:3-5 prophesied that the Messiah would heal people, due to His own physical suffering and the stripes, which He would receive from the Romans (compare Matthew 8:16-17). Isaiah 53:8 stated that He would be "taken from prison and from judgment," foretelling that His "trial" and "conviction" would be illegal even according to human law (For more information on these startling prophecies, see Part 4 of our free booklet, "Jesus Christ--A Great Mystery," pages 41-65).

Isaiah 53:12 foretold that He would pray for the transgressors at the time of His death (Luke 23:34). Isaiah 53:12 also stated that "He was numbered with the transgressors." This was fulfilled in more than one way, by the two robbers crucified with Him, and by His own disciples, compare Matthew 27:38 and Luke 22:35-38. Isaiah 53:12 also foretold that He would bear "the sin of many," which found its obvious fulfillment in Christ's death (compare Hebrews 1:1-3; 1 Peter 2:24).

The books of Psalms are also filled with prophetic references to Christ's First Coming.

Psalm 8:2 foretold that children would greet and welcome the Messiah at His First Coming (compare Matthew 21:16). Psalm 16:10 foretold that the Messiah would not stay in the grave, but that He would be resurrected soon after His death so His body would not see corruption (Acts 2:25-35). Psalm 22:7 revealed in advance that He would be ridiculed, while dying on the cross (Matthew 27:39-44). Psalm 22:14, 17 prophesied that the Messiah would be crucified (Matthew 27:26; John 12:32-33). Psalm 22:18 stated that soldiers would cast lots and divide His garment among themselves (Matthew 27:35). Psalm 34:20 foretold that none of Christ's bones would be broken (compare John 19:33, 36).

Psalm 41:9 foretold that the Messiah would be betrayed by one of His friends who would eat bread with Him (Luke 22:21; John 13:18). Psalm 69:21 prophesied that He would be given vinegar to drink for His thirst (John 19:28-30). Psalm 78:2 foretold that the Messiah would speak in parables (compare Matthew 13:34-35). Psalm 118:22-23 prophesied

that the Messiah would be rejected by the builders, but that He would become the chief cornerstone for His Church (compare Matthew 21:42; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:6-10). Psalm 118:26 foretold in advance the exact words with which the people in Jerusalem would greet the Messiah (compare Matthew 21:9).

We find in the book of Numbers (24:17) that, in relationship to the birth of the Messiah, a star would come out of Jacob (compare Matthew 2:2). In addition, a striking prophecy can be found in the book of Micah (5:2), referring to Christ's birth: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting." Compare the record of the fulfillment of this prophecy in Matthew 2:1-12.

Hosea 11:1 foretold that the Messiah, as a child, would stay temporarily in Egypt (compare Matthew 2:14-15). And Jeremiah 31:15 told us in advance about the horrible murder of the Jewish children at the time of Herod (compare Matthew 2:16-18).

Malachi 3:1 prophesied the appearance of a messenger just prior to the manifestation of the Messiah's First Coming to prepare a people for Him. This prophecy found its fulfillment in John the Baptist, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (compare Matthew 11:7-10; Mark 1:2-4).

Even though the book of Zechariah deals foremost with the time of Christ's Return--the Second Coming of the Messiah--it also contains several references to events which took place during His First Coming.

Zechariah 9:9 reports that Christ, the just King offering salvation, would appear lowly, "riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey." The fulfillment of that prophecy is recorded in John 12:14-15. Zechariah 9:9 also shows that His entrance in Jerusalem would be triumphant, as we read: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!" This prophecy was fulfilled just prior to Christ's betrayal and arrest,

compare Mark 11:8-10.

In Zechariah 11:12-13, we are told that Jesus would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (compare Matthew 26:14-16), and that the money would be thrown into the house of the LORD--the temple--for the potter. This was fulfilled, exactly as stated; compare Matthew 27:3-10. Please note that Matthew 27:9 says that Jeremiah, too, gave this prophecy in advance. But it says that Jeremiah the prophet SPOKE those words, apparently, without writing them down in the book of Jeremiah. The prophecy was RECORDED, however, in Zechariah 11:13, as we have seen.

Zechariah 12:10 refers to the fact that the Messiah would be pierced. We are told in the New Testament that a soldier pierced Christ's side with a spear, causing His death on the cross (John 19:34-37). For the exact manner of Christ's death, please read our free booklet, "Jesus Christ--a Great Mystery," pages 78-79. The passage in Zechariah 12:10 is quoted in Revelation 1:7, referring to Jesus Christ.

Another possible reference to the piercing of Christ's hands at the time of His crucifixion (compare John 20:25) can be found in Zechariah 13:6, where we read, in the Authorized Version: "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

Finally, Zechariah 13:7 foretells that all of Christ's disciples would leave Him at the time of His arrest, prior to His crucifixion and resurrection: "... Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered..." Compare, for the exact fulfillment of that prophecy, Matthew 26:31-32 and Mark 14:27-28.

It is truly remarkable how these and many other Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus Christ at the time of His First Coming. Jesus Himself insisted that ALL prophecies written about His earthly life were, and had to be fulfilled (Luke 24:25-27, 44-46; compare Matthew 26:51-56).

Based on this testimony of Scripture regarding

things which are past, we can have complete and total confidence in the infallibility of prophecies dealing with the future. As Christ came as a humble servant to die for us, so He WILL come again as the KING of kings to rule for and with us (Revelation 5:8-10; 20:4, 6; Daniel 7:13-14, 26-27). He said time and again that He WILL return--and soon (John 14:3; James 5:8-9; Revelation 22:12, 20).

Lead Writer: Norbert Link