



HOW DID PEOPLE KNOW JESUS WAS COMING?

Part 9 of Vintage Jesus

Pastor Mark Driscoll | December 03, 2006

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The Rabbi: How did people know Jesus was coming? Well that's a story from the Christian Bible. And to ask a Rabbi that, to ask a Jew that question, would be like asking a modern Christian America, something about events from some other religious Scripture. It's not our Scripture. So, the question itself presupposes something that we – the question itself presupposes something that we don't accept, namely that these events happened in history as told in Christian Scripture.

We read the Talmud, the Jewish Scripture, as an independent document that does not foreshadow Christian Scripture and would therefore hold that when Christians read it as a foreshadowing in Scripture that is the mistake in reading of the text. The story Of the Binding of Isaac, enormously triaged emotionally laden story, in of itself, and you don't need future events in order to establish the significance of that moral tale. Of that tale of ultimate faith, that stands on its own.

First of all the question of the Messiah, the Messiah has not come yet. For reasons that I'll, I'll explain. _____ view the Messiah, that the Messiah will be descendant of King David, a flesh and blood human being, who will come to world and do several things. The Messiah will be a political military ruler who will reunite the Jews, all Jews in the Land of Israel, will reestablish Jewish Sovereignty over the entire Biblical Land of Israel; however you understand its borders. Will reestablish full observance of all laws of the Torah, and there are not only Ten Commandments in Jewish Scripture there are 613 of them. The Messiah, will allow Jews to observe all of those Commandments, and perhaps most importantly the Messiah, will usher in an era of universal peace and, justice and, righteous, and goodness.

And a mere glance at the newspapers today shows that we haven't reached that yet. Our world is far from the good, righteous, perfect place that we – that our tradition has dreamt it can be. And so therefore we very definitely, we very definitely live in a pre-Messianic World, a world in which the Messiah has not yet come.

One of the other principals is that the Messiah has to complete the work before he dies. So, many people ask, "Well, if somebody comes along and says they're the Messiah, how do you know?" And the answer is, "Just wait." If when he dies the world is the perfect place, that we're working to make it, then he was, and if not, if we are still – if we still fall short of that goal, then obviously that was a Messianic pretender not the real thing.

A Reformed Jew, Reformed Judaism, early on rejected the notion of a person as the Messiah. Not looking for an individual, but rather we see ourselves, as God's partners, in working tirelessly in order to bring on the Messianic era. In order to make the world a good, perfect, just, and righteous place that we know that it can become. So, we're not looking for the Messiah, to be a person, but we're looking for the fulfillment more generally of the messianic dream of our tradition, which promises peace and wholeness, and completeness the world as it might be, but not a person.

Jesus died of the cross many years ago. Though I do not believe that he was resurrected I do believe that he continues to exist in, in many, many significant ways. Most importantly in the ways in which, the memory of his life and his teachings continue to inspire Christians today.

Mark Driscoll: That gives us a little somethin' to talk about. I want to thank my friend the Rabbi. He's certainly a nice guy. I have enjoyed his company on a few occasions. But we're dealing with today, and why we want to interview him, is we're gonna look at a lot of passages in the Old Testament, and we're going to, we're going to look at, really the big issue that separates Christians from Jews and that is; how to interpret the Old Testament, who is the Messiah, and is Jesus the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises about the Messiah, meaning the anointed one of God, who would come and take away sin, and to reconcile us to God and to usher in a New World.

And this is the ninth in a twelve part series that we are calling Vintage Jesus. Normally we go right through books of the Bible. In 07' we'll go through Ruth, which is a tremendous book, on a fantastic woman, and also the Book of Nehemiah. So, you can start reading ahead over the holidays if you so chose.

To help guide our course of study today though you should have obtained on the way on something called the Loop and that will have the notes, 'cause

I'm going to be all over the place, this is going to be like a Bible auction. Man, I'm just going to be movin' quick and firing all kinds of Scripture at you but the notes will help to guide our time together so you don't get completely lost. So, today's question is; "How did people know that Jesus was coming into human history?"

And we'll look at; we'll look at that in great detail in just a moment. So, I'm glad to have, yeah. I'll go ahead and pray and then we'll jump right in and we'll look at the answer to this question.

"Lord Jesus, we begin by asking that you would send the Holy Spirit to inform us of the truth of Scripture so that we might connect the Scripture to you rightly. And that as a result we might understand how Scripture and history in our lives only make sense when you are at the center of those things. And so, God we do love you. We do trust you. And we ask that we would learn clearly about Jesus today and that you would enable us to have hearts that love him and lives that follow him and we ask this in his good name. Amen."

Let me set up our time together by giving you a brief background on the Bible in general and then we'll get into some specific parts of the Bible, in particular. I'll start by saying at the time it was written, roughly 25 percent of your Bible was prophetic in nature, meaning it foreshadowed, in predicted, it promised in great detail a future event that God would then bring to pass to show that God both knows the future and that God is Sovereign over the future. And God has control ultimately over human history.

And many of those promises and prophecies work in such a way they are thread that weaves much of our Scripture together. Promise and fulfillment are sort of the threads that pull together all the other parts of Scripture. And out of those promises and prophecies roughly 60 plus of them are about this person, called the Messiah. That the Jews have been waiting for, and he is the one who will come to take away sin and usher in a new world and connected people to God and overcome our problem of sin and death.

And will look at 25 of those in particular today. And they will reveal to us Jesus as Messiah, Jesus as fulfillment of Old Testament promise and prophecy. And this is a very controversial truth, but it was something that was in fact taught by Jesus himself, who was a Jewish Rabbi, a Teacher of Old Testament Scriptures.

I'll give you three things that Jesus said that are very important before we launch into Genesis. The first ways, in Matthew 5:17 and 18, Jesus said, "Do not think I came to abolish the law and the prophets, the Old Testaments, rather I came to fulfill them." So, Jesus said, "The whole Old Testament has certain promises and prophecies that I am here to fulfill."

Secondly Jesus said in John Chapter 5 in verses 37 through 40, a bunch of religious neat nicks and bloggers and people who want to argue came to me with Jesus and they want to argue with him about Scripture and he said, "You diligently study the Scriptures, in John 5 in them you have eternal life, yet you fail to realize these Scriptures are all about me." "And you don't really understand anything about the Bible," Jesus is saying. "Unless you read the Bible and connected it to me." Meaning that the Bible makes no sense apart from Jesus, and that you can go to a church, a religion, a cult or a group and even if they're using the Bible if they're not primarily connecting everything to Jesus then the Bible isn't going to make any sense and it's not a good teaching that you're receiving because, good teaching is all about Jesus, according to Scripture.

Third, in Luke 24 Jesus, after he lived died and rose, it says, he held two amazing Bible Study's where he took people through the whole Old Testament. And on one occasions it says, "The songs and the Law which is the Books of Moses and the prophets and he explained how of all the Old Testament Scriptures were about him, and how he had come to fulfill them all."

All of that to say that the Old Testament points to Jesus, the New Testament shows us how the prophetic promises of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the life, and death, and burial, and resurrection of Jesus. And he is the long awaited Messiah. And we'll look at 25 of these amazing promises that happened hundreds sometimes more than a 1,000 years before Jesus was even born.

The first of which is listed in your notes as Genesis Chapter 3:15. And hear the promise is given that Jesus would be born as a man, as a male, so that automatically gets us down to half of the human race. And that he would have a mother, just like the rest of us, except for a distinct feature which we will notice from Isaiah in a minute. And here's the context that God made us male and female, everything is wonderful glorious and good. Satan rebelled against God and sin and came and tempted our first parents. They rebelled against God and sinned, results is that they are now separated from God and doomed for death.

And instead of just leaving them there God in his great kindness comes to Adam and Eve and he speaks to them in Genesis 3:15, something that theologians call the Protoevangelion, or the First Gospel and he promises that Jesus' is coming as a male, born of a female, to defeat Satan and to fix the sin problem that we all suffer from. It says it this way, "Fourteen hundred years Moses says, before the birth of Jesus, it is promised, Genesis 3:15, "I will put end of the earth separation, division, hostility between you and the woman, between offspring or seed or descendant, and hers." "He," meaning Jesus, "Will crush your head and you will strike his heel."

It is said that Jesus will come as a male born of a female, that he'll have a great conflict with Satan. That Satan will injury him but ultimately he will conquer and crush Satan. It moves on then Genesis, does to talk about a man name Abram, or Abraham whose name was changed here and how Jesus would come through his family line.

And that he would come through Abraham and Abraham's son Isaac and Abraham's, son – grandson Jacob and his great grandson, Judah. I'll start in Genesis 12:3, God says to Abraham, "All peoples on earth will be blessed through you" So, the covenant the promise, the blessing of Jesus is promised to come through the family line of this man Abraham. So, now we're narrowing it down, looking for Jesus to come through a particular family.

Well, Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael and the God says in Genesis 17:19, "Your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you're to call him Isaac and I will establish my covenant with him." So, there will be two sons Isaac and Ishmael. But God says, "Jesus is coming through Isaac not through Ishmael." And then Isaac is born as a miracle because Abraham and his wife were past child bearing years and barren and God still gave them the son Isaac, whose name means laughter, 'cause God always get's the last laugh, on these deals. That's a theological point. God has a sense of humor.

And then Isaac as well has sons. And he has sons, Jacob and Esau, and we're told in Numbers 24:17, "I see him, but not now," meaning Jesus is coming but it's gonna to be awhile. "I behold him, but not near," it's going to be quite some time. "A star will come out of Jacob, a scepter will rise out of Israel" and the scepter is the accoutrement of Kings, that's meaning Jesus is the King and he will come from Isaac's son Jacob but not his son Esau.

And then Isaac has a son named Jacob and then he has 12 sons and God chooses one of those sons to again to be the next line of the generation which Jesus would come, that being son Judah. Genesis 49:10, "The scepter," the accoutrement of the King – Jesus here is depicted as King, "Will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until it comes to whom it belongs, and the obedience of the nations is his."

Says, Jesus will come as a male, born from a female. He will come from the family of Abraham but he will come from Isaac, not Ishmael. He'll come from Jacob not Esau. And he'll come from Judah, not of any of his other 11 brothers. So now we're really narrowing down the coming of Jesus and we're getting a clear picture of the family he will come from and descend from.

This is clearly laid out in Matthew 1 as being fulfilled as Jesus came specifically through this family line. Furthermore, in Isaiah Chapter 7:14, 700 hundred years before the birth of Jesus, my third prophecy I'll share with you. Is we're told more specific details about Jesus' mother; specifically that she would be a virgin. So at this point we're really whittling the list of potential Messiahs down, right. The virgin, gives birth to a baby. 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 you're to call him Immanuel which means – what?" "God is with us."

Was that fulfilled in Jesus? Yeah, when he was born he was called Immanuel, God is with us. We even sing that Christmas song. So it has to be true. And what we know is as well, is that Jesus mother, Mary was a virgin, in fulfillment to this promises, conceived by a miracle, gave birth to Jesus, who was God with us Immanuel.

Now some commentators will say that the Hebrew word here does not mean, virgin. It means; young, devout, religious, teenage girl, which is a – virgin. (Laughter) Right – I mean – I mean it is a virgin but, its like, "Oh, that's not a virgin. That's a devout 13 year old girl" Well this is before the day of teenage girls in clear heels. I mean this is – you know, this is before that. (Laughter) this is in the day when the young woman was a virgin. And I am the father of a young woman who is a virgin. If you came into my house and I said, "This is my virgin, daughter." Say, "She's not a virgin she's just a teenager." She's a virgin, and she will be for a long time. (Laughter) Or I will be doing prison ministry from the inside, right. That's how it works.

You know if you go to a devout Muslim or Jewish or Christian home any sort of devout religious home, the 13 year old daughter is a virgin. That's the way it works. So, that was prophesized about his mother Mary and she fulfilled that prophecy. We'll deal with her again, in a few weeks. Not only that regarding Jesus' birth we're told exactly where he would be born, namely the town of Bethlehem.

In Micah Chapter 5:2, my fourth prophecy, 700 years before the birth of Jesus, Micah declares this, "But you Bethlehem," – that's the town – "Ephrathah" – that's the area – "though you were small among the clans of Judah," – that would be rural hick town in the Hebrew, it's Enumclaw, (Laughter) – Enumclaw-esque – "out of you will come from me, one who will be ruler over Israel, the King of Kings, whose origins are from old, or from ancient times, or from eternity."

So, the eternal God is coming into human history and he'll be born in a dumpy rural hick town of Bethlehem. Now many of you know the story, but was Jesus' family from Bethlehem, was that where they lived, not at all, not at all. But, what happened because God rules over human history, the King decided we needed to take a census of all the tax payers, right. I mean- the government going after taxes is Biblical, it's been going on since the days of Jesus, and they decide we might not be getting all the tax dollars we could. We need everybody to register, make sure we have everybody on the tax rolls, to make sure we can get as much money as we can. So, to register for tax purposes everybody had to go to their hometown, to their family of origin.

Well, Jesus' adoptive father Joseph was from the tribe and the family of David. Their hometown was Bethlehem, so they went to Bethlehem; at just the time that Mary was ready to give birth to Jesus. They arrived there for the census and lo and behold just as Micah; prophesied Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem.

I've heard some people say, "Well, Jesus knew the prophesizes and he set up his life as to give the impression that he was the Messiah." How did he fake the destination of his birth? I mean – my wife has given birth to five kids and none of them have picked the hospital, let alone the city. Ridiculous.

Fifth prophecy, about Jesus' life, was that while he was around on the earth, he would not commit any sin. We are told this by Isaiah, 700 years before Jesus was born. In Isaiah, 53:9, "He had done no violence nor was there any deceit found in his mouth." Meaning he did nothing wrong in word or deed, he was sinless. He was perfect. Jesus is the fulfillment of this. No one else is perfect but Jesus. And actually there is a short list of people who have ever like Jesus declared themselves without sin and perfect. But Jesus said, rhetorically when he was alive on the earth, "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?" The answer is no. Hebrews 4 says, "He was tempted but he never did sin."

So, we're waiting for a man born of a woman, from the family of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah, whose mother would be a virgin who would be born in Bethlehem and would never commit any sin. Right, I mean – we're getting the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle as it were, and as we put them

together we're coming into a clear and clearer picture of the coming of Jesus long before he actually arrived.

The sixth prophecy is that 700 years before his birth, the prophet Hosea, Hosea 11:1 said, "That Jesus would spend some time living as a refugee in the nation of Egypt. It says, in Hosea 11:1, "When, Israel, was a child I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son." Well Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth, but he spent some time in Egypt because there was a persecution of genocide that broke out against young boys by a Godless and fearful King and was afraid that one of these boys would rise up and take his kingdom.

So, to avoid the slaughter, Jesus, mother and father took him to Egypt for a season where he lived as a young boy in fulfillment of the promise of Hosea 11:1. Not only that, we are told that Jesus would go to the temple in Malachi. And this is an amazing prophecy because for those of you who know Jewish history, when was the temple destroyed? 70AD, so, now we get a deadline. Alright whoever the Messiah is he has to come before 70AD, because the promise is he would go to the temple but the temple was destroyed in 70AD and there has not been a temple for almost 2,000 years.

I tell my Jewish friends, they said, "We're waiting for the Messiah." I said, "Well, Malachi says he will come to the temple. You have no temple. The temples been destroyed. Messiah already came. His name is Jesus. Malachi says, "400 years before the birth of Jesus," Malachi 3:1 says, "See I will send my messenger" – that's the fore runner we will deal with him momentarily – who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord – the Lord who – The Lord Jesus, "You are seeking will come to his temple." The Lord will come to his temple, the messenger of the covenant, that's the covenant, the new covenant that Jeremiah speaks about that God will take away our sin and give us a new heart and give us a new life.

"The messenger of the covenant whom you desire will come says the Lord Almighty." Did Jesus go to the temple? Yes. A few occasions he went there during his life. Yeah, he did. Say how do we know Jesus is the Messiah? Well one of the ways we know is Messiah had to come before 70AD. I've heard some of my Jewish friends, and I love them, and when we have these discussions respectfully, but I've heard some of my Jewish friend say, "Well we will rebuild the temple and the Messiah will come to the new temple." I say, "Really, 'cause the Jews, the Muslims, the Christians, the Bahias' along with the groups like the Mormons, and the Jehovah's Witnesses all say that's their plot of land. And they all say that they get to build their religious worship center there. And if you think they'll all agree then you have more faith then it takes to be a Christian."

I can't see the Jews and Muslims sitting down and saying, "Let's, let's build a church together," I mean – you know – I don't know if you watch the news things in the Middle East, don't look like they're coming together for a joint worship service anytime soon. And it's been that way since Genesis. So I'm assuming that trajectory will continue. There won't be another temple for the Messiah to come too. Because the Messiah has already come and he came to the temple that was destroyed in 70 AD.

Additionally we're told that John the Baptizer would come to prepare the way for Jesus making sure no one would miss the coming of Jesus. Isaiah Chapter 40:3 is written is 700 years before Jesus was born it says, "A voice of one calling in the desert, prepare the way for the Lord, make straight in the wilderness a highway for God." Who was that John the Baptizer, Jesus' freaky, weird home school cousin. (Laughter)

It's a true story actually. The kid grew up in the woods and he wore what? Camel hairs clothes, he was dressed like a Jedi knight or something. And what was his steady diet, bugs and honey, right. Any kid who grows up wearing animal fur in the woods, homeschooled, eating bus and sugar. He's beyond already. He's full peculiar. (Laughter) And that was Jesus cousin, right. And he came preaching, "Repent the Kingdom of God is at hand, the Lord is coming, The Lord is coming, prepare your hearts." And he fulfilled the prophecies of both Malachi and Isaiah that Jesus was coming.

And, I know many of you aren't parents, when you do become one, I would just forewarn you. Be careful in reading these stories to your children it's amazing the application that they make. My two sons for example, I read them his story this summer and they loved it. Because here's a boy that pees outside and eats bugs so all of a sudden they have license for all of their dreams. And – a – that's how they actually interpreted John the Baptizer.

And so, one day I hear my daughters running in the house, I have three boys and two girls. And the two girls are freakin' out and screamin' "Oh, my, gosh, Dad, you've got to come outside" I'm thinkin' somebody's dying. I go out there. The boys have taken honey and they've gathered bugs and wrapped the bugs in the honey and eating them in front of the girls to gross them out, and it worked, exceedingly well. I said, "What are you boys doing?" And their like, "It's in the Bible, Dad John the Baptizer did it and it's Biblical. You can't discipline us for it. I was like, true, maybe I can get a prophet out of this deal, I don't know. That seems to be a prophetic diet. So, I let them eat and they still eat bugs and honey and pee in the yard, but anyways. (Laughter)

That was Jesus freaky home school cousin, John. I see him with an Afro and like cricket leg in his tooth. I just see him kind of that way. But – a – not only that it says Jesus during his life would perform a whole lot of miracles. 700 years before he was born Isaiah 35:5 and 6 says, "Then will the eyes of the blind be open, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame will leap like a deer and the mute tongue shout for joy."

They'll say, "You'll know its Jesus because he'll heal people. Deaf people will hear. Mute people will speak. Lame people will walk. Blind people will see." Did Jesus do those things? It's great he did those things. He did miracles. And I would tell you this, that Jesus is alive and well today and we at Mars Hill, we still I believe that God can and does heal. And we pray for people and we have seen God heal them.

I have a cool story this morning of Jesus healing an elderly woman in her 80's who's has had years of chronic leg and knee pain. She loves the Lord. She's cute as can be. And she said, "Pastor Mark, I've been in so much pain and I've been using my pain medication but it's not working and finally just prayed earnestly to God. And I believe that he healed me. And I haven't had pain for this amount of time. And I'm not taking my pills and I can walk and I'm able to get around my house and go for walks and Jesus has healed me."

So, we believe that about Jesus, that he can heal people that he use to heal people when he was alive on the earth. And just because he's alive in heaven

today doesn't mean he can't heal. And so we do pray to him for such things and this promise was fulfilled in the life and the ministry of healing that Jesus had. It also says more details about Jesus life pieces of the puzzle. That he would come riding in on a donkey like a triumphant King coming into to be welcome and celebrated to the city of Jerusalem.

500 years before he was born, Zechariah 9:9 says, "Rejoice greatly, O of daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See you King – that's Jesus – comes to you righteous, and having salvation, gentle riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Did that happen in Jesus' life? Did he ride into Jerusalem like a triumphal King on the back of a young donkey celebrated by people who came out to cheer his entry absolutely, absolutely. Scripture says that's what exactly happened that's the historical fact.

Also in addition to these wonderful things about Jesus life, like his miracles and those who received him and celebrated him, there also prophecies made about Jesus, his suffering, his hardship, his pain, his tears and his strive. One of those is given a 1,000 years before he was even born in Psalms 41:9. He says, "Even my close friend, whom I trusted, who I shared my bread with, has lifted up his heel against me." In that culture to lift up your heel against someone was sort of to declare war on them, to be hostile toward them, to intend to do them harm and evil. What he says is, "I will be betrayed by a close friend, one that I have broken bread with. He will be the one who betrays me."

Who was that in the life of Jesus? That's Judas Iscariot. A close friend for three years broke bread with Jesus and broke bread with him at the last supper before he determined in his heart that he would participate in the murder in the betrayal and the murder of Jesus. And Jesus was close friends, three years he ate and lived and traveled and loved and had a friendship with Judas. And Judas was the close friend who betrayed him in fulfillment of the prophecy of Psalm 41:9.

The tenth prophecy is that not only would Jesus would be betrayed by a close friend. But he would be betrayed by the payment price of 30 pieces of silver. This is amazing the Scripture actually names the number of coins that the betrayer Judas would be paid, for handing over Jesus to the authorities.

500 years prior to his birth, Zechariah 11:12 and 13 says, "They paid me 30 pieces of silver, – And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter." – Which is a portion of the temple, that again, that was destroyed in 70 AD, so, that's the second confirmation of the historical deadline – "The handsome price at which they priced me! So, I took the 30 pieces of silver, and threw them into the house of the Lord." That's the temple of the potter. "The promise was made; I will be betrayed by a close friend and whom I've broken bread with."

And 500 years before that occurred Zechariah, said, "Yes, indeed, he will be paid 30 pieces of silver, and Judas Iscariot was likewise paid 30 pieces of silver and in disgust he threw that money into the temple before 70 AD just as was promised by Zechariah.

Again, these are amazingly, careful given details that God is revealing to us here. God wants us to be so clear that Jesus is our savior Jesus is our God, Jesus, is our Messiah. He is giving us very clear details. He goes on furthermore to say that, "Jesus would be abused in Isaiah." 700 years before Jesus was born.

We are told in Isaiah, Chapter 50:6 "I offered my back to those who beat me." Was Jesus' back beaten? Yes, beyond recognition.

If you saw the movie the Passion of the Christ, you saw a real good portrayal of what happened to Jesus. And how his back was just traumatized and he was flogged to the point of near death. It goes on to say, "Not only did I offer my back to those who beat me, I also offered my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard." Which in that culture was a means of which was robbing a man of his dignity and disgracing him and humiliating him, was that done to Jesus? Yes. Sadly it was.

"I did not hide my face," it says, "from mocking and spitting." Was Jesus mocked? Yes, with things like, "Hail, Hail, King of the Jews." Spit upon, yes. History records that yes indeed, Jesus was spit upon. Jesus, it was promised would be physically, emotionally, spiritually, verbally abused. And he was in fulfillment to the promise, given by Isaiah 700 years before he was even born. In clarification of that it also tells us that prior to his death that they would strip Jesus.

And they would split his clothes, except for the one seamless garment, be the equivalent to our, you know, a good coat. It was the one piece of clothing that he had that had some apparent value rather than dividing up among those who were participating in his murder. They literally rolled the dice or cast lots for that and that was promised in Psalm 22:18 a 1,000 years before his birth, "They divide my garments among them and they cast lots for my clothing." That absolutely was fulfilled. As the crucifixion of Jesus was in sight, that they stripped him naked that split his garments and that they rolled the dice for the one piece of clothing that had some value.

Furthermore we are told that Jesus would be hated and rejected. And I know that some of you really love and receive Jesus, but some of you really hate and reject him. It says in Isaiah 53:3, 700 years before his birth, "He was despised and rejected by men. A man of sorrows, familiar with suffering, Like one from who hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

It was promised that people would hate Jesus. They would reject Jesus, that they would despise Jesus, that they would oppose Jesus. And they did. And that tragic prophecy was fulfilled in very painstaking detail, as recorded by the New Testament record. But, not only is that promised but it is also promised by Isaiah that Jesus would not defend himself. That he wouldn't answer all his critics. That he wouldn't write a Tome listing all his reasons for his vindications. Rather he proceeded forward serving God faithfully, on his mission, to die and rise to save sinners like me.

And Jesus was not dissuade from his mission by all of the criticism and controversy, and the opposition and all of the lies and the false witnesses and the false trials and the bad reports. He didn't allow that to take him off of his mission. And that was promised in Isaiah 53:7, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth." He did not defend himself he was gracious and kind and even loved his enemies. "He was lead like a lamb to slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."

And that was absolutely fulfilled in Jesus. He was meek, and gentle, and humble and kind and loving and forgiving, even to his most ardent opponents and critics. Even in their hour of most vile antagonism. And he stands for an example for us all. And then we are told that Scripture is clear that Jesus Christ would be crucified. And this was promised in the Psalms a 1,000 years before Jesus was born. What makes this prophecy even more remarkable is that this crucifixion is prophesized before crucifixion exists.

It wasn't, I think until the Persians invented crucifixion a few hundred years later that crucifixion even existed. Yet it was promised for Jesus a 1,000 years before his birth a few 100 years before crucifixion was invented. It says it this way in Psalm 22:16, "Dogs have surrounded me, a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet," that's what it says. Was that fulfilled in Jesus, absolutely? When they went to crucify him, They took five to seven inch spikes and drove them through what, his hands and his feet. And Jesus was crucified through his hands and his feet.

I mean not only was crucifixion was prophesized but where they would put the nails was foretold. So, that we would all have certainty that this Bible that we read is about Jesus. Additionally we are told that when he would be crucified through his hands and his feet he would be crucified with sinners. That we are told this 700 years prior, in Isaiah in 53:12, "Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, he will divide the spoils with the strong because he poured his life out into death he would be murdered and was numbered with the transgressors with the sinners." Was the fulfilled in the life of Jesus? Yeah.

Was Jesus put to death with sinners, one on his right, one on his left, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. That not only would he be put to death, – I mean – you look at the details leading up to death of Jesus, betrayed by a close friend who ate meals with him, for 30 pieces of silver that would be thrown in to the temple that only existed until 70 AD, falsely accused, despised hated, beard plucked out, people saying atrocious things, mocked, crucified through the hands and the feet, with thieves who were guilty and deserved to die.

I mean this is unbelievable, painfully accurate, successive details about how Jesus would live and die. If that were not enough, we were also told in Scripture well in advance, that none of his bones would be broken in his death. Moses says this, 1,400 years before the birth of Jesus and furthermore the Psalmist says this a 1,000 years before the death of Jesus. I'll read the first one by Moses in Exodus 12:6, we are told there, "Do not break any of the bones." Any of what bones? What animal, a lamb. What is the context here, Passover, the great Jewish celebration of what, of the time when they were slaves in bondage in Egypt? And everyone had sinned against God, as we all have. And the wrath of God, and the justice of God, and the judgment of God, was coming upon them, the depicted day in which he would pour out his wrath and he was literally going to take lives.

And God said, "There will be one way that I will Passover you and not bring death to your house hold. That is if you take a lamb without spot or blemish, showing forth the sinless life of Jesus. And if you make that animal your substitute and you slaughter it for your sins. And its blood is shed in your place and you take that blood and you put it over the entryway to your home, then I will know that you have faith in Jesus who is coming, to shed his blood and take away your sin." And God said, "I will literally Passover you and death will not come to your home."

And this is foreshadowing of Jesus. When Jesus show up John the Baptizer says, "Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." First Corinthians 5 says, "When Jesus Christ, our Passover lamb has been slain." The whole point of Passover was to show us that Jesus Christ was coming to be our substitute. Though he was innocent, and he did not deserve death that he would take our place. And he would shed his blood for our sins so the wrath of God would pass over us.

And in the details of Passover, it was said, as I read to you from Exodus 12. That none of the bones of the animal were to be broken, because none of Jesus' bones were to be broken either. And we don't sacrifice animals anymore because Hebrews says that, "Jesus is the sacrifice for all sin." And Jesus sacrificed once for all." So we don't have sacrifices, we just have Jesus. And the reason why Jesus, bones were not broken because crucifixion was exceedingly slow, death by asphyxiation.

There was a recent CSI episode, in which Grissom actually explained crucifixion fairly accurately. I don't know what kind of theologian Grissom is but he got this one right. There was someone who had been crucified on the television show, part of the plotline. And he said that, "Crucifixion leads to death by asphyxiation, which is accurate. Because as your body slumps on the cross you cannot open up your lungs to get enough air to breathe and eventually you die by asphyxiation.

Well because people were nailed by their feet as well, sometimes they would push themselves up to get air in their lungs, and this would go on for days and they would extend their lives. But if the executioner got tired of waiting they would come and break their legs, so then they couldn't push themselves up and get any more air in their lungs. And Jesus had such a brutal flogging and beating and he was so very near death that he died fairly quickly on the cross. And when the executioner came to investigate his body he declared him to be dead, to assure us of that he ran a spear through his side, puncturing his heart sack so water and blood flowed out.

But none of Jesus bones were broken, in fulfillment in all that was shown forth in the Jewish Passover celebration of the breaking of no bones. This was also promised in Psalm 34:20, a 1,000 years before Jesus we are told, "He protects all of his bones not one of them will be broken." Furthermore we are told, "That Jesus Christ would be forsaken by God the Father."

In Psalm 22, one a 1,000 years before Jesus was born, we hear this cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me." Who said that 1,000 years later? Jesus. When did he say that, on the cross? Why would he say that? Well, Jesus Christ took upon himself sin and including my sin and as a result God the Father turned his back on God the Son. And there was physical and spiritual death which is the penalty for sin. And it was paid for Jesus my substitute in my place for my sins.

Martin Luther calls this the great exchange. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "God, made him that is Jesus, who knew no sin to become sin," – that would

be my sin – “so that in him” – we, including me – “might become the righteousness of God.” That Jesus took my condemnation for his salvation. He took my sin for his sinless perfection. He took my death for my life. He took my separation from God for my intimate relationship with God the Father. And in that moment that Jesus took upon himself my sin and substitutes himself in his place, God the Father turned his back on God the Son and Jesus was forsaken as I should have been but by God’s grace through Jesus, am not. And that’s why Jesus cried. From Psalm 22:1, he was fulfilling that prophecy, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”

Again the details are astonishing; that the women would give birth to a son who came from the line Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah, that the mother would be a virgin and she would give birth to the son in Bethlehem. That as a boy he would be taken to Egypt that he would grow up without committing any sin. That he would go to the temple before 70 AD. Those later in life, a friend of his, who say him perform the miracles that were prophesied and had broken bread with him on many occasions, would betray him for 30 pieces of silver, which would be thrown in to disgust into the temple.

That his beard would be plucked out, that false accusations would be made, that liars would run him through a series of false trials and he would not defend himself. He would maintain his dignity, and he would continue forth with his mission. That his back would be bloodied that his beard would be plucked, that his reputation would be attached. That he would be crucified through his hands and his feet between two thieves. The garments that he wore would be striped of, would be taken from him and be distributed. One piece of which would be won by someone in a dice game. And that none of his bones would be broken but on the cross he would be forsaken by God the Father.

We’re also told that Jesus would die that ultimately his mission was to die. Isaiah says, 700 years before the birth of Jesus, “He was cut off from the land of the living.” And he would die, he would die. Not only would he die but he would be buried with the rich. That’s what Isaiah, goes on to say in Isaiah, 53:9, in the next verse, “He was assigned a grave with the wicked, he was buried in a cemetery with all the sinners,” – which he was not – “and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth”

Jesus would die from his crucifixion and he would be buried in a rich man’s tomb. Was Jesus a rich guy? I don’t care what the televangelist, who has the wife with big hair that looks like she lost a paint ball gun war, says, right. (Laughter) That’s good line, snuck it up on, ya. That Jesus wasn’t a rich guy. He was not a rich guy, he was poor. He was homeless. The Bible says, “He didn’t have anywhere to lay his head.” Jesus was a homeless guy, right. He was poor.

When it came time for him, for example to pay his taxes, what did he do? He told his guys go fishin’. Maybe there’s money in a fish. There’s a broke guy right there, right. (Laughter) if – “I’m broke, I hope there’s money in the fish.” You have officially reached the end of your income stream and you are now at a desperate place for money. You’re lookin’ at fish for coins. I mean – that’s – that’s really the bottom of income. He was broke. How in the world could Jesus be married in a rich man’s tomb? Was he? He was.

When Jesus died, they had nowhere to bury him. He didn’t have a tomb. He was broke. One of the quiet more secret disciplines a man named, Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy and an affluent man, who stepped forward and said, “Jesus needs a decent place to be buried. I will give him my tomb.” And so he gave Jesus his burial plot which was the tomb of a rich man. And it was among the other rich. And Jesus body was laid in that tomb. That’s how he was buried with the rich in his death, in the fulfillment to the promise of Isaiah given 700 years prior.

Again some of my friends have said, “Well Jesus set up his life so that all the things met the prophecy.” You don’t pick your mom, your place of birth. And after you die you don’t have a big say in where they put you. I mean, these are things before he was born and after he died that were promised in Scripture showing that not only is it all true but it is beyond a shadow of a doubt, factual that these were not situations manufactured by Jesus, to fool us.

And if that weren’t enough the Bible also promised 700 years before the birth of Jesus in Isaiah, and a 1,000 years in Psalms that after dying he would resurrect. Psalms 16:10, 1,000 years prior, “You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your holy one.” And there’s only one that is really holy that is Jesus. “See decay. I’ll go to the grave.” But you’re not going to leave me there, my bodies not gonna just going to become mulch in the ground. I’m not going to be there. You will bring me back.

Isaiah 53: 10 and 11, 700 years before Jesus said, “Though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, which is death.” That is the language of death. “He will see his offspring.” – He will come back from death. – “Prolong his days” – after his death – “And the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand, after the suffering of his soul.” After he dies it says, “He will see the light of life, and he will be satisfied,” because his work will be finished. And sin will be forgiven and he will destroyed Satan and sin and death, and that’s Jesus.

Did Jesus rise from death? Yes. He did. And it was seen by multitudes of people, upward of 500 at a time. His mothers, his brothers, saw it. His friends his enemies saw it. Crowds saw it. Men and women saw it. Young and old saw it. It was a fact. And he maintained his witness of being alive for 40 days. Even with the doubters like Thomas, “Touch my scars, I was dead and now I’m alive.” That happened on a Sunday, that’s why we worship on Sunday. That’s why Jews stop worshiping on Saturday and started worshipping on Sunday, cause that was the day of Jesus resurrection. And today a few billion people on earth worship Jesus Christ as God because of his resurrection from death, and his fulfillment of all of the Old Testament prophecy.

Just Jesus and he rose from death. And again you have to confess, even if you are not a Christian, we really whittled down the list. You got to find a guy whose mom was a virgin that was born in Bethlehem before 70 AD died and is still alive. It is a very short list. Even if you went to public school, you go, “That’s a short list right there.” I went to public school and I think – I mean, it’s a short list. I’ve heard other people say, “Well, maybe it was

somebody else." Who? Give me one other dude with this resume. You know, there is no one else. Jesus is the fulfillment of all these prophecies. And not only that but it tells us, "That he will be descended into heaven and sit at the right hand of God." So it completes the whole full circle ministry of Jesus from; in heaven to the earth, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, back into heaven at the right hand of the Father.

Both a 1,000 years prior to Jesus birth are given, Psalms, 68:18 "When you ascended on high you lead captives in your train." God, when you returned to heaven, Lord Jesus, you took those who, in the Old Testament, were waiting for you to come and die and rise. You took them with you. You opened up heaven." This verse is quoted in Ephesians, talking about how Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and those who loved Jesus, in the Old Testament, we're waiting his coming as their Messiah to die and rise and take away their sin. That their souls when Jesus ascended into heaven, they went with Jesus.

So today if we die and we know Jesus, the Bible says, "To be absent of the body is to be present with the Lord." And we get to ascend with and like Jesus. Who is now seated at the right hand of the Father. My last verse, Psalms 110:1, "The Lord says to my Lord, - God says to God - Huh, well the doctrine of the Trinity is referred here. "There is one God, three persons, Father Son and Spirit." And here God the Father says to God the Son. "Sit at my right hand," the seat of prominence, and, preeminence and power and respect and adoration and joy. "Until I make your enemies, a footstool at your feet,"

Where's Jesus today, in heaven at the right hand of the Father as God, being worshipped by the angels and those Christians who have already gone before us and those Christians in the Old Testament whose faith was in the coming of Jesus; anticipating his sinless life, his substitutionary death, his bodily resurrection from death.

And again, we're talking about Jesus. Here's a few things that somewhere I just desperately need you to know. The first is that this ultimately must shape our view of scripture. The scripture is inspired of God. This is God's information. There is no way that this many authors of this many periods of history and this distance of years from the historical fulfillment could have possibly predicted, guaranteed, even come close to prophesying, these excruciatingly accurate and detailed portraits of the coming of Jesus. Only God knows the future. Only God controls the future. And only God can reveal this kind of information about the future. And God has in Scripture. And that's why at Mars Hill we love Scripture because it's true and it's from God and furthermore it's about Jesus.

The whole point of Scripture is Jesus. And so for us as we read Scripture it is only about Jesus. It is always about Jesus. It is solely about Jesus. It is exclusively about Jesus. It is clearly and emphatically and repeatedly and wholeheartedly about Jesus. [Applause]

And so as we read Scripture, we love Scripture. 'Cause it's about Jesus and it's from God. And he's our Messiah. And we really need one, individually, and nationally and globally. There is a need for a Savior, and is revealed in Scripture as none other than Jesus Christ, alone. And that means that Jesus is the centerpiece of Scripture. And Jesus is the centerpiece of history. And Jesus is the centerpiece of Christianity. And he is the centerpiece of Mars Hill. And I must ask you. Is he the centerpiece of your life?

Is Jesus your Messiah? Do you know Jesus? Do you believe the promises of Scripture? Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the one that truly we've all been longing for? The one to deal with our sin, and our death and our life and our world and to bring the Kingdom of God, if so you're a Christian and if not, you're not a Christian and that, that must, that must change. It's all about Jesus. And if you don't know Jesus you are separated from God. And we want you to be reconciled to God through Jesus. And Jesus is alive and well and he knows your heart, knows your intent.

Even today if you're here and you're not a Christian, I'll tell you the most wonderful thing in the world. And that is, God loves you. God has done everything to take away your sin. God has done everything to reconcile him to yourself. And it's all been accomplished through Jesus who on the cross said, "It is what?" Finished, took care of everything and now we just simply trust in the person and work of Jesus. And because Jesus is alive and well today, he knows your thoughts and words and intent and you can tell him even quietly in your seat. "Jesus I'm a sinner. You're God. Make me Christian." And he will.

Begin reading your Bible and learning about Jesus and loving Jesus with God's People and growing in a relationship with Jesus. As a guy who didn't know Jesus for the first 19 years of his life, more than half of his existence. I could tell you this is the most wonderful life altering invitation you will ever receive and that is to come to know Jesus.

Furthermore, we sit here today in many ways in the same position as those who heard the Old Testament prophecies about Jesus. They were told, "Jesus is coming, trust and wait." And he came and he lived and he died and he rose and he ascended. And we are here now reading promises of Scripture that say, "He's coming again. Trust and wait." So we find ourselves essentially very much in the same position as those who were waiting for Jesus in the Old Testament; reading the Bible, trusting in the promises of God, waiting for the Messiah to come to finish the work at his second coming that he began at his first coming when he takes away all sin, when he lifts the curse. When he destroys all evil doers, when he wipes all the tears from our eyes and everyone is healed and all who love Jesus spend forever with him.

And so today we respond to Jesus by, praying, by singing, by giving of tithes and offerings, by partaking of communion which is remembering the body and blood of Jesus. And as we sing and worship, we're joining with the angels and the Christians that have gone before us who presently who are gathered around Jesus that are seated at the right hand of the Father, in the position of glory and they are singing to him with gladness and joy and our voices participate in that great heavenly choir. And we invite you all to join us in song to Jesus tonight. And that's why we're here.

Answer my question, "How did people know Jesus was coming?" Answer, they read their Bible. I would just ask yeah, enjoy, reading your Bible. It's all about Jesus. Amen. Alright.

You're a little better than the 5, they were the decaf crowd. (Laughter) I'll go ahead and pray, right we'll give tithes and offerings. We'll take communion. We'll sing. We'll celebrate. We'll pray. We'll honor Jesus, who is our Messiah, as we wait for him to come again and finish the work that he began.

“So, Lord Jesus, you told us to pray to you so. We're praying to you. You told us to sing to you. We're going to sing to you. You told us to take communion, to remember your body and blood given for our sin and so we are. We're giving of our tithes and offerings to further the word of your person and work as it goes forth into the world. And Lord, Jesus, we confess that you are the hero of Scripture, that you are the Messiah and that you are God, who has come on a rescue mission to seek and to save those who are lost. Jesus, thank you so much. Thank you for giving us such specific prophecy. So far in advance with such clear detail that we just simple could not miss you if we only have eyes that are willing to see. Please send your spirit to give us those eyes” —