



# Messianic Prophecies

Reason & Theology Podcast

# Introduction

- When it comes to the evidence from Messianic Prophecies in the OT, there are at least two approaches to the subject in establishing a “Religion-Authenticating Miracle” or (“RAM” for short).
  - **1. Argument from Direct Prophecy Fulfillment-** the burden of proof requires that one is able to prove that a specific set of conditions is prophesied in advance of the fulfillment and that the conditions set forth in the prophecy are indeed fully fulfilled (without any equally or more probable ordinary natural explanations such as vague or ambiguous prophecies, prophetic literary devices, self-fulfillment, etc. obtaining).
  - **2. Argument from “Extraordinary Circumstances” (i.e., the “Jesus or Bust” Argument)-** this is my own nuanced version of an argument from Messianic prophecy in the OT, arguing that given the provable Messianic prophecies, the *Biblically-reasonable*, plausible and unfalsified fulfillment claims regarding Jesus in the New Testament, is the only possible Messianic candidate; we have the situation where it is either Jesus fulfills these prophecies or no one can (i.e., it is literally “Jesus or Bust”).
    - **Note that the prophecies themselves must also be of a sufficiently remarkable or “extraordinary” nature (i.e., if fulfilled, they would not likely to be explained with “ordinary natural” mechanisms).**
- However, there are many difficulties in meeting one’s burden of proof with respect to the first argument from direct prophecy fulfillment. In some cases, it is hard to establish the historicity/factualness of Jesus’ fulfillment of certain texts outside of relying on the Gospels and their general reliability and/or assumed inerrancy (notions not respected by many skeptics). In other cases, the prophecies themselves are ambiguous and one must employ various prophetic devices such as double fulfillments, prophetic typology, prophetic hyperbole, prophetic telescoping, etc. to claim and establish the fulfillment of a given prophecy.
- With respect to the burden of proof being on the claimant, I think there is at least one partially provable Messianic prophecy (**Isaiah 52:13-53:12 & Jesus’ death and Resurrection**) that can meet the criteria for a direct prophecy fulfillment argument, but I think the best argument is an appeal to the “extraordinary circumstances” of “Jesus or Bust” as this option is easier to meet one’s burden of proof. **The following presentation will present that circumstantial argument!**

# Messianic Prophecy Exegesis - Some Helpful Principles -

- 1. Messianic Prophecies are not clearly and/or explicitly identified as such in the Bible.
  - E.g. Isaiah 52:12 doesn't say, "OK next up, we have a Messianic prophecy about the Messiah's atoning death and Resurrection, so pay attention!"
- 2. The Messianic hope developed gradually over time in Israel.
- 3. Many Biblical prophecies (including Messianic ones) are fulfilled gradually
  - Sometimes prophecies have partial fulfillments over time until it is fully brought to completion- like filling up a cup with water.
  - Not the same as prophetic "Double Fulfillment" device here, more saying there are partial fulfillments over time.
- 4. The prophets saw the Messiah coming on the immediate horizon of history- "prophetic telescoping" is often at play.
- 5. The Messiah is the Ideal Representative of His people, the nation of Israel; He fulfills the destiny originally intended for Israel due to their sinful failure to carry out their covenant with God.

# Messianic Prophecies in the Book of Isaiah

- Some of the most important Messianic prophecies come from the OT book of Isaiah, the greatest of the Major Prophets in the Hebrew Bible.
- The dating and authorship of Isaiah is controversial among some historians and Biblical scholars; with traditional Jews and Christians saying that the major prophet Isaiah ben (son of) Amoz [as per the 1:1 superscription], wrote the entirety of the book sometime in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.
- Starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century A.D., some skeptics doubted whether Isaiah wrote the entire book by positing the existence of many editors and redactors having created it as we have it in its current form. The more common scheme splits Isaiah into 2 or 3 sections with at least 2 or more different authors; it attributes Ch.1-39 to Isaiah ben Amoz in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., Ch. 40-55 to a later unknown author called ‘Deutero/Second-Isaiah’ written around the Babylonian Exilic period and Ch. 56-66 to yet another even later unknown writer called “Third-Isaiah” written perhaps as late as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.
- \*\*\* Note: Going forward we shall assume the two-fold division of Isaiah as the skeptical position given those 2 sections are the ones relevant to our discussion on Messianic prophecies.

## Reasons for “Late-Date” Skepticism Refuted:

- 1. Anti-Supernatural Bias-** In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the intellectual elites had a pervasive dismissive attitude towards believing in Miracles or the Supernatural; any detailed predictions provided in the Bible were simply assumed to be written after predicted event’s occurrence.
- Such outdated and easily refuted biases have been refuted time and time again by more thoughtful Theist scholars and intellectuals. An anti-supernatural bias that mindlessly assumes that supernatural prophetic fulfillments are impossible has been shown to be unwarranted by more sophisticated logicians. Furthermore, even assuming naturalism, it may still be reasonable to believe that a prophecy was given in advance and was subsequently fulfilled (E.g. cases of self-fulfillment, random coincidence, etc.).
- 2. Contrasting Settings/Sitz Im Lebens-** Chs. 1-39 seems to fit a Judean setting for composition vs. a Babylonian Exilic setting for Second-Isaiah material. But once again, this objection is really founded upon nothing more than an anti-supernatural bias which artificially disallows a prophet to have knowledge about a future time-period of the Babylonian Empire and the Exile that Jews would face at that time.

# Reasons for “Late-Date” Skepticism Refuted Cont.

- **3. Linguistic/Stylistic Distinctions-** Scholars have identified certain stylistic/linguistic distinctions between Chs. 1-39 & the later Chs. 40-66. Additionally, two independent computer studies, starting with the 1973 YT Radday study compared a variety of linguistic features in the two sections of Isaiah (Chs.1-39 & 40-66) and both concluded that a single author could not have written both sections.
- Unfortunately, the presence of distinctive styles alone does not necessarily entail different authorship nor even differing dates of composition. Authors often having differing styles depending on the type of literature they are writing or the content they are relaying. Isaiah appears to be an anthology of prophecies put together by Isaiah over his 5-decade career as a prophet of the Lord where detectable differences in style would be expected.
  - *As Isaiah scholar John N. Oswalt admits; “attribution of authorship [and even dating] on the basis of style [alone] is **not** a precise science. It is a matter of observation that different subject matters as well as different periods in a person’s life produce different styles”.*
- Finally, even the computer studies are ultimately inconclusive as the technology used for the Radday study in 1973 was highly experimental and subject to experimenter intervention and bias as proven by major discrepancies between the findings of it and the other study which made the same final conclusion. What’s more, another computer study conducted IN the same year (in 1973) by L.L. Adams & A.C. Rincher produced the exact opposite results and conclusions proving the same author had produced both sections of Isaiah.

# Reasons for Isaiah “Early-Date”

- **1. Archeological/Scientific Proof-** The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the late 1940’s revolutionized Biblical scholarship in OT Studies and the dating of various OT books.
  - The composition of the “Great Isaiah Scroll” is a copy of an earlier manuscript and has been dated by most scholars of all persuasions to somewhere between 125-100 B.C. at the latest. Some date the manuscript’s composition as early as 200 B.C. As R.K. Harrison says, this proves “*Isaiah was in its [current] final form no later than the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C... It would seem necessary to advance the date of the original autograph to the middle of the Persian period at the very latest as has also been done in connection with certain Psalms that formerly assigned to the Maccabean period*” [See Barfield, p.255 for full quote]. Isaiah in its final form was already established as an inspired prophet uncontroversially before the Maccabean period!
    - **Though see the 1990’s Carbon-14 Dating of Great Isaiah Scroll to approx. 230-351 BC. = <https://reasons.org/explore/blogs/voices/carbon-14-dating-supports-the-writing-of-the-great-isaiah-scroll-prior-to-the-crucifixion>**
- **2. Early Authoritative Jewish Sources-** all such ancient sources, ranging from Josephus to the Talmud, agree that Isaiah ben Amoz was the author in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. These ancient Jewish extra-Biblical sources speak of Cyrus the Great, reading the entire book, not just the first 39 chapters.
- **3. Parallels with Other Early Writings-** Isaiah closely parallels the minor prophets Amos & Micah, both of whom scholars say wrote during the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (see examples in Barfield, Endnote #20, p.324). There is some evidence that the compiler of Kings in the middle of the Babylonian Exile also used the entire book of Isaiah. Finally, there are similarities between “2<sup>nd</sup> Isaiah” specifically (i.e., 40-66) with early writings from Nahum and Zephaniah (Endnote #23 on p.325) and dissimilar with later post-Exilic period writings in Ezra, Nehemiah and Malachi which would not happen if the latter chapters of Isaiah was written between 400-150 B.C.
- There is similar subject matter between the early books as well such as those Gleason Archer mentions; concern about bloodshed and violence, falsehood and religious hypocrisy, concern for pervasive idolatry in Israel which wasn’t an issue after the Exilic period and use of the rare and unique “Holy One of Israel” phraseology (Barfield, p.257-258).
- **4. Weak Unknown Prophet Theories-** If an unknown person or group of people wrote the greatest literary/prophetic works of all time as 2<sup>nd</sup> Isaiah, it seems most surprising that every trace of him/them has been so completely erased from Hebrew tradition; not even his name survives unlike the other OT prophets (read quote, Barfeild, p.257).
- It is also recognized that 2<sup>nd</sup> Isaiah (40-66) far exceeds Ch.1-39 in terms of grandeur of vision and an elevated nature of development, why does no one else mention “2<sup>nd</sup> Isaiah”, or the prophet’s name (not Jeremiah, nor Daniel nor Ezekiel hint at the presence of such a prophet and why would this work be relegated to be nothing more than the “appendix” of an supposedly inferior prophet like Isaiah who wrote Chs. 1-39.
- **5. Scholarly Support-** A sizable amount of credible OT scholars hold to the “Early-Date” position such as Hill and Walton, Bush, Willis, Hubbard, Archer, etc. (p.259)

# “Jesus or Bust” Argument: The Birth of the Messiah

- The first major Messianic prophecy regarding the birth of the Messiah, is the famous “Virgin birth” prophecy in Isaiah 7:14, which says, *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, **the virgin** shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel”* (NKJV).
- This text fits into the overall context of Isaiah Ch. 7-11 [with multiple Messianic prophecies included within it such as Isaiah 9:5(6) predicting the possible divinity of the Messiah which we’ll strategically ignore in this presentation, but, if true, would obviously help my argument here].
- The Hebrew word translated as “virgin” is *almah* which means “young woman” and so Jewish anti-missionaries argue it doesn't predict a “virgin” would give birth to the Messiah. If Isaiah wanted to say “virgin” he would have used the Hebrew word *betulah*. Even the Greek word *parthenos* in the LXX/Septuagint doesn’t unambiguously mean “virgin”.
  - **Response-** This is simply not true. The Hebrew word *betulah* does not explicitly mean “virgin” and there is Scriptural proof of this word used to describe a young woman/maiden outside of legal contexts (see examples Brown Vol.3, p.22). *Almah* is consistent with a young unmarried female which implies “virgin”. There is NO single word in Biblical Hebrew that always and only means “virgin” and thus, the word *almah* in 8<sup>th</sup> century Hebrew could have been entirely appropriate to prophesy a virgin giving birth.
- In the immediate context, King Ahaz of Judah was worried about being attacked by his neighbours Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah of Israel. But God sent him the prophet Isaiah to tell him that God would protect his kingdom and as proof he could ask for a *“sign from the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth of Sheol or in the heights of Heaven above.”* Ahaz sinfully refuses to trust God and so God, through Isaiah, then turns to address the House of David (plural) and says in Ch. 7 verses 13-17;
  - *“Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? 14 **Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.** 15 Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings. 17 The Lord will bring the king of Assyria upon you and your people and your father’s house—days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah.”*
- This is the third of the divine birth announcements in the OT (the prior two being for Ishmael son of Hagar and Abram & the birth of Samson, Judge of Israel) and all three use similar words and phrases to signify the birth is going to be of great importance and significance; in this case, Immanuel’s birth will be of great significance for the House of David and the kingdom of Judah as a whole that it represents. **Namely, it is implied that the “almah's” giving birth to this son, would serve as a supernatural/miraculous sign and wonder signifying that an event of great importance has happened for the House of David and shows that “God is with them/us” (aka. Immanuel).**

# The Birth of the Messiah Cont.

- Jewish skeptics have often pointed out that this prophecy in Isaiah is not a Messianic prophecy at all, but instead was something that was fulfilled in Isaiah's day with the birth of Maher-shalal-hash-baz in the book of Isaiah 8:1-4 (see Brown, p.26 for list of parallels of the two birth narratives).
- It seems Jews living in Isaiah's day came to closely associate the birth of Maher (for short) with the birth of Immanuel as that was the only notable birth that King Ahaz would have been privy to (though later Jews came up with alternative fulfillments such as King Hezekiah's birth for example).
  - BUT, remember the Prophetic interpretative principles such as the fact that the prophets saw the Messiah coming on the immediate horizon of history via prophetic telescoping and other relevant principles of interpretation.
- Unfortunately, the prophecy was not for King Ahaz personally, but for the House of David as a whole & seen in the full context of the glorious and eschatologically significant prophecies in Isaiah 9-11 (E.g. The Messianic Branch in Isaiah 11) related to this child in the rest of Isaiah 7-11, such prophecies were simply NOT fulfilled by either Maher or Hezekiah or any other candidate for 700 years afterward and so those saying the prophecy was fulfilled in King Ahaz's day seem to be forced to admit that Isaiah was a false prophet!- In other words, they must opt for the "Bust" option here with this prophecy.
- Jesus is claimed to be the Incarnate Son of God made flesh (literally "God with us" = Immanuel). His mother Mary was an "almah" who had never slept with a man and his birth is claimed to have served as a supernatural/miraculous sign for the House of David and the nation of Israel as a whole, despite those in power refusing to recognize and acknowledge it. Furthermore, everything the Lord prophesied about the nations and politics surrounding Judah and Israel relevant to the time of Ahaz and the divided Kingdom period came to pass "*before the Child knew to refuse the evil and choose the good*" just like Isaiah foretold!
- **Note:** There is another relevant Messianic prophecy related to the Messiah's birth/ancestry being in Bethlehem in Micah 5:2. This prophecy also contains a component speaking about the potential eternality and thus, divinity of the Messiah as well. "*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, 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 of old, from ancient times*". **We shall strategically set this prophecy aside as well.**



# Messiah's Mission & Ministry

- **1. Miracle Healer (Isaiah 35:5-6)**- Isaiah speaks of the Messianic era (i.e., "day") of salvation as entailing the miraculous healing the blind, deaf and lame, etc.
  - *"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert."*
- **2. Light to the Gentiles (Isaiah 49:6)**- Isaiah speaks of the Suffering Servant (an individual Messiah in this verse) as being a light showing and bringing Gentiles to salvation and the knowledge of the God of Israel.
  - *"It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant, To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth".*
- **3. The New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34)**- Messiah Brings in a New Spiritual Covenant to Fulfill Torah/Law of Moses.
  - *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*
- **4. Dating the Book of Jeremiah:**
  - **Late Date Factors**- The stylistic literary distinctions between Type A, B and C in Jeremiah as argued by Bernard Duhm & Sigmund Mowinckel, The Disjointed Chronology, Differences with the Septuagint, & Close Links to Deuteronomy (see Refutations in Barfield, p.259-260).
  - **Early Date Factors (Late 7<sup>th</sup> & early 6<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.)**- Archeological finds at Lachish of 21 letters with identical language of Jeremiah and reference to the "Beware prophet" of God, Early witnesses attribute to Jeremiah universally & we have the Septuagint (250 .B.C) & Dead Sea Scrolls proving Jeremiah existed more than 200 years before Jesus (see Barfield, p.261).
  - Jeremiah may have been written by more than just Jeremiah; perhaps also by Baruch, his scribe, for example.

# Isaiah 53 & The Suffering Servant

- This prophecy is the 4<sup>th</sup> and final Suffering Servant Song in Isaiah ("songs" celebrating the sacrificial life of a righteous servant of God who brings about the redemption of others) from Isaiah 40-55.
- The entirety of this prophetic song is in **Isaiah 52:13-53:12**; the others being found previously in **Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9/11**.
- **Reading/hearing the text itself = <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuieQzaoMzl>**

# The Messiah's Atoning Death & Resurrection (Isaiah 53)

- Christians argue that this passage predicts the Messiah's atoning death and subsequent Resurrection from the dead for the salvation of Israel and humanity.
  - This is by far, the clearest Messianic prophecy in the entire OT; it single-handedly has led to the most Jews converting to Christ over the centuries. See "The Forbidden Chapter: Isaiah 53 in the Hebrew Bible" video asking modern day Jews about this prophecy & Jesus = [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGz9BVJ\\_k6s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGz9BVJ_k6s)
- The Messiah/Suffering Servant's death is **explicitly** mentioned in various verses of this text;
  - 1. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter- 53:7;
  - 2. For He was cut off from the land of the living- 53:8
  - 3. They made His grave with the wicked, but with the rich at His death- 53:9
  - 4. When You make His soul an offering for sin- 53:10
  - 5. Because He poured out His soul unto death- 53:12
- The Messiah/Suffering Servant's subsequent Resurrection from the dead is also **implicitly** predicted;
  - 1. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days- 53:10.
  - 2. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many- 53:11.

# Isaiah 53- Alternative Interpretations

- **1. Nation of Israel Interpretation-** Many modern Jews interpret the suffering Servant, not to be an individual who dies and rises from the dead literally (like the Messiah), but instead as the nation of Israel as a whole.
  - Support for this comes from the previous passages from Isaiah 40-55 including some of the Servant Songs which undeniably refer to the Suffering Servant as being the nation of Israel (esp. against the backdrop of it's return to the Promised Land after it's Babylonian Exile in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.).
  - E.g. Isaiah 52:11-12, the immediate verses preceding our Messianic prophecy, speak of the nation of Israel thusly, *"Depart! Depart! Go out from there, Touch no unclean thing; Go out from the midst of her, Be clean, You who bear the vessels of the Lord. For you shall not go out with haste, Nor go by flight; For the Lord will go before you, And the God of Israel will be your rear guard"*.
- **Response:** This interpretation of 52:13-53:12 is simply impossible Biblically, historically and logically to be true!
  - 1. No authoritative Jewish source interpreted this text as referring to the nation of Israel until Rashi in the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Though, the Christian Father, Origen, refers to some random non-authoritative but learned Jews who were espousing this view in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, but it did not endure or become incorporated into any authoritative texts like the Targums or Talmud). **Despite centuries of Christians using this text Messianically in debate with Jews!!!**
  - 2. Some ancient Jewish sources refer to this text as a Messianic prophecy about the Jewish Messiah; the Servant's suffering and earth is explicitly said to be for the sins of Israel as a nation being full of spiritually "blind and deaf" Jews.
  - 3. The Servant is depicted as righteous yet lowly and afflicted, despised and rejected. Israel has never been totally righteous with no deceit in its mouth in history + this violates God's covenant with Israel in the Torah whereby it says if Israel is righteous God will bless it and He will only curse it with suffering and affliction if they are disobedient.
  - 4. The Servant, after His suffering, was said to be highly exalted so that kings and leaders around the world would stand in awe of Him and bow down to Him. Israel has never been highly exalted to the point that Gentile kings and leaders have bowed down to it or been in awe of it, while many kings have done such to Jesus over the centuries.
  - 5. Israel's suffering at the hands of the Gentiles (Assyria, Babylon, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Nazis), have only ever brought further condemnation on themselves when God was finished using them to punish the Jews for their sins, Israel's sufferings have never Biblically or historically brought healing, redemption or forgiveness to its oppressors.

# Isaiah 53: Alternative Interpretations Cont.

- **1. Israel's Righteous Remnant Interpretation-** Many Jews throughout history have recognized the erroneous nature of the National interpretation of this prophetic text and instead opt for a more plausible view of it referring to the righteous remnant of Israel- the righteous minority as it were which can range from 1 person to many within the nation of Israel.
- **Response:** While this interpretation is partially correct in so far as an individual, such as the Jewish Messiah Jesus, can constitute the righteous remnant of Israel, this text cannot be referring to a group of individuals as the righteous remnant minority within Israel; **they are NOT, Biblically speaking, a “distinct entity”!**
  - 1. The righteous remnant has no identifiable or clear origin and history of its own. It makes no sense to say “He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground- 53:2, as it has no origin like Israel does nor an upbringing like a person has.
  - 2. Isaiah 53:7 speaks of the Servant thusly, “*He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth*”. This is the opposite of the role of the righteous remnant throughout history as it's role is to object to the sinful majority and voice its complaints and historically (esp. prior to the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.), it has led several violent resistance movements and rebellions to overthrow the sinful oppressors of God's servants (E.g. The Maccabees of the Maccabean revolt in 167-160 B.C.).
  - 3. The righteous remnant of Israel has never, historically, been highly exalted where Gentile kings bowed down to them and were in awe of them as per Isaiah 52:13-15. Quite the opposite, Gentile oppressors and leaders have always regarded these rebels with disdain and want to kill them!
- It's obvious that this text speaks of concrete individual, not an abstract unidentifiable group of persons!

# Isaiah 53:

## Jesus as Failed Messianic Candidate

- Jews, who begrudgingly admit Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is indeed a Messianic prophecy, have nevertheless objected to Jesus' claims to have fulfilled it. They raise several alleged disanalogies between the Suffering Servant and Jesus as described in the NT, here are some of the main objections;
- **1. Isaiah says the Servant would be sick & die due to disease-** No it doesn't, it says he was acquainted or intimately associated with the grief-stricken, sick and dying, just as Jesus the Jewish Messiah was when He healed the people of their ailments.
- **2. Jesus Did Violence in the Temple-** No He didn't! Jesus used a whip to drive the sinful people away from the Temple, no one got hurt or was injured or killed.
- **3. Jesus Cried Out on the Cross (Not Silent)-** This verse is not about not making a single noise, but about being a lamb to the slaughter, meaning He would not raise His voice in His own defense or to resist/protest what was happening to Him; perfect description of Jesus and his "turning the other cheek"!
- **4. Jesus Did Not Have any Physical Seed-** The Hebrew word "zera" meaning "seed" is sometimes used literally to refer to physical descendants and sometimes metaphorically in the OT and the book of Isaiah itself. It is sometimes used to refer to a future generation as well and thus it is easy to see what this text means, Jesus has many Christians who are adopted as sons and daughters of God through Him; we are Christ's metaphorical children (i.e., the adopted *children* of God).

# The Timing of the Messiah (Daniel 9)

- **Daniel 9:24-27** predicts the precise timing that the Messiah would appear (minimally, it says the Messiah must appear before the destruction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple in 70 A.D.). Some Christians claim it can prove the precise year the Messiah would come (there are ways to get it to 30 A.D. or 33 A.D. depending on which date you prefer for Jesus' crucifixion);
  - *“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. 25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”*
- **Bonus: Haggai 2:6-9** says that God, *“...will fill this house [2<sup>nd</sup> Temple] with glory,’ says the Lord of hosts. 8 ‘The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,’ declares the Lord of hosts. 9 ‘The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace,’ declares the Lord of hosts”*. God’s glory was via His divine Shekinah or presence in Solomon’s Temple which was missing from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple, yet Jesus, God in the flesh, entered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple before it was destroyed to grant peace between God and man.

# Late vs. Early Dating of the Book of Daniel

- Outside of a mindless appeal to anti-supernatural bias, skeptics of the Bible have provided a few reasons to think Daniel was written in the Maccabean period. Contrastingly, more careful Biblical scholars have refuted all of these reasons and presented their own proving it dates to the time of the prophet Daniel himself!
- 1. Word Usage:**
- Skeptics claim Daniel uses certain Aramaic (supposedly dating only from western Syria/Palestine after 300 B.C.), Persian, 3 Greek words related to musical instruments and even the style of some Hebrew words all reflect a later date than when Daniel supposedly lived.
  - Counter: Unfortunately, these claims have been falsified as the Aramaic words used have been archeologically proven to date before, during and after the time of Daniel via 9<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. North Semitic inscriptions and the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Elephantine Papyri. The Persian words date to the time of Daniel who lived well into that Empire's early period, the specific Greek musicians with such instruments were shown to be imported as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and were mentioned being taken from Ashkelon to Babylon before 600 B.C. Finally, the Hebrew words and style reflect that found in Ecclesiasticus written in the time of Daniel according to skeptics (Barfield, p.269-272).
- On the other hand, Biblical scholars have found certain Assyrio-Babylonian words that indicate a composition at or near Babylon in the latter half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. These words either disappeared completely or underwent major alterations in the following centuries (Barfield, p.280).
- 2. Use of the Apocalyptic Genre:** Skeptics claim the apocalyptic genre did not exist in Daniel's day and instead it reflects Maccabean era apocalypses. This is untrue however, as books in this genre written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. differ radically from Daniel (Jubilees, 12 Patriarchs, Enoch, Sibylline Oracles, etc.).
- 3. Placement in the "Writings":** If Daniel was a major prophet, why is his book not placed in the "Prophets" section of the Bible? This objection makes three false assumptions in order to work; i) it assumes that the three sections were written subsequent in time instead of simultaneously, ii) that Jewish scholars at the time would have grouped Isaiah/Jeremiah and Daniel in the same boat, and iii) a book cannot have elements of prophecy and writing in it. Each of these assumptions has been proven untrue (see Barfield, p.272-274).



# Late vs. Early Dating of the Book of Daniel

- **4. Early References:** Daniel was already established as Scripture in the Maccabean period meaning it must have been established prior to that. The DSS link Daniel with Ecclesiastes and Chronicles that skeptics date at the latest to the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Also the book of 1<sup>st</sup> Maccabees references Daniel as Scripture. Finally, the prophet Ezekiel references Daniel's writings in this book and skeptics date him to the early period.
- **5. Josephus & Daniel:** Additionally, Josephus records Alexander the Great reading the book of Daniel and being so impressed he spared Jerusalem from his wrath and privileged the Jews. There are at least 8 reasons provided by secular historians as to why they think there is some "ring of truth" to this late first century A.D. account ([see Barfield, p.279](#)).

# Timing of the Messiah (Daniel 9)

- Daniel is prophesying during the late Exilic period and realized Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews' exile would end after 70 years; that time was almost at hand in the late 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.
- The prophecy outlines a total period of “Seventy sevens” or “Seventy weeks”. In prophecy this refers to “weeks of years” meaning there will be a period of  $70 \times 7 = 490$  years. **Dr. Michael Brown rejects arguments for a “360-day” prophetic year which some Christians use to predict the precise year of the Messiah to the time of Jesus.**
- Jews & Christians differ on whether to divide the 490 years into 3 periods of 49 year (7 weeks) + 434 years (62 weeks) + 7 years (1 week) or just two periods of 483 years (69 weeks) + 7 years (1 week); we shall assume the Jewish version is correct.
  - **“So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.**
- It is clear that the start (i.e., terminus a quo) of the 490 years is the **“issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem”** and after the 62+7 weeks period/s are completed, then an anointed one/Messiah must come and be killed **before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 A.D (i.e., terminus ad quem)**. This much is clear and uncontroversial among both Jews and Christians of various interpretations.
- The sequence, given a Jewish understanding is, 1) Decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, 2) After 49 years (first 7 weeks period) an anointed one (aka. Messiah #1) appears, 3) Jerusalem is restored, even in troublous times, for a period of 434 years (62 weeks), 4) Another anointed one (Messiah #2) comes and is killed (and ushers in the fulfillment of the other prophetic elements). 5) Over the final 7 year (1 week) period the Temple and city of Jerusalem will be destroyed.

# Daniel 9 Cont.

- **There is controversy as to when Step #1 was initiated. There are multiple possible candidates of varying strengths;**
- **1. Jeremiah's Receiving the 70-year prophecy**, either originally in **605 B.C** or later on in **597 B.C**. But virtually no one goes for this as the prophecy is not a word issued to restore the city as it wasn't destroyed yet and the 2 or 3 periods have no significant correlations according to Jews and Christians!
- **2. Decree of Cyrus recorded in Ezra 1:1-4 & 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 (ca. 539-538 B.C.)**: However this decree, only referred to the rebuilding of the Temple, not the city itself!
- **3. Decree of Darius in Ezra 6:1-12 (ca. 519-521 B.C.)**- But this simply renews Cyrus' earlier decree and focuses on the Temple alone not the city as a whole.
- **4. The Decree of Artaxerxes 1<sup>st</sup> in Ezra 7:12-26 (ca. 457 B.C.)**- Focused on the Temple again, but Ezra was given permission to use the funds as needed & Ezra 9:9 and Nehemiah 1:4 seems to indicate that the authors associated this decree with the restoration of Jerusalem as a whole via mentioning its "walls" being broken and repaired = city as a whole. But Barfield argues not a royal decree but "royal favour".
  - James Smith argues that the "word" doesn't refer to a specific decree or published prophetic message, it could simply refer to the divine declaration that Jerusalem be rebuilt and this favours a date close to the 457 B.C. decree option (Brown Vol 3., p.107).
  - This date gets us to 457-483 = 26 but remember no year "0" so it is 27 A.D.- the very year the Gospels say Jesus started his ministry!!!
- **5. The Commission of Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2:5-8 (ca. 446 B.C.)**- This date does mention the rebuilding of the city as a whole, but the problem is that this option is hardly a royal edict and was not seen as a decree. Furthermore, if we take this date, then 7+62 weeks later would give us 38 A.D. when no Messiah or anointed one of significance was killed for Jews or Christians = the prophecy is a bust then!
  - This date works according to some Christians if you use the "360 day prophetic year. Arrives at the year 30 A.D., they year Jesus died.
- Note: We know Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed in 70 A.D. and subtracting one week/7 years we arrive at 63 A.D., subtracting 483 years from that (remember no 0 A.D. year), we come to 421 B.C. and **thus there must be some minor gap years approx. 25-36 years** involved depending on the starting point or else it is a bust! Did these gaps occur after all three periods or only 1-2 of them, we simply don't know, but we do know the total number of possible gap years permitted!

# Daniel 9 Cont.

- Prophetic elements to be Fulfilled & Jesus in the NT (Brown, p.93);
- **1. To Fill Up the Transgression-** within the 490 year period, the people of Israel would commit their final transgression against God.
  - Fulfilled in Matt 23:32 where Jesus warns the leaders they were about to fill up the measure of the sin of their forefathers by killing him.
- **2. Top seal up the sin-** the perfect sacrifice for sin offered to forgive mankind's sins. Sin problem sealed decisively by Jesus in Hebrews 10:12-14.
- **3. To make atonement for iniquity-** we are able to be redeemed and reconciled to God with our sins atoned for Colossians 1:14 and Hebrews 10:12-14 say.
- **4. To bring in everlasting righteousness-** God has ushered in the Messianic era and the Already-but-not-Yet Kingdom of God whereby righteousness shall prevail eternally.
- **5. To seal up vision and prophecy-** Jesus fulfilled and completed the OT and with his ushering in the Messianic era and the New Testament = no need for new divine revelations.
- **6. To anoint the most holy-** Various ways Jesus fulfilled this, perhaps it refers to the initiating of the Spiritual Temple of God/Body of Christ.
- **\*\*\* Note:** anti-Christian Jews have argued this text speaks of two Messiahs or “anointed ones” not just one as Christians like to claim. This is unproven and depends on how one breaks down the weeks of years intervals. But, even if true, this does nothing to take away from Jesus’ necessary fulfillment of these prophecies as the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 anointed ones. The first one may refer to either King Cyrus the Persian, Joshua the High Priest or Zerubbabel the governor mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah.

# Jesus as Messianic Candidate

Messianic Prophecy	Unfalsified Jesus Fulfillment Claim
1. Messiah's Birth via an "almah" serve as a miraculous/supernatural sign to the House of David that "Immanuel/God is with them/us" (Isaiah 7:14).	The young unmarried woman Mary was a virgin who supernaturally conceived a son named Jesus who was God in the flesh (literally Immanuel/God with us).
2. Messiah would be a miracle healer of blind, deaf, mute and lame who would usher in a New Covenant between God & His people & serve as a Light to the Gentiles/nations. (Isaiah 35,49 & Jeremiah 31).	Jesus healed many people from their infirmities and He inaugurated the Messianic era as disclosed in the New Covenant/Testament written on His people's hearts via the H.S. & He has served as a Light to Gentile nations bringing them knowledge of and reconciliation with the one true God of Israel.
3. Messiah would die to atone for sin & rise from the dead (Isaiah 53).	Jesus was killed via being crucified and rose from the dead to atone for humanity's sins.
4. Timing- the Messiah would be killed and inaugurate Messianic era prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Temple in 70 A.D. (Daniel 9).	Jesus was killed in 30 A.D. and His death and subsequent Resurrection from the dead inaugurated the Messianic era.

# Falsifying Jesus as Messiah

## - Alleged Failed Messianic Prophecies -

- The above showed but a mere handful of the many Messianic prophecies and typologies that Jesus of the NT is uniquely claimed to fulfill as the Messiah.
- BUT, anti-Christian Jews claim that even if the claims above are granted for the sake of argument, Christians are merely engaging in a **selection bias** fallacy; they point out that Jesus is a falsified Messianic candidate because he has failed to fulfill various “provable” Messianic prophecies in the OT. For example;
  - 1. The Messiah was to be a reigning and conquering King of the Jews, but Jesus was rejected by His own people.
  - 2. The Messiah has to rebuild the Temple, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple was standing until His dying day and thus He never rebuilt the Temple at all.
  - 3. The Messiah was to usher in an age of world peace whereby everyone, Jew and Gentile alike, worship God in peace and harmony free from the harms of sin forever.
- These are elements of Messianic prophecy that are not yet fully fulfilled and yet Jesus in the Gospels and NT makes the unfalsified *bona fide* claim that He will fully fulfill all the other Messianic prophecies in the OT with His Second Coming in the future. Since we have the “downpayment” of Jesus’ Messiahship via the unique fulfillment of various prophecies during His first coming prior to 70 A.D., we have a divine guarantee that He will return to fulfill the rest!

# Comparison Test: Another Jewish Messiah Candidate?

- Probably the most famous ancient candidate for the Jewish Messiah was none other than Simon bar Kokhba (died c. 135 A.D.).
- He famously led a Jewish revolt against the Roman Empire between 132–135 A.D. Bar Kokhba was hailed as Messiah-king by Rabbi Akiva, who referred to him using Numbers in the Torah: "There shall come forth a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite through the corners of Moab," and Haggai 2: "I will shake the heavens and the earth and I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms...." (Talmud tractate Sanhedrin 97b).
- His messiahship was doubted by some, but bar Kokhba led a rebellion and founded a short-lived Jewish state. He was killed in the siege of Betar, which was the final battle of the Third Jewish–Roman War that ultimately devastated Judea and largely ended the political Messianic ambitions of the Jews in ancient times.

# Simeon Bar Kokhba as Messianic Candidate

<b>Messianic Prophecy</b>	<b>Unfalsified Jesus Fulfillment Claim</b>
<p>1. Messiah's Birth via an "almah" serve as a miraculous/supernatural sign to the House of David that "Immanuel/God is with them/us".</p>	<p>There are no claims regarding His birth- it was an mundane (i.e., ordinary natural) and insignificant event.</p>
<p>2. Messiah would be a miracle healer of blind, deaf, mute and lame who would usher in a New Covenant between God &amp; His people &amp; serve as a Light to the Gentiles/nations.</p>	<p>Though some miracles were attributed to Bar Kokhba (E.g. he had been seen spewing out flames), there are no reports that he healed people. He tried to enforce the Old Covenant, not disclose a New Covenant written on His people's hearts via the H.S. Nor has he served as a Light to Gentile nations bringing them knowledge of and reconciliation with the one true God of Israel.</p>
<p>3. Messiah would die to atone for sin &amp; rise from the dead.</p>	<p>Bar Kokhba was killed in Bethar during the war, but his death was not said to atone for the sins of Israel nor was it claimed that he rose from the dead. His death falsified his Messiahship!</p>
<p>4. Timing- the Messiah would be killed and inaugurate Messianic era prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple in 70 A.D.</p>	<p>Bar Kokhba was killed in 135 A.D. by the forces of Roman Emperor Hadrian, long after 70 A.D. His death failed to inaugurate any sort of Messianic hope, instead it had the opposite effect.</p>



# Uniqueness: Prophecies about Muhammed (Islam)

- The Quran mentions that the prophet Muhammed of Islam was prophesied in the Bible as the future and final prophet of Allah.
  - *“Those who follow the Messenger, the Immaculate One, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel which are with them.” (Al-Quran 7:158)*
- The question arises, are the bona fide claimed *fulfilled* and *unfalsified* Biblical prophecies about Muhammed as remarkable as those about Jesus and do they reproduce the extraordinary circumstance of “Muhammed or Bust”?
- 1. In **Deuteronomy 18:17-19**, Moses prophesied:
  - *“And the Lord said unto me. They have well spoken that which they have spoken, I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.”*
- Muslims claim that the foretold prophet in this prophecy was not Jesus, nor any other Israelite prophet, because none of them ever claimed to be the prophet promised here. Further Muslims argue that this prophecy could only have been fulfilled by Muhammad, who, like Moses, was a lawgiver, a prophet, and a military leader. Moreover, this Prophet was to come from the brethren of the Israelites, which must be a reference to the Ishmaelites (Muhammad’s purported ancestors), for Ishmael was the brother of Isaac, the father of Israel. These facts, along with other similarities between Muhammad and Moses, support the identification of "the Prophet" with Muhammad.
- 2. Christ promised another prophet (Comforter) in **John 14:16**- the Greek word *Paraclete* which the Christians interpret as referring to the Holy Spirit is by our Doctors taken to be *Periclyte*, the Greek form of Ahmad (i.e. Muhammed mentioned by name).

# Muhammed Prophecy Problems

- There are major problems with this prophetic appeal as Muslims have to tear both prophecies out of context in order to make them conform to the Islamic interpretation and so there is serious question as to whether the prophecies are even saying what they claim.
- **Deuteronomy 18 Prophecy:**
- 1. First, the passage says that God will raise up a prophet like Moses, because the Israelites didn't want to speak directly with God. The Israelites said, "Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God ... that I die not," and God replied, "They have well spoken that which they have spoken." Hence, when verse 18:15 is taken in context, we see that the Jews were asking for a mediator, someone to stand between them and God just as Moses did. The ultimate fulfillment of this passage would be someone who stands as a permanent mediator between God and man. While Muhammad could certainly be viewed as an intermediary of some sort, the passage seems to fit more comfortably if the Prophet is Jesus. At best, one could argue that Muhammad was a link in the chain of transmission from the Qur'an, from Allah, to Gabriel, to Muhammad, to mankind. But this doesn't fulfill the prophecy. Muslims don't believe in the sort of mediator required by Deuteronomy 18. In Christianity, however, Jesus is a permanent mediator: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Timothy 2:5-6).
- 2. Next, Moses says that God will raise up a prophet "from the midst of thee." Since he is talking to Israelites, it sounds as if God is telling them that he will raise up a prophet from the midst of Israel. In any case, Muhammad surely wasn't raised up from the midst of Jews. Jesus, on the other hand, was born and raised in Israel, so the context again fits more comfortably if Moses is referring to Jesus.
- 3. Third, although Muslims often claim that the term "brethren" must refer to the Ishmaelites, the Book of Deuteronomy shows that this claim is completely false. To be sure, "brethren" can be used to refer to people other than the Jews, and it is used in this manner with the Edomites earlier in Deuteronomy (see 2:4). However, the term "brethren" is most commonly used when referring to other Israelites: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother. (Deuteronomy 15:7).

# Muhammed Prophecy Problems Cont.

- Fourth, the conclusion of the Book of Deuteronomy tells us how we should interpret Moses' phrase "like unto me": And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel. (Deuteronomy 34:9-12).
- Here the phrase "like unto Moses" suggests a prophet who would speak with God face to face and perform signs and wonders "in the sight of all Israel." Muhammad doesn't fit either of these criteria. He claimed to have received his revelations from Gabriel, not directly from God, and he admittedly could not perform miracle
- Finally, while Muslims appeal to Deuteronomy 18:15-19 as evidence for their prophet, they would do well to read the next verse, which, when combined with a certain embarrassing event from Muhammad's life, turns out to be proof against the prophet of Islam. In Deuteronomy 18:20, God declares: But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.
- Here God gives us two criteria for recognizing a false prophet: (1) If a person delivers a revelation which doesn't come from God, the person is a false prophet; and (2) if a person speaks in the name of other gods, the person is a false prophet.
- Interestingly, Muhammad meets both criteria, for he delivered the infamous "Satanic Verses" (i.e. verses he gave to his followers as part of the Qur'an but later claimed were inspired by Satan). Since these verses did not come from God, Muhammad meets the first criterion. And since the verses promoted polytheism, Muhammad meets the second criterion as well.
- Hence, the very passage that Muslims claim as their primary Biblical prophecy about Muhammad turns out to proclaim that Muhammad can't be a prophet at all! (For a much fuller treatment of Deuteronomy 18:20 as evidence against Muhammad (see "The Deuteronomy Deductions = [https://www.answering-islam.org/Authors/Wood/deuteronomy\\_deductions.htm](https://www.answering-islam.org/Authors/Wood/deuteronomy_deductions.htm) ).

# Muhammed Prophecy Problems Cont.

## John 14 Prophecy:

1. The three passages from John repeatedly identify the Comforter as the Holy Spirit (or the "Spirit of Truth"). Yet Muslims argue that these verses simply can't refer to the Holy Spirit: The terms of the prophecy do not warrant the conclusion that they are applicable to the Holy Ghost. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you" are words too clear to need any comment. The New Testament says that John was filled with the Holy Ghost even before he was born. Then it speaks of Jesus himself as receiving the Holy Ghost in the shape of a dove. Thus the Holy Ghost used to visit men before the time of Jesus as well as in his own time. This argument clearly misses the point of Jesus' prediction. Jesus acknowledges that the Spirit was already with them: "... for he dwelleth with you." The prophecy was that the Spirit would be in them and dwell with them forever. This was something entirely new, and it was by no means invalidated because the Spirit was already in Jesus.
2. Jesus says that the Comforter would be with his disciples forever. In no sense was Muhammad ever with Jesus' disciples, let alone with them permanently.
3. According to the prophecy, the world cannot receive the Comforter because it cannot see him. Thousands of people saw Muhammad during his lifetime, for he was visible. Thus, the invisible Comforter cannot be the visible Muhammad.
4. Jesus tells the disciples that the Comforter was already with them. While the Holy Spirit was with Jesus' disciples, Muhammad wasn't born for more than five centuries after this prophecy and therefore couldn't have been with them.
5. The Comforter was to be in the disciples. Muhammad is not in Jesus' followers and never will be. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, filled the believers at Pentecost and has been in Christians ever since.
6. Jesus said that he would send the Comforter from the Father. Muslims do not believe that Muhammad was sent by Jesus; they believe that Muhammad was sent by God. So, unless Muslims are willing to admit that Jesus is God, they should not accept this as a prophecy about Muhammad.
7. Finally, prior to his ascension, Jesus predicted that his followers would "be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). The Holy Spirit came to Jesus' followers shortly after his ascension to the Father: And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:1-4) Thus, the fulfillment of this prophecy came within a matter of days. Muhammad came more than five hundred years later.

# Arabia = Land of the Promised One

- **Isaiah 21:13-17** says, *“The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companions of Dedanim. The inhabitants of the Land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him they fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn swords and from the bent bow, from the grievousness of war. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail; And the residue of number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall diminished: for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it.”*
- Muslims claim multiple fulfilled elements; the first is the connection with this prophecy & Arabia as the scene of the Prophecy. This is most significant. Hazrat Muhammad(saw) appeared in Arabia. Secondly, the prophecy speaks of “Him that fled”. The flight of Hazrat Muhammad is momentous event in the history of the world. It is upon the flight of Muhammad from Mecca that the Muslim calendar begins. Thirdly, “fled from drawn swords” conclusively proves the fulfillment of the prophecy in Muhammad who fled from Mecca when his house was surrounded by his deadly enemies who stood there, drawn swords in hand, thirsty for his blood.
- **BUT**, the next two verses, which Muslims conveniently leave out says: For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of a hireling, And all the glory of Kedar shall fail: And the residue of the number of archers, The mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: For the LORD God of Israel hath spoken it. (Isaiah 21:16-17).
- The verses provide a timeframe for when the prophecy was to be fulfilled. The fulfillment was to take place within a year of the prophecy! While we cannot be certain when the prophecy was made, we know that Isaiah wrote during the expansion of the Assyrian empire, and that the Assyrians began invading Arabia in 732 B.C. Further, the inhabitants of Tema lived approximately four hundred miles north of Mecca, so it is difficult to imagine how the prophecy could apply to Muhammad’s flight from Mecca. It seems most reasonable, then, to conclude that Isaiah prophesied about the Assyrian empire’s attacks on Arabia that occurred during his own lifetime, not about Muhammad’s flight from Mecca more than a thousand years later.

# “Muhammed or Bust” Circumstance?

- I’m afraid that the prophecies appealed to by Muslims do not predict what they claim when looked at in context.
- In some cases the claims about Muhammed provably falsify him as a candidate for fulfilling these prophecies in the Bible.
- Finally, there are multiple equally probable claimants for the fulfillment of these prophecies such as Joshua for Deuteronomy, and the Holy Spirit for John and so we do not have a situation of Muhammed or Bust, but instead it seems we “**Multiple Candidates (but NOT Muhammed) or Bust**” as Muhammed doesn’t even qualify as a candidate for some of the prophecies when properly understood!!!