As we noted in the last lesson, Jesus said not to believe Him if He had no witnesses to His claim to be the Son of God (John 5:31). In the same conversation that He put forward His works as a witness, He also presented the witness of the Scriptures (John 5:39, 45-47).

When the apostles and other Christians went throughout the world to convert the world to Jesus, one of the main arguments they used to persuade people to believe in Jesus was fulfilled prophecy. They laid the life of Jesus next to the predictions of the Old Testament prophets (all made at least 400 years before Jesus’ birth) and showed that there was a perfect match. This is proof that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Christ, the Son of God. To see examples of this argument read Acts 3:18; 8:32-35; 17:1-4; 18:24-28.

This argument for Jesus from fulfilled prophecy also serves as an argument for the Bible being the Word of God and as an argument for the existence of God (see Isaiah 41:21-29). So, this lesson is a clinching argument for this course and for Christianity.

The many predictions recorded by Moses and the prophets were written for the benefit of those who have had the gospel preached to them, including us (1 Peter 1:10-12). To the Old Testament writer and the Old Testament reader before Jesus, the various predictions of the coming Messiah (“anointed one,” “Christ” or “King”) were like puzzle pieces that could not be fitted together. But, to one who knows the life of Jesus, the puzzle pieces can be easily put together. It becomes obvious that Jesus was the One the Old Testament predicted and is none other than the Christ, the Son of God.

**The Old Testament Puzzle Put Together**

With the knowledge of the life of Jesus we have from the New Testament, the predictions of the Old Testament prophets can be understood and assembled together to get a complete picture of the Messiah they said would come.

The King who was to come would have a messenger, described as Elijah, who would prepare the way for Him (Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6). The King would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) of a virgin (Isa 7:14). And, His lineage (family line) would include Abraham (Genesis 12:3), Judah (Genesis 49:10), and David (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

Not only would this Messiah be human, He would also be Divine. He would be called by such names as “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14), and “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6-7). It is not surprising then to read that when He came to bring salvation, He would heal the blind, deaf, lame, and dumb (Isaiah 35:5-10; 53:4).

Although the coming “Anointed One” would be Divine and demonstrate the power of God, He would be a man of humble character. He would be quiet, unassuming, and not self-assertive. In this manner He would pursue His mission with determination until it was completed (Isaiah 42:1-4).

According to the Prophets, the Christ would suffer the rejection of men who did not realize His worth and therefore He would be a “man of sorrows, acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:1-3). The purpose of His suffering would be to sacrifice Himself for man’s sins to bring about man’s salvation (Isaiah 53:4-6).

But His sacrifice would not be the end of Him. He would “prolong His days” and see “the result of the anguish of His soul” and “be satisfied” (Isaiah 53:10-11). And because he bore the sins of mankind, He would be exalted and rewarded (Isaiah 53:12; Psalms 110:1).

Also, in addition to functioning as King, He would also be a Prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-19) and Priest (Psalms 110:4; see Zechariah 6:9-13).

**The Old Testament Picture of the Messiah Is a Picture of Jesus**

John the Baptist came as God’s messenger (Elijah) to prepare the people for Jesus (Matthew 11:2-15). Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1) of a virgin (Matthew 1:18-23). His family line included Abraham, Judah, and David (Matthew 1:1-2).

But Jesus was more than human. He was “God with us” (Matthew 1:23) and indeed was God in the flesh (Jn 1:1, 14). This was demonstrated by His miracles (John 5:36; 20:30-31). Jesus told John the Baptist’s disciples to tell him about the miracles that he was doing as evidence He was the One Isaiah had predicted would come (Matthew 11:2-6).

Although Jesus was Divine and possessed supernatural power, He did not
assert Himself against those who tried to destroy Him, but rather withdrew, asking that the multitude not make Him known (Mathew 12:14-21). With determination (Luke 9:51), He quietly worked toward the culmination of His work in Jerusalem.

It was in Jerusalem that Jesus’ rejection (John 1:11) reached its climax. He grieved over His rejection and the judgment that would soon come because of it (Matthew 23:37). Just outside Jerusalem, Jesus was crucified because of the rejection of men, but also because of the salvation of God. He was the sacrifice for the sins of mankind (1 Peter 2:24).

But, three days later, Jesus rose from the dead, as attested by many eyewitnesses (Acts 2:32; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8). He lives on to see the result of His labor of love and every soul saved gives Him great satisfaction.

Because of Jesus’ labor, God has highly exalted Him. He is both Lord and Christ at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33-36). His rulership is over all men, including the kingdom of those who have submitted to His rule, the church (Ephesians 1:20-23).

Jesus is also our Prophet, God’s only Spokesman in our day (Acts 3:21-23, Hebrews 1:1-2). And, at the same time, He serves as Priest, always living to plead with God for the forgiveness of our sins (Hebrews 7:11-28).

We recall from our childhood days the story of Cinderella. In her mad dash to return home before midnight when the magical spell was to wear off, she left a glass slipper behind. The prince made a desperate search throughout the land to find the young lady he had fallen “head over heels” for. How would he find her? Whoever could wear the glass slipper would be the one. Many tried it on, including Cinderella’s wicked sisters. But, none could wear it, until of course, Cinderella. She was the one to become princess.

The predictions made by the Old Testament prophets can be likened to a crown. Only the One who fulfilled the predictions could wear the crown. There were men besides Jesus who tried to “wear the crown” (see Matthew 24:23-24), but it did not fit them because they did not fulfill the O.T. predictions. But Jesus fulfilled the minute details of all the puzzling Old Testament predictions in a way that cannot be explained by mere chance or coincidence. The Scriptures do bear witness of Him, even as He said. The crown fits Him. He has the right to be King and is right now reigning in heaven!

Questions for Lesson Nine:

Name: ________________________

True or False? (Answer after reading the Scriptures in the lesson)

_____ 1. If the Jews of Jesus’ day had believed Moses, they still would not have believed Jesus.

_____ 2. Philip converted the Ethiopian to Jesus by showing him how Jesus fulfilled Isaiah 53.

_____ 3. The method Paul used to convert people in Thessalonica was to reason from the Old Testament Scriptures and persuade them that Jesus fulfilled them.

_____ 4. It was Apollos’ great speaking ability that refuted the arguments of the Jews.

_____ 5. Fulfilled prophecy does not play an important role in evidences for Christianity.

_____ 6. The Old Testament prophets completely understood the predictions they wrote about the Christ.

_____ 7. Those who read the Old Testament predictions before Jesus completed His life on earth clearly understood them.

_____ 8. We today are among those the Old Testament predictions were written for.

_____ 9. The messenger who would prepare the way for the Messiah was described as Elisha.

_____ 10. Beginning with Abraham, God made a nation through whom He would bring the Messiah to bless all nations.

_____ 11. When Jacob (Israel) gave Judah his blessing, he indicated that the Messiah would come through him.

_____ 12. David was promised that he would have a descendant who would be King forever.

_____ 13. The Messiah was predicted to be One who would love conflict and who would fight to promote and defend Himself.

_____ 14. God used men’s wicked treatment of the Messiah to fulfill His plan for man’s salvation.

_____ 15. The Messiah’s role as prophet would require men to hear and obey His words.

_____ 16. John the Baptist fulfilled Micah’s prophecy concerning the messenger to prepare the way for the King.

_____ 17. The importance of listing Jesus’ family line in Matthew 1 is to establish that He qualifies to be the Messiah.

_____ 18. Jesus expected John and his disciples to accept Him without any proof.

_____ 19. Jesus tried to avoid Jerusalem, fearing His life.

_____ 20. Jesus’ rejection and the consequences to follow in Jerusalem didn’t bother Him.

_____ 21. Jesus bore man’s sins in His body on the cross.

_____ 22. Over 500 people at one time saw Jesus after God raised Him from the dead.

_____ 23. Jesus is ruling His kingdom now as Lord and King at the right hand of God.

_____ 24. God continues to reveal His will in these last days through many people.

_____ 25. Jesus’ fulfillment of the Old Testament predictions could be coincidental.