

“I (God) will raise up a prophet

from among their brethren

like you (Moses)” (Deuteronomy 18:15).

God has not remained silent. He desires to be known by us. To fulfill such a purpose He raised up prophets who spoke to men, His Words, concerning Himself and His purpose for them and for us today. Moses was one such prophet. Moses was somewhat unique as a prophet in that he also was used by God to deliver his brethren from bondage. God promised Moses that He would raise up another prophet like him from among their brethren. The promise reads, “*The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you (Israel), from your brethren, you shall listen to him . . . And the Lord said to me, ‘They have spoken well. I will raise up **a prophet from among their brethren like you**, and I will put My words in his mouth and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of Him.*” (Deuteronomy 18:15-19). Verse 20 goes on to give a warning regarding false prophets, who will falsely claim to speak for God as His prophet.

As you can see in the above promise, God provides for man to have a means to know what He is saying. God then expects man to believe and obey **The Message given**. It is of preeminent importance then that we know who this promised prophet is because it is his words we are to listen to and obey and it is he who will deliver.

In the Old Testament Scriptures God has provided us with over 330 credentials or proofs of who exactly this prophet will be. God has purposed through these Old Testament prophecies to give men such a means as to without a doubt, concretely, and objectively identify this one when he comes so as not to be deceived by a false prophet.

Before we look at these identifying credentials (prophecies) we should look at Deuteronomy 18:15-19 once more. See if you can notice a very important clue or credential as to the promised prophet’s identity. Who is God speaking to? Who is Moses speaking to? Read the whole chapter 18 to get more of the context: Moses is speaking to Israel (his Jewish brethren) and he is telling them what God told him regarding the good news of the promised prophet. This is key to understanding who the promised prophet is and who the promised prophet cannot be. You see, some say this promise is fulfilled in Muhammad and that the *Qur’an* refers to Deuteronomy 18:15-19 when it says, “*The unlettered prophet* (Muhammad), *whom they* (the Christians) *find mentioned in their own* (Scriptures—the Bible) *in the Law and the Gospels.*” (surah 7:157).

Let us now look at the evidence to objectively access this claim. First, it is clear that the term “*brethren*” in Deuteronomy 18 means fellow Israelites. The Jewish Levites were told in verse 2, “*They shall have no inheritance from among their brethren.*” Elsewhere in Deuteronomy, the term “*brethren*” also means fellow Israelites, not foreigners. God told the Jews to choose a king “*from among your own brothers,*” not a “*foreigner*” (Deuteronomy 17:15). Israel never chose for herself a non-Jewish king. So you see, the context of chapter 18 as well as the entire book of Deuteronomy makes clear how the term “*brethern*” is being used. The context and use of the term throughout does not allow for it to mean anyone other than an Israelite. Since the term “*brethren*” refers to Israel, not to their Arab antagonists, the promised prophet would not come from their enemies, but from their brethren (Israel).

But Muhammad came from Ishmael and is an Arab, not an Israelite, as Islam admits. Prophets and heirs to the Jewish throne came from Isaac. According to the Torah (first five books of the Bible), when Abraham prayed, “*If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!*” God answered emphatically, “*My covenant I will establish with Isaac (not Ishmael).*” (Genesis 17:18, 21). Later God repeated, “*It is through Isaac* (not Ishmael) *that your offspring will be reckoned*” (Genesis 21:12). The *Qur’an* itself states that the prophetic line came through Isaac, not Ishmael: “*And we bestowed on him Isaac and Jacob, and we (Allah) established the prophethood and the scripture among his seed*” (surah 29:27). [Notice as an aside that Allah refers to himself as “*we*.” This is done many times throughout the *Qur’an* (30+ times in surah 2 alone). Yet, Islam despises that God is revealed in the Bible as One God revealed in three Persons—“*Let Us(God) make man in Our image*” and “*The Lord our God is One*”(Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 6:4).]

Jesus was from among His Jewish brethren, Israel (Matthew 1; Luke 3:23-34; Galatians 4:4). This is an accepted fact by Islam and even secular sources. Jesus also fulfilled other credentials of the prophet-messiah(deliverer) likened to Moses in Deut 18:15-19 which says, “*he will tell them everything I commanded him.*” Jesus said, “*I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me*” (John 8:28). And, “*I did not speak on my own accord, but the Father Who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it*” (John 12:49). He called himself a prophet (Luke 13:33), and the people considered him a prophet (Matthew 21:11; Luke 7:16; 24:19; John 1:45; 4:19; 6:14; 7:40; 9:17; Acts 3:22-23; 7:37). Muhammad was pressed for a miracle to prove he was a prophet from God. Yet, he confessed that he would not perform any miracles and he was a mere mortal (surah 17:90-93; 29:50-51; 2:118; 3:183). Jesus, however, had a ministry of miracles (John 20:30-31).

The Old Testament Scriptures (including the Torah, Psalms, and Prophets) contained, as mentioned, 330+ credentials besides those already stated directly in Deuteronomy 18:15-19 to know without a doubt, by concrete, objective evidence, who this promised prophet is. It is to these prophecies we now turn to put evidence on top of evidence as the case mounts for determining definitively who the prophet is. These prophecies are given over a 1000 year period. All of them are given at least 500 years prior to the birth of Jesus Christ. Yet, every one of the 330+ prophet-messiah’s credentials are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, without exception, without alteration, and many with amazing detail. Notice especially the specificity of these prophecies and the equal detail in their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. For the sake of space we have listed only about 50 of the major credentials in the following chart which gives the O.T. prophecies in the first two columns and then their fulfillment in Jesus in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column.

Remember, just as the prophet must be from among his Jewish brethren according to Deut 18:15-19, he must emphatically, without exception, fulfill all of the following prophetic credentials. Consider this in light of God’s warning about false prophets in Deut 18:20. The one who claims to be the promised prophet likened unto Moses yet does not meet all of the credentials is false and God says, “*he speaks in the name of other gods*” (verse 20).

Prophecies Concerning His Birth		
He must be born of the seed of woman	Genesis 3:15	Galatians 4:4; Matthew 1:20
He must be born of a virgin *	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35
He must be the Son of God	Psalms 2:7	Matthew 3:17; Mark 9:7
He must be of the seed of Abraham	Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:16
He must be son of Isaac (not Ishmael)	Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:23, 34; Matthew 1:2
He must be the son of Jacob	Numbers 24:17	Luke 3:23, 34; Matthew 1:2
He must be of the tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:23, 33; Hebrews 7:14
He must be of the family line of Jesse	Isaiah 11:1	Luke 3:23, 32; Matthew 1:6
He must be of the house of David	Jeremiah 23:5	Luke 3:23, 31; Matthew 1:1
He must be born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4-7
He must be presented with Gifts	Psalms 72:10, 12-15	Matthew 2:1,11
Herod Kills Children	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16
Prophecies Concerning His Nature		
His pre-existence	Micah 5:2	Colossians 1:17; John 17:5, 24
He shall be called Lord	Psalms 110:1	Luke 2:11; Matthew 22:43-45
He shall be called Immanuel(God with us)	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23; Luke 7:16
He shall also be a Priest	Psalms 110:4	Hebrews 3:1; 5:5,6
He shall also be a Judge	Isaiah 33:22	John 5:30; 2 Timothy 4:1
He shall also be a King	Psalms 2:6	Matthew 27:37; John 18:33-38
His special anointing of the Holy Spirit	Isaiah 11:2	Matthew 3:16,17; Mark 1:10-11
His Zeal for God	Psalms 69:9	John 2:15,16

“For if you believed Moses

you would believe Me

for he wrote about Me” (Jesus in John 5:46).

Jesus and New Testament writers appealed to prophecy to make known who He was:

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He(Jesus) expounded to them in all the Scriptures(the Old Testament), the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27)

“You search the Scriptures(the Old Testament), for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me(Jesus). But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. **For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?**” (John 5:39, 40, 46, 47).

“But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law (the Old Testament Scriptures), ‘They hated Me(Jesus) without a cause’ ” (John 15:25)

“To Him(Jesus) all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission(forgiveness)of sins” (Acts 10:43)

“Now when they had fulfilled all that was written(in the Old Testament) concerning Him(Jesus), they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.” (Acts 13:29)

“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures(Old Testament), and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures(Old Testament), and that **He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present**” (1 Corinthians 15:3-6). [many eyewitnesses to the risen Christ]

A second objection is that the New Testament has been corrupted since the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Muhammad told all Muslims they should believe the Bible (surah 2:136; 3:84; 5:46; 57:27; 10:94). This objection holds no more water than the others though. You see, by the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the 66 books of the Bible had already been compiled into one unit or book for centuries. Also, thousands of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament were in existence. Their consistency confirmed that their accuracy had been reliably preserved up to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. These same manuscripts are in existence today and can be viewed by the skeptics in museums, universities, etc. around the globe. Further, modern confirmation of the Bible’s authenticity and preserved reliability came in 1948 when Bedouin shepherd boy (also named Muhammad) discovered the *Dead Sea Scrolls* while searching for his lost goat. They contained manuscripts of Bible books dating back centuries before the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The consistency between these manuscripts and the Bible we read today proved the Bible’s reliability once again by even modern day evidence.

When the *Qu’ran* was written, the Bible had not yet been translated into Arabic. Yet, Muhammad claimed that the message of the *Qu’ran* was consistent with the Bible in order to gain legitimacy for his new religion. Upon the Bible’s translation into Arabic In the 10<sup>th</sup> century Qu’ranic teachers soon realized the *Qu’ran’s* vast deviation from God’s actual revelation in the Bible. In an attempt to save face they began to propagate the lie that the Bible was corrupted by men, even though the manuscript evidence, hands down, proved this false and still does today.

A third objection is that the prophecies were deliberately engineered by Jesus in order to substantiate his claims. However, again, common sense should prevail when one considers that there is no way Jesus(if he was a mere mortal) could have controlled many events necessary for their fulfillment. For example, He had no control over where He would be born (Micah 5:2), how He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), when He would die (Daniel 9:25), what tribe (Genesis 49:10) and lineage He would be from (2 Samuel 7:12), etc. Also, there is no way, short of being supernatural, that Jesus could have manipulated the events and people in His life to respond in exactly the way necessary for it to appear that He was fulfilling all of these prophecies, including John’s announcing of Him (Matthew 3), His accuser’s reactions (Matthew 27:12), how the soldiers cast lots for His garments (John 19:23, 24), and how they would pierce His side with a spear (John 19:34). So how is it that one can determine all these things and even write about them at least 500 years prior to their fulfillment unless He is God!? Answer this, considering the fact that the prophecies are historical facts which cannot be explained away!

“And beginning with Moses and all the prophets

A final objection is that the fulfillment of all the above prophecies in Jesus was a coincidence. However, 8 of the above prophecies were chosen for a scientific study by *Science Speaks* to determine the chance one might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies. The probability was determined to be 1 in 10<sup>17</sup> (10 to the 17<sup>th</sup> power). That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000 (17 zeros after the one). In order to help us comprehend this staggering number, *Science Speaks* illustrates it by supposing that we take 10<sup>17</sup> silver dollars and lay them on the ground of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up only one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. This is the same chance the prophets would have had for writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, up to this day, providing they wrote them according to their own wisdom. Now these prophecies were either given by inspiration of God or the prophets just wrote them as they thought they should be. In the latter case the prophets had just one chance in 10<sup>17</sup> of having them come true in any man, but they all came true in Christ. The fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of these prophecies because it is impossible humanly speaking. (Stoner in Science Speaks, 100-107)

The study further went on to consider 48 of the above prophecies and found that the chance any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10<sup>157</sup>. Practically speaking, to try and illustrate this number, considering the limitations of our human mind, would be futile (God’s thoughts are higher than—Isaiah 55:8, 9.), and this does not even near consider the entire 330+ prophecies.

Almost everything a skeptic of Jesus Christ believes every day about his own life and the world around him has far, far less statistical support than exists for proving objectively that Jesus is the Prophet-Messiah which the law and prophets foretold. Most of the above fulfillments were actually witnessed by real persons in history who wrote what they saw, heard, and touched with their own two hands, eyes, and ears. All but one of Jesus’ disciples were killed because they refused to stop telling others about the crucified and risen Lord Jesus whom they saw, heard, and handled as they personally witnessed many of the prophecies fulfilled in Him (1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:30-31; 20:25-27; Lk 24:39; Acts 2:22-36; 1 Pet 1:16). You see, some men will die for what they believe because they have believed a lie, not knowing the truth as eye witnesses and, therefore, being deceived by the lie others pass on. But, no one dies for what he knows is a lie. So we know Jesus’ disciples died for the truth because they were eyewitnesses to the thing they died for, not even having the chance of being deceived by mere lies passed on by men. If what they saw, heard, and handled was not a crucified and risen Jesus they would not have preached this message to their own death.

In conclusion, the evidence proves far beyond any reasonable doubt that Jesus is even far more than the one who delivered God’s message. **He is The Message!**—the Word of God in flesh (John 1:1, 14). He is also the Lamb of God Who fulfills what every blood sacrifice of the Old Testament points us to: the life of a sinless substitute being taken in place of sinful man to satisfy the Just nature of God (Leviticus 16-17; Exodus 12; John 1:29). *Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins* (Hebrews 9:22). The shed blood of Jesus Christ alone delivers man from sin because it is the blood of God the Son in flesh—in flesh so He could die, God so His life and, therefore, the sacrifice of Himself would have infinite value to redeem every man (2 Corinthians 5:19; Rev 1:5; Heb 7:16). Jesus bore the judgment which a holy God must pour out on the sinner. Therefore, God can now remain Just while forgiving and declaring the sinner righteous who believes on Jesus because He has dispensed perfect justice on Jesus against sin’s offense to His infinitely holy nature (Isaiah 53; Romans 3:21-26). Our works do nothing to satisfy God’s Holy and Just judgment against our sin. God calls our works “*filthy rags*” (Isaiah 64:6). Only Jesus’ blood satisfies God’s justice and, therefore, makes possible our acceptance with God by faith in Him.

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He expounded to them in all the Scriptures concerning Himself”

