

Video Transcript: Was Jesus Christ the Messiah?

1.

Christians believe that Jesus Christ was the Messiah whose coming was predicted in the Old Testament. Those of the Jewish faith, however, disagree, and are still waiting for the Messiah to appear. So who's right?

In this video, I will present evidence to show that Jesus was the Messiah.

2.

The word "messiah" means "anointed" and refers to a consecrated person, such as a priest or a king.

The Old Testament contains many prophecies that describe a particular Messiah who would be God's anointed Saviour and Redeemer.

The equivalent of "Messiah" in Greek is the title "Christ". Thus, the name "Jesus Christ" literally means, "Jesus the Anointed" or "Jesus the Messiah".

Interestingly, the name "Jesus" is derived from the Hebrew word *Jeshua* which means "the Lord saves".

3.

The Bible uses many different names for the Messiah. For example, he is called:

Our "Rock" and "Redeemer" (Psalm 19:14; 78:35, Isaiah 59:20).

God's "Anointed One" (Psalm 2:2; Daniel 9:26).

God's "Prophet" (Deuteronomy 18:18; cf. John 1:21).

The "Branch" and "The Lord Our Righteousness" (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6).

"Immanuel" which means "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14; cf. 1 Matthew 1:23).

4.

In order for Jesus to be the Messiah, he needed to:

1. Claim to be the Messiah. If he had not made this claim, there would be no Christian faith!
2. Exactly fulfill all the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah, many of which are very detailed.
3. Live a life consistent with being God's Anointed One.

An unbiased examination of the Scriptural evidence concerning Jesus Christ will show emphatically that he was the Messiah.

5.

The New Testament reveals that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah on several occasions. For example, he claimed:

- That he had come to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies (Matthew 5:17; Luke 4:17-21; 24:25-27, 44).
- That the Scriptures spoke about him (John 5:39-40, 46).
- That he was the Messiah foretold in the Scriptures (Matthew 16:16-17; 26:63-64; John 4:25-26).
- And that his disciples were blessed to witness what had been foretold (Matthew 13:16-17).

6.

According to one authority, there are about seventy Old Testament prophecies (excluding types) relating to the Messiah which were fulfilled by Christ at his first advent. The following are some examples:

- He will be from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10).
- He will be a descendant of King David (2 Samuel 7:13; Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6).
- God will be his Father (2 Samuel 7:14).
- A messenger will be sent to prepare the way for him (Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 3:1-2).
- He will be born in the small town of Bethlehem, by natural childbirth, but will have existed from eternity (Micah 5:2-3).

7.

- He will be born to a virgin, and will be called Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14).
- He will be righteous from an early age (Isaiah 7:15).
- The Spirit of God will be upon him (Isaiah 11:2).
- He will be a covenant and a light for the lost (Isaiah 42:6-7).
- He will live the life of a suffering servant, but will be glorified by God (Isaiah 52:13-53:12).
- He will enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).
- The Jews will pay thirty pieces of silver as his value (Zechariah 11:12-13).

8.

- He will suffer terribly at his death, but will be honoured by God (Psalm 22).
- People will mock him and insult him as he suffers (Psalm 22:6-8).
- His torturers will gamble for his garments (Psalm 22:18).
- He will be resurrected from the dead (Psalm 16:10; Psalm 110:4; Isaiah 53:10-11).

As one commentator observed:

The chances of all these prophecies being fulfilled in one man are so overwhelmingly remote that it is strikingly demonstrated that they could in no wise be the shrewd guesses of mere men – Prof. J. P. Free.

9.

Jesus' claim to be the Messiah is also supported by his life, as described in the New Testament. This evidence includes:

- **His teachings.** These show an insight and depth of wisdom as yet unsurpassed by any other religious founder, moralist, or philosopher.
- **His character.** Jesus was without sin (cf. John 8:29). Even his enemies could find no fault with him, and could only accuse him of blasphemy for claiming to be God's Son (cf. John 19:6-7).
- **His public miracles.** These were even greater than those performed by the great prophets Elijah and Elisha, but still the Jews rejected him (cf. John 8:46; 10:31-32).

10.

- **His own prophecies.** Jesus predicted his own death and resurrection (e.g., Matthew 20:17-19). But he also predicted the total destruction of the Jewish Temple which occurred some forty years later (Matthew 24:1-2).

- **His resurrection from the dead.** This is the emphatic proof that Jesus was who he claimed to be – the Messiah and the Son of God. Thus Jesus rebuked the unbelievers of his day saying to them:

A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:39-40).

11.

If the evidence for Jesus as the Messiah is so strong, why did the Jews reject him?

Of course, not all of the Jews did reject Jesus. The proto-church was made up of mostly Jewish believers, including many priests (Acts 2:1-41; 6:7).

It was these believers who spread the gospel message to the Gentile nations (cf. Acts 9:15; 10:45; 11:18).

This was done to fulfill the prophecy where God promised:

I will show my love to the one I called "Not my loved one". I will say to those called "Not my people", "You are my people"; and they will say, "You are my God." (Hosea 2:23).

12.

As for those Jews who have rejected Christ, they have been passed over so that the prophecy might be fulfilled which says:

Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed (Isaiah 6:10).

But there is still hope for the nation of Israel, because God has also promised:

I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son (Zechariah 12:10).

13.

There is strong evidence to support Christ's own claim to be the Messiah.

In addition to precisely fulfilling the scores of Old Testament prophecies relating to his first appearing, his life was also consistent with that of God's Anointed One.

His wisdom, righteousness, the willing sacrifice of his life for the lost, his love for and obedience to the Father, the miracles that he performed, the fulfilled prophecies that he made, and ultimately his resurrection from the dead all point irresistibly to the truthfulness of this claim. Thus, the words of the psalmist are revealed in Christ:

The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes (Psalm 118:22-23).