

# The Top 40 Messianic Prophecies about Jesus

The Hebrew Scriptures were key to Jesus' self-understanding.

by Rich Robinson | August 04 2020

## Introduction to Messianic Prophecies

**There are probably no other persons in history** whose life has raised as many questions as that of Jesus (Yeshua). His life, teaching, and deeds were of such a nature that his first disciples and closest followers were often baffled by him. But for Jesus himself, the Hebrew Scriptures and messianic prophecies were the key by which he understood his vocation as Israel's Messiah.

*For Jesus himself, the Hebrew Scriptures were the key by which he understood his vocation.*

A clear example of this comes at the end of Luke's gospel. After Jesus was crucified, his followers were crushed. They had hoped that he would be the Messiah who would destroy the tyranny of Rome and restore the kingdom of Israel. **But their idea of the Messiah was not God's idea.** To his disappointed followers, Jesus said:

“How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.” (Luke 24:25-27 NIV)

For Jesus, the idea that he had to first die as an atonement for our sins, and then rise from the dead, made perfect sense—and was, in fact, necessary—as the fulfillment of what the prophets of the Hebrew Bible had said. This was how he understood himself, and he argued that this was the only way his followers could understand him.

**But what does it mean to fulfill the Scriptures?** This is not as simple as it may sound. Often, the New Testament writers say that Jesus has fulfilled the Scriptures when something in his life is literally predicted by the prophets. For instance, the idea that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Other times,

fulfillment is not about prediction but pattern. In his role as Israel's Messiah, Jesus fulfills the Scriptures when he relives Israel's story through his own life—when he suffers their pains, endures their hardships, and lives a life of perfect obedience to God's law.

**So, we invite you to explore these passages below** from the Jewish Scriptures and their fulfillments in the life of Jesus.

# The Prophecies

## 1) The Messiah would be resurrected

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Psalm 16:8-11

**New Testament citations:** Acts 13:35-37

**Commentary:** King David may have seen ahead to his own resurrection—but David's resurrection was only possible because of the resurrection of his descendant, the Messiah. His vision of his own resurrection and that of the Messiah's could well have blended into one glimpse of the future. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [What proof do you have that Jesus is the Messiah?](#)
- [Two Messiahs in Judaism: Ben David and Ben Joseph](#)

## 2) The Messiah would bring in a new covenant

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Jeremiah 31:31-34

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 7:22, 8:6-13, 9:15, 10:14-18, 12:24

**Commentary:** The expression "new covenant" appears seven times in the New Testament, and the new covenant is even more frequently referred to simply as the "covenant," with the context showing what is meant. The first big question is, when will this covenant begin to take effect? [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## Related Topics:

- [Overview of the Major Prophets](#)

### 3) The Messiah would be forsaken and pierced, but vindicated

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Psalm 22:1-31](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 27:35, 39, 43-44, 46](#); [Mark 15:34](#); [John 19:23-24](#), [Hebrews 2:11-12](#)

**Commentary:** The first half of [Psalm 22](#) is the psalm of a righteous sufferer, derided by his enemies and feeling forsaken by God. From verse 22 (Hebrew, 23) on, the tone changes radically as the sufferer is vindicated by God and the Lord reigns over all the earth. Beginning with a despondent tone, the psalm ends on a note of triumph. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

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# About Jesus

and why he still has Jewish followers

Hi Friend,

Just in time for the holidays, find out why Jesus and Hashanah go together like apples and honey!

Also included: the surprising story of a Jew for Jesus who was invited to help lead a traditional Yom Kippur service.



CONTEXT

**What's Rosh Hashanah Got to Do With Jesus**

Check out these 5 ways that Jesus and this ancient Jewish holiday are connected.



REFLECTION

**How a Jew for Jesus Helped Establish Local Synagogue Services**

An unlikely meeting led to a surprising partnership

## 4) The Messiah would be the rejected cornerstone

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Psalm 118:22-24

**New Testament citations:** Mark 12:10-11, Acts 4:9-12, Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-8,

**Commentary:** The word “cornerstone” may refer either to the foundation stone or to the keystone holding together an arch. So Jesus is either the foundation or the “stone” holding together the entire structure of Israel. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Jesus' References to Old Testament Scriptures](#)

## 5) The Messiah would do life-affirming redemptive deeds

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Isaiah 61:1-2

**New Testament citations:** Luke 4:16-21

**Commentary:** “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,” writes Isaiah, “because the Lord has anointed me.” Commentators have often wondered who the “me” is in this passage. Is it the prophet? Is it the “Servant of the Lord” with whom we meet in earlier chapters? [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [What proof do you have that Jesus is the Messiah?](#)
- [Two Messiahs in Judaism: Ben David and Ben Joseph](#)

## 6) The Messiah would be born of a virgin

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Isaiah 7:14

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 1:22-23, Luke 1:31-35

**Commentary:** More than most others, this prophecy has occasioned seemingly unending debate: was it fulfilled in Isaiah's time, or was it for a later time? Does the Hebrew word *almah* refer to a virgin or a young woman? Was Matthew in the New Testament misquoting it and distorting its meaning? [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [The Genealogy of the Messiah](#)
- [Almah: Virgin or Young Maiden?](#)

## 7) The Messiah would come according to a timetable

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Daniel 9:24–27

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 24:15–16, Mark 13:14–15, Galatians 4:4

As Daniel prayed, the angel Gabriel appeared to him to bring an announcement: Gabriel tells Daniel not about the 70 years of captivity (which Daniel knew were coming to an end) but about “seventy sevens,” or a period of 490 years, climaxing not merely in the return from Babylon but in the messianic age. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [The Messianic Time Table According to Daniel the Prophet](#)

## 8) The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Isaiah 52:13–53:12

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 8:16–17, Matthew 20:28, Matthew 26:28, Matthew 27:59–60, Mark 10:45, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20, John 12:37–38, Acts 8:32–35, Romans 10:16, Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:21–25

**Commentary:** Isaiah 52:13–53:12 has been a contentious passage between Jews and Christians over the centuries. Is it about Israel? Is it about the Messiah? Is it about someone else? Because of this, and also because the passage has been so

influential for many Jewish people who have come to believe in Jesus, we will expand the usual short commentary into a longer four-part article. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Who's the Subject of Isaiah 53? You Decide!](#)
- [The Rabbis' Dilemma: A Look at Isaiah 53](#)

## 9) The Messiah would bear our sins and suffer in our place

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Isaiah 52:13–53:12](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 8:16–17](#), [Matthew 20:28](#), [Matthew 26:28](#), [Matthew 27:59–60](#), [Mark 10:45](#), [Mark 14:24](#), [Luke 22:20](#), [John 12:37–38](#), [Acts 8:32–35](#), [Romans 10:16](#), [Hebrews 9:28](#); [1 Peter 2:21–25](#)

**Commentary:** Prophecies 8, 9, and 10 share the same extended commentary on the suffering servant. [Read the commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Why Did Jesus Need to “Die for Our Sins?”](#)
- [The Ultimate Scapegoat](#)

## 10) The Messiah would not remain dead, but see his seed, prolong his days and be exalted

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Isaiah 53:10–53:12](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Hebrews 9:28](#); [1 Peter 2:21–25](#), [Luke 9:22](#)

**Commentary:** Prophecies 8, 9, and 10 share the same extended commentary on the suffering servant. [Read the commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Resurrection: Rabbinic Judaism, Hebrew Scripture and the New Testament](#)
- [First Fruits in the Bible: What Does it Have to Do with Resurrection from the Dead?](#)

## 11) The Messiah would be preceded by Elijah the prophet

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Malachi 4:5-6 [Hebrew Bible, verses 3:23-24]

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 11:14-15, Matthew 16:14, Matthew 17:9-13, Mark 6:14-16, Mark 9:11-13, Luke 1:16-17, John 1:21

**Commentary:** This is the third “forerunner” prophecy. Isaiah 40:3-4 spoke of a voice crying out to [prepare the way of the Lord](#) in the desert; Malachi 3:1 [prophesied of a messenger](#) preparing God’s way and now in Malachi 4:5-6, God sends the prophet Elijah before the “great and awesome day of the Lord comes.” Elijah’s mission is to bring about reconciliation... [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Jesus and Elijah: Comparisons and Contrasts](#)
- [Guess Who’s Coming to the Seder?](#)

## 12) The Messiah would be a prophet like Moses

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Deuteronomy 18:15-19

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 13:57, Matthew 21:46, Luke 24:19, John 1:21, John 1:25, John 6:14, John 7:40, Acts 3:22, Acts 7:37

**Commentary:** This prophecy comes in the context of a warning by Moses against false prophets. In contrast to false prophets, the “prophet like me” will speak what is true. Moreover, according to verse 16, the prophet would speak for God so that the Israelites would not need to hear God’s voice directly, which was a fearsome prospect. In this way, the prophet would be a mediator between God and the people. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## Related Topics:

- [A Prophet Like Unto Moses](#)

## 13) The Messiah would be pierced

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Zechariah 12:10

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 24:30, John 19:31-37, Revelation 1:7

**Commentary:** In Zechariah 12 we find a prophecy of Judah's victory over the nations—a victory possible because God has extended his protection to them. At that time also, according to verse 10, a “spirit of grace” will come on the people as they look on (apparently) God himself, “whom they have pierced,” and as they are mourning “as one weeps over a firstborn.” [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## Related Topics:

- [Jewish Messianic Interpretations of Zechariah 12:10](#)
- [Two Messiahs in Judaism: Ben David and Ben Joseph](#)

## 14) The Messiah would come riding on a donkey

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Zechariah 9:9

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 21:1-7

**Commentary:** Zechariah 9:9 was therefore understood messianically. According to this Talmudic discussion, if we are worthy, the Messiah will come in the clouds. But if we are unworthy, he will come riding on a donkey. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## Related Topics:

- [Two Messiahs in Judaism: Ben David and Ben Joseph](#)
- [Jesus as Messiah in the Gospels](#)

## 15) The Messiah would be called out of Egypt

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Hosea 11:1

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 2:13–15

**Commentary:** Herod had already plotted to murder all the boys in Bethlehem two years of age and under. (This actually likely amounted to about twenty children; [see commentary on Jeremiah 31:15](#).) Warned by an angel, Joseph, Mary and Jesus flee to Egypt. This was not a random location. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [The Son of God](#)

## 16) The Messiah would be called God's Son

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Psalm 2:1–12

**New Testament citations:** Mark 1:11, Luke 3:22, Acts 4:25–28, Acts 13:33, Hebrews 1:5, Hebrews 5:5

**Commentary:** Psalm 2 speaks of the nations of the world plotting against both God himself and his “Anointed.” Originally, this referred to the Davidic king, but the scope of what is described here, as well as later Jewish tradition, understood this to be referring to the Messiah, God’s Ultimate “Anointed.” In verse 7, God specifically calls the Anointed “my Son” and promises worldwide rule in the face of the laughable opposition of the nations who counsel rebellion against God. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [The Son of God](#)

## 17) The Messiah would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Zechariah 11:12–13

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 26:14–15, Matthew 27:3, Matthew 27:9–10

**Commentary:** Jesus, in the tradition of the prophets of Israel, had rebuked the current leadership of Israel for being false shepherds. Yet the true shepherd,

Jesus himself, was rejected by the people and valued as lowly and worthless, just as thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave. [Continue reading commentary](#)



**Related Topics:**

- [A Comparison between Joseph and Jesus](#)

## 18) The Messiah would be the Son of Man

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Daniel 7:13-14

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 9:6, Matthew 12:8, Matthew 13:41, Matthew 16:13, Matthew 16:27, Mark 8:31, Luke 6:22, Luke 9:22, John 1:51, John 3:13-14, Acts 7:56 and many others

**Commentary:** “Son of Man” is the way Jesus referred to himself numerous times in the gospels. While “Son of Man” may sound like it emphasizes Jesus’ humanity, it is actually one that speaks about his deity and his exalted nature. It derives from Daniel 7:13-14, where Daniel receives a vision at night. On the “clouds of heaven” he sees “one like a son of man,” who appears before God—the “Ancient of Days.” [Continue reading commentary](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Is the Messiah Divine?](#)

## 19) The Messiah would be a willing sacrifice

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Genesis 22:1-18

**New Testament citations:** John 3:16, Hebrews 11:17-19

**Commentary:** As Abraham loved God and so obeyed Him, God loved the world. The sparing of Isaac at the end of the story enabled God’s promises to continue to be fulfilled through Isaac and through Isaac’s son Jacob. For if Isaac had indeed been sacrificed, the promises God made to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 could never have been fulfilled. In a twist on that, it was because Jesus actually was sacrificed that those promises are now fulfilled for the entire world. [Continue reading commentary](#)

## Related Topics:

- [Ram or Lamb?](#)

## 20) The Messiah would be the Passover lamb

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Exodus 12:1-51

**New Testament citations:** John 1:29, John 1:36, John 19:33, John 19:36; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; 1 Peter 1:19

**Commentary:** One of the most pervasive images in the New Testament is that of Jesus as our Passover lamb. Recall the story from the book of Exodus. A perfect lamb had to be selected, set aside for several days, then killed and its blood put on the doorposts of the Israelites' homes so that they would be spared the tenth plague: death of the firstborn. John the Baptist twice referred to Jesus as a "lamb." [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 21) The Messiah would be the star coming out of Jacob

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Numbers 24:17

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 2:2, Revelation 22:16

**Commentary:** The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, speaks of the "rise" of a star from Jacob, echoed in the New Testament's star that "rose" (Matthew 2:2, 9), using the same Greek word. At the other end of the New Testament, in Revelation 22:16, Jesus calls himself the "bright morning star." [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 22) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Micah 5:2 [Hebrew Bible verse 1]

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 2:1-6, John 7:40-43

**Commentary:** In agreement with the thought that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, we find first that Jesus was actually born there, though he grew up in

Nazareth. Second, the “chief priests and scribes” cited the prophet Micah in support of this idea. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 23) The Messiah would be greater than David

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Psalm 110:1–4

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 22:41–45, Mark 12:35–37, Luke 20:41–44, Acts 2:34–36, 1 Corinthians 15:25–28, Hebrews 1:3, Hebrews 1:13, Hebrews 4:14–5:10

**Commentary:** Rabbinic argumentation often centered on resolving two apparently contradictory Bible passages. Here, Jesus does something similar. From a multitude of passages we know that the Messiah had to be the son (that is, a descendant) of David. In that case, how can David address him as “Lord”? How can the Messiah be David’s son and at the same time his Lord? [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [The Genealogy of the Messiah](#)

## 24) The Messiah would be a descendant of David

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** 2 Samuel 7:12–16

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 1:1, Luke 1:32–33, Acts 15:15–16, Hebrews 1:5

**Commentary:** The prophets of ancient Israel looked for a day when this promise would be fulfilled in an ultimate descendant of David—the Messiah—who would rule over the nation. [Isaiah 11:1], in a great messianic passage, tells us that “there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.” Jesse, as we learn elsewhere, was the father of David. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 25) The Messiah is spoken of throughout the Hebrew Bible

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Hebrew Bible

**New Testament citations:** Luke 24:25–27, Luke 24:32

**Commentary:** Jesus points them to the prophets of the Bible and reiterates what he had told them numerous times before: “Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” To paraphrase this, Jesus was asking, “Wasn’t it by God’s plan that the Messiah had to suffer, die, and then be resurrected?” The Greek “necessary” implies that there was no choice; this is how things *had* to be to redeem Israel and the world. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 26) The Messiah would be the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Isaiah 9:6–7 [Hebrew Bible 9:5–6]

**New Testament citations:** Luke 1:32–33, Luke 1:79, John 14:27, Acts 10:36, Romans 9:5, Philippians 4:7, Colossians 2:3; 2 Thessalonians 3:3

**Commentary:** In these verses, a child is at the forefront of Isaiah’s prophecies, as it was in Isaiah 7:14 ([see comments on that verse](#)). This time, the child is given a name consisting of four exalted titles. This name has generated much discussion. Is it a description of the child himself? [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 27) The Messiah would be preceded by a messenger

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Malachi 3:1

**New Testament citations:** Matthew 11:10, Mark 1:2, Luke 1:76

**Commentary:** Malachi is speaking to Jewish people who had returned to the land of Israel from exile in Babylon and who had rebuilt the temple. Yet the promises of God’s glory filling the temple had apparently not materialized. To a

dispirited people, Malachi prophecies that God will indeed come to the temple, preceded by a “messenger.” [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Overview of the Minor Prophets](#)

## 28) The Messiah would be the coming one to whom the scepter belongs

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Genesis 49:10](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 2:6](#), [Matthew 2:11](#), [Romans 1:5](#), [Romans 15:18](#), [Romans 16:26](#), [Hebrews 7:14](#), [Revelation 5:5](#)

**Commentary:** This prophecy is part of Jacob’s prophetic blessings on his sons; the full blessing on Judah is found in [Genesis 49:9–12](#), in which Jacob speaks of the preeminence of that tribe. We can mention three highlights of the prophecy blessing: 1. The promise of the “scepter” and “ruler’s staff” indicates that Judah would exercise rulership. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

**Related Topics:**

- [Jacob’s Prophecies](#)

## 29) The Messiah would be acclaimed

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Psalm 118:25–29](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 21:9](#); [Mark 11:9–10](#); [Luke 13:34–35](#), [19:38](#), [John 12:13](#)

**Commentary:** Psalm 118 was one of the Hallel Psalms (Psalms of Praise) recited at Passover time. All four Gospels record that as Jesus entered Jerusalem in the days leading up to Passover, crowds gathered, acclaiming Jesus as the one “who comes in the name of the Lord” (Psalm 118:26). [Continue reading commentary >](#)

[>](#)

## 30) The Messiah would be the seed of the woman

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Genesis 3:15

**New Testament citations:** Romans 16:20, Galatians 4:4, Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 12:9, 17

**Commentary:** The singular “**he** shall bruise your head” suggests a particular individual; the contrast between head and heel may suggest that the blow against Satan and evil will be lethal, but not so the blow against the individual. Just as Genesis sets the stage for everything that follows in the Bible, this verse sets the stage for the coming of someone who would inflict a death blow on Satan and on evil. As a result, many understand this to be the first hint of a coming one who will be victorious over evil. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 31) The Messiah would be the descendant of Abraham through whom all nations would be blessed

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Genesis 12:3

**New Testament citations:** Acts 3:24–26

**Commentary:** It has always been the biblical hope that one day the nations of the world would join with Israel in worshiping the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. One can make a good case that through Jewish doctors, lawyers, scientists, and the world-renowned Israeli technology sector, great blessing has already come to the world. But as the Bible shows us, the ultimate fulfillment is that through Jesus. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 32) The Messiah would be lifted up

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** Numbers 21:6–9

**New Testament citations:** John 3:14–18

**Commentary:** In [John 3], Jesus is in conversation with a leading Pharisee, Nicodemus. At one point he remarks, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life” ([John 3:14]). Jesus had his own crucifixion in mind when he was “lifted up” on another pole at his crucifixion; he says as much in John 12:32. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

### 33) The Messiah would be our Kinsman-Redeemer

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Ruth 4:4–9]

**New Testament citations:** [Luke 1:50, 58, 68, 72, 78]; [John 10:17–18]; [Romans 5:7–8]; [Ephesians 1:7]; [Colossians 1:4]; [Hebrews 2:11–12, 17]

**Commentary:** In the book of Ruth, the idea of *chesed*, often translated *lovingkindness* or *mercy*, lies behind the action of the redeemer (Hebrew, *go'el*). *Chesed* implies acting to meet the deep needs of others based on relationship of commitment and covenant. Because of this, it also implies that a more powerful person will be the one showing *chesed* to one who is weaker, and it is done voluntarily. In the same way, God's *chesed* lies behind His acts of mercy on behalf of His people Israel. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

### 34) The Messiah would be the righteous sufferer

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Psalm 69]

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 27:33–34, 48]; [John 2:17, 15:25, 19:28–30]

**Commentary:** Like [Psalm 22], this is also about a righteous sufferer. [Psalm 22] impresses us in its very graphical fulfillment in the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus. [Psalm 69] impresses us by being the most-quoted psalm in the New Testament applied to Jesus. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

### 35) The Messiah would be the great light

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Isaiah 9:1–2] [Hebrew Bible 8:23–9:1]

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 4:13–16](#), [Luke 1:76–79, 2:32](#); [John 1:4–5, 8:12, 9:5, 12:46](#)

**Commentary:** Galilee, represented here by the tribal areas of Zebulun and Naphtali, were the first to be taken into captivity by Assyria in the eighth century BC. Here, Isaiah promises that they will see a reversal of this tragedy, for God’s light will shine on them—an emblem of His presence and guidance. Matthew chapter 4 portrays Jesus’ ministry in Galilee as the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy. Galilee, though inhabited by Jews, was also a populous area for Gentiles, hence the designation “Galilee of the Gentiles”—with a hint that Jesus’ ministry will impact not only the Jewish nation but others as well. [Continue reading commentary >](#)



# Get the Top 40 Messianic Prophecies e-book

The Hebrew Scriptures were key to Jesus' self-understanding

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## 36) The Messiah would be called a Nazarene

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Isaiah 11:1](#), [Isaiah 53:3](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 2:23](#)

**Commentary:** Matthew's Gospel cites many Old Testament prophets about the Messiah, but only in 2:23 does he use the plural "prophets" as opposed to a particular prophet: "And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene." Moreover, whereas in other citations he uses the word "saying" (Greek, *legontos*), here he uses the word "that" (Greek, *hoti*), suggesting that it is not a direct quote. Rather, it represents a summary of what several prophets have said. What did they say then? [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 37) The Messiah would perform signs of healing

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Isaiah 35:5-6](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 11:4-6](#), [Luke 7:20-23](#)

**Commentary:** In [Matthew 11](#), John the Baptist has just been imprisoned. In his perplexity—if the Messiah has come, how could this be?—he sends his disciples to ask Jesus if he really is the Coming One. Jesus responds in this way: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me." [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 38) The Messiah would be preceded by a forerunner

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Isaiah 40:3-5](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 3:1-3](#); [Mark 1:1-3](#); [Luke 1:76, 3:1-6](#); [John 1:22-23](#)

**Commentary:** As Malachi 3:1 does (see [commentary on that verse](#)), [Isaiah 40:3-5](#) speaks of someone coming to prepare God's way. Where Malachi talks

about a [messenger](#) coming to [bring God back to His Temple](#), Isaiah speaks of a [voice](#) crying out to prepare God's way [in the desert](#). [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 39) The Messiah would be a light for the nations of the world

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Isaiah 42:1-7](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 12:15-21](#); [Luke 2:27-32](#); [John 8:12](#); [Revelation 21:23-24](#)

**Commentary:** In [Isaiah 42:6](#), we read that the servant will be “a light for the nations.” This actually helps us to understand what kind of justice (Matthew 12:18, 20) God will bring to the Gentiles (the nations of the world), and what kind of “hope” Isaiah says they will have. As the following New Testament verses show, the servant’s light will provide revelation, life, and direction or guidance. [Continue reading commentary >](#)

## 40) The Messiah would be the object of a murderous plot, but hope lies ahead

**Hebrew Scriptures reference:** [Jeremiah 31:15](#)

**New Testament citations:** [Matthew 2:16-18](#)

**Commentary:** Herod’s murder of the male children in Bethlehem who were two years old and under is part of a pattern in Scripture in which evil rulers attempt to destroy Israel. We remember that Pharaoh asked the midwives to kill the male babies of the Hebrews. We recall that Assyria and Babylon ripped Israelites from their land and brought them into captivity. We think about how Haman tried to commit genocide against the Jewish people. Now in Matthew, Herod is seeking to destroy someone that he views as a competitor, as another king. [Continue reading commentary >](#)