

THE PROPHECIES ABOUT JESUS

The coming of Jesus was mentioned in almost every book of the Old Testament, beginning with Genesis 3, in which God prophesied that the "Seed of the woman will bruise the serpent's head", and ending in Malachi 4, in which He says that He" will send a messenger to prepare the way before Him" . There are more than three hundred prophecies in the Bible about our Lord, which constitute with the other prophecies which do not deal with Him, about one third of the Old Testament. So it seems that God has taken a great deal of interest in informing human beings about what is hidden for them in the future. When we say that, we immediately find ourselves asking why would God put that much emphasis on the future, sending scores of His special people whom He named "Prophets", which means the announcers of God's messages, to inform mankind about what is to come. The most obvious reason is His love for man, and His desire to share with him some of His decisions, and to keep him informed, so nothing will be viewed by him as sudden or unexpected. He also wanted man to be ready for these prophecies when they happen. Sometimes, prophecies were God's means for warning the people about their sinful behavior, and how it will result in dire consequences for them.

Prophecies also offer us a rare opportunity to know the mind of God. knowing what He did in specific situations reveals to us a part of His nature, but

reading the prophecies which He sent to us with His prophets, helps us in delving deeper into His mind, because He usually gives the reason for the action that the prophecy describes. For instance, if He did not reveal to Noah the future, and that He is going to send the flood to destroy every living thing on the earth, and just did it, we would have never been able to know the reason behind His decision. Prophecies also provide us with unshakable evidence that our God is a powerful God, who is all-knowledgeable, to the extent that nothing is hidden from Him, even the future. This will help some of those who are reluctant or shaky in following Him, because their faith in Him is not strong enough.

Two kinds of prophecies about Jesus:

As we survey the prophecies about our Lord, we find that they cover every aspect of His life on earth. So some talk about His birth, some about His lineage, some about His temptation, some about His ministry, some about His betrayal, some about His rejection, some about His death, some about His resurrection, some about His relationship with the Father, some about His humanity, some about His pre-existence, and some about His second coming. But the interesting observation about these prophecies, is that, beside the above classification which is based upon the different aspects of our Lord's life, they can also be classified under two categories; Those which point toward His sufferings, and those which point toward His glory. An example of the prophecies

which point toward His suffering, is the one that says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our inequities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we were healed" (Isa 53:5). An example for the prophecies that point toward His glory, is the one that says, "I saw in the night vision, and behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Dan 7:13,14)

We find this classification interesting because it presented Jesus both as a human being who was under the suffering as we are, tempted, wounded, and bruised. And also as God, and king, whose name is exalted over every other name, and whose triumph over the forces of evil, gave Him the glory that could be seen by every one. The scribes, the Pharisees and the rest of the religious hierarchy of the Jewish nation, faced with this dichotomy about the identity of the promised savior, did not hesitate to dismiss the prophecies which foretold His weaknesses and sufferings, and turned their full attention to those prophecies, which told of His triumph and glory. This was an expected reaction on their part, because the Messiah was supposed to be their savior, and a savior is supposed to be strong, and triumphant. They were

expecting a savior who will deliver them from their bondage to Rome, as Moses delivered their ancestors from their bondage of Egypt. So, when they tried to crown Him king, and He refused, they felt cheated, and could not stand by, while they were observing their hopes and dreams so summarily rejected by Him. The only action open to them was to destroy Him, which they did. Unfortunately they did not realize that by destroying Him, they were also destroying themselves.

As we turn our attention to the prophecies themselves, we find that they left nothing in the life of Jesus which they did not cover.

In the following pages we are going to reflect on some of these prophecies. Those prophecies which were selected, were taken to represent every aspect of our Lord's life . they were also selected because of their clarity, and the lack of ambiguity, in their wording.

Prophecies about Jesus' birth:

1) " But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who is little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from old, from ancient days." (Mic 5:2).

In this prophecy the prophet Micah, who is considered next only to the prophet Isaiah in the number of prophecies about Jesus, talks about His birth place. We notice that he called Bethlehem by its

double name. It is interesting to note that the word "Bethlehem" means "The house of bread", and the word "Ephrathah" means "fruitfulness". So the birth place of Jesus, carried the two concepts of providing the people with bread, and of producing fruits for them. Does this remind us of that day in which Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves of bread and two fish, and when He declared that He is the bread of life ? or when He talked about people producing fruits that are the products of salvation. Was that a coincidence or was it intended? We don't know, but most likely it was intended, because as we mentioned before, there is nothing called coincidence in God's book. Bethlehem is also called "The city of David", because his ancestors lived there. So it was fitting for the son of David to be born in it.

As to the prophecy itself, we find that it revealed one of our Lord's goals in coming to the earth, which is to establish a kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, and to become its ruler. It also reveals His divinity, when it says that His origin is from old, from ancient days.

Why did God choose that obscure place to be the birth place of His son? He probably did that to show the world how humble He is. Jesus was born in an obscure village and not in a great city, to teach us humility. He also lived most of His life in another obscure village called "Nazareth" , a place that was scorned by the Jewish people, to the extent that one of Jesus' disciples commented when his friend told

him that they have found the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, by saying, " Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (Jn 1:46).

2)"Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." (Isa 7:14).

This prophecy is considered one of the most explicit prophecies about the birth of Jesus, and does not require any explanation.

3) " For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa9:6).

In this prophecy, the Father is telling the world that His son who will be born one day as a man, is equal to Him. And because of this, He called Him, Wonderful, Counselor, and The Everlasting Father. This means that Jesus will be some one who the people will call " Wonderful", some one who will capture their imagination, some one who is so resourceful, and capable of doing things that He will fascinate and mesmerize the people. Also by calling Him " Counselor", He meant to say that He will be full of wisdom. And by calling Him "The Everlasting Father", He was declaring again that the Father and the Son are one, and that He will consider Himself a father to mankind. Then He added another quality, by

calling Him "The Prince of Peace", which means that He will cause peace to be established between man and God, a peace that was lost when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's order and ate from the forbidden fruit.

4) "I will declare the decree: The Lord said to me , You are my Son; this day I have begotten You." (Psa2:7).

In this prophecy, God is telling the people that He, the king of Kings is issuing a decree, a legal and a royal statement, that Jesus is His true Son. He is also saying that The Son is born and not created. This proves one more time, that the Son is equal to the Father, because as some one who is born, He is definitely equal to His Father, but if He was created, He would be inferior to his creator. As we reflect on the phrase," This day I have begotten you", we find ourselves asking, which day was that ? The Bible does not answer this question. God may have been talking about the day, in which Jesus was born, almost five hundred years before it happened.

5) "Thus says the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, and refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are not."(Jer31:15)

This prophecy was interpreted by St. Matthew to point to what happened when king Herod sent his Roman guards to Bethlehem with orders to kill all male children who are two years old or less. He was

upset when the Magi obeyed God's order and did not return to see him as he instructed them, after their visit to the Holy Family in Bethlehem. This was one of the most brutal acts reported in the Bible, and deserved to be the subject of this prophesy, which was written by the prophet Jeremiah six hundred years before Christ was born. What happened reflects the corruption of the leaders of the Jewish nation at that time. And also the tremendous powers of Satan. He definitely was the one who planted the fear and hatred in Herod's heart toward the baby Jesus, and incited him to kill Him, to guarantee that He will never become a king, and will never challenge his authority.

Prophecies about His lineage:

1)The Lord said to Abram," Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves." (Gen 12:1-4).

Any body who reads this prophecy will probably say that it is about God telling Abram to leave his home, and relatives, and to encourage him, He promised him few rewards. How is this related to Jesus? The answer to this is that if the prophesy stopped after God told Abram that He will bless those who bless you, and curse those who curse you, it would have no

relationship with Jesus, but when God added, " and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves", it becomes a prophesy about Jesus for the following reasons.

a) Abram was chosen by God to be the first step in choosing and separating the ancestry of our Lord, from the rest of the world, which, at that time did not know Him. So He ordered him to leave his family and friends, because they did not worship Him, but worshipped idols that they made with their own hands. Those people definitely were not good examples for Abram and his descendants. So He wanted to protect him from their influence, so He can bring him up in the fear and the love of God.

b) As history proved, Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation, and the only way that the families of the earth would have been able to bless themselves in him, was that one of his descendants becomes the one who will bruise the Serpent's head, and restore man to his exalted position in heaven. This descendant was none other than Jesus of Nazareth, whose genealogy was reported in the New Testament by both St. Matthew, and St. Luke, and which goes back to Abraham.

It is interesting to note that the prophesy said, that 'the families of the earth shall bless themselves'. why didn't the prophesy say that 'the families of the earth shall be blessed'? the difference is that in the prophesy as it came, the families of the earth will choose to bless themselves, while in the other, they will be automatically blessed. This means that man has a choice to make, either he chooses to accept

salvation, and this way, he will be blessed, or refuse it and remain in his sins.

2) " I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy the children of Sheth." (Num 24:17)

This prophecy came from the mouth of Balaam, the mixed up prophet, who was asked by Balak, king of Moab, to curse Israel. He sent few of his princes to bring Balaam to him. But when God appeared to him, and told him not to go with them, he did not go. But Balak did not give up, so he sent more princes to him who promised him more expensive gifts if he came with them. This time God told him to go with them, and to say only those words that God will give him. So, he went with them, but on his way to meet Balak, he changed his mind and decided to curse Israel. Here God used the ass that Balaam was riding on, to send him a message. He sent an angel to stand in the way, and opened the eyes of the ass to see him, while withholding the vision from Balaam, who did not see it. The ass veered from the road, and went into a field. When Balaam saw that, he hit the ass, and it came back to the road. Then the angel stood on one side of a narrow pass that Balaam had to take, and when the ass saw the angel, she went toward the wall, and Balaam's foot was pushed against it. Balaam hit her again. Then the angel went ahead and stood in the next narrow pass, and there was no room for the ass

to go anywhere. So she lay down under Balaam, who hit her for the third time. Here God gave the ass the gift of speech, and she asked Balaam, why have you hit me these three times? When Balaam told the ass the reason, God opened his eyes and he saw the angel of the Lord obstructing the pass. The angel told him that he can go and meet Balak, but reiterated to him that only the words that he is going to put in his mouth, he will utter. When he went, and Balak asked him to curse Israel, he refused, and blessed them instead. Then he said the above prophesy.

As we examine the words of the prophesy, we can see that he was talking about Jesus, who will come but not now, who was seen by Balaam but was far away. No wonder, for the prophesy was made about the year 1,100 B.C. Again, we see Jesus associated with two things, a star, and a scepter. The star is a symbol of greatness, and also of light, and the scepter is a symbol of royalty. Jesus was all that, He was great, He was the light of the world, and He was the king of the universe. The prophesy also talks about Jesus

coming from Israel, and specifically from the descendants of Jacob.

Then it says that He will crush Moab, which means that He will crush His enemies. Then it also said that He will break down the sons of Sheth. If we take the word " Sheth" to mean the third son of Adam, we can't understand what this part of the prophesy means, but if we looked up the Hebrew word we find that it can mean a "tumult" which means confusion

or mild uproar. So it can be said that Jesus will end the confusion, and stop any uproar against Him.

3)" And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots. (Isa 11:1).

Here the prophecy links Jesus to Jesse, David's father, and calls Him a rod, and a branch. A rod signifies strength, and also justice. Jesus was a rod, because He was strong, and He was God's justice, despite the fact that He did not condemn anyone while on earth, nevertheless, He will be the one who will judge all nations and give everyone according to his deeds.

4) " In those days, and at that time, will I cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness into the land." (Jer 23:5).

Here we hear the same prophesy from the prophet Jeremiah, who came after the prophet Isaiah by about one hundred and forty years. He too used the word "Branch of righteousness" to describe Jesus, and traced Him to David. and again repeated the theme of His judgment of the people.

5) " Judah, you are he, whom your brothers shall praise; your hand shall be in the neck of your enemies, your father's children shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's whelp, from the prey, my son, you are gone up. He stooped down, he

couched like a lion, who shall rouse him up. The scepter shall never depart from Judah, nor a law giver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen 49:8-10).

This prophecy was uttered by none other than Jacob, the father of the nation of Israel, on his death bed. The Bible tells us, that when he knew that he was about to die, he called his twelve sons to bless them, and to tell them what will happen to them in the future. He began with his oldest son Reubin, and proceeded to the rest of his children in the order of their birth. As we study his words to every one of his sons, we find that his words to Judah were by far the strongest, and the best.

He said that he will be praised by his brothers, that he will prevail against his enemies, that people will bow before him, that he will have power that nobody will be willing to challenge, and that he will be a king, and that he will be followed by many people. This translates to the following: a victorious hero, who has a righteous power, a power to be feared, a regal power, a king who will conquer his enemies, and have a big following, and that he will be the center of the assembly. obviously all those prophesies were never fulfilled in Judah, but they were fulfilled in Jesus who came from the tribe of Judah.

Prophecies about His ministry;

1)" The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because

the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings, He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Isa 61:1,2)

This prophecy was the one which Jesus Himself read in the synagogue of Nazareth. After He closed the book, gave it to the attendant, and sat down, St. Luke wrote that "the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. They were interested in what their native son who lived in Nazareth for all His life and made His living by pursuing His father's trade; carpentering, has to say. By the time this happened, Jesus had already moved to Capernaum. They probably heard about His baptism by John the Baptist, and what happened there. They may have gotten the news about His call of few people to be His companions and disciples, and His first message to the people, "Repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand". St. Luke resumed the story by saying that Jesus startled them all by saying, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21). The reaction to what He said was mixed. Some praised God that He gave such wisdom and eloquence to one of them, while others said, "Isn't this the son of Joseph". Jesus feeling this told them, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country" (Lk 4:24)

As we turn our attention to what the prophecy said, we find that it talked about several things that Jesus

will do, during His brief stay on earth. First it says that Jesus was anointed by God the Father, who sent Him into the world to do a specific job. The prophecy said that He is going to bring good news to the poor. The good news are the salvation which He came to offer mankind. Why did it say , to the poor? Does this mean that salvation was to be offered only to the poor? How about the rich? Are they going to be left out in the cold? The answer is that what the prophecy meant, are not the poor in possessions, but those who are poor in the spirit. This was the first beatitude which Jesus used to preface the sermon on the mound. and as we mentioned before, that the only ones who will benefit from the salvation, are those who know that they are sinners, and consequently find themselves in need of forgiveness. But those who feel that they are righteous will not benefit since they will never go to God and ask Him for forgiveness.

Then the prophecy mentions that Jesus will comfort and give support to the broken hearted, which may point to His efforts to eliminate the suffering of many people by healing their diseases, raising their dead, and forgiving their sins. Then the prophecy goes on to talk about freeing the captives, and opening the prison. This is an indication of what He did after His death on the cross, when He went down to Hades and liberated those who died while holding the hope that in the fullness of time, the Messiah will come and set them free.

2) " Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. I the Lord have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and give you for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison" (Isa 42:1,6,7).

In this prophecy we can see the support of the Father for His Son, of which Jesus talked several times. We can also see that His ministry will reach the Gentiles, something that He began while still on earth, by healing the Canaanite woman's daughter (Mt 15) , and when He went to the village of Sychar to spend two days with the Samaritan people talking with them about the kingdom of God (Jn 4). This was followed by the efforts of His disciples to spread His message in the whole world, after His ascension. We can also see a reference to the new covenant that God established with the people, when the Son was crucified on their behalf. The prophesy also mentions His miracles when it says, 'to open the blind eyes', and finally it mentions the liberation of those who were kept captives by Satan, until the coming of Jesus.

3)" He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoking flax he shall not quench. He shall bring judgment unto truth . He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he has set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law." (Isa42:1,4)

In this prophesy we can see a hint about Jesus' quietness, humility, and going about His business of serving the people without too much fanfare. It also mentions that He shall bring to the people the truth, which will serve as a basis for judging them later. It also mentions something about His patience, and perseverance in the face of the resistance and the rejection that He faced from many especially from the scribes and the Pharisees. It also says that despite all that, He will succeed in His job, and His law, will become the law of all the people.

4) "In the scroll of the book it is written of me, my delight is to do your will; your law, my God, is deep in my heart. I proclaimed the saving justice of Yahweh in the great assembly. See, I will not hold my tongue, as you well know. I have not kept your saving justice locked in the depth of my heart, but have spoken of your constancy and saving help. I have made no secret of your faithful and steadfast love, in the great assembly." (Psa 40:8,9,10).

This prophesy talks about the loyalty of the Son to the Father and His willingness to do His will. Does this remind us of what happened in the garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus prayed to the Father saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will" (Mt 26:39).

It also talks about His preaching of the word of God, and of His teaching the people about God's love, His

willingness to help, and His justice.

5)" I will open my mouth in a parable" (Psa78:2). " I will incline my ear to a parable" (Psa49:4). " Speak a parable unto the house of Israel"(Ezek 17:2).

Obviously these three prophecies talked about our Lord's marvelous ability to simplify many of the difficult concepts of the new theology that He came to preach, by molding them in the form of a parable, in which He used some of the things that people were familiar with, to bring them as close as possible to an understanding of whatever concept He was talking about. This was fulfilled to the extent that St. Matthew wrote, " All this Jesus said to the crowds; indeed he said nothing to them without a parable.(MT 13:34). The difficulty that the Israelites had with what Jesus wanted to teach them, was not because of the difficulty of those ideas, for all that He preached was simple enough for even the least educated among them to understand. What is difficult about loving God, loving your fellow man, doing good to them, and not getting obsessed with the world and the things of the world? The difficulty was there because of their strong worldly orientation, and their utter refusal to give it up.

Prophecies About His Betrayal:

1)" Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted his heel against me." (Psa41:9).

This prophecy tells about the person who betrayed Jesus, and who was one of His closest friends, whom he trusted with the treasury. His closeness to Jesus was indicated by what was said about their sharing food together. We remember when Jesus dipped a piece of bread in his dish and gave it to Judas. The Bible tells us that after he ate it, Satan entered him, and led him to where he met the religious leaders, to finalized his plan to surrender Jesus to them.

2) "Then I said to them , ' If it seems right to you, give me my wages; but if not keep them.' And they weighed out as my wages thirty shekels of silver. Then the Lord said to me,' Cast it into the treasury, the lordly price at which I was paid" (Zech 11:12)

In this prophecy, we read yet another detail about the last days of our Lord's life on earth. We read about His betrayal, and the exact amount of money that His betrayer received for his treason. The prophecy called the thirty pieces of silver," Jesus' wages", and another time as the "Lordly price", which was fulfilled when Judas Iscariot sold his friend Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Then the prophecy concludes by mentioning the fact that the money was returned by Judas when he realized that he has betrayed an innocent man.

3)" And one shall say to him, What are those wounds in your hands? Then he shall answer,' Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends....Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be

scattered."(Zech 13:6,7).

This prophecy also talks about Jesus' betrayal by one of His friends, and also about one of the physical results of that betrayal; the wounds in His hands caused by the nails which nailed him to the cross. At the end, it mentions the painful fact that he was abandoned by His disciples, when He was seized and tried. The Lord told them that this will happen, and even reminded them of the prophesy, when they began telling Him that they will not abandon Him.

4) " False witnesses did rise up ; they laid to my charge things that I knew not."(Psa35:11)

This prophecy talks about those who were bribed by the priests and the Pharisees, to testify against Jesus in his trial before the Sanhedrin. The Bible records that these accused Jesus of saying certain things that either He never said, or said something similar, but by which He meant a totally different meaning than the one they reported. This could be considered a betrayal, because the people by and large loved Him, and probably believed in Him.

5) " When he shall be judged, let him be condemned; and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office." (Psa109:7,8).

This prophecy by David talks about Judas' betrayal, and that he will be condemned for it, to the extent that even if he prayed to God, his prayers will not be

accepted, and instead of the Lord counting them as assets, He will consider them a liability, because they will remind Him of the great sin that he had committed. Then it concludes by telling us that his office will not be left vacant, for somebody else will occupy it. This is what happened. St. Luke wrote in the Act of the Apostles, that after the disciples saw the Lord ascend into heaven, they went back to Jerusalem, and then they decided to select someone to replace Judas. So they named two men; one called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and the other called Matthias. After praying, they cast lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. So he was enrolled with the eleven, and considered one of the twelve.(Act1).

Prophecies about His suffering:

1)" Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; and as one from whom men hide their faces , he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he has born our grief, and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our inequities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes

we were healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own ways; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb. So he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he has done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the lord to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes himself an offering for sin.....

" Therefor will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he has poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sins of many, and made intercessions for the transgressors." (Isa 53:1-10&12).

As we examine this prophecy which is almost all of chapter fifty three of the book of Isaiah, you can't help being amazed by its clarity and specificity. It begins with " Who has believed what we have heard? which immediately prepares the reader to expect to read something which is unbelievable, that most of those who will hear it will not believe it. We know that the idea of God becoming a man to offer himself as a sin offering on behalf of mankind, so he can save him from the death that he deserved when he

disobeyed Him, is an idea that is still met with a lot of skepticism, and outright disbelief by many till this day. Isaiah stated this fact and then proceeded by wondering, "And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed ?". He was saying that the news that most people will not believe, has to do with somebody who will be the arm of the Lord, who will do His will, and then he went on to tell the people that the person that he was talking about, will grow before God like a young plant, which means that he will be born and will grow, which makes him a human being. Then he added, that he will be like a root growing out of dry ground, which was an indication of the poor spiritual condition of the Jewish nation at the time Jesus was born. But Isaiah stated that despite this Jesus will come.

Then he adds that, "he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him". As I read this over and over again, I wondered whether Isaiah was writing about the physical characteristics of our Lord, or is there something hidden here that I am missing? Then I thought that if he was talking about our Lord's appearance, then what he said conflicts with what king David wrote about Him in Psalm 45, when he said that He , " is the fairest of the sons of men" (Psa 45:2).

Looking up at the writings of others, I found no mention of his physical appearance any where. So Isaiah was not talking about that, he was talking

about some episodes that happened in His life, which made people unable to look on him with kindness and acceptance. One such occasion happened when He cast few evil spirits from two demoniacs and allowed them to enter into a herd of swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank, and perished in the water. The Bible tells us that when the people of the village knew that, they came out and asked Jesus to leave. A more intense situation happened when He was crucified. Again the Bible tells us that throngs of people passed by, some waiving their fists at Him, castigating Him because He saved others but could not save Himself, while others challenged Him to come down from the cross, if He wanted them to believe in Him. So most likely Isaiah was talking about the crucifixion of Jesus, as he expanded on the theme by saying that, " He was despised and rejected by men", which means that because of that He had no beauty or comeliness, in the eyes of those who hated Him.

Then the prophecy proceeds to talk about other details that point to His sufferings not because of any fault of His, but because of our sins. He was wounded for our transgressions, as Isaiah put it.

Then he proceeds by talking about certain specifics before His death, such as His silence before the sanhedrin, and Pilate, and His refusal to defend Himself. Isaiah expressed this beautifully when he said, " He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is lead to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is

dumb.

After that we find that Isaiah dealt with some specific aspects of His death when he wrote, " And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death", which points to the fact that He was crucified with two thieves, and when He was buried, He was buried in a new tomb that Joseph of Aramathea, a rich man , owned.

Isaiah ends his prophesy by explaining the ultimate goal of all the suffering that Jesus will go through, by stating that "he makes himself an offering for sin", and that "he bore the sins of many", and that, "he made intercessions for the transgressors".

2)" My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" (Psa 22:1).

Here we find David, predicting verbatim what the crucified Jesus will say on the cross. He spoke seven times on the cross, but one of the most dramatic words that He said, and which revealed the depth of the spiritual agony that He suffered on the cross, was that which David prophesied in that brief prophesy, " My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" What did He mean when He said that, why did He say it? are questions that will be dealt with in another place in this book.

3)" They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (Psa 22:18).

Again, we see king David, prophesying about something that many of those who read the prophecy before the coming of Jesus may have found it of little value, or of little significance, because it deals with an act which is not that important to be written in one of David's psalms. But, when this happens to the promised Messiah, it becomes important. Not only because of that, but its importance lies in the fact that it points to two important facts about Him. The first that He will suffer and that He will be crucified naked, and the fact that He did not own enough cloths and as a result, His executioners had to cast lots to see who among them will get his last piece of clothing.

4) "They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink" (Psa 69:21).

This is once more another explicit prophecy about a specific event that happened during our Lord's crucifixion. The Bible tells us that before His death, He said, "I am thirsty", and one of the soldiers dipped a sponge in a mixture of gall and vinegar, put it on the blade of a spear, and raised it to His mouth, and when He tasted it, He refused to drink, and said, "It is finished", as if He was saying that all the prophecies about Him have been fulfilled, and more important, the mission that the Father has given me has been accomplished. Shortly after that He gave up the spirit and died.

5) "And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth on a clear day" (Amo 8:9).

This prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. St. Matthew wrote that when Jesus was crucified, the sun hid its light and that there was darkness beginning with the sixth hour, which was twelve o'clock noon, until three o'clock in the afternoon.

Prophecies about His resurrection and ascension:

1)" I have set the Lord always before me because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices, my flesh also shall rest in hope. For you will not leave my soul in hell; neither will you suffer your Holy One to see corruption." (Psa 16:8-10).

This prophecy could have been easily considered, a prayer by David, raised in praise and thanksgiving to God, for His love and protection, and for all the gifts that He bestowed on him. The only thing that made it a prophesy about somebody else, was his mention of the "Holy one", as the person he was talking about. David never referred to himself as the Holy One, especially when he was addressing God. We have heard him calling himself "a dead dog"(1 Sam 24:14), and "a flee"(1Sam 26:20). So, he was talking about somebody else, and knowing that the title "The Holy One" was only reserved for God, then we can

conclude that David was talking about non other than Jesus of Nazareth, who even though He died on the cross, yet He rose from the dead and His body never saw corruption.

2) " O Lord, you have brought my soul from the grave, you have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit (Psa30:3).

"But you,O Lord, be merciful to me, and raise me up, that I may requite them"(Psa 41:10).

Here also we can clearly see that David was not talking about himself. He was talking about somebody who will be brought back from the grave, and will not stay in the pit, and who will be raised up by God. This description does not fit anyone but Jesus, because all those who preceded Him and were raised from the dead, after they died the second time, went down to the pit and remained there. The only one who descended into the pit,or " Hades", and did not stay there was Jesus, who went down to release those who were captives to Satan, and who were waiting for Him to come and save them from their imprisonment.

3) " After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." (Hos 6:2).

Obviously the prophet Hosea was talking about somebody who will be raised from the dead on the third day after his death. As we survey those who

were raised from the dead, we will not find anyone who remained dead for three days, after which he was raised. All of them were raised on the same day they died. The one exception to that was Lazarus who stayed in the tomb four days, before our Lord raised him. any body reading this prophesy will wonder why did Hosea use the word "us" in talking about that person. The only explanation is the fact that he was talking about the second person of the Holy Trinity, so it was appropriate to use the plural, rather than the singular, to show reverence and respect. The other question is, what did he mean when he said , " After two days he will revive us"? Searching through the writings of the saints, nothing was found which would shed light on this part of the prophecy.

4) " Lift up your heads O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle! The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." (Psa 24:7-10)

There is no doubt that this prophesy was written about the ascension of our Lord to heaven, and the welcome that He received from the heavenly host, as He joined the Father. Nobody else was named " The King of glory" except Him. Also the prophesy talks about His might in battle, which points to the success of His mission in defeating Satan, and saving mankind from the death that they deserved, when He died on the cross, in their place.

5) " I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord has chastened me sore; but he has not given me to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord. This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." (Psa 118:17-20)

This is another prophecy which clearly points to the life of our Lord on earth, and how it ended. First, David states that the person he was talking about, will not die, but live. This points to the fact that even though Jesus tasted death, yet He rose up and continued to live. Then he talks about God the Father and how He allowed His son to suffer that much, but He did not leave Him to die. This was fulfilled when Jesus was crucified, and died, but was not left dead, as He rose from the dead to live again. The last part of the prophesy talks about His ascension and His entrance into the" gates of righteousness". Then he ends it by stating that the same gate that welcomed Jesus upon His return, will also welcome those who believe in Him, so where He is, there they will be also.