**Messianic Prophecies fulfilled only by Jesus Christ**

In the Bible, prophecies about the Messiah are so specific that during the entire history of mankind, no man could accidentally fulfill them.

Even if someone tried to falsify fulfillment of prophecies about the Messiah, it would not be possible because fulfillments depended on other people, even on God's enemies.

It would be difficult to find a person who fulfilled at least two or three such prophecies out of so many, and it is impossible to find anyone who would fulfill all prophecies, if behind that person there is no incredible, ingenious, powerful mind that had been planned all this for thousands of years.

Let us look at arguments that show that only one person fulfilled all God's prophecies about the Messiah – an that is Jesus Christ.

Jesus' biography was written in advance through the Bible prophets, so that today no one should have a dilemma whether He is the True Savior or someone else could be too.

So, let's look at the list of prophecies that Jesus could not falsify, because the fulfillment depended on other people, even on his enemies who wanted to prove that He was not the Messiah:

- the place of his birth;

- to be born by a virgin;

- his parents to be Jews from Bethlehem;

- his parents to take Him to Egypt and bring Him back when God tell them to;

- to start his mission precisely at a certain, time-bound;

- to cure incurable diseases, to rise dead before the multitude of witnesses, and to forgive sins;

- to give Him a donkey to ride into Jerusalem;

- wickedness to prevail in the temple, so He must clean the temple;

- Judas to betray him;

- Sanhedrin to pay Judas exactly 30 silver coins to betrayal, and to buy potter's field from that money;

- to spit on Him, to beat Him and mock Him;

- His disciples to run away;

- to be pierced (to die in a certain way);

- two criminals to be crucified with him and to be buried in the grave of a rich man;

- God to turn His head from Him;

- his enemies to give Him vinegar at the cross;

- his enemies to divide His clothes by casting lots;

- His bones not to be broken by His enemies;

- to rise after three days, so His body does not decay in the grave;

- to get into heaven and to serve as a high priest for sinners who repented.

Let's take a look at these detailed Messianic prophecies that no one else in history could fulfill except Jesus Christ.

**The Place of Birth**

About 700 years before the Messiah was born, the prophet Micah said that the true Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, "whose goings forth are from the everlasting." So, from all places on the planet, the prophet narrowed the choice for the place of Messiah’s birth - to Bethlehem." “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5.2

No man can set up the place where he was born, just to fulfill the prophecy. As an unborn baby, Jesus could not have an influence on His parents to take Him to be born in Bethlehem. "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea..." Matthew 2.1

Jesus' mother lived in Nazareth, but when Caesar August ordered the population census, even though Mary was pregnant, close to her due date, she had to travel to her birth place to Bethlehem. "And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered" (Luke 2.1-7)

Thus, the pagan emperor with his order contributed to the fulfillment of this prophecy, because Mary would not go to such a long journey of 100 miles, while eigth month pregnant.

Also, the prophet Micah said that the Messiah would not be an ordinary man but an eternal being, alive before the beginning of the world, from eternal times.

Jesus said to himself: "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM" John 8.58 Abraham died almost 2,000 years before Christ, and there is no man who lived that long. It is impossible for a human being to test whether this is true. Only if Jesus was really everything else He claims to be, then this could be true.

**Mother - virgin; child will be male**

The prophet Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would be born by a virgin and that He would be a male: "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel (God is with us)." Isaiah 7.14

A prophecy that child would be a male or female would bring a 50% probability of guessing correct gender. However, no man can arrange to be born by a virgin. This is physiologically impossible, unless - God perform a miracle.

This kind of conception does not exist in nature. However, for an Almighty God, this would not be a problem.

Mary did not benefit from the claim that she gave birth to a child as a virgin, but only a shame and danger. There is no logic that Mary, Jesus' mother, would claim to be "with child of the Holy Spirit" before marrying Joseph (Matthew 1.18), because she would risk to be sentenced to stoning like an adulteress, and she would be accused for violation of God's law. Still, in spite of being threatened by death penalty, Mary says that the child was not Joseph’s, but instead God created a miracle on her.

It is strange that Joseph did not abandon Mary, but he allowed himself to be ashamed too.

At first, Joseph did not believe Mary, but later he claimed that an angel appeared to him in a dream and told him to take Mary as his wife, "…for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1.20, 21

Joseph would have no reason to stay with Mary if he was not really told by an angel that Mary will fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy about a virgin which would give birth to the Messiah. Joseph obeyed God regardless of what the other people say.

There is no false messiah that people would believed he was born by a virgin in Bethlehem.

On the other hand, Joseph and Mary never gave up the claim that Mary had given birth to Jesus as a virgin, although Mary could have been stoned for that. So, either Jesus is the Messiah, or the Messiah was not yet born.

**Messiah’s Tribe**

According to Moses' prophecy, the Messiah was to be born into the tribe of Judah from which emperors came, because the Messiah will be the king for eternity. "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people." Genesis 49.10

Out of the 12 tribes of Israel, Jesus Christ was born exactly from the tribe of Judah, descendant of the king David (Luke 3.33,34; Matthew 1.2.3; Hebrews 7.14) and (Jeremiah 30.9 Ezekiel 37 24; 34.23.24; Osiah 3.5).

The probability that Mary would have a son and not a daughter is 1:2.

The probability that the Messiah would in the tribe of Judah is 1:12.

The likelihood of being from the family of Jesse, as prophesied by the prophet Isaiah (11.1) is incredibly small; but everything was fulfilled as prophesied (Revelation 22.16).

If Jesus was just a man, He would not be able to arrange to be born as an Israelite from the tribe of Judah, from the family of Jesse, as a descendant of king David.

No man can arrange his gender, the place of birth, his tribe, family, or mother to be pregnant as a virgin. Even before Jesus spoke and walked on this Earth, God already showed many people that Jesus fulfilled Messianic prophecies which no one could by pure chance. That could do only the real Savior from sin.

**He will return from Egypt**

The Gospel writer Matthew reminded us that the prophet Osiah, while describing liberation of Israel from bondage in Egypt, also described that the Messiah will go to Egypt, and that God will bring his Son from there. "

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son." Hosea 11.1

Jesus' parents did not intend to go to Egypt. The road was too long and tiring for the newly born baby and Mary who just gave birth.

However, they had to go because the angel told them that king Herod planned to kill their only-begotten child (Matthew 2.13-15, 19-20). This way ungodly king forced them to fulfill Hosea’s prophecy.

This way, another Messianic prophecy was fulfilled by other people, even before He grew up, and before He could make His own decisions.

Of course, Jesus, as a baby could not influence his parents to take him to the foreign country and back. Jesus could not arrange this prophecy to be fulfilled on Him, except if He is more than just a man.

Note that the Pharaoh in Egypt also asked for the male children of Israel to be killed, and in Jesus's time the king of Israel demanded male children to be killed in order to prevent the Messiah to be born.

God saved Moses’ life, as well as the life of Jesus Christ, and Moses lead people of God out of bondage, as the Messiah would lead God’s people out of sin to the Promised land.

Jesus became the new Moses, a better prophet which Moses promised God will send to save them ("The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear" (Deuteronomy 18 : 15)).

How many babies born in Jesus's time fulfilled all these prophecies? How many babies from the beginning of the world, fulfilled all these prophecies?

 When we multiply all probabilities to calculate a probability all of these prophecies to be fulfilled on one man, we can freely say that this is impossible to be fulfilled by accident. It is also impossible for any man to trick others to believe he is a messiah, because prophecies depended on his enemies even before he was born.

But the Bible says that everything is possible to God. It seems that so many prophecies have been given about the Messiah, because God wanted us to have no dilemma if this is really the Messiah or not.

**The time of Messiah’s anointing and the liberation of people from sin**

Not only the details of Messiah’s birth were publically stated, but the prophet Daniel also announced in advance exact year when the Messiah will be anointed: "Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." (Daniel 9.24)

This prophecy pointed toward year 27 A.D., the exact time when Jesus was baptised, and the Holy Spirit came down on Jesus, to anoint him for the work of salvation He is going to do, and later He was anointed to die to save us.

The Hebrew word “Messiah” and the Greek word “Christ” means “Annointed”, because a person was anointed with oil, which is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

Anointment symbolically indicated that God by his Spirit authorized someone to rule, or to be a priest, or to perform some specific mission God gave him to do. All anointments were shadows of one Annointed person, the Messiah who will save the world from sin and death.

This prophecy was fulfilled exactly at prophecied time in Jesus' life. That is why at the beginning of his ministry Jesus said:

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” Mark 1.15 The time was fulfilled exacly when Jesus Christ did everything what He came for to do.

God is the master of time. He fulfilled prophecies right at predicted time as He foretold centuries ago He will do. He gave us precise predictions of future so we can also make our decisions in advance.

If Jesus Christ was just a man, He could not arrange or fix fulfilments of all those prophecies. Only the one who is Sovereign Almighty could have prophesied and fulfill these unique prophecies.

**The Messiah will set us free, heal both body and spirit,**

Many people claim to be able to cure other people, but no one, like Jesus, healed the blind from birth, man paralyzed for 38 years, all in front of skeptical witnesses. On the top of that, Jesus resurrected other people even 4 days after they died, after decay process begun, all in the front of hundreds of people.

Isaiah’s prophecy about Messiah’s role has two parts: the first part Jesus began to fill upon his first arrival, when he cured people, released them from slavery to sin, and proclaimed the Gospel, which meand “Good News” of salvation; "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and **the day of vengeance** of our God; to comfort all who mourn... " Isaiah 61.1.2

The second part of this prophecy is a promise that at the time of His second coming, the Messiah will execute the sentence made by God on His trial to every human being: salvation or destruction for eternity.

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus Christ read this text in the synagogue and said that He began to fulfill this prophecy. "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." Luke 4.16-21

His words were a joyful news for the sinners, He healed both body and spirit of afflicted and unfortunate, literally from hopeless situations, and he freed people who sought help and forgave sins. He devoted every moment of his life for helping people in distress.

Isaiah also prophesied that the Messiah would heal, and in order to liberate people from sin, he would receive a punishment that men deserved, while men will be restored to the position Messiah deserves.

Notice that the prophecy says that he will be despised even though he helped people, which is an unexpected development of events. It would be easy to predict that He would be a hero because he cured and helped people. "He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief… Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted." Isaiah 53.3,4

It is unusual and unexpected for people to reject someone who helped so many people: "healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people..." Matthew 4.23,24 This prophecy was more difficult to fulfill because people generally behave positively toward healers.

No one has ever challenged Christ's goodness, honesty, love, and other positive qualities, which makes Him unique. Christ's love is still a magnet that attracts people to God.

**The Messiah will give prophecies**

The apostles heard prophecies Jesus gave in public, and after allfulfilled prophecies, they had no doubt Jesus was the Messiah.

Why should apostles leave their families, their jobs, and neglect personal property just to go around the world and tell everyone about Jesus Christ? They did not have any material benefits, they were even mocked and brutally attacked because they preached that Jesus was the Messiah.

In spite of this, the apostles continued to follow him because they were convinced Jesus fulfilled all prophecies expected from the Savior, as God promised.

The most important of Jesus' prophecies was that he would be condemned to death in Jerusalem and He will resurrect after three days (Matthew 16.21; 27.63).

The apostles did not believe the Messiah will die, so they were very disappointed with Jesus' death. Almost completely crushed.

Only after the Jesus’ resurrection, the apostles faith become unbreakable, and they completelly trusted God who showed His power to resurrect us even when we die.

After Jesus’ resurrection, not even life threatening people could stop the apostles from telling people they’ve seen the resurrected Messiah.

The apostles said that we should obey God first, rather than men. They would rather die trusting God who is able to resurrect them, than to deny the Messiah who brought hope and meaning to our lives.

If the apostles were unsure whether Jesus was the Messiah or if they conspired to arrange facts that Jesus fulfilled Messianic prophecies, at least one of them would admit that they were lying to save his life.

Instead, all apostles died as martyrs, still claiming that Jesus was the Messiah. Our logical question would be: Who would die for a lie?

Even if any of apostles denied Christ’s resurrection, which they did not, the Bible says that the first witnesses of Christ’s resurrection were Roman soldiers, pagans, people who did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

Therefore, together with all fulfilled prophecies, God gave strong arguments also to His enemies that Jesus is the Messiah with a mission to save us from the eternal death by Christ's death and resurrection.

**He will come on a donkey**

Jesus did not try to gain material wealth here, but He needed even to borrow a donkey to ride into Jerusalim, as a fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy. ("Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey." Zechariah 9.9)

This seemingly unimportant detail, gave us another proof of the Messiah’s identity. Jesus could not force anyone to give him a donkey with a colt, which He did not have, in order to ride into Jerusalem, and He could not force people to lay clothes on the road and shout: “Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ Hosanna in the highest!” Matthew 21: 8-11

Ridding on a donkey showed Jesus's modesty. If the role of Messiah guaranteed wealth, glory, and a high position, many would put a lot of effort to pretend to be the Messiah.

Who would put such an effort for a modest position that appears in the eyes of majority as worthless and lead to death on the cross?

**Messiah will defend God's temple from defilement**

A false messiah would direct his actions to support popular opinions and desires opposite to God's principles and commandments given in the Bible.

However, it is foretold that the real Messiah will carry out a spiritual reform, call to abandone man-made traditions and fully trust only God. This is why the majority rejected the Messiah. The true Messiah was not popular among the religious hypocrites. "Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother’s children; because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me." Psalm 69.7-9 see John 2.17; Mark 11.15-18; Matthew 21: 12,13; Luke 19.45,46.

So Jesus drove out all merchants from the temple who earned money by overcharging services to pious people in the temple.

Not only that Jesus did not have any material benefit of fulfilling the prophecy about spiritual reform, but those who valued money more than God, they hated Him even more. "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him." John 1.10,11

If Jesus was a false messiah, he would comply with all man-made traditional believes which can bring money to deceiver, and He would not make them His enemies by initiating a spiritual reform.

Only the true Messiah would not make compromises, but He would stick to His mission regardless of poverty as a consequence.

Even today the most unpopular people are those who proclaim that God calls us to change our bad behavior, while the crowd happily follow leaders who compromise and tolerate sin, even when they realize how they were manipulated.

**Messiah’s traitor was his close friend**

Another prophecy that Jesus could not falsify was about betrayal of a close friend. "Even my own familiar friend (Jewish shalom: peace, a friend) in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me." Psalm 41.9

The prophet used word shalom (שָׁלֹם שָׁלוֹם), which means peace, or a friend. Not only did Jesus was betray a friend, but he did it in Jerusalem. The word Jerusalem (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם יְרוּשָׁלַםִ) means “the city of peace”, and contains the same word - shalom.

Before he was betrayed, Jesus said: "...but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’ Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He… Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” John 13.18-21

When the apostle John asked Jesus who would betray him, “Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon." John 13.26 So Jesus and his traitor ate bread together as foretold!

Jesus foretold that a friend would betray him, a man who was in peace with him, the man to whom he had given bread.

Jesus warned his disciples what would happen in advance, because He did not want them to be disappointed, but to trust Him, even when everything seems to be destroyed by the traitor.

Jesus could not have force Judas to betray him. Jesus even tried to bring Judas back from the path of destruction. He kept him in His immediate vicinity to help him change, if Judas zccept Jesus’ help.

Jesus gave to Judas the same arguments that He is the Messiah, as well as to all apostles.

Given the same amount of evidence, all apostles recognized and believed Jesus is the Messiah, except Judas who decided to betray him for money.

Even at the time of betrayal, Jesus called Judas a friend, which was His way of asking Judas to repent (Matthew 26.50), and also to remind us of the prophecy from the Psalm.

Jesus called his enemies to repentance because He wants to save them. Yet, some people say no to God, no matter how much evidence God gives them about His love and care for them.

Judas tragically ended his life without any hope. The Judas example is a call to everyone not to doubt God who has given us enough evidence of His care for us.

God's absence from our lives would lead toward darkness and death without hope, and the presence of God in our life will bring the fullness of life, and it will lead toward eternal life.

**The price for which the Messiah will be betrayed**

In the Bible, the price for which the Messiah will be betrayed was foretold, as well as the potter's field will be bought for that money: "…So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—that princely price they set on me…" Zechariah 11.12,13

Again, the fulfillment of prophecy depended on Jesus' enemies, and no one could force Sanhedrin to give Judas exactly 30 silver coins as it was prophecied: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him." Matthew 26.14-16

Not only did religious leaders of Israel pay the exact price as Zechariah prophecied, but they also bought the potter's field from that money. "…But the chief priests, taking silver, said," It is not right to throw them into the church thirst, for it is taken for blood. "But they agreed and bought for themselves a potter's field for the graveyard to the guests, and from that it called the fields of the fields to this day." Matthew 27.3-8

Jesus could not influence the price of His betrayal, and what would they buy for that money, because God's enemies would certainly not help Him to fulfil God’s prophecy.

The Pharisees even tried to deny that Jesus is the Messiah, they wanted people to stop believing Jesus is the Messiah, but instead with their intrigues they fulfilled prophecies, confirming that Jesus is the Messiah.

Although God's enemies had no interest in fulfilling this prophecy, they did just what the prophet of God announced it would happen to the Messiah.

This fact is unexplainable even to the biggest skeptics. God provided such evidences that Jesus is the Savior, that a rational person would have no doubts about His credibility.

Even if someone suspects the apostles arranged the events to look as Jesus is the Messiah, but no one would expect Jesus’ enemies to fulfill prophecies that confirms Jesus as the Messiah.

**The Messiah will be humiliated and tortured**

Any false messiah would certainly not be motivated to let his enemies humiliate and torture him. On the other hand, the mission of the true Messiah was to suffer to save other people.

The prophet Isaiah said that people will spit on the Messiah: "I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting." Isaiah 50.6

The fulfillment of this prophecy happened during the Jesus’ trial, because of the disregard for the basic rights of the defendant.

It is terrible how wicked people enjoy to do the harm to someone already wounded. It is hard to believe they were like this toward Jesus, who did no harm to anyone, and always only helped the unfortunate: "Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, “Prophesy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?” Matthew 26,67,68; 27.30

It was also predicted the Messiah would be beated and mocked. The fulfillment of this prophecy also depended on ungodly people who had no interest in fulfilling it, but they did exactly as the prophecy said: ...They will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek." Micah 5.1 "All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, “He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!” Psalm 22: 7,8

Jesus did not provoke anyone to betray Him, arrest Him, beat Him, and spit on Him. His goodness called people to respect him, but some people treated Him with contempt.

As prophecied, human evil fulfilled this prophecy, and brought another argument that Jesus is the Messiah. They even literally repeated the same words as written in the Psalm 22: "Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, “Prophesy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?” Matthew 26.67,68

"And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, “…If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross… He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God”. " Matthew 27.39-44

On the other hand, is there any reasonable person who would agree to go through such abuse, maltreatment, humiliation and crucifixion as Jesus did, just to introduce himself falsely as the Messiah?

Every false messiah would try to avoid suffering, and he will look for benefits. Every cheater would do everything he can to avoid torture and death.

No one would certainly accept this kind of suffering just to deceive people into thinking that he is the Messiah.

However, Jesus did not complain or oppose the suffering He needed to go through to save people. Jesus was silent because people who rejected God’s guidance, no matter what He said, they would not change. So He went through their harassment only because of people who are willing to repent and come back to God. "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth." Isaiah 53.7

It was given enough evidence that everyone can be convinced that Jesus is really the Messiah. Christ's goodness was so unearthly comparing to human aggression, defamation, and malevolence.

**The apostles run away**

From the Bible, we clearly see that Jesus read prophecies about the Messiah and He knew in advance what would happen to him.

Jesus said that He is a good shepherd, because He knew that the prophet Zechariah predicted the Messiah would be striken, which means, He will be arrested and killed, and His disciples would run away disappointed and scared: “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion,” says the Lord of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; then I will turn My hand against the little ones.” Zechariah 13.7

However, if Jesus wanted to appear Messianic prophecies are fulfilling on Him, we would expect Him not to tell apostles anything about it, but to lead them to fulfill the prophecy about their lack of faith and courage.

Instead, Jesus did exactly the opposite: He even warned the apostles not to be frightened or disappointed when He is arrested in the future: "Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered… But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled." Matthew 26.31,56

Apostles were not forced by destiny to be disappointed, but Allknowing God saw in advance they would be disappointed by their weakness, and He did not wanted them to be crushed by their lack of faith.

God saw their desire to change, and warned them what will happen, so they can later firmly stand on His side.

The Gospel writers did not make them look better in the eyes of people, so they can have some benefits or position. They rather openly admited their weaknesses, and uplifted only the Messiah who never failed.

The apostles were not a corrupted persons, they did not describe themselves as faultless super-heroes seeking for glory, but they publicly acknowledged their mistakes and shame.

People of such high moral standards as apostles, they would not fake fulfillment of Messianic prophecies, while they were ready to die for honesty.

**The method of death sentence: Stabbed hands and legs**

If some false messiah even agreed to be beaten and humiliated to appear as he fulfilled prophecies, it is very unlikely that he would allow to be killed, which means – he will lose every benefit from his scam.

One of the most obvious arguments that Jesus is the Messiah represents the way of His death, again directed by His enemies, while He was not involved in the decision.

Although at the time these prophecies were written, the way to execute the death penalty was stoning, it was foretold that the Messiah’s hands and feet would be pearced. Such a death penalty was not known at the time when psalmist David and prophet Zechariah wrote these prophecies. "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn." Zechariah 12.10 "For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet." Psalm 22.16

Only when Romans conquered Israel, death penalties were executed by crucifixion. If prophets were not inspired by God, they could not know at the time they wrote prophecies that death penalties would be executed in a different way. "…where they crucified Him… But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out." John 19.18,34 Being hanged on a tree was considered the greatest curse. (“If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.” Deuteronomy 21.22,23)

How could prophets know centuries in advance how the Messiah would die? We know that people do not have supernatural abilities, unless they were really given information from a supernatural being.

Such a precise prophecy could be inspired only by God. The accuracy of these prophecies is the evidence of God's omnipotence and knowledge.

God foretold the way the Messiah would die at a time when such death sentence was unknown. The way of death Jesus Christ suffered, was another confirmation that indeed He is the Messiah, our Savior.

Imagine how great God's intelligence is, comparing to our limited abilities! God's knowledge we are not able even to comprehend or imagine.

When we think about God's huge wisdom, this is a sufficient reason to worship Him.

**Death among criminals, and a funeral among rich**

Another prophecy that could not be fulfilled by a false messiah is the prophecy that the real Messiah would die among criminals, while He would be buried among rich. " And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth… Because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isaiah 53.9.12

When a death penalty is executed over some person, the convicted person has no control over the circumstances. He can not demand any particular way to be killed, or with whom he will be executed, or where he will be buried.

It was not hard to guess that Jesus would be condemned among real criminals.

It would be hard to guess that someone innocent is sentenced to death penalty, but while He hang on the cross in pain, He has mental strenght to pray for real criminals, and even for people who crucified him.

Since all men broke God's law, we all need Jesus’ prayer to forgive us because we do not know what we are doing. "... there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” Luke 13.33,34

It was fulfilled even that Jesus was "with the rich at His death". Wealthy Joseph of Arimathea gave his grave for Jesus to be buried. There is no indication that at this moment Joseph was aware that he is fulfilling this prophecy. "Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed." Matthew 27.57-60

He was a member of Sanhedrin, but the circumstances of Jesus’ death finaly convinced him that Jesus is the true Messiah, and he did not wanted to hide any longer that decided to follow Jesus.

**God will abandon Him**

The prophecy that the Messiah will triumphantly come to save people was easy to understand. However, it was really difficult to understand that God would for some reason abandon the Messiah to suffer for a period of time: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?" Psalm 22.1

Jesus quoted this psalm at the cross, to show that He was just fulfilling this prophecy: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Matthew 27.46

This Jesus' cry was not a lack of trust in God. Jesus knew that the Father turned his face away from Him because our sins were placed on Him, because He decided to die instead of us.

Jesus actually quoted Messianic Psalms 22 in order to remind us that He, as the Messiah, fulfills another prophecy, and He agreed for our own sake, for a set amount of time to be separated from Father, so we can be forgiven.

**He will be given vinegar to drink**

For Messiah’s suffering, the Psalmist also prodicted that for His thirst, evil people will give Him vinegar. This psychopathic desire of God's enemies to torture the Messiah, only contributed to fulfillment of another prophecy and another confirmation that Jesus is the Messiah. "They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Psalm 69.21

No matter how Jesus looked helpless at the cross, He kept in his hands the salvation of all people, even those who decided to kill him. So he fulfilled this prophecy: "... that the Scripture might be fulfilled, (Jesus) said, “I thirst!” Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit." John 19.28-30

He kept the situation under His control and nothing happened differently from what God had foretold centuries ago. It all showed God’s supreme intelligence and how powerful He is.

 He has given us free will and He does not force us on any decision, but nothing can stop God from saving people who decided to trust Him.

**His clothes will be divided by casting lots**

A series of prophecies fulfilled by God's enemies continues. God saw the whole millennium ahead that soldiers would take off Messiah’s clothes and cast a lot to see who will get them. "They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." Psalm 22.18

Knowing God, we are not surprised anymore that this is exactly how it happen. It is incredible how precisely God saw in advance His enemies will behave. Every God’s opponent should realize how small we are before the Sovereign God. "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,” that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: “They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." John 19.23,24

God is like a chess master who plays with a beginner and predicts all the moves in advance, every single variation. People think they can outsmart the Master, but at the end they realize God foresaw all their moves from the beginning and found a winning option for us, if we are willing to listen to His voice.

**His bones will not be broken**

When God decided to free Israelites from Egyptian slavery, the only condition was to sacrifice a Passover lamb without breaking any bone. This lamb symbolized the Messiah, who will sacrifice himself to free God’s people from slavery of sin. "He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken." Psalm 34.20 This command not to break a bone to already dead Passover lamb could sound useless to someone, but instead it was a prophecy which can help us identify the Messiah. The lamb was a substitution for a slave of sin who must die, but the Lamb died instead so repented sinner can live (Exodus 12.46)

As the Passover lamb should not have any broken bones, the Messiah’s bones were not broken at the cross. Roman soldiers on a regular basis broke bones of prisoners at the cross to speed up their dying, but they did not break Jesus' bones. Jesus was already dead, because the burden of our sins and the separation from the father killed Him faster than physical suffering. "... the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs… For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, “Not one of His bones shall be broken." John 19.31-33, 36

So God's prophecy points toward an exception to the rule. The Messianic prophecies did not predict common, everyday behavior, but exceptions to established routines, which makes them difficult to be fulfilled by chance.

**The Messiah will resurrect in 3 Days**

No false messiah has even attempted to fulfill many of the Old Testament shadows of future events, for example the one which indicate the Messiah will be resurrected from the grave on the third day, before the start od decay process. "... no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matthew 12.39,40 "For You will not leave my soul in Sheol (grave), nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption." Psalm 16.10

Any false messiah who allow to be killed would remain in grave, because God would certainly not resurrect him. However, Jesus was very confident that He would resurrect after they killed Him, and He openly prophesied in front of his enemies, it will happen on a third day. "Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body.“ John 2.19-21

A false Messiah might try to do some trick and simulate the resurrection, but faking death and resurrection under such difficult circumstances, while fulfilling centuries-old prophecies depended on enemies – would be a mission imposible – except for the true Messiah.

Could anyone predict his time of death and his resurrection three days after? This is imposible for any human being. Roman soldiers confirmed that Jesus was dead before they took Him of the cross.

A soldier pierced his chest with a spear through His heart, and a stream of blood and watery fluid came out. After such a heavy loss of blood and a heart injury, Jesus certainly was not only in a comatose condition from which he allegedly wakened later, as some say, but He certainly died.

Even if Jesus did not die, armed soldiers stood at the entrance to the tomb, and Jesus could not leave unnoticed. When the apostles said that Jesus had risen, soldiers could show the body they guarded.

Instead, the women who came to the grave to anoint the body of Jesus, claimed that there were no more soldiers on the grave, but they found angels who told them that Jesus had risen.

After the resurrection, Jesus was seen by many people in several situations. The apostle Paul says that the resurrected Christ was seen by more than 500 people at one time: "After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep." 1.Corinthians 15.6

The prophecy of resurrection three days after death only the true Messiah could fulfill. Jesus' resurrection could not be logically denied even by his enemies.

Instead of denying, they tried to arrest and kill the apostles who spread the word about the resurrection of Christ, only because they had no arguments to deny it.

Also, religious leaders of Israel made up very unbelievable story: several frightened, disappointed and unarmed apostles stole the body of Christ, unnoticed by armed Roman professional soldiers commanded by a centurion. Centurion was usually in charge of a hundred soldiers.

On the other hand, before Christ’s resurrection the apostles were hidden in fear for their lives, but after the Christ's resurrection they come out to preach on the streets of Jerusalem and in the temple without any fear – to confirm they saw the resurrected Messiah with their own eyes.

The apostles had no material benefit from preaching this, so they would not allow to be exposed to a mortal danger if they had any doubts.

The apostles advocated for high moral principles, so it would not be logical to invite people to a high morality based on a lie and deception.

And yet, under constant persecution they insisted their story was true for the rest of their lives, even though they had no personal property, no wealth, or a position of significant influence in society.

Such perseverance is possible only if they were telling the truth that they really saw the resurrected Jesus and believed that God would resurrect them if they die, as well as the Messiah.

All other religious leaders and self-proclaimed messiahs ended up in graves, and their dead bodies people use as relics for pilgrimage.

Only Jesus Christ overcame the death on the third day as it was foretold centuries before.

**Jesus is our intercessor at God's investigative judgment**

If He was resurrected, where is Jesus today? If you interviewed people on the street what they think where Jesus is today, only a few people would give the right answer.

Most people do not believe that Jesus is alive, even though they celebrate Easter. And if people believe that Jesus has risen and ascended to God’s throne in Heaven, only a few would know that He intercedes for us before the Father’s throne. "Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! … Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”’ Zechariah 6.12,13

The Apostle Paul says: "…We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man." Hebrews 8.1.2

Therefore, the purpose of Messiah's sacrifice on the cross was so that he could mediate before God's throne, for everyone who wants to return to God

God gave detailed instructions to Moses how to build the Most Holy place (Exodus 25,8,9) and how to perform symbolic rituals, which are shadows of real events happening in the heavenly temple, where Jesus as a High Priest advocating for repenting siners who pray to God.

The Apostle Paul says that Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and men ("For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all…" 1 Timothy 2,5).

When all men make their final decision, for God or against Him, then Jesus will cease to mediate before God’s throne. He will remove his high priest robe and put on his kingly robe. He will come for the second time to our planet to execute the decision made before the throne of God.

What does all this mean to us? All fulfilled Messianic prophecies indicate that there is a living God in heaven who created perfect world, who knows the future, who did not give up from us even when people rebelled againt Him.

The one who knew even 1500 years in advance that all this will happen, He is worthy of our trust.

God gave us these prophecies because He is our true friend, asa a guide and warning, although most people treat God as an enemy.

Fullfilled Messianic prophecies show us not only that God exists, but that He loves his creatures and wants to save us.

In Jesus' life, all the prophecies were fulfilled exacly as prophets predicted it will be, and if Jesus was just a man, He could not arrange fulfillment which depended on his enemies.

Jesus said, "Which is written must still be accomplished in Me." Luke 22,37 Everything is happening according to God's prophetic schedulle.

Therefore, Messianic prophecies are not vague, inprecise or shallow, so everyone could fulfill them, or if that can be fulfilled by chance in many different situations.

These prophecies are not a few random matches of events. Messianic prophecies are specific and precise, so no one can fulfill them by chance, or to fake their fulfillment.

The fulfillment of all these prophecies in life of Jesus Christ showed God's incredible intelligence, because He fulfills His centuries old complicated plans, and no one can stop Him from saving people who sincerely repent and want to live according to His principles.

If God calls us to change something in our lives, this is certainly the best choice for us, something for our own benefit.

People who follow God did not deny Him even in life threatening situations, even in Roman arenas or before the inquisition.

When God wants to save us, no matter who is against us, emperors, priests or religious organizations, no one will stop God from saving us.

Therefore, God gave us sufficient information about His so we can trust Him.

But if we run away from the quiet calls of His Holy Spirit, God will not force us to come back.

Resurrection and eternal life with God - our own way. The choice is ours.