

# **To Seek and To Save the Lost**

**“Are You the One Who Is to Come?”**

*Luke 7:18b-19*

**Rev. Freddy Fritz**

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# “Are You the One Who Is to Come?”

## Introduction

For the past year or so we have been examining the life of Jesus as it has been recorded in the Gospel of Luke. This past Lord’s Day we looked at the incident regarding Jesus’ meeting with messengers from John the Baptist in Luke 7:18-35.

John burst on the public scene as an extremely popular preacher. He had been called by God to prepare the way for the coming of the Christ. John drew incredibly large crowds to his ministry in the desert region around the Jordan River. He was a fiery and passionate preacher who proclaimed a message of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. He even reproved King Herod for unlawfully marrying his brother’s wife. Because of this, Herod had John thrown into prison.

And there John sat and languished. He had preached faithfully and prepared the people for the coming of the promised Christ. He heard about the amazing ministry of Jesus who by now was himself drawing massive crowds to his ministry. Jesus healed countless thousands of people and preached good news to poor, captive, oppressed and spiritually blind sinners.

But after being in prison for about 6 or 8 months, John began wondering whether Jesus was in fact the promised Christ. Part of the problem was that John, like most of the people in his day, expected a Victorious Christ. He expected that when Christ came he would overthrow all injustice and unrighteousness and set up his glorious kingdom. John did not understand that the Christ would actually come *twice*. Christ’s second coming will be as the Victorious Christ. However, Christ came as a Suffering and Sin-bearing Christ during his *first* coming. John’s misunderstanding about the purpose of Jesus’ first coming led to the question he had about the identity of Jesus.

And so Luke records John sending the following question

to Jesus in Luke 7:18b-19:

**<sup>18</sup>. . . . And John, <sup>19</sup> calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (Luke 7:18b-19)**

Jesus' reply to John is fascinating. And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them" (7:22). By pointing John to the miracles he was performing and the message he was proclaiming, he was reminding John of several Old Testament predictions that would accompany the arrival of the Christ. Passages such as Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2 point to a future resurrection of the dead associated with the advent of the Christ. Similarly, Isaiah 35:5-6 associates healing of the blind, lame, and deaf with the Christ, while Isaiah 61:1 describes the preaching of the good news to poor, captive, oppressed, and spiritually blind sinners as the message of the Christ.

Jesus could have highlighted many more Old Testament predictions that found their fulfillment in him as proof that he was indeed the Christ.

### **Lesson**

I would like to highlight some Old Testament predictions that were fulfilled in Jesus. I plan to use the following outline:

1. Old Testament Predictions Were Literally Fulfilled in Jesus
2. Conclusion: Jesus Really Is the Christ
3. Two Objections to All the Predictions Being Fulfilled in Jesus

## **I. Old Testament Predictions Were Literally Fulfilled in Jesus**

First, I want to point out several Old Testament predictions that were literally fulfilled in Jesus.

Briefly, I would like to point out just eight predictions that were literally fulfilled in Jesus.

### *A. The Christ Would Be Born in Bethlehem*

First, the Christ would be born in Bethlehem.

The prophet Micah predicted that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 says, "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."

Matthew 2:1 says, "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. . . ." In Matthew 2:6 the chief priests and scribes quoted Micah 5:2 as the place where the Christ would be born.

### *B. The Christ Would Be Preceded By a Messenger*

Second, the Christ would be preceded by a messenger.

In the last book of the Old Testament, which was written about 450 years before John the Baptist began his ministry, God said through the prophet Malachi in Malachi 3:1, "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts."

Jesus noted that this prediction was fulfilled in Luke 7:27, "This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'"

*C. The Christ Would Enter Jerusalem on a Donkey*

Third, the Christ would enter Jerusalem on a donkey.

Zechariah 9:9 says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

This prediction is fulfilled and is recorded in Luke 19:35-37, "And they brought it [that is, a donkey] to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen."

*D. The Christ Would Be Betrayed By a Friend*

Fourth, the Christ would be betrayed by a friend.

Psalm 41:9 predicts, "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me."

Its fulfillment is found in Matthew 10:4b, ". . . and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him."

*E. The Christ Would Be Sold for Thirty Pieces of Silver*

Fifth, the Christ would be sold for thirty pieces of silver.

Zechariah 11:12 states, "Then I said to them, 'If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.' And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver."

This prediction is fulfilled in Matthew 26:14-15 where we read, "One of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?' And they paid him thirty pieces of silver."

*F. The Thirty Pieces of Silver Would Purchase a Potter's Field*

Sixth, the thirty pieces of silver would purchase a potter's field.

Zechariah 11:13b states, "So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter."

After Judas saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought the thirty pieces of silver back to the chief priests and the elders and threw it on the floor of the temple. Matthew 27:7 says that "they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers."

*G. The Christ Would Be Silent Before His Accusers*

Seventh, the Christ would be silent before his accusers.

Isaiah 53:7 says, "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 silent, so he opened not his mouth."

We find its fulfillment in Matthew 27:12, "But when he [that is, Jesus] was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer."

*H. The Christ Would Be Pierced in His Hands and Feet*

And eighth, the Christ would be pierced in his hands and feet.

Psalm 22:16b says, ". . . they have pierced my hands and feet."

Luke 23:33 says, "And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left." Jesus was crucified in the usual Roman manner. His hands and feet were nailed to wood-

en posts with large spikes.

Interestingly, Roman crucifixion was unknown in Jewish law. Psalm 22 was written hundreds of years before crucifixion even came into existence as the preferred way to execute criminals. And so this was an astonishing fulfillment of prediction.

## **II. Conclusion: Jesus Really Is the Christ**

Second, we conclude then that Jesus really is the Christ.

I highlighted just 8 Old Testament predictions that were each literally fulfilled in Jesus. Josh McDowell, in his book titled *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, states, "The Old Testament, written over a 1,000-year period, contains several hundred references to the coming Christ. All of these were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and they establish a solid confirmation of his credentials as the Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Floyd Hamilton, in his book titled *The Basics of Christian Faith*, makes the following comment, "Canon Liddon is authority for the statement that there are in the Old Testament 322 distinct predictions which were literally fulfilled in Christ."<sup>2</sup>

## **III. Two Objections to All the Predictions Being Fulfilled in Jesus**

And finally, I would like to address two objections to all the predictions being fulfilled in Jesus.

### *A. Jesus Deliberately Fulfilled the Predictions*

First, Jesus deliberately fulfilled the predictions.

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<sup>1</sup> Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Historical Evidences for the Christian Faith*, Revised Edition (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1979), 141.

<sup>2</sup> Floyd Hamilton, *The Basics of Christian Faith* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1964), 160.

Skeptics say that Jesus read about the predictions in the Old Testament about the coming Christ. And so he deliberately set about to fulfill them in his own life so that people would believe that he was the Christ.

This objection might seem plausible at first glance. Jesus could have made an arrangement with his cousin, John the Baptist, to go before and “prepare the way” for him. He could have preached a message of the good news as foretold by Isaiah. And he could have entered Jerusalem on a donkey. He could have deliberately fulfilled a number of the predictions.

However, there were many predictions that were totally beyond the control of Jesus. There is no way he could have deliberately determined the place of his birth (Micah 5:2), the manner of his birth as being born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), his manner of death (Psalm 22:16), his burial in a rich man’s tomb (Isaiah 53:9), and so on.

And so, all 322 distinct predictions, many of which were totally beyond the control of Jesus came true in his life.

*B. It Was Merely Coincidental That All the Predictions Were Fulfilled in Jesus*

And second, it was merely coincidental that all the predictions were fulfilled in Jesus.

Some say that the fact that all 322 predictions were literally fulfilled in Jesus was merely coincidental. They say that one could find a number of these predictions being fulfilled in other people.

Yes, it is true that one or two (or even a handful!) predictions might have been fulfilled in other men. But it is impossible for all 322 predictions to be fulfilled in another single man.

In his book titled *Science Speaks*, Peter Stoner showed that the science of probability has ruled out coincidence as the way in which all 322 predictions can be fulfilled in a single



man.

Actually, just in regard to the eight predictions that I listed for you in this lesson above, Stoner says, "We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight predictions is 1 in  $10^{17}$ ." That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates:

Suppose we take  $10^{17}$  silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from that day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom.

Now these prophecies were either given by inspiration of God or the prophets just wrote them as they thought they should be. In such a case the prophets had just one chance in  $10^{17}$  of having them come true in any man, but they all came true in Christ.<sup>3</sup>

Keep in mind that this staggering probability is for only 8 out of the 322 predictions all coming true in one person!

There is simply no way that it is coincidental that all 322 predictions came true in the person of Jesus Christ.

## Conclusion

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in fulfillment of Old Testament prediction. He was born of a virgin in fulfillment of Old Testament prediction. He was born of the lineage of Abraham

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<sup>3</sup> Peter W. Stoner, *Science Speaks* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1963), 100-107.

and David in fulfillment of Old Testament prediction. He was presented with gifts in fulfillment of Old Testament prediction. King Herod killed children after Jesus' birth in fulfillment of Old Testament prediction. Jesus and his family fled into Egypt to escape Herod's atrocities in fulfillment of Old Testament prediction.

Jesus fulfilled 322 Old Testament predictions regarding his birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, and so on.

That means that Jesus really is the Christ, the Son of God, and Savior of sinners. God sent him to pay the penalty for our sin so that we can be reconciled to God.

Do you believe that Jesus really is the Christ?

And have you asked Jesus to pay the penalty for your sin?

I pray that this Christmas Eve you will believe that Jesus really is the one who came to be the Christ, and the Savior of sinners. Amen.

# **Mission Statement**

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ  
and membership in his church family,  
develop them to Christlike maturity,  
equip them for their ministry in the church  
and life mission in the world,  
in order to magnify God's name.*

## **Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz**

This sermon, and other sermons, by the Rev. Freddy Fritz can be found at:

1. [www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons](http://www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons)
2. [www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp](http://www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp)
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## **Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church (PCA)**

*Answers for Life!*

Address: 19911 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa, FL 33647

Telephone: (813) 973-2484

Fax: (813) 973-4673

Email: [Office@TampaBayPresbyterian.org](mailto:Office@TampaBayPresbyterian.org)

Web site: [www.TampaBayPresbyterian.org](http://www.TampaBayPresbyterian.org)

**PRAYER:**

Our Father, thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank you for the clear predictions in the Old Testament that point to the coming Christ. Thank you that they were all perfectly fulfilled in him.

We also thank you that he is the Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior of sinners. This Christmas Eve will you grant the gift of saving faith and repentance to those who have not yet embraced Jesus as Lord and Savior.

And for this I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

**BENEDICTION:**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and always. Amen.

**CHARGE:**

Now, brothers and sisters, go and serve God wholeheartedly!