

Why I Believe – Part III: The Perfect Messiah

3-10-13

In our discussion of Satan's war against Faith, we have said that one of his great weapons is worldly knowledge (I Corinthians 1:18-21). He tempted Eve with this in the beginning, and still uses it today. Our war against Satan is with knowledge (II Corinthians 10:4-5).

We have been considering the idea that today worldly knowledge is a combination of facts and interpretation. Facts may not change, but the interpretation of facts is what is at issue. For example, evolution looks at our world and states that the similarity of the ape and a man is because they have evolved, while we see through Scripture it is the evidence of a common creator. The same fact, but interpreted based on the acceptance of God or the belief in the absence thereof. With Prehistory, some see an absence of God, but we have seen the veracity of the Bible. Now we consider theology

If we were to identify the "facts" of theology, it would be that there is a communicated source from a divine origin. We call this the Bible. One great part of the Bible is the prophetic message of identification of the Messiah. This Messiah was first promised to Even, then to Abraham, then to David, each one being promised a savior through their seed.

Interpreting these promises is dangerous. For example, Islam states that Moses' promise of a Messiah ('I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. Deuteronomy 18:18) is a validation of their prophet Mohammed. However, we can see he does fit the description. This Messiah would be a Jewish Messiah.

In considering our theme, we need to see how the same facts have brought other conclusions. In this case, we will consider the rejection of Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah by the Jews (of His time and ours). Typically, there are six reasons given for this rejection:

1. Descended from David and Solomon,
2. Be anointed King of Israel,
3. Return the Jewish People to Israel,
4. Rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem,
5. Bring peace to the world and end all war,
6. Bring knowledge of God to the world

Jews today state that Jesus failed to fulfill these prophecies. Is this true?

First, Jesus' genealogy is actually traced by two independent historians of the Bible, Matthew (chapter 1) and Luke (chapter 4). Matthew records the line of Jesus through His adopted Father, and Luke through His biological mother. Why two Genealogies? One shows He was King of the Jews, and one shows He was the Seed Promise. One gives His bloodline, the other His birthright.

Second, when speaking of the anointing of Jesus, we need to remember that the prophets specifically said God Himself would anoint (Psalm 2:2), and that He would do so with the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 61:1). Did this occur? In fact it happened three times (Matthew 3:16, Matthew 17:5 and John 12:28). Consider that there were three offices of anointment that the Messiah would fill: High Priest, Prophet and King. Therefore, He was more than qualified for the office of messiah by anointing.

Third, Jesus restored Israel, but not in the manner expected. The promises of restoration were not exclusive to the Jew; consider Isaiah 2:2-5. Similar promises state that this would come to both Jews and Gentiles. That restoration (Luke 2:25-32) occurred when men were restored to a relationship with God.

Fourth, Jesus built the Temple. This promise is repeated by Old Testament prophets (Zechariah 6:15, etc), and then in the New Testament we are repeatedly told that there is a new, Spiritual Temple that has been built by Jesus (I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, II Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 2:21, I Peter 2:9). Again, He fulfilled the promises better than could have been anticipated.

Fifth is the promise of world peace. What about the promise of peace? Prophets said it would come to all the world (Zechariah 9:10). In truth, it did happen. Consider the greatest enemies of men are not one another, but Satan (Hebrews 2:14), Death (2 Timothy 1:10), and ultimately, God Himself (Romans 5:1,10)

Sixth and last is the knowledge of God going out to all the earth. This was the very substance of the Great commission (Mark 16:15-16). Ultimately, the Apostles said that the knowledge of God has gone out to all (Ephesians 3:3-6).

Only one man met all these conditions – Jesus of Nazareth. Not only did He meet these conditions, but He exceeded them to become a Perfected Messiah