

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

September 18, 2016

Jesus' Identity Proved by Fulfilled Prophecy

by Frank Himmel

When Jewish opponents doubted what Jesus said about who He was, the Lord responded, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me" (John 5:39).

John wrote his gospel to preserve faith-building evidence for us (20:30-31). Fulfilled prophecy is one the powerful proofs of Jesus' identity. In his typical manner, John selected for our consideration seven incidents in Jesus' life in which He fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures.

❶ John summarized the response to Jesus' public teaching this way: "But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?'" (12:37-38; cf. Isaiah 53:1).

❷ Jesus warned the apostles that one of them would betray Him. He said, "I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scrip-

ture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats my bread has lifted up his heel against me'" (13:18; cf. Psalm 41:9). Jesus added in the next verse that He was foretelling the betrayal so that when it occurred, His foreknowledge of it would be an additional proof of His deity.

❸ Jesus cautioned the apostles that as His spokesmen, the world would hate them just as it hated Him (15:18). Its hatred of Him, in turn, paralleled its hatred of the Father (v. 24). The Lord then observed, "But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'They hated Me without a cause'" (v. 25; cf. Psalm 35:19; 69:4).

❹ Jesus' prayer in John 17 includes this statement, made in reference to the apostles: "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled" (v. 12). Earlier, Jesus cited Psalm 41:9 with reference to Judas. Consider also Psalm 55:12-15 or 109:8 (cited in Acts 1:20).

❺ John's account of Jesus' crucifixion includes this detail: "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to ▶



decide whose it shall be'; this was to fulfill the Scripture: 'they divided my outer garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots'" (19:23-24; cf. Psalm 22:18).

6 Jesus' cries from the cross also fulfilled prophecy. "After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, 'I am thirsty'" (19:28; cf. Psalm 22:15; 69:21).

7 John saw fulfilled Scripture in the way in which Jesus' death was finalized. "Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, 'Not a bone of him shall be broken.' And again another Scripture says, 'They shall look on him whom they pierced'" (19:31-37; cf. Exodus 12:46; Zechariah 12:10).

Interestingly, John included other events in Jesus' life which fulfilled Scripture, yet he recorded them without noting that prophecy was coming to pass. One example is Jesus' burial in a rich man's tomb

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(19:38-42; cf. Isaiah 53:9). Did John perhaps think that seven such references were sufficient? "But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (20:31). ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	David Gray	John Baucom	Greg Winget
SONG LEADER	Gary Hagler	Carlos Garcia	J B Williams
OPENING PRAYER	Mark Clifton	Don Rapp	
LORD'S SUPPER			
BREAD	Steven Turner	Steven Turner	
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CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Kerry Gray		
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CLOSING PRAYER	Albert Harrison	Chris Brooks	Adam Wilson