

From the book of Genesis all the way to Malachi there are numerous references to the messiah. As early as Genesis chapter 3, God says, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman and your offspring and hers, he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Genesis (3:15). This is normally known as the *proto-Euangelion* or the first gospel which tells us that Satan will be a defeated foe though the struggle between human beings and Satan will continue on till the end. However death will be affected by a human eventually on Satan. Jesus fulfills this as he defeats Satan on the cross by his death and resurrection.

The anticipation of the messiah was there from ancient times among the Jewish community. Though the word messiah is frequently used in a modern language to indicate a powerful personality the word has no real meaning when the person is dead and gone. The word messiah is actually taken from the Hebrew bible which means "anointed one". Faithful Jews were long awaiting the messiah who would come and deliver them from their enemies and rule over them forever. The Jewish people always talked about the time 'when the messiah comes' when everything would be fine.

The birth of Jesus was foretold by the prophet Isaiah, "Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign. And behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and will call him Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14). Mathew confirms the birth, of Jesus as a fulfillment of this prophecy. The coming of Jesus in human form fulfilled the promise of 'God with us-Emmanuel'. In terms of his ministry also Isaiah had prophesied saying "The Spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners. To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour... (Isaiah 61:1-2). When Jesus began his ministry this was the passage that was read in the synagogue and at the end of it he said, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). Jesus through his message and his ministry catered for all kinds of people: the high and the low, rich and poor, sick and well came to him and were cradled in his words of relief, care and salvation. All this fulfilled the words of Isaiah that he would be the one to heal the broken hearted and to proclaim liberty to the captives.

Despite his wonderful words and compassionate miracles and his evident goodness Christ was rejected by his own people. The rulers envied and hated him. The people proved to be unreliable and were easily swayed by the hostility shown to Jesus by these elders and religious rulers. This was foretold long before Christ came by the prophet Isaiah: "He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain like one from whom people hide their faces. He was despised and we held him in low esteem (Isaiah 53:3)." The climax of the life of Jesus was his death by crucifixion. It is said that in times before Christ it was sometimes the practice to tie or nail certain criminals to a stake or tree after they had been put to death. Crucifixion of living persons seems to have come only with the Romans. It was unknown among the Jews. Yet, a thousand years before Jesus was born his living crucifixion was clearly foretold: "Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierced my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display. People stare and gloat over me (Psalm 22:16, 17)." Even the sharing of his clothes which the New Testament describes as being carried by soldiers is clearly mentioned; "They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garments." (Psalm 22:18)

The suffering and shame of Christ were all for the sake of redeeming human beings. He suffered for our forgiveness and for our salvation. The Old Testament words could not have been clearer. "Surely he took our pain and bore our suffering. Yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him and by his wounds we are healed. We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us turning our own separate way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:4-6). Similarly his resurrection is also foretold: "...Because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead nor will you faithful one see decay.

So we see through the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi show the coming of Christ, his birth, his life, his ministry, his death, the cross and the resurrection were