

**“BABEȘ-BOLYAI” UNIVERSITY, CLUJ-NAPOCA  
FACULTY OF REFORMED THEOLOGY**

**DOCTORAL THESIS**

**MESSIANIC PROPHECIES: PROMISES,  
FULFILLMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS REGARDING  
THE PROMISES**

**-SUMMARY-**

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**Key words:**

*Messianic prophecies; promise vs. fulfillment; the genealogy of the Messiah; the attributes of the Messiah; the activity, the suffering, the death and the resurrection of the Messiah; Messiah's Divinity; expectations regarding the unfulfilled prophecies.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the ages, among all the characters of universal history Jesus Christ distinguishes Himself, because apart from Him, nobody else's life was ever described with exact details, from birth to death, and it had been done thousands of years before His birth. These aspects were specifically proclaimed through the Messianic prophecies. By studying Biblical prophecies in general, we will notice the way in which they stood out throughout the time, due to the way they wrote history before it even happened.

The Messianic prophecies analyzed in the current paper are not considered to be ordinary foresight that took place in history by accident, but the accuracy they were transmitted with and were revealed, proves that the whole Universe is in control of a Master whom the Bible calls God.

**The Importance of Studying the Messianic Prophecies**

Over the introductory chapter, it was highlighted that the Messianic prophecies from the OT have a deep apologetic content due to the fact that the majority of them were spoken long before the fulfillment, therefore their aim is both to strengthen the recipients' faith (for those who already believe) and to make the skeptics aware that they do not have any basis for not believing in God's existence. Furthermore, it was reminded that the Messianic prophecies present the major historical events of humanity before they occurred; thereby an additional argument is being brought up for the existence of God and mostly for the description of His character.

Perfect congruence between the Old and the New Testament highlighted by the Messianic prophecies, on the one hand through the promises from the OT and, on the other hand through their fulfillment presented in the NT. In addition, it can be easily noticed that the importance of this topic, Messianic prophecies, increases in direct ratio with the passing of time, taking into account the fact that many of them are still waiting for their fulfillment. The relevance of Messianic prophecies is emphasized even by the fact that the whole history depends on them, and notably the history of the Jewish people revolves around them. Everything that is going to happen to the State of Israel should not be considered as something new to those who study the OT prophecies.



## **Supporting the Chosen Topic**

The main reason that led me to choose this topic is represented by the current situation, namely the way in which the false liberal theologies perceive the concept of Messianic prophecy particularly, and the one of prophecy generally. From point of view of liberal theologians, many, if not all of the messianic prophecies are perceived merely as some predictions that can be either true or not, and before they can be trusted they need to pass through the "filter" of reason. For instance, it is claimed that it is impossible that Messiah would have been born out of a virgin, as this matter is irrational; whereas others even hold the belief that the evangelists Matthew and Luke invented the birth of a virgin in order to cover the illegitimate birth of Jesus. Additionally, it is claimed that divinity was attributed to the Lord Jesus after the Council of Nicaea in the fourth century. Similar to the liberal theologies, during the last decades, volumes and defamatory studies concerning the identity of Jesus of Nazareth have been published. Also, concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ during the twentieth century, different books were published, having the main purpose of disputing the identity of Jesus as the Messiah. This paper aims to bring a counterargument to these false theologies.

A second reason was to find out exactly the way in which Messiah has been foretold dozens, hundreds and even thousands of years before His embodiment and especially the way we should relate to the prophecies regarding future events, both with the State of Israel and the entire world, at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

### *The Current Knowledge in the Research Field*

In this chapter we provided a brief presentation of the Messianic prophecies research from the ancient times to the contemporary writers, including the current century. Later on, I mentioned the level of studies conducted in Romania, on this topic, noticing that during the last two centuries less than fifteen volumes on this subject were published in Romania.

## **Defining the Goals of the Research**

The current paper had as a goal, and mostly managed to be a new step in the study of the Messianic prophecies. Approaching the Messianic prophecies both from the perspective of the OT' promises and the one of fulfillments reflected in the NT, the present paper intends to distinguish that there is a clear connection between the OT and the NT which was not directed (the NT authors did not intend to prove that the OT prophecies are true), but happened providentially. As we shall notice, the authority of the Scriptures is clearly argued through the details spoken in the OT (hundreds or even thousands of years before) and fulfilled during the NT time. Also, the present study intended to be a

biblical foundation of the Hebrew Messianism and, why not, a concise scriptural basis for the New Testament Christology.

Therefore, at the end of the present paper, I wanted to prove the following objectives:

- God is the only true God whose knowledge is infinite and whose word is never broken.
- The Messiah is preexistent, divine and coeternal with God the Father (God described in the OT) having some specific attributes, namely: King, Prophet, High Priest and thus, the only Savior of the mankind.
- The Triune God is the absolute Sovereign, so that all things, events, regardless of their nature (if they are positive or negative) are subordinated to His will, so that nothing can occur outside of His will.
- Through the manner in which they were spoken and especially fulfilled, the Messianic prophecies prove their author's, namely God's, authority and sovereignty.
- The biblical message (especially the one transmitted through the Messianic prophecies) is authentic and relevant for every society, particularly for the contemporary one. The correlation between the promises and their fulfillment proves that the Bible is the Word inspired by God, the man being incapable to write and fulfill all the prophecies that are described in the Bible.
- Proving the identity of the man Jesus of Nazareth, born out of the Virgin Mary, being the Messiah promised in the OT.
- To consider that the Messianic prophecies were fulfilled by accident is considered to be misinformation claimed by the skeptics who do not accept the history of the Hebrew people only, but rather attempt to cause disorder within the divine creation. The accidental fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies is an unfounded supposition.
- Clear establishment of the place, time and the way in which the unfulfilled promises will be accomplished up to this moment, namely those that emphasize the eschatological events.

### **Research Methods**

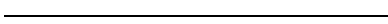
In this subchapter we presented a mathematical method to show the impossibility of random fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies, by using the law of mathematical probability.

### **Documentary Sources**

For the present paper I used different documentary sources starting from the online libraries of the most prestigious publishing houses to the libraries of the faculties of theology from Romania and abroad.

Online libraries consulted:

- *Google Books*: By using the account I created on [www.books.google.com](http://www.books.google.com) I was able to gain access to the most valuable books from the following publishing houses: Mohr Siebeck (Tubingen, Germania); Kregel Publications; BiblioBazaar, LLC; Zodervan Publishing House (Grand Rapids, Michigan), T&T Clark LTD; Harvest House Publishers; State University of New York Press, Albany; Tony Alamo Christian Ministers Worldwide, Texas; C. Scribner's sons; Kregel Publications; William Briggs, Toronto; The Tyndale Press; The Cathedral Library Association; The Cathedral Library Association; Augsburg Fortress; Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Rome; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing; Sheed & Ward, Kansas.
- *Forgotten Books* ( <http://www.forgottenbooks.org> ): An online publishing house that offers to this present day <sup>1</sup> 10,011 books and 5,161 books are going to be published. The aim of this publishing house is to reprint the most valuable old books.
- *Open Library* ( <http://openlibrary.org/> ): An online publishing house that offers over 1,000,000 electronic books. By using this site I was able to access books recognized internationally, on the topic of Messianic prophecies. Some of these volumes from this site are available either online or offline (by downloading them in an electronic version).
- *SAGE Journal online* ( <http://online.sagepub.com/> ): It offers over 630 diaries written by more than 245 societies and institutions and over 700 books per year from different fields among which there is a theological one.
- *Theology on the Web* (<http://www.theologyontheweb.org.uk/>):
- *Biblical Studies* (<http://biblicalstudies.org.uk>): It recommends extensive bibliographies for each book of the Bible, as well as the study of hermeneutics, biblical archaeologies, criticism and biblical exegesis.
- *Theological Studies* (<http://www.theologicalstudies.org.uk/>): A site ran by Robert I. Bradshaw, specialized theological studies. It provides excerpts from different books and even complete books on different theological topics.
- *BibleWorks 8.0.005s.1*: It is software that offers all the details needed for a correct exegesis of an original biblical text. It contains over 200 translations of the Bible in 40 languages and over 40 texts, written in the original languages (in Hebrew for the OT and in Greek for the NT). Also, it



<sup>1</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

offers a large morphological database containing tens of remarkable lexicons and a lot of reference works. For further details, access: <http://www.bibleworks.com/>.

#### *Libraries from France and Australia*

Between January 28<sup>th</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup> 2011 I was in Australia where I had access to one of the most prestigious libraries in the world, the Theological Seminary Library "Vose Seminary" from Western Australia (<http://vose.wa.edu.au/>), where I consulted over 30 volumes regarding the topic of Messianic prophecies.

From July 21<sup>st</sup> to August 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 I was part of an Erasmus Placement and had access to the National Library of France (*Bibliothèque Nationale de France*). Through the research room of this library, exclusively dedicated to doctoral candidates who were recommended by the scientific coordinators, I had the opportunity to consult nearly all of the volumes written on the topic of Messianic prophecies (especially the volumes written in English and French).

#### *Faculties of Theology Libraries*

During the 2010-2011 academic year, and beyond it, I consulted a few libraries among which: *the Faculty of Pastoral Pentecostal Theology, Pentecostal Theological Institute* from Bucharest, *the Faculty of Didactic Reformed Theology*, Babes-Bolyai University from Cluj-Napoca; *Biblical Studies* from Cluj-Napoca, Babes-Bolyai University from Cluj-Napoca; Central University Library "Lucian Blaga" from Cluj-Napoca.

### **The main structure of the doctoral thesis**

Within each chapter (with the exception of the introductory one) for every single Messianic prophecy and for a group of prophecies, I wrote two subchapters: the first one aimed at providing an in-depth analysis of the promise (from the OT), whereas the second one describing the way the promise was fulfilled. As some of the Messianic prophecies have not fulfilled yet, I consider necessary to highlight the events preceding the fulfillment of the prophecies, and what kind of expectations we ought to have.

*The second chapter* is meant to analyze the main concepts of the Messianic prophecies. Thus, in this chapter the following concepts were analyzed: messianism and messianic waiting (including the way in which the man Jesus has related to the Jewish Messianic expectations); the Messiah, prophet and prophecy in the OT; Messianic prophecy (including the perspective of rabbinic writings) and the biblical terminology of "fulfillment" both from the OT point of view and the NT one.

*In the third chapter* the focus was on those Messianic prophecies that reveal the existence of the Lord Jesus Christ before His embodiment. These prophecies present the Lord Jesus Christ not only as the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, but mostly as God. Moreover, they emphasize the fact that not only the Messiah continued to exist "at the right hand of God" after His ascension, but that He also was preexistent to His embodiment. Therefore, neither did His existence begin with His birth of the Virgin Mary, nor was it finished with His physical death on the cross. Within the same chapter special emphasis was laid on the eternity and divinity of Jesus Christ proclaimed through the promises from the OT and proven through the confirmation from the NT.

*The fourth chapter* describes all the Messianic prophecies regarding the birth of Jesus. Hence, the Messiah is described as "the seed of the woman" that crushes the head of the serpent; then, as the One who lives in the tents of Shem ("the seed" of Shem); then as "the seed of Abraham", "the seed of Isaac", "the star of Jacob", "Shiloh from Judah" (from Judah's tribes), "the Shoot of Jesse" and "the seed of David".

Furthermore, within the same chapter we emphasized that through the Messianic prophecies even the Messiah's birth time, the supernatural characteristic of His birth (born out of a virgin) and His birthplace, in Bethlehem of Judea, were all established. Also, the prophecies do not hesitate to announce the most important events that will take place after the Baby Messiah's birth (the people who will visit Him, the presents brought to Him and even the king's decision to kill all the children of His age.)

In the *fifth chapter* we highlighted the way in which everything that had been prophesied about the Messiah's activity has been precisely fulfilled. When describing His activity we went into great detail about the roles He had, namely: King, High Priest (faithful in the order of Melchizedek); Prophet (like Moses), Shepherd of Jewish people, Savior of the mankind, servant of the Lord and Redeemer.

*In the sixth chapter* both the tragedy of sufferings and the death of Jesus Christ and the triumph of His resurrection were highlighted. Therefore, this chapter describes the sufferings of the Messiah (His rejection, the mockery he had to go through, His physical torture and even His right reaction to the suffering), both from the perspective of the very detailed promises and their fulfillment.

Also, the same chapter emphasizes the most significant moment lived by the Lord Jesus in the context of His death and burial, all from the perspective of the OT promises and the actual facts from the NT. Later on, the promises from the OT regarding the resurrection of Messiah are described, their reaffirmation (carried out by Jesus Himself) and eventually the confirmation described by evangelists and the apostles. The event of the Lord Jesus' ascension is not overlooked either, as later on, the

promise of the Holy Spirit's gift mentioned in the OT is highlighted, reaffirmed in the NT (by the Messiah) and fulfilled in the book of Acts.

*The last chapter* is especially intended for the study of the Messianic prophecies, of the eschatological dimension. Within the same chapter we emphasized the most honest expectations regarding events like: the final judgment and the second coming of the Lord Jesus. The description of the second coming comprises of an analysis of the relationship between the millenary Kingdom and the moment of the Messiah's returning and the relationship between the second coming of Messiah and the great tribulation, and finally we have aimed to highlight what the believer's attitude should be towards these promised eschatological events.

### **The author's contribution within the research**

#### *The uniqueness of the research*

The present paper clearly distinguishes itself by the fact that even if it is based on the research conducted up to the present time, nevertheless, the approach on the subject is a peculiar one. Especially, in the Romanian context the current study aims to be a way through which the Christian faith from the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic area would be strengthened and more strongly anchored in the Holy Scriptures. Also, through its messianic character, the present volume aims to be groundwork for the Messianic Christians.

#### *The originality of the scientific work*

Although, it can be easily noticed, the present paper includes plenty of reference studies, the methodology used and especially the fact the least commented passages were chosen (for example Ps. 102), not only in the Romanian context, but also at an international level, emphasize the author's authenticity and personal contribution.

#### *The challenge of the research*

Due to the limited space, the current scientific paper does not claim to have exhausted the topic of the Messianic prophecies, but its aim is to serve as groundwork for the many unexplored studies that could be started from it. An encouraging challenge would be to present this paper to both skeptics (in order to bring arguments for the faith), and newly converted within the local Church (in order to strengthen their faith in the Lord Jesus).

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*BGT*, This database is a combination of the *BNT* and *LXT* databases. This allows people who want to work with both versions at once to easily do combined searches, apud *BibleWorks 8.0.005s.1*.

*BNT* – *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Nestle-Aland 27th Edition. Copyright (c) 1993 Deutsch Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, apud *BibleWorks 8.0.005s.1*.

*LXT* – *LXX Septuaginta* (*LXT*) (Old Greek Jewish Scriptures) edited by Alfred Rahlfs, Copyright © 1935 by the Württembergische Bibelanstalt / Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (German Bible Society), Stuttgart, apud *BibleWorks 8.0.005s.1*.

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*WTT*, Codex Leningradensis Hebrew Text. The *WTT* Hebrew text is from the Groves-Wheeler Westminster Morphology and Lemma Database (*WTM*). This text includes contains full and complete Hebrew accents (that is, the taamim (or te`amim) is equivalent to cantillation marks and these include the accent marks, indicating how the masoretes divided the word flow into sentences, word groups, etc.) apud *BibleWorks 8.0.005s.1*.

*WHM*, Greek Version of the NT (Westcott-Hort Morphology, Greek Morphology Version), apud *BibleWorks 8.0.005s.1*.

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