

He Shall Be Called a Nazarene...

In Matthew 2, verse 23 we read, “And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, ‘He shall be called a Nazarene.’”

We are all familiar with the Savior being referred to as a Nazarene, but who are the prophets who spoke the prophecy quoted above? The text in Matthew uses the plural form of prophet, so we can safely assume that at least two prophets spoke that the Messiah would be called a Nazarene.

Where is this prophecy recorded? What Old Testament prophets can be credited for this? The answer is that the prophecy of Jesus being called a Nazarene cannot be found in the Old Testament, and the identity of the two or more prophets is unknown. Does this mean there is a discrepancy in the Bible? Some biblical critics would like for us to believe so. However, the absence of a reference to this particular prophecy is by no means an indication of its truthfulness.

First, notice that in Matthew it does refer to the unknown prophets speaking that the Messiah would be known as a Nazarene. Not all that was spoken of prophets became written. Several prophets could have made it widely known that Jesus was to be from Nazareth, so this would be in complete harmony with the scripture in Matthew. Some go as far to say that this reference to a Nazarene is actually meant to be Nazarite, and giving credit to John the Baptist. This is not supported in scripture especially since by definition, Nazarene means specifically someone from the city of Nazareth, while Nazarite specifically refers to one who voluntarily took a vow described in Numbers 6:1–21.

By Tony Williams,
For the elders