

6. Was the Coming of Christ Prophesized?

When reading the Bible, I get a tremendous sense of being pulled along a 1500-year timeline (from Moses to Christ) giving so many hints, so many pointers as to what was going to happen: the arrival of Jesus, narrated at the time of the opening of the New Testament.

Our atheist friends will tell us that it's all mumbo jumbo, and that any prophetic announcements are all back-dated redactions made by others to bolster the Christian tradition. That they can provide zero evidence for this does not stop their beliefs' gaining traction in our society. If they are right, this is a conspiracy still going on today, 3500 years from its inception, involving at least 25 or more authors of Old Testament books, 10 or more authors of New Testament books, countless individual participants, and lots of people who were prepared to suffer hideous deaths. And yet no one has said a word?

The alleged conspirators must have possessed not just a multi-generational but a multi-*millennial* vision when it came to converting people to their views — with often next to no regard for themselves and their own survival and well-being.

This is not even close to probable: to have maintained a conspiracy involving untold people over such a long period, with not just one person betraying the plot. There remain biblical interpretation and translation disputes — this I don't deny — but there is not any evidence of tampering on such a large, conspiratorial scale.

I have asked myself: What exactly is prophesised in the Old Testament concerning the Christ? This is what I have concluded.

Jesus, during his earthly reappearances following his resurrection, asks some of His disciples to think about what was prophesised. He gives them a nudge, so to speak. This nudge reverberates towards you and me down the ages. From Luke 24:13-35:

Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. And He said to them, 'What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?' Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, 'Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?' And He said to them, 'What things?' So they

said to Him, 'The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.' Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

The Disciples' eyes opened. Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, 'Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent'. And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, 'Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?' So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, 'The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!' And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

Naturally, I have no idea what part of the scriptures or what sayings of the prophets Jesus decided to remind his colleagues of on this occasion. But in my reading of the Bible I have found that there are 230 prophecies concerning Jesus Christ either hinted at or pointed to in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. (This is leaving aside all those that relate to the second coming of Jesus.) Also, the Bible is full of prophecies relating to invasions of Israel/Judah, of various cities being destroyed, the rise and fall of a number of Empires, specific naming of some of their Kings well in advance of their coming, and much more. For now, here is just the prophetic versus written concerning Jesus and his first coming that I have gleaned from my own reading of the Old Testament.

Messiah is already implied in God	Genesis 1:26
Messiah would be born of a woman who would crush Satan.	Genesis 3:15
Messiah is the helper of God in the Tower of Babel story	Genesis 11:1-9
Messiah would come from the blessed line of Abraham.	Genesis 12:1-3 Genesis 21:12 Genesis 22:18
Messiah suggested as Angel of the Lord	Genesis 16:7
Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac and not Ishmael's line.	Genesis 17:19
First suggestion of the ultimate son sacrifice	Genesis 22:13
Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham, reaffirmed with Isaac	Genesis 26:2-5
Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham, reaffirmed with Jacob	Genesis 28:10-17
Messiah is first suggested as a saviour and redeemer	Genesis 48:16
Messiah would come from only the tribe of Judah.	Genesis 49:10
First suggestion that the ultimate Passover sacrifice, Christ, would have no bones broken	Exodus 12:46
Burt offerings of unblemished animals are done for atonement of sins	Leviticus 1:3-17
Grain offering as an additional devotional offering as the Messiah was devoted to his father	Leviticus 2:1-16
Peace offering to represent the free choice of peace between the Messiah and the father	Leviticus 3:1-17
Sin offering establishes that the Messiah will propitiator for all sins	Leviticus 4:1-5
The repentance offering as the Messiah paid for all redemption	Leviticus 5:14
Messiah would be the ultimate scapegoat	Leviticus 16:8
The veil of the tabernacle separates Holy from un-Holy. Herod's veil was ripped asunder to show Christ was the way to God	Leviticus 16:12
The Messiah's life blood makes atonement	Leviticus 17:11

Concerning all the various Jewish feasts. It is the Christian contention that Jesus fulfils all of these as he taught he came to fulfil The Law (Matthew 5:17). Leviticus covers these and the MacArthur Study Bible shows how this takes place.

Christ in the Levitical Offerings

Burnt Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's atonement and is observed by his sinless nature.

Grain Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's dedication and consecration and is observed by his dedication to His Father's wishes.

Peace Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's reconciliation and fellowship and is observed by the fact he was at peace with God.

Sin Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's propitiation and is observed by his substitutionary death.

Trespass Offering is satisfied by the Messiah's repentance and is observed by Christ paid for all redemption.

Old Testament Feasts

Passover is the death of the Christ ,

Unleavened Bread is the sinlessness of the Christ,

Firstfruits is the resurrection of the Christ,

Pentecost is the outpouring of the Christ,

Trumpets is the gathering of Israel by Christ,

Atonement is for the sacrifice of Christ,

Tabernacles is for the reunion with Christ Leviticus 23 (all of it)
(MacArthur J., 1997)

No bones shall be broken of the Messiah's Numbers 9:12

The ultimate Messianic King will come from Judah out of Egypt Numbers 24:8

Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob Numbers 24:17

The Nativity Star is proclaimed to come with the future King for all dominion
Numbers 24:15-19

The Shema prayer of the Jews, which is used to establish the oneness of God, used the same word 'one' God, as used for the unity of man and woman in Genesis 2:24 (two persons, man *and* a woman from one flesh) thus, paradoxically, preparing the ground for the Trinity as three persons in one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4

Messiah would be a prophet (with evidence of prophecies required to distinguish a good from a false one)

Deuteronomy 18:15

The test suggested by Moses to established the true prophet the Messiah com-plies with

Deuteronomy 18:20-22

You are cursed, as you can't obey all the law. But Jesus takes on the universal curse by "hanging on a tree" for all of us

Deuteronomy 21:22-23

The Messiah will provide redemption for the Gentiles as well - The Messiah, as the anointed one would have nations and their leaders directly hostile to Him

Deuteronomy 32:43

Messiah appears as the Commander of the Army of the Lord

Joshua 5:13-15

Messiah as Angel of the Lord to reaffirm God's

Judges 2:1

Angel of the Lord (Messiah) identified as the Lord Himself

Judges 6:11

The Messiah's line is prepared pre-David

Ruth 4:1-22

Hannah advances the above

1 Samuel 2:1-10

The Lord will rule via the Messiah through this line

1 Samuel 2:10

The priest hood will be established to be ruled by the Messiah as son of God forever

1 Samuel 2:35

David as prime King of Israel is image of the later Messiah , the King who also came from the same humble start

1 Samuel 6:11

The Davidic Covenant established (7:12) with Messiah foretold of this line as son of God (7:14) forever (7:16)

2 Samuel 7:1-17

Messiah is salvation to King David and his descendants forever

2 Samuel 22:51

David's last words predict the most perfect and just King Messiah

2 Samuel 23:3-4

Everlasting covenant only fulfilled in the Messiah

2 Samuel 23:5

As the above regarding David's last words	1 Kings 2:4
Solomon wrongly believes he is the most perfect and this the fulfilment of the Davidic promise	1 Kings 2:24
Line of Messiah established from Adam via David	1 Chronicles 3:1
Line of Messiah not cursed as it is not via Solomon but via Nathan through Mary	1 Chronicles 3:16
Messiah's line prevails	1 Chronicles 5:2
The Temple is built in preparation for the true Messiah/Lamb sacrifice	2 Chronicles 5:1
Where they fail, the Messiah will set up the glorious kingdom	2 Chronicles 7:17-18
The Davidic line reduced to one only; the Lord's Covenant continues despite the imperfections of the genealogical line to the Messiah	Chronicles 23:3
All Kings would be against the anointed Messiah	Psalms 2:2
Messiah would be called King and crowned in Jerusalem	Psalms 2:6
Messiah would be declared the Son of God	Psalms 2:7
Messiah would be praised by little children	Psalms 8:2
The Messiah will have all things put under his feet	Psalms 8:6
The Messiah will be resurrected from the grave	Psalms 16:10
The Davidic line confirmed in everlasting kingship	Psalms 18:50
The Messiah will be forsaken by God in His moment of agony	Psalms 22:1
The Messiah will be ridiculed and scorned	Psalms 22: 7,8
The Messiah's feet will be pierced as will His hands	Psalms 22:16
The Messiah's bones will be left intact	Psalms 22:17
The Messiah's clothes will be gambled for	Psalms 22:18
The Messiah will be seen as a Shepherd (as is frequently attributed to Jesus in the New Testament)	Psalms 23:1
The Messiah would ascend to heaven	Psalms 24:7-10
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Psalms 28:9
No bone of the Messiah will be broken	Psalms 34:20
Messiah would be falsely accused.	Psalms 35:11
The Messiah will be hated unjustly	Psalms 35:19

It is written that the Messiah will come to do God's will

Psalm 40:7-8

Messiah would be betrayed (by Judas).

Psalm 41:9

Messiah's throne will be anointed and eternal.

Psalm 45:6-7 (89:4, 89:34-37, 132:12)

The Messiah will ascend into Heaven

Psalm 68:18

Messiah would be rejected by his own people and Apostles

Psalm 69:8

The Messiah will be consumed by zeal for God's temple

Psalm 69:9

The Messiah will be given gall and vinegar

Psalm 69:21

The desolate place of Judas predicted

Psalm 69:25

The Messiah will suffer

Psalm 69:26

Gifts will be brought

Psalm 72:10

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 74:1

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 77:20

Messiah would speak in parables.

Psalm 78:2-4

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 78:52

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 79:13

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 80:1

Messiah is the firstborn of all creation

Psalm 89:27

Messiah answers Satan

Psalm 91:11-12

Revelation via scripture is very sure

Psalm 93:5

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 95:7

The Messiah will come as a Shepherd

Psalm 100:3

Messiah would pray for his enemies.

Psalm 109:4

The Messiah betrayer will be replaced

Psalm 109:8

"The Lord said to My Lord" The Messiah sits above King David who addresses the Messiah as "My Lord."

Psalm 110:1

The Messiah's followers will be volunteers

Psalm 110:3

Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek

Psalm 110:4

The Messiah will be the cornerstone to replace the stone (Moses) that was rejected, as Moses said

Psalm 118:22

The Messiah will come in the name of the Lord and will be blessed	Psalm 118:26
The Messiah was with God at creation, and the foundation of wisdom	Proverbs 8:23-31
The Messiah is the son of God and his name is asked for	Proverbs 30:4
The Messiah will appear as the branch of the Lord	Isaiah 4:2
The Messiah affirmed in the Trinity	Isaiah 6:3
The Messiah affirmed as a different manifestation of God	Isaiah 6:8
The Messiah will have to uses parables	Isaiah 6:9
The Messiah will be born of a Virgin	Isaiah 7:14
The Messiah will be called Immanuel	Isaiah 7:14 ¹
The Messiah as Immanuel 'God is with us' will save the remnant of Israel	Isaiah 8:10
The Messiah will be rejected by Israel	Isaiah 8:15
The Messiah will start his ministry in Zebulun, Naphtali and Galilee (land of the Gentiles)	Isaiah 9:1-2
The Messiah will be the Virgin's Son called Immanuel, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace – of the Davidic line	Isaiah 9:6
The Messiah (Branch) will be of the Davidic line, (through both via Mary and his step father is this traced)	Isaiah 11:1
The Trinity suggested again, The Spirit, the Lord and Him	Isaiah 11:2
The Messiah will not Judge as an earthly King, but spiritually	Isaiah 11:3
The Messiah will put the poor centre stage	Isaiah 11:4
The Gentiles will seek the Messiah	Isaiah 11:10
The Messiah will determine who goes into Heaven	Isaiah 22:22
The Messiah will be the stone for a foundation to build	Isaiah 28:16
The Messiah as the Holy one of Jacob will cleanse Israel	Isaiah 29:23
The Messiah will have his princes or apostles	Isaiah 32:1
The Messiah will cure the lame	Isaiah 35:6
The Messiah will be preceded by a man from the wilderness to prepare the way (John the Baptist)	Isaiah 40:3

¹ See next section

The Messiah would be presented to the world in humble guise	Isaiah 53:2
The Messiah would be despised and rejected on the whole	Isaiah 53:3
The Messiah would shoulder our sins	Isaiah 53:4
The Messiah would be a substitute for sinners	Isaiah 53:5
By His physical scars and Passion we will be healed	Isaiah 53:5
The Messiah takes away all our iniquity	Isaiah 53:6
The Messiah was the lamb led silently to slaughter	Isaiah 53:7
The Messiah was taken from judgment and prison and sacrificed despite shouldering our iniquities/sins	Isaiah 53:8
It was God's will that the Messiah would die	Isaiah 53:10
It was God's will to prolong His life after death	Isaiah 53:10
The Messiah's sacrifice is a one off event for all iniquities	Isaiah 53:11
The Messiah will be associated with criminals, as he was on the Cross. He will die, he will shoulder the sins for all and act as the intermediary with heaven	Isaiah 53:12
The Messiah's Kingdom will vastly extend beyond Solomon's	Isaiah 54:3
The Lord looked at earthly injustice as pondered upon earthly intervention	Isaiah 59:15
The Lord took it upon Himself to intervene in the Cosmos	Isaiah 59:16
The Messiah will be from Zion	Isaiah 59:20
The New Covenant will be everlasting <i>(not doing too badly, so far, 2000 years on, still with billions of followers)</i>	Isaiah 59:21
They shall bring gold and incense	Isaiah 60:6
The Messiah is sent to minister to the poor and broken hearted and liberate the captives	Isaiah 61:1
The prefiguring of the plot to slaughter the lamb like Messiah is foretold	Jeremiah 11:18-20
Messiah will come, and be the Shepherd	Jeremiah 23:24
The Messiah as the Branch of the Davidic line will judge	Jeremiah 23:5
The Messiah will be called The Lord Our Righteousness	Jeremiah 23:6
The Messiah will come first from the North	Jeremiah 23:8
The Messiah will come as the Branch of the Davidic line	Jeremiah 30:9
The Messiah will come up from among the people to govern	Jeremiah 30:21

The New Covenant will be forged in the Messiah	Jeremiah 31:31-34
The above is known with certainty	Jeremiah 31:35-37
The Messiah will give individual spiritual salvation	Jeremiah 33:8
The Messianic salvation is open for all individuals of all nations	Jeremiah 33:9
The Messiah will be from David, will judge with righteousness	Jeremiah 33:15
The Messiah will be called The Lord Our Righteousness	Jeremiah 33:16
The Messiah as God will come as King	Ezekiel 1:26
The pre-incarnate Messiah's supremacy over all angels is established	Ezekiel 9:2
The Messiah will be established from the Davidic line	Ezekiel 17:23-23
The Messiah will come from a lowly family of this line	Ezekiel 17:24
The Messiah as God acts as the shepherd for his sheep	Ezekiel 34:11
The Messiah will (spiritually) feed his flock	Ezekiel 34:16-16
The Messiah will judge his flock	Ezekiel 34:17-22
The Messiah will be the one servant	Ezekiel 34:23
The Messiah will show the peaceful way	Ezekiel 34:25
The Messiah will be the King-Shepherd of the Davidic line	Ezekiel 37:22-25
The Messiah will come from God of supernatural origin	Daniel 2:45
The Messiah will be a King and Son of God	Daniel 3:25
The Messiah as Son of Man & establish his dominion	Daniel 7:13-14
The Messiah will be followed in all nations of the earth	Daniel 7:14
The Messiah will come at the predicted point in time	Daniel 7:24-26
The Messiah will bring in the path to everlasting righteousness	Daniel 7:24
After the Messiah, there will be no more visions	Daniel 7:24
The Messiah will die	Daniel 7:26
When the above happens, the city will be destroyed	Daniel 7:26
The Messiah not be sought by the Jews first time around	Hosea 3:5
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd to tend His lamb	Hosea 4:16
The Messiah was God's son and he was to be from his chosen people out of Egypt	Hosea 11:1
The Messiah is like the Cypress Tree (the Cross) from which all fruitfulness springs	Hosea 14:8

The Messiah will include the gentiles in his redemption plans	Amos 9:11
The Messiah will come out of Bethlehem	Micah 5:2
The Messiah will be rejected in the first advent	Micah 5:3
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Micah 5:4
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Micah 7:14
The Messiah as Angel of the Lord is identified as the Lord	Zechariah 3:2
The Messiah is depicted as Servant and of the Davidic line	Zechariah 3:8
The Messiah is depicted as the cornerstone as he was at Calvary	Zechariah 3:9
“The Branch (Messiah)” (of Jesse) is predicted as King over existing Kings	Zechariah 6:12
The Messiah will be glorious	Zechariah 6:13
The Messiah will bring peace	Zechariah 6:13
The Messiah will be a priest king	Zechariah 6:13
The Messiah will appeal to the gentiles	Zechariah 6:15
The Messiah will need all to have faith first before his second advent	Zechariah 6:15
The Messiah is to arrive in Jerusalem on a donkey	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is King	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is just	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is humble	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah is to bring salvation	Zechariah 9:9
The Messiah will come as a Shepherd	Zechariah 9:16
The Messiah will feed the flock with truth	Zechariah 11:7
When the Messiah departs His earthly life, the unbelievers will perish and some will resort to cannibalism (destruction of Judah)	Zechariah 11:9
The Messiah would be deemed worth 30 pieces of silver	Zechariah 11:12
The Messiah knew this would buy a potter’s field	Zechariah 11:13
After the departure of the Messiah from this world, Jew would fight Jew (as also told by Josephus)	Zechariah 11:14
The Messiah as the Lord was pierced	Zechariah 12:10
The Messiah is the equal companion of God	Zechariah 13:7
The Messiah’s death is foretold	Zechariah 13:7

The Messiah's disciples will be scattered	Zechariah 13:7
The Messiah's initial followers will suffer persecution	Zechariah 13:7
The Messiah's name will be great among the Gentiles	Malachi 1:11
The Messiah will come with no notice, suddenly	Malachi 3:1

My reading of the Bible with a good study guide (MacArthur J., 1997), a commentary (Dunn, 2003), a good Bible Dictionary (Freedman, 2000), and the Internet always close by has been a great help in understanding the themes that run through scripture, as well as their timelines. It is a great shame that people are taught in schools and churches (if they are taught this subject matter at all) what I call the 'copy and paste' version of Scripture, through which you receive only bits at a time, and the relation between those bits is not at all clear. The Christian religion could do better in communicating its core messages.

All I can say concerning the prophetic utterances above, written between 1500 and 400 years before Christ arrived, is that it would have to be the most monumental conspiracy — involving multiple generations over 3,500 years to today — for no obvious personal gain.

The inconsistencies and errors at the margins, rather than serving as evidence of deceit, suggest honest testimony. Meanwhile, at each allegation of a redaction or a fraud or a conspiracy, you have to ask yourself: Who benefits? The persecuted Christian? The person who is predicting Christ, 1500 years, 1000 years, 800 years, 400 years prior to Christ? I think not.

I have heard it said on many occasions that no modern scholar believes that the Gospels were actually written by the named authors, but that all had been prepared by others writing from sources that were no longer extant. I question this next.