

# **Jesus the Christ Revealed in the Old and New Testaments**

## **Understanding the Claims, Prophecies, Resurrection, and Evidence for Jesus Christ**

**Notes:** All Scripture is quoted from the NKJV. You can find these passages in any Bible.

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### **I. A Note on This Guide's Purpose**

This guide is designed to clearly and simply explore the evidence for one of history's biggest questions: Is Jesus God? We will look directly at what the Bible says, examine key historical evidence, and provide straightforward answers to common questions. The full Bible passages are included so you can see the context for yourself.

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### **II. What Did Jesus Say About Himself?**

A person's own words are the best place to start. Jesus made several stunning claims about His identity, repeatedly pointing to Himself as the central figure of the entire biblical story.

### **Claim 1: The Whole Bible is About Him**

After His resurrection, Jesus explained to His followers that the Old Testament was pointing to Him all along.

#### **Luke 24:27**

“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

#### **Luke 24:44–45**

“Then He said to them, ‘These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”

### **Claim 2: He Has a Unique Relationship with God**

Jesus claimed an equality and unity with God the Father that was unheard of for a human being. His audience understood this as a claim to be God.

#### **John 10:30–33**

“I and My Father are one.’ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him... The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, make Yourself God.’”

### **Claim 3: He Existed Before His Earthly Life**

Jesus claimed to have existed eternally, even before Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation. He used a special name for God from the Old Testament—“I AM”—to describe Himself.

#### **John 8:58**

“Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’”

### **Claim 4: He Directly Identified as the Messiah**

When asked directly, Jesus confirmed He was the long-awaited Messiah (the “Christ”).

**John 4:25–26**

“The woman said to Him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming’ (who is called Christ). ‘When He comes, He will tell us all things.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He.’”

**Claim 5: He Accepted Worship**

In Jewish culture, worship is reserved for God alone. When His disciple Thomas saw the risen Jesus and cried out in worship, Jesus accepted it.

**John 20:28**

“And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’”

**Summary**

Jesus did not just claim to be a good teacher or a prophet. He consistently said He was the fulfillment of Scripture and equal with God. These are claims that force us to make a decision about who He is.

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**III. The Resurrection: The Central Event**

The entire Christian faith stands or falls on one historical claim: Jesus rose from the dead. The earliest records show that the disciples were not expecting this, but their encounters with the risen Jesus transformed them completely.

**The Risen Jesus Was Not a Ghost**

The accounts emphasize that Jesus returned in a physical body. He invited His followers to touch His wounds and even ate a meal with them to prove He was real.

**Luke 24:38–43**

“And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.’ ...So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence.”

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**The Earliest Christian Statement of Faith**

The Apostle Paul wrote down what scholars call an early “creed,” or statement of belief, that was already being shared long before he wrote this letter. It contains a list of eyewitnesses to the resurrection.

### **1 Corinthians 15:3–7**

“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas (Peter), then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present... After that He was seen by James (Jesus’ half-brother), then by all the apostles.”

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## **The Transformation of the Disciples**

One of the strongest evidences for the resurrection is the dramatic transformation of Jesus’s followers.

Before the resurrection:

- the disciples fled
- Peter denied Jesus three times
- many hid in fear

After claiming to see the risen Jesus:

- they publicly preached in Jerusalem
- they boldly proclaimed the resurrection
- they endured persecution, imprisonment, beatings, and martyrdom

Something dramatic changed them.

The explanation they consistently gave was that they had encountered the risen Christ.

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## **Early Christianity Under Persecution**

The earliest Christians had little to gain socially, financially, or politically by following Jesus.

Many believers faced:

- rejection from family
- expulsion from synagogues
- loss of status
- persecution
- imprisonment
- death

**John 9:22**

“For the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.”

Christians were also viewed suspiciously by the Roman Empire because they refused to worship Roman gods or the emperor.

Ironically, Christians were sometimes accused of being “atheists” because they rejected the Roman pantheon of gods.

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**Why Christianity’s Growth Matters**

This raises an important historical question:

Why would Christianity spread so rapidly if Jesus had simply died and remained in the grave?

The earliest Christians preached:

- a crucified Messiah
- repentance
- self-denial
- holiness
- suffering
- eternal reward rather than earthly comfort

There was no promise of wealth, power, or social advancement.

In fact, Jesus warned His followers that persecution would come.

**John 15:20**

“If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.”

**Acts 14:22**

“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

Yet Christianity spread rapidly across the Roman Empire despite severe opposition.

This growth is difficult to explain unless the disciples truly believed Jesus had risen from the dead.

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## **The Conversion of the Apostle Paul**

One of the most compelling historical evidences for the resurrection is the conversion of the Apostle Paul.

Before becoming a Christian, Paul (then called Saul) actively persecuted Christians.

### **Acts 8:3**

“As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.”

Paul was not searching for Jesus. He viewed Christianity as false and dangerous.

Yet suddenly, Paul became:

- one of Christianity’s greatest missionaries
- a defender of the resurrection
- a sufferer for Christ

He endured:

- beatings
- imprisonment
- rejection
- hardship
- eventual execution

Paul consistently claimed this transformation occurred because he encountered the risen Jesus.

### **1 Corinthians 15:8**

“Then last of all He was seen by me also...”

From a historical perspective, Paul’s conversion is difficult to explain naturally.

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## **Jesus Predicted His Own Death and Resurrection**

Another important detail is that Jesus repeatedly predicted His suffering, death, and resurrection before they occurred.

**Mark 8:31**

“And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things... and be killed, and after three days rise again.”

**Matthew 16:21**

“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem... be killed, and be raised the third day.”

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**The Disciples Did Not Understand**

One remarkable detail supporting the reliability of the Gospel accounts is that the disciples repeatedly failed to understand Jesus’s predictions.

If the resurrection story had been invented later, the disciples likely would have been portrayed as confident and understanding from the beginning.

Instead, the Gospels honestly portray:

- confusion
- fear
- doubt
- misunderstanding

**Mark 9:32**

“But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him.”

**Luke 24:11**

“And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.”

This honesty strengthens the credibility of the accounts because the writers openly included their own failures and disbelief.

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**Why Did Jesus Come to Die?**

Some people struggle with the idea that Jesus, if truly divine, would come specifically to suffer and die.

According to the Bible, however, Jesus’s death was central to His mission.

The Bible teaches that humanity is separated from God because of sin.

**Romans 3:23**

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

The Old Testament sacrificial system pointed forward to Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

**Isaiah 53:5**

“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.”

**John 1:29**

“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

The resurrection is presented as:

- victory over death
- confirmation of Jesus’s identity
- proof His sacrifice was accepted
- hope for eternal life

**Romans 1:4**

“And declared to be the Son of God with power... by the resurrection from the dead.”

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**Summary**

The belief in the resurrection was not a legend that grew over time. It was the foundational, explosive claim of the very first Christians, based on the testimony of eyewitnesses who claimed to see the risen Jesus.

The transformation of the disciples, the rapid growth of Christianity despite persecution, the conversion of Paul, and the willingness of early Christians to suffer for their message all point toward one central claim:

Jesus truly rose from the dead.

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**IV. “The Son of Man”: A Title of Divine Authority**

Jesus often called Himself the “Son of Man.” While this sounds like He is just saying He is human, His Jewish audience knew it was a direct reference to a powerful, divine figure from an Old Testament prophecy in the book of Daniel.

**The Prophecy: A Vision of a Divine King**

Daniel saw a vision of a figure who looked like a man (“Son of Man”) but who approached God, rode on the clouds (something only God does), and was given an eternal kingdom and the worship of all people.

#### **Daniel 7:13–14**

“I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days... Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion.”

#### **The Claim: Jesus Applies the Vision to Himself**

At His trial, when the High Priest asked Jesus if He was the Son of God, Jesus answered by quoting this very passage from Daniel and applying it to Himself.

#### **Matthew 26:64**

“Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.’”

#### **Summary**

The High Priest immediately understood the implication. Jesus was not just claiming to be the Messiah; He was claiming to be the divine ruler from Daniel’s vision. This is why the High Priest tore his robes and accused Jesus of blasphemy.

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## **V. A Pattern of Fulfilled Prophecy**

The Old Testament contains dozens of specific predictions about the coming Messiah, written hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Jesus fulfilled this pattern of prophecy in a way that is statistically impossible to explain by chance.

### **Where Would He Be Born?**

#### **Prophecy (c. 700 BC): Micah 5:2**

“But you, Bethlehem... out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel.”

#### **Fulfillment: Matthew 2:1**

“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea...”

### **How Would He Be Born?**

**Prophecy (c. 700 BC): Isaiah 7:14**

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”

**Fulfillment: Matthew 1:22–23**

“...that it might be fulfilled...: ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son...’”

**Why Would He Die?****Prophecy (c. 700 BC): Isaiah 53:5**

“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.”

**Fulfillment: 1 Peter 2:24**

“...who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree...”

**How Would He Die?****Prophecy (c. 1000 BC): Psalm 22:16, 18**

“They pierced My hands and My feet... They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.”

**Fulfillment: John 19:23–24, 37**

The soldiers crucified Jesus (piercing His hands and feet), cast lots for His clothing, and fulfilled the scripture, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.”

**Summary**

One or two fulfilled prophecies could be a coincidence. But the sheer number and specificity of predictions about Jesus’s lineage, birth, life, death, and resurrection, all coming true in one person, points to a divine plan.

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**VI. The Statistical Impossibility of Fulfilled Prophecy**

One of the most remarkable arguments for Jesus as the Messiah is the mathematical improbability of fulfilled prophecy.

Mathematician and professor Peter Stoner attempted to calculate the odds of one person accidentally fulfilling Messianic prophecies.

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**Fulfilling Just 8 Prophecies**

Stoner estimated the probability of one person fulfilling only 8 Messianic prophecies by chance as:

1 in  $10^{17}$

That is:

100,000,000,000,000,000  
(100 quadrillion)

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### **The Texas Silver Dollar Illustration**

To help visualize this number, Stoner used the following illustration:

Imagine covering the entire state of Texas with silver dollars two feet deep.

Now mark one single silver dollar.

Mix all the coins thoroughly across the state.

Blindfold a person and allow them to travel anywhere in Texas—but they may pick up only one coin.

The odds of selecting the marked coin on the very first try are the same odds as one person fulfilling just 8 Messianic prophecies by chance alone.

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### **Jesus Fulfilled Far More Than 8 Prophecies**

Jesus did not fulfill merely 8 prophecies.

Many scholars identify more than 300 Messianic prophecies fulfilled in Christ.

Stoner estimated the probability of fulfilling 48 prophecies by chance as:

1 in  $10^{157}$

This number is so enormous that it exceeds ordinary human comprehension.

For perspective, the estimated number of atoms in the observable universe is often estimated around:

10<sup>80</sup>

The probability of fulfilling 48 Messianic prophecies is vastly beyond even that scale.

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### **Examples of Fulfilled Prophecies (additional references highlighted in this document)**

- Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)
  - Born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)
  - Descendant of Abraham (Genesis 22:18)
  - Descendant of David (Jeremiah 23:5)
  - Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12)
  - Silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7)
  - Pierced hands and feet (Psalm 22:16)
  - Buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9)
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### **Why This Matters**

One fulfilled prophecy might be coincidence.

Several fulfilled prophecies become difficult to explain naturally.

But the convergence of dozens of highly specific prophecies in one individual points toward divine orchestration throughout history.

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## **VII. What Does History Say? Evidence Outside the Bible**

The evidence for Jesus is not confined to the Bible. Several non-Christian historians from the first and second centuries confirm key details about His life and the movement He started.

### **What Most Historians Agree On**

Even scholars who are not Christians generally accept a core set of historical facts:

- Jesus of Nazareth was a real person who was crucified by the Roman governor Pontius Pilate.

- His disciples sincerely believed He appeared to them after His death.
- This belief utterly transformed them, and they were willing to suffer and die for it.
- The Christian movement began and spread very rapidly.

## **Non-Christian Sources**

### **Tacitus (Roman Historian, c. 116 AD)**

Tacitus wrote that “Christus” (Christ) was executed by Pontius Pilate in Judea and that His followers were a widespread “superstition” in Rome. This confirms the key figures, place, and manner of death.

### **Josephus (Jewish Historian, c. 94 AD)**

Josephus mentions Jesus as a wise man who did surprising deeds, was crucified by Pilate, and had followers called Christians who reported that He had appeared to them alive again.

## **Summary**

History confirms that Jesus was a real person whose life and death had a massive, undeniable impact. The core events reported in the Gospels are rooted in actual history, not myth.

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## **VIII. Answering Common Questions and Objections**

### **“The disciples stole the body.”**

This theory does not explain why the disciples would willingly suffer persecution and death for something they knew was false.

Why would they invent a lie and then suffer persecution, torture, and execution for it? People die for what they believe is true, not for something they know is a hoax.

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### **“Jesus did not really die.”**

Roman soldiers were professional executioners. To make sure He was dead, they pierced His side with a spear (John 19:34). Even if He had survived, a barely-living, wounded man

stumbling out of a tomb would not have inspired worship as the glorious conqueror of death.

### **John 19:34**

“But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.”

Even if Jesus somehow survived crucifixion, a severely wounded man would not inspire worship as the conqueror of death.

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### **“The disciples hallucinated.”**

Hallucinations are private, personal experiences.

Jesus reportedly appeared to individuals, small groups, and even over 500 people at once.

Group hallucinations of the same event are not supported by psychological evidence.

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## **IX. Conclusion**

The combined evidence surrounding Jesus Christ is extraordinary.

- He made direct claims about His divine identity.
- He fulfilled ancient prophecies written centuries before His birth.
- His followers claimed to witness Him alive after crucifixion.
- Historical sources outside the Bible confirm key aspects of His life and death.
- The mathematical probability of one person fulfilling the Messianic prophecies by chance is beyond comprehension.

Taken together, these form a compelling case that Jesus is the promised Messiah revealed throughout the Scriptures.

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## **How to use this Guide (and a One-Page Summary)**

# The Case for Jesus: A Quick Summary

## 1. His Own Words

Jesus did not claim to be just a good teacher. He claimed to be God, saying, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30) and using God’s own name, “I AM,” for Himself (John 8:58). He also said the entire Old Testament was about Him (Luke 24:27).

## 2. The Resurrection

This is the key event. Jesus was publicly executed and buried. Days later, His tomb was empty, and hundreds of eyewitnesses saw Him alive again (1 Corinthians 15:3–7). These witnesses went from being terrified and hiding to being bold preachers who were willing to die for their belief that Jesus had conquered death.

## 3. Fulfilled Prophecy

Jesus fulfilled dozens of specific predictions written hundreds of years before His birth. These include being born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), being born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), and being pierced in His hands and feet at His death (Psalm 22:16). The odds of one person fulfilling all these by chance are astronomical.

## Conclusion

The combination of Jesus’s own stunning claims, the powerful evidence for His resurrection, and the incredible pattern of fulfilled prophecy makes a compelling case that He is exactly who He said He was: the Messiah, the Son of God.

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## Bibliography for Further Study

- **The Case for Christ** by Lee Strobel
- **Reasonable Faith** by William Lane Craig
- **Mere Christianity** by C. S. Lewis
- **Science Speaks: Scientific Proof of the Accuracy of Prophecy and the Bible** by Peter Stoner

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## Appendix: Quick Reference Table of Prophecies

<b>Prophecy (Old Testament)</b>	<b>Fulfillment (New Testament)</b>
Born of a woman (Gen. 3:15)	Galatians 4:4
Born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14)	Matthew 1:18–23
From the line of Abraham (Gen. 22:18)	Matthew 1:1
From the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10)	Luke 3:33
From the house of David (Jer. 23:5)	Luke 1:32–33
Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)	Matthew 2:1
Preceded by a messenger (Isa. 40:3)	Matthew 3:1–3
Betrayed by a friend (Ps. 41:9)	Matthew 26:47–50
Sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12)	Matthew 26:15
Silent before accusers (Isa. 53:7)	Matthew 27:12–14
Hands and feet pierced (Ps. 22:16)	John 20:25–27
Garments divided by lot (Ps. 22:18)	John 19:23–24
Buried in a rich man's tomb (Isa. 53:9)	Matthew 27:57–60
Resurrection (Ps. 16:10)	Acts 2:25–32