

JESUS: MORE THAN A MAN

THE CHRIST

Main Text: Matthew 1:18-25

“Christ” is not Jesus’ last name. “Christ” comes from the Greek word *Christos*, meaning “**anointed** one” or “chosen one.”

This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *Mashiach*, or “Messiah.”

“Jesus” is the Lord’s human name given to Mary by the angel Gabriel. - **Luke 1:31**

“Christ” is His title, signifying Jesus was sent from God to be a King and Deliverer

Daniel 9:25

Isaiah 32:1

“Jesus Christ” means “Jesus the Messiah” or “Jesus the Anointed One.”

Isaiah 11:1-2

Like all kings of Israel, the Messiah would be anointed ritually with oil, and by the Spirit to lead God’s people. This anointing signifies the setting apart for the Lord’s service.

The Messiah would be the Lord’s anointed Prophet, Priest, and King. Jesus fulfills all of this titles.

There are hundreds of prophetic passages in the Old Testament that refer to a coming Messiah who would deliver His people

Isaiah 61:1

Daniel 9:26

Israel thought their Messiah would come with military might to deliver them from decades of captivity to earthly kings and pagan nations.

The New Testament reveals a much better deliverance provided by Jesus the Messiah—a deliverance from the power and penalty of sin.

Luke 4:18

Romans 6:23

The Bible says Jesus was anointed with oil on two separate occasions by two different women (**Matthew 26:6–7**; **Luke 7:37–38**), but the most significant anointing came by way of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 10:38**).

Jesus' title of "Christ" means He is God's Anointed One, the One who fulfills the Old Testament prophecies, the Chosen Savior who came to rescue sinners (**1 Timothy 1:15**), and the King of kings who is coming back again to set up His Kingdom on earth (**Zechariah 14:9**).

After celebrating Passover, Jesus and His disciples walked to the Mount of Olives, to the Garden of Gethsemane (**Matthew 26:36**).

The fact that Jesus spent the final hours before His arrest in a garden is significant.

The fall of man occurred in a garden—so Jesus, who is the second Adam, also entered into a garden as He prepared to give His life to atone for the sin of the first man and woman.

Often the gospels use cultural images of kingship to proclaim Jesus as the Christ, God's anointed King who has come. When a king rose to power, other kingdoms would send ambassadors with expensive gifts to establish a friendly relationship with the future leader.

This is what is happening in **Matthew 2**, when wise men come to bring gifts to Christ, the newborn King whose star they have seen in the east.

This was a fulfillment of **Numbers 24:17**, **Isaiah 60**, and **Psalms 72**. The latter two passages both describe the coming of a great king and describe how representatives from nations everywhere would come to give him tribute.

We see another picture of Jesus as King when he rode on a donkey into Jerusalem. This was often the way they would announce the coming of a new king.

They did this for Solomon in **1 Kings 1:38-39**.

It is the fulfillment of **Zechariah 9:9**, the triumphal entry of the Messianic King.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you! He is just and endowed with salvation; humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

During Jesus' trial, he is asked "Are you the King of the Jews?"

And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a King." So Pilate asked him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And he answered him and said, "It is as you say." (Luke 23:2-3)

Zechariah 3:8:

Listen well, Joshua [Yehoshua] kohen gadol [high priest], both you and your companions seated before you, because they are men who are a sign—behold, I will bring forth My servant the Branch.

The virgin birth is spiritually significant, for the Messiah's unique birth points to His identity as Immanuel, "God with us." The Messiah, the One "born of a woman" (Gal. 4:4), would be different than any other king in the history of Israel. By looking at Isaiah 7:14 in the greater context of Isaiah 9:5–6, this becomes even more evident:

**For to us a child is born,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be upon His shoulder.
His Name will be called
Wonderful Counselor [Pele Yoetz],
Mighty God [El Gibbor]
My Father of Eternity [Aviad],
Prince of Peace [Sar Shalom].
Of the increase of His government
and shalom there will be no end—
on the throne of David and over His kingdom.**

For centuries Christians have applied this well-known passage from Isaiah 9 to Jesus.

Jewish tradition also agrees with this understanding: "The Messiah will be called by eight names:

- **Yinnon (He shall flourish)**
- **Tzemach (Branch)**
- **Pele (Miracle/Wonderful)**
- **Yo'etz (Counselor)**
- **Mashiah (Messiah)**
- **El (G-d)**
- **Gibbor (Hero)**
- **Avi 'Ad Shalom (Eternal Father of Peace).**

However, the majority of Jews, however, do not see the names mentioned in **Isaiah 9:5–6** as prophesying a divine Messiah.

The divinity of the Messiah has historically been a major point of contention between followers of Jesus and Jewish rabbis.

There are many clues hidden in Scripture that do point to the Messiah as being divine.

The Messiah would be a King who would usher in a time of peace and prosperity for the entire world.

The Messiah would be both human and divine.

His divine nature is clearly seen in the names ascribed to Him in scripture.

*He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief,
One from whom people hide their faces.
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
Surely He has borne our griefs
and carried our pains.
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
struck by God, and afflicted.
But He was pierced because of our transgressions,
crushed because of our iniquities.
The chastisement for our shalom was upon Him,
and by His stripes we are healed.
—Isaiah 53:3—5*

In Josh McDowell's book, *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, he writes:

“Peter Stoner, in the book *Science Speaks*, examines the mathematical probabilities that apply to the fulfillment of these (8 predictions) predictions. In the foreword to that book, H. Harold Hartzler, of the American Scientific Affiliation, Goshen College, writes: “The manuscript for *Science Speaks* has been carefully reviewed by a committee of the American Scientific Affiliation members and by the Executive Council of the same group and has been found, in general, to be dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented. The mathematical analysis included is based upon principles of probability which are thoroughly sound and

Professor Stoner has applied these principles in a proper and convincing way.” (Hartzler, “F,” as cited in Stoner, SS)

The following probabilities are taken from Stoner in *Science Speaks* to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability.

Stoner says the following by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies (all of which are listed above):

- the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem.
- He would be preceded by a messenger.
- He was to enter Jerusalem on a donkey.
- He would be betrayed by a friend and his hands and feet pierced.
- His betrayer would be given thirty pieces of silver.
- The betrayal money would be thrown into the house of God and used to buy a potter's field.
- He would be silent before his accusers.
- His hands and feet would be pierced and he would die accounted among criminals.

Stoner writes:

We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} [10 to the 17th power). That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000 (17 zeroes after the one). In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them according to their own wisdom. Now these prophecies were either given by inspiration of God or the prophets just wrote them as they thought they should be. In such a case the prophets had just one chance in 10^{17} of having them come true in any man, but they all came true in Christ. This means that the fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of these prophecies to a definiteness which lacks only one chance in 10^{17} of being absolute. (Stoner, SS, 100–107)

Stoner then considers a group of forty-eight of the prophecies and reports:

We find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10^{157} . This is really a large number and it represents an extremely small chance. Let us try to visualize it. The silver dollar, which we have been using, is entirely too large. We must select a smaller object. The electron is about as small an object as we know of. It is so small that it will take 2.5 times 10^{15} of them laid side by side to make a line, single file, one inch long. If we were going to count the electrons in this line one inch long, and counted 250 each minute, and if we counted day and night, it would take us 19,000,000 years to count just the one-inch line of electrons. If we had a cubic inch of these electrons and we tried to count them it would take us, counting steadily 250 each minute, 19,000,000 times 19,000,000 times 19,000,000 years or 6.9 times 10^{21} years. With this introduction, let us go back to our chance of 1 in 10^{157} . Let us suppose that we are taking this number of electrons, marking one, and thoroughly stirring it into the whole mass, then blindfolding a man and letting him try to find the right one. What chance has he of finding the right one? (Stoner, SS, 109,110)”