

Did Jesus Live a Scripted Life?

Psalms 40:7-8: *7 Then I said, Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.*



The man Christ Jesus stands at the center of the faith of hundreds of millions of people. His very existence, along with the words and actions of his life, creates a remarkable tapestry that truly provides a strong foundation for believers. Sometimes questions arise about how and why Jesus did all that he did. Was his life scripted? This question can have several layers. First, did Jesus do the things he did in a mechanical way, solely for the purpose of fulfilling Old Testament prophecies? Second, and on a much deeper level of skepticism, could Jesus have fulfilled the prophecies he fulfilled just as a show, to gain followers and notoriety? In other words, could his life have been a collection of events designed to merely draw attention to himself and create a movement?

Let's begin with the answers to both questions: No and no! Now that we have that out of the way, let's work on understanding just how the fulfillment of so many prophecies went far beyond any kind of scripted event. Answering the first question will help us set the foundation to answer the second.



Question #1

Did Jesus do the things he did in a mechanical way, solely for the purpose of fulfilling Old Testament prophecies? Was his life just a series of "checking the boxes on a 'to do' list" to fulfill what he was supposed to do?

Paul attributes these next verses to Jesus in Hebrews 4, so let's look at the context:

Psalms 40:7-10: *7 Then I said, Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I **delight** <2654> to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart. 9 I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation; behold, I will not restrain my lips, O LORD, You know. 10 I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great congregation.*

Delight: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2654 *chaphets*; properly, to incline to; by implication (literally but rarely) to bend; figuratively, to be pleased with, desire

Jesus CLEARLY desired to do God's will:

- *I delight to do Your will*
- *Your Law is within my heart*
- *I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness...I will not restrain my lips*
- *I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart*

Jesus CLEARLY loved God, and his life was thoroughly invested in doing His will:
John 4:34: *Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work.*

What a great illustration of God's will as food, as it "nourished" Jesus.

John 14:30-31: *30 I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in me; 31 but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded me. Get up, let us go from here (meaning, leave this Upper Room).*

Jesus knew he was walking into a trap. Why was he willing to do this? Because he loved his Father. He was submissive, just like Isaac was to his father, Abraham.

I do exactly as the Father commanded me.

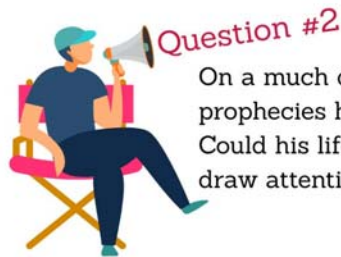
He was able to do this joyfully:

John 15:11: *These things I have spoken to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.*



Comprehending the "script" of Jesus' life

All that Jesus said and did in his life was thoroughly driven from his heart, which was bent on serving his Father in heaven. Therefore, the "script" of his life was a self-imposed choice, an absolute free-will offering to live each moment according to the MOST important thing!



Question #2

On a much deeper level of skepticism, could Jesus have fulfilled the prophecies he fulfilled just as a show, to gain followers and attention? Could his life have been a collection of events designed to merely draw attention to himself and create a movement?

Others had tried to do this before him and failed!

To answer this question, let's simply examine multiple prophecies and see what Jesus could and could not control in them. To do this we will go through 14 different prophecies about Jesus.

Let's begin with just two of the prophecies regarding his birth:



1. Jesus was prophesied to be born of a virgin:

Isaiah 7:14: *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin <5959> will be with child and bear a son, and she will call his name Immanuel.*

Virgin: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5959 *'almâh*;
a lass (as veiled or private):—damsel, maid, virgin

Skeptics correctly say this word *virgin* can mean any young woman. Why do we think this refers to a literal virgin?

- This “virgin” conceiving is a sign, a marker, a miracle!
 - Whenever this Hebrew word is used, it most often means an actual virgin.
- See [Bonus Material](#) for more.

The fulfillment was powerfully announced through the words of the angel Gabriel:

Luke 1:26-31: 26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And coming in, he said to her, Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you. 29 But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. 30 The angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.

The name “Jesus” means “Jehovah saves.”



This beautifully describes how Jesus was sent, but would it have been possible for him to control his own birth? No! The heavenly Father controlled it, but Jesus did not.

But what happened to Immanuel? Matthew quoted from Isaiah 7:14:

Matthew 1:23: BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL, which translated means, “God with us.”

But his name was Jesus, not Immanuel! Was the prophecy wrong?

Immanuel means “God is with us.” Jesus means “Jehovah saves.”

Matthew doesn't say Jesus was *named* Immanuel, but that he would be *called* Immanuel—a subtle but important distinction.

“God is with us” through the sending of His son to be the ransom for all. The meaning of Jesus' name encompasses the fact that God is with us because He is present through His son, Jesus, who gave his life as a ransom for all.



2. Jesus was prophesied to be king over Israel:

Genesis 49:10: The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

Shiloh means “gift from God,” or “peaceful one.”

“God is with us,” “Jehovah saves,” “gift from God”—it all begins to fit together.

The fulfillment of this prophecy on king and rulership was again announced to Mary through the words of the angel Gabriel:

Luke 1:32-33: *32 He will be great and will be called the son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David; 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end.*



What are the odds of these prophecies being fulfilled by one individual?



Comprehending the “script” of Jesus’ life

The obvious initial conclusion here is that Jesus could not have controlled the outcome of these two prophecies given by the angel Gabriel. As we continue to look further, let us note that all of the next several prophecies will be from the written holy words of the Old Testament.

We’ve just opened the door to fulfilled prophecies by looking at only one event—the prophecy of Jesus’ birth—and already we have plenty of inspiration to feed our belief!

We’ll now unfold four Old Testament prophecies regarding Jesus’ birth and infancy. What kind of insight awaits?

In our last segment, we saw the angel Gabriel proclaim to Mary what had already been written. As we move forward, we will see the Old Testament can certainly stand on its own, as it is the Holy Word of God. A powerful lesson to take note of here is that when the Bible speaks, we need to listen! We don’t need a proclaiming angel because we have the prophecies.



3. Jesus was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem:

Micah 5:2: (NIV2011) *But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.*

There were two cities of Bethlehem in New Testament times:



1. **Bethlehem Ephrathah**, also called “Bethlehem of Judea” in southern Israel, and
2. **Bethlehem of Galilee**, also called “Bethlehem of Zebulun” in northern Israel.

Not only did the prophecy announce Jesus would be born in Bethlehem, but specifically which of the two.

Joseph's simple obedience to the laws of the land caused a prophecy to be fulfilled:
Luke 2:4-6: *4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6 While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.*

Joseph and Mary had to travel to Bethlehem to register for tax purposes according to a decree from Caesar Augustus. It just so happens to be the place where Jesus is prophesied to be born—coincidence? Of course not.

God can use the behaviors and convictions of people in specific places to send clear messages regarding His plan. In going to Bethlehem to register, Joseph was following Roman law, enforced by Herod, an enemy of Jesus. This action resulted in the fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy of Jesus' birth. This is another example of a simple prophecy simply fulfilled.

THINK! What are the odds?



4. Jesus was prophesied to have to be taken to Egypt to avoid death as a small child:

Hosea 11:1: *When Israel was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.*

But is this really a prophecy about Jesus? It doesn't sound specific to him.

The fulfillment was recorded in Joseph's obedience to God through a dream:

Matthew 2:12-15: *12 And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the Magi left for their own country by another way. 13 Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, Get up! Take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.*

Think about this: Joseph had a dream instructing him to protect Jesus as a toddler. He obeyed the dream and moved.

14 So Joseph got up and took the child and his mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt. 15 He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON.

THINK! Would it have been possible for a toddler to have set this up?

Obviously Jesus as a toddler could not have forced Joseph to move and thereby fulfill prophecy. He was not affecting Joseph's actions.

By the power of God's spirit, Matthew gave us the prophetic connection back to **Hosea 11:1**.



5. The horrible results of the actions Herod would take when the Magi did not return to him were clearly prophesied:

Jeremiah 31:15: *Thus says the LORD, A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.*

This verse originally referred to the sorrow of Israel during the Babylonian exile. Ramah, near Bethlehem, was a staging point where captives were gathered before being deported. As the matriarch of Israel (mother of Benjamin and Joseph), she symbolizes the collective grief of the nation.

This is a heart-rending prophecy about what the anger of Herod would produce. His anger was focused on the Magi who went a different way after a dream from God told them not to go back to Herod.

The fulfillment was recorded in Herod's unconscionable anger at the Magi:

Matthew 2:16-17: *16 Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the Magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the Magi. 17 Then what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled.*

Rachel was the mother of two sons, Joseph and Benjamin, who became tribes of Jewish people. The tribes occupied Palestine at the time of Jesus' first advent. Also, Rachel was buried near Bethlehem in the area where the slaughter took place.

Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem echoes the grief described in Jeremiah. Rachel's weeping becomes a metaphor for the mothers of Bethlehem mourning their slain children. Ramah's proximity to Bethlehem makes the geographic and emotional connection even stronger.

History supports what happened. The children were tragically slain. It is a sad, horrible prophecy.

In Jeremiah, mourning was followed by hope and restoration (**Jeremiah 31:16-17**). In Matthew, the grief of Bethlehem sets the stage for the coming of the Messiah, who brings ultimate redemption.



6. Jesus was prophesied to be called a Nazarene:

Isaiah 11:1-2: *1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a **branch** <5342> from his roots will bear fruit. 2 The spirit of the LORD will rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear (reverence) of the LORD.*

Branch: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5342 *nêts̄er*; from #5341 in the sense of greenness as a striking color; a shoot; figuratively, a descendant:—branch

Matthew connects this as a Messianic prophecy for us.

The fulfillment was recorded as a result, again, of Joseph's obedience to the directions of God:

Matthew 2:19-23: *19 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said, 20 Get up, take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the child's life are dead. 21 So Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Then after being warned by God in a dream, he left for the regions of Galilee, 23 and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: he shall be called a Nazarene.*

(Source: Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Biblical Commentary): on Matthew 2:23: ...The best explanation of the origin of this name appears to be that which traces it to the word *nêtsar* in Isaiah 11:1—the small twig, sprout, or sucker, which the prophet there says, "shall come forth from the stem (or rather, 'stump') of Jesse, the branch which should fructify from his roots." The little town of Nazareth, mentioned neither in the Old Testament nor in Josephus, was probably so called from its insignificance: a weak twig in contrast to a stately tree; and a special contempt seemed to rest upon it—"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46)

There is no direct Old Testament verse that says "He shall be called a Nazarene." So what's going on? Matthew uses the phrase *spoken through the prophets* (plural), which signals a summary of prophetic themes, not a direct quote. He's pointing to a collective expectation about the Messiah's humble, despised origins—not a single verse.

Some scholars reflect the Jamieson, Fausset and Brown commentary quoted above, suggesting Matthew is using wordplay between Nazareth and *nêtsar* (*branch*). Others propose that Matthew is referencing oral traditions or non-canonical prophetic writings that weren't preserved in the Hebrew Bible.

Even though **Matthew 2:23** isn't quoting from one specific verse, it clearly points to Jesus' identity as the humble Messiah. Another prophecy fulfilled!

Let's remember our second question:



Question #2

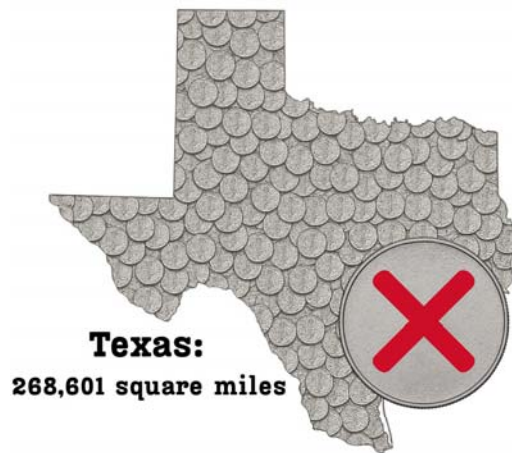
On a much deeper level of skepticism, could Jesus have fulfilled the prophecies he fulfilled just as a show, to gain followers and attention? Could his life have been a collection of events designed to merely draw attention to himself and create a movement?

To agree with this skepticism, we would have to claim a major conspiracy was in place. All of those participating—Gabriel, Mary, Joseph, Herod and the Magi would all have to be working together. And, of course, the toddler Jesus would have been unable to participate in such a conspiracy!



What are the odds of these six prophecies being fulfilled?

Let's put this in perspective. The odds of one person fulfilling just eight of the 300+ prophecies Jesus fulfilled is one in 10 to the power of 17, **1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000** (that's one in 100 quadrillion)!



The state of Texas in the United States has 268,601 square miles of territory. Let's fill the state two feet deep with silver dollars.

Your job is to find one silver dollar with a red "X" on only one side by randomly picking one. It might be face up or down. You only get one chance to find the correct silver dollar. More on this soon!

(Source: This analogy comes from Peter Stoner, a mathematics and astronomy professor, who applied the science of probability to biblical prophecy in his book *Science Speaks*.)



Comprehending the "script" of Jesus' life

Our obvious second conclusion is that it is simply impossible for these dramatic events to come to fruition by the will and planning of mere humans, as the drama is far too deep. The evidence of God's foresight and will unfolding before us cannot be ignored!

We are only up to a few prophecies so far and already we can see it would be impossible to set up Jesus' life to fulfill these except with God's foresight.

It's downright stunning to see all of the details that had to fall into place so Jesus could even have the chance to grow up. God's power is amazing!

**Putting conspiracy theories aside, what prophecies did Jesus fulfill as an adult?
Is there any way he could have just read the Old Testament
and made the fulfillments happen?**

We do know that when Jesus began his ministry at 30 years old, he was incredibly well versed in the Old Testament writings. We know he knew prophecies. We know he eagerly preached in order to fulfill God's will. Does this mean he was now scripting his own life?

Did Jesus just get lucky?

In one sense, Jesus DID script his own life—in the same way an athlete who has been rigorously trained enters a competition. Jesus knew his objective and did all in his power to fulfill it. This personal scripting could control some things but could NOT control most other things.

Just a few more prophecies to illustrate this:



7. A messenger was prophesied to prepare the way for Jesus' message:

Isaiah 40:3-5: *3 A voice is calling, Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; 5 then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.*

This is a plain prophecy of “someone” who prepares the way.

The fulfillment was brought to life by John the Baptist and his preaching:

Luke 3:3-6: *3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT. 5 EVERY RAVINE WILL BE FILLED, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL WILL BE BROUGHT LOW; THE CROOKED WILL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH; 6 AND ALL FLESH WILL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD.*



Jesus could not control the zeal and focus of John; rather, John lived according to the determination of his own heart.

John's character enabled him to fulfill this difficult prophecy. Luke, like Matthew, ties this back to Isaiah—as it is written in the words of Isaiah the prophet.

Jesus couldn't control John's zeal. He couldn't make John work harder or preach more. It came from his heart and cost him his life. Prophecy fulfilled!



8. It was prophesied that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem and be hailed as their king:

Zechariah 9:9: *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; he is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

This is a straightforward prophecy about the people rejoicing with the king riding in on a donkey.

The fulfillment was dramatically set in place by Jesus orchestrating his entrance into



Jerusalem, explained for us in two different pieces that dovetail together.

Could this be forced to happen?

Mark 11:7-10: 7 They brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it; and he sat on it. 8 And many spread their coats in the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. 9 Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting: *Hosanna! <5614> BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;* 10 blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!

Hosanna: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5614; of Hebrew origin (see #3467 below and #4994) oh save!; hosanna (i.e. hoshia-na), an exclamation of adoration:—hosanna

The beginning of the fulfillment was scripted: Jesus told the disciples to bring him a specific colt from a specific place.

But there was a second part to the prophecy. The Old Testament reference in **Mark 11:9** is from **Psalms 118:26**. We are combining two different prophecies and a two-part fulfillment in this Prophecy #8.

The fulfillment was dramatically magnified by the responses of the people, fulfilling yet another prophecy:

Psalms 118:25-26: 25 O LORD, do *save <3467>*, we beseech You; O LORD, we beseech You, do send prosperity! 26 Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD; We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Save: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #3467 *yâsha'*; a primitive root; properly, to be open, wide or free, i.e. (by implication) to be safe; causatively, to free or succor:—(a rendering that results from an idiom peculiar to the Hebrew) at all, avenging, defend, deliver(-er), help, preserve, rescue, be safe, bring (having) salvation, save(-iour), get victory



Was it even possible for Jesus to manipulate the crowds just to fulfill the prophecy? *Hosanna* and *do save* are similar words in Greek and Hebrew. Jesus could NOT have made this happen.

Estimates vary, but many scholars suggest that hundreds of thousands—possibly up to 1 million people—were present during Jesus' triumphal entry. See [Bonus Material for more](#). All this without phones, chats or social media! Where would all these people have gotten the information? Jesus had no way to invite all of these people.

It happened because they were drawn to him. In expectation of the Messiah, they recognized **Zechariah 9:9** was coming to pass. They were shouting things from the prophecy, *Save us, save us now!* There is no way Jesus could have orchestrated this. It happened only because it was God's will.



9. It was prophesied that the people would not believe Jesus' message:

Isaiah 53:1: *Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*

We just talked about the people coming to him and declaring him king, but here is another prophecy that says others were not going to believe him. *Who has believed our message?*

The fulfillment was a sad result of the people's hard-heartedness:

John 12:37-38: *37 But though he had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in him. 38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?*

THINK! Jesus could not control the people's response to him.

How much good can one person do, and still they wouldn't believe? What more could have been done? In **John 11**, he raised Lazarus from the dead, the pinnacle of all his miracles, yet here in **John 12**, the prophecy quoted from Isaiah was fulfilled and some still did not believe.



10. It was prophesied that the people would despise and reject Jesus:

Isaiah 53:3: *He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we did not esteem him.*

We are only touching on a few verses of this sad chapter of prophecy.

Once again, the fulfillment was a sad result of the people's hard-heartedness:

John 1:11: *He came to his own, and those who were his own did not receive him.*

This is the beginning of the gospel of John, summing up that Jesus was rejected. This leads us up to the crucifixion.

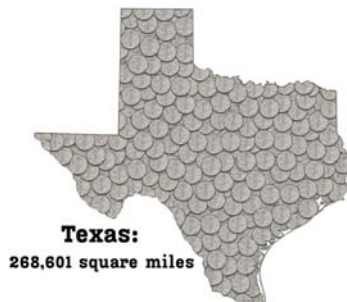
At the time of the crucifixion, we look further to see a deeper fulfillment of this prophecy:

Luke 23:13-14,16,18,20-21: *13 Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, 14 and said to them, You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined him before you, I have found no guilt in this man... 16 Therefore I will punish him and release him. 18 But they cried out all together, saying, Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas! 20 Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again, 21 but they kept on calling out, saying, Crucify, crucify him!*

This rejection of Jesus was absolute and heartbreaking.

THINK!

We are up to ten prophecies. What are the odds of Jesus being able to control all of these outcomes?



Remember the illustration of the silver dollars in Texas corresponding to the odds of one person fulfilling even eight prophecies?

You have to randomly find the silver dollar with the red "X" on it in one try. That would be hard enough, but there is one additional detail in this—you have to find the red "X" while you are blindfolded!





Comprehending the “script” of Jesus’ life

Our obvious third conclusion is that all of these events were far out of Jesus’ control, and yet they were precisely fulfilled. The power of God’s word and prophecies cannot be denied; rather, they should be relied upon as proof of God’s plan.

We have to look at these odds objectively and truthfully. The only logical conclusion is that the fulfillment of these many prophecies is proof of something bigger than the ability of one human to manipulate one period of time. It is proof of a higher, intentional and eternal plan.

The reality of the magnitude of prophecy being fulfilled without manipulation really shows us the power of God’s foresight. God IS love!

Thus far, the evidence is overwhelming! How much more evidence of prophecy being fulfilled is there in his crucifixion and death?

Just reading the 22nd Psalm strikes awe into our hearts as we realize that those words were written so long before they were largely fulfilled on the cross. For the sake of this brief overview, we will only touch on that Psalm plus a few other prophecies that were clearly beyond Jesus’ ability to control.



11. It was prophesied that Jesus would be betrayed by a friend:

Psalm 41:9: *Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.*

The fulfillment was dramatically set in place by Jesus pointing out Judas’ betrayal:

Matthew 26:21-22: *21 As they were eating, he said, Truly I say to you that one of you will betray me. 22 Being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to him, Surely not I, Lord?*

John 13:26-27: *26 Jesus then answered, That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him. So when he had dipped the morsel, he took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. 27 After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, What you do, do quickly.*

This is the first part of the fulfillment—Jesus calls out the event of Judas’ betrayal before it happens because he understands the prophecy in Psalms. He tells Judas, *What you do, do quickly*, allowing God’s will to unfold at his own expense.

The further fulfillment was dramatically carried out by Judas’ actual betrayal:

Matthew 26:48-50: *48 Now he who was betraying him gave them a sign, saying, Whomever I kiss, he is the one; seize him. 49 Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, Hail, Rabbi! and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said to him, Friend, do what you have come for. Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.*



It is hard to relate to the heartbreak Jesus would have felt as this prophecy so boldly unfolded. Jesus couldn't control Judas' heart.



12. It was prophesied that the exact price of Jesus' betrayal would be 30 pieces of silver:

Zechariah 11:12-13: *12 I said to them, If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind! So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages. 13 Then the LORD said to me, Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them. So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.*

The fulfillment was unmistakably displayed in the actions of Judas AND in the actions of the chief priests:

Matthew 26:14-15: *14 Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15 and said, What are you willing to give me to betray him to you? And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him.*

Then after Judas gave the money back to them:

Matthew 27:6-7: *6 The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood.*

But the money to pay Judas was from the temple treasury!

7 And they conferred together and with the money bought the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.



Would Judas the betrayer and the chief priests, as enemies of Jesus, conspire with Jesus to fulfill prophecy that confirmed him as the Messiah? Of course not!

But they DID fulfill the prophecy that condemned Jesus, with incredible detail, with Zechariah predicting that the 30 pieces of silver would be thrown to the potter. This is not a random coincidence.

Here the enemies of Jesus, doing all in their power to discredit him, are precisely fulfilling these prophecies. Was Jesus' life scripted? No!



13. It was prophesied that Jesus would be mercilessly mocked and ridiculed:

Psalms 22:7-8: *7 All who see me sneer at me; they separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, 8 Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.*

As we said earlier, **Psalm 22** was largely fulfilled on the cross, and some verses give us a view of the future.

The fulfillment was dramatically revealed in the abuse from the people, especially the chief priests:

Matthew 27:39-41,43: *39 And those passing by were hurling abuse at him, wagging their heads 40 and saying, You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! 41 ...the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him*

and saying... ⁴³ *HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET GOD RESCUE him now, IF HE DELIGHTS IN HIM; for he said, I am the son of God.*

Did the enemy quote the prophecy on purpose, or in mocking?

They are not quoting the prophecy to make Jesus look good; they did it to mock him, to say, *You think you are this, but you are not.* The fulfillment of this prophecy is done out of this horrible spite, anger and sense of evil victory over Jesus as he's dying.

Psalms 22 starts out with, *My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?* Jesus uttered those words on the cross, so we could say that part was scripted. Then there is the part of the prophecy with which the chief priest, scribes and elders are mocking Jesus. But verse ³¹ says:

Psalms 22:31: *They will come and will declare his righteousness to a people who will be born, that he has performed it.*

He has performed it—or as fulfilled in John 19:30, It is finished. The cross experience was prophesied hundreds of years earlier.



14. It was prophesied that Jesus would be counted among wicked men and yet buried with honor:

Isaiah 53:9: *His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet he was with a rich man in his death, because he had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth.*

His grave was assigned with wicked men—the thieves on the other crosses.

The fulfillment was powerfully set in place by Jesus' crucifixion and burial:

Matthew 27:38: *At that time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.*

He was with a rich man in his death—Joseph of Arimathea gave up his expensive tomb for Jesus.

Matthew 27:57-60: *57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. 58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.*



Comprehending the “script” of Jesus’ life

Our obvious final conclusion is there is NO feasible way Jesus could have fulfilled even these 14 prophecies by creating a script for his life and then living it.

On the contrary, this shows us the supernatural power of God's foresight and the unlimited wisdom of His plan.

And we haven't even touched the prophecies Jesus himself spoke!



Just like the example we gave of successfully picking out, while blindfolded, one marked silver dollar among a field the size of Texas covered in silver dollars, the fulfillment of these multiple prophecies by one man could not have happened by accident.

Throughout the Bible, God has shown us how His plan will unfold. The sin of Adam would be canceled by Jesus. Through the free-will offering of Jesus giving his life, all men would have an opportunity for life later. God's plan is so much bigger than sin and death!

So, did Jesus live a scripted life?
For Rick, Jonathan, Julie and Christian Questions...
...Think about it!

All scriptures cited are from the NASB1995 translation unless otherwise noted.



Next episode

Episode 1396:
What Are the Signs of Jesus' Return?



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Bonus Material and Study Questions

Recommended additional study:

Ep.1312: How Do We Know Jesus Is the Promised Messiah? (Part I)
Jewish skepticism and key Old Testament identifiers of the Messiah
<https://christianquestions.com/current-events/1312-messiah/>



Parents and Bible class teachers, continue your studies on this topic with these short, animated videos for kids at [ChristianQuestions.com/YouTube](https://christianquestions.com/YouTube):

- **How do we know Jesus was the Messiah?**
<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/how-we-know-jesus-was-messiah/>
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- **Why didn't some people like Jesus?**
<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/why-didnt-some-people-like-jesus/>

Virgin: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5959 *'almâh*;
a lass (as veiled or private) damsel, maid, virgin

All uses of the word in the King James Version:

Genesis 24:43: *Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin <5959> cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink.*

Exodus 2:8: *And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid <5959> went and called the child's mother.*

Psalms 68:25: *The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels <5959> playing with timbrels.*

Proverbs 30:19: *The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid <5959>.*

Song of Solomon 1:3: *Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins <5959> love thee.*

Song of Solomon 6:8: *There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins <5959> without number.*

Isaiah 7:14: *Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin <5959> shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

How many were in the crowd at Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem?

Passover pilgrimage: First-century Jerusalem swelled dramatically during Passover. The Jewish historian Josephus claimed that over 2 million people could be present during the feast, though most scholars consider that number exaggerated.

More conservative estimates: Many modern scholars suggest 200,000 to 300,000 pilgrims was more realistic, with some pushing it closer to 500,000 to 1 million depending on how far people traveled and how long they stayed.

Two converging crowds: The Gospels describe two groups—one coming with Jesus from Bethany and Galilee, and another already in Jerusalem for the feast (**Matthew 21:9**). This convergence likely amplified the spectacle.

John 12:12–13 mentions a “great crowd” that came out with palm branches.

Matthew 21:10–11 notes the city was stirred and asked, *Who is this?* implying that many didn't know Jesus personally, but were swept up in the moment.

Luke 19:37–38 highlights the crowd was composed of disciples and those who had seen his miracles. The crowd's enthusiasm was likely fueled by messianic expectations, especially after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (**John 12:17–18**).

Study QUESTIONS

Ep.1395: Did Jesus Live a Scripted Life?

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1395-jesus-scripted-life/>

See:  **CQ.Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

1. What was Jesus' attitude towards doing God's will? (Psalms 40:7-10, John 4:34, 14:30-31, 15:11)
2. Could Jesus have fulfilled prophecies just to gain followers and attention?
Explain how that could not be true of the following prophecies/fulfillments given by Gabriel:
 - a. Jesus was prophesied to be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14/Luke 1:26-31, also Matthew 1:23)
 - b. Jesus was prophesied to be king over Israel (Genesis 49:10/Luke 1:32,33)
3. Explain how that could not be true for these four prophecies/fulfillments about Jesus' birth and childhood:
 - a. Jesus was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2/Luke 2:4-6)
 - b. Jesus was prophesied to be taken to Egypt to avoid death as a small child (Hosea 11:1/Matthew 2:12-15)
 - c. Herod's actions when the Magi did not return to him (Jeremiah 31:15-17/Matthew 2:16-17)
 - d. Jesus was prophesied to be called a Nazarene (Isaiah 11:1-2/Matthew 2:19-23)
4. Could Jesus have read these prophecies and deliberately fulfilled them? Explain:
 - a. A messenger was prophesied to prepare the way for Jesus' message (Isaiah 40:3-5/Luke 3:3-6)
 - b. His ride into Jerusalem where the people hailed him as their king (Zechariah 9:9/Mark 11:7-10, also Psalms 118:25-26)
 - c. The people would NOT believe Jesus' message (Isaiah 53:1/John 12:37-38)
 - d. The people would despise and reject him (Isaiah 53:3/John 1:11, also Luke 23:13-21)
5. Is it reasonable that Jesus scripted the Pharisees and others, and the events that led to his death? Why?
 - a. It was prophesied that Jesus would be betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9/Matthew 26:21-22, 48-50, John 13:26-27)
 - b. The exact price of Jesus' betrayal was prophesied to be 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12-13/Matthew 26:14-15, 27:6-7)
 - c. It was prophesied that Jesus would be mercilessly mocked and ridiculed (Psalms 22:7-8,31/Matthew 27:39-43, also, John 19:30)
 - d. It was prophesied that Jesus would be counted among wicked men and yet he would be buried with honor (Isaiah 53:9/Matthew 27:38, 57-60)
6. Jesus was "scripted" in that he did intentionally follow prophecy for certain parts of his life—his awareness of what was expected of him like the ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, his ministry, etc. Does it bother you that he did this? Share your ideas.