



Reason one

BECAUSE HE CAME AS
PROMISED



Maybe you'll be asked this in a table quiz some day.



Q. Name the individual who has been credited with predicting the following:

- the Great Fire of London
- the French Revolution
- the rise of Napoleon
- the two World Wars of the twentieth century
- the career of Hitler
- the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by nuclear bombs
- the Apollo moon landings
- the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster
- the death of Princess Diana

How did you do?

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The answer, of course, is Michel de Nostredame (known to us as *Nostradamus*).


It is probably true to say that if someone mentions 'prophecy' today, most people tend to think of the Bible (with all those funny sounding names like Ezekiel) *and/or* Nostradamus. Perhaps he is the best known and most revered 'prophet' or 'seer' coming from the non-biblical world. Indeed, often people think that the biblical prophets and Nostradamus were really about the same thing. They could be placed in the one category because they possessed this common (and eerie!) ability to predict the future.

Is that a fair conclusion to reach?

Judge for yourself.

Nostradamus' prophecies come to us from sixteenth-century France. He began his career as an apothecary, working in the field of medicine and chemistry, but moved on to practise the 'dark arts' and was particularly interested in astrology. His most famous work is the rather non-cryptically titled *The Prophecies* which first appeared in 1555. Nostradamus wrote his prophecies in rhymed quatrains which were then grouped into sets of 100 called centuries.

Probably the best way to see how Nostradamus is used is to take a well-known example. What follows is, perhaps, the one most favoured by Nostradamus enthusiasts. To fully appreciate it, you will need to know a little bit of American history: namely that both President John F Kennedy and his brother (Robert Kennedy/Attorney General) were assassinated in the 1960s. Do note that the two prophecies come from unconnected centuries. With Nostradamus, you do not have to trouble yourself with context or an unfolding narrative!



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The ancient work will be accomplished, And from the roof evil will fall on the great man; They will accuse an innocent, being dead, of the deed; The guilty one is hidden in the misty copse.

(Century 6 Quatrain 37)

The great man will be struck down in the day by a thunder bolt, the evil deed predicted by the bearer of a petition; According to the prediction another falls at night, Conflict in Reims, London, and pestilence in Tuscany.

(Century 1 Quatrain 27)

The Nostradamus faithful claim that what we have here are references to murder, the Book Depository, the shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald (who was innocent!), the Grassy Knoll, gunfire, Jean Dixon's warning, the fact that Robert Kennedy was shot at night, the student riots in France and England, and the Florence flood of the same year.

That certainly was enough to book Nostradamus a one-hour special on the Discovery Channel. Few would object to the statement that this is the best that non-biblical prophecy has to offer. This is their champion at the top of his game.

As we turn to consider just some of the many prophecies given in the Bible we will be better able to judge whether we are dealing with the same thing.

Look at me, everyone!

Jesus of Nazareth made a staggering claim. While discussing the Word of God with the religious leaders of the Jewish nation, He took their breath away with these words:

These are the very Scriptures that testify about me ...
Moses ... wrote about me.

(John 5:39, 46)



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Later He told His disciples:

...everything must be fulfilled that has been written about me in the law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.

(Luke 24:44)


We need to understand what is being said here. In the clearest of language, Jesus of Nazareth is insisting that the entire Old Testament (as we call it) speaks about and points towards Him! He is its subject! Quite simply, if that is not true, then Jesus is the ultimate egomaniac and the greatest blasphemer of all time. There really is no in-between position possible with these statements.

It has been calculated that there are approximately 300 prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the Rescuer to come (the Messiah), whom Christians identify as Jesus of Nazareth. Sometimes that figure is further broken down and it is said that there are 61 major prophecies that chart the career of the coming deliverer. We will encounter some of these as we focus on the birth, betrayal and death of the Messiah. It is when we examine these 'word pictures' given in advance that we see how perfectly Jesus matches up against them. If you find a 100% correlation, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth is, indeed, the promised Messiah.

Messiah's Birth

You certainly could not say that Jesus arrived on the scene unannounced. I'm not just referring to the star that guided the wise men or to the angels who frightened the shepherds that first Christmas. Actually, you can trace the promise of a coming Messiah all the way back from the manger at Bethlehem to the immediate aftermath of man's sin, as recorded in Genesis chapter three. God's promised deliverer would not just randomly appear. His lineage was mapped out for all to see.



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He would be born:

- the seed of the woman (Gen. 3)
- the seed of Abraham (Gen. 12)
- in the line of Isaac (Gen. 21)
- in the line of Jacob (Gen. 35)
- from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49)
- in the family line of Jesse (Isa. 11)
- of the 'house' of David (Jer. 23)



In a very real sense baby Jesus was the ultimate planned pregnancy. In fact, it was a pregnancy like no other. Christians frequently talk about the miraculous birth of Jesus. In one sense there was nothing special about how Mary delivered her child in that Bethlehem manger. But the process by which Mary *came to be 'with child'* in the first place was utterly miraculous (read Luke 1:35). This, too, was something that was promised centuries beforehand:

... the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

(Isa. 7:14)

Because we are so familiar with the story of Messiah's birth, we could easily miss another significant detail.

Which parent of young children has not had the 'delight' of the school nativity play recreating the scene at Bethlehem? I write as a veteran of such campaigns, having had one child performing in the role of a donkey, and (brace yourself) another as the stable door! The only consolation is that critics labelled the latter a somewhat 'wooden' performance!

But why was it that Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the first place?

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Caesar's first Christmas

Luke tells the story in chapter two of his Gospel. It really was the height of inconvenience. Mary, who was heavily pregnant, and her husband-to-be (Joseph), lived nowhere near Bethlehem. They lived in the far north of the land of Israel, in the town of Nazareth. But something happened over which they had no control. Caesar Augustus decided to take an empire-wide census. No doubt it was a device designed to ensure that everyone was paying taxes. Not only did he decide to take a census at this particular time, but he also determined *how* it should be carried out. Each male head of a household was to return to his own ancestral home to register.

Just think of the disruption for all those folk who had travelled and resettled elsewhere. But it spelled double trouble for Mary and Joseph. Not only did they have to set out on the approximate 80 mile trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem (allowing for a detour around Samaria), but they did it with Mary rapidly approaching her due date! If it had been left to them, you can be sure there would have been no travel plans for this couple.

But what Caesar wants, Caesar gets!


And we all know the story of the inn-keeper with no room, the offer of the stable, and the birth of baby Jesus in the humblest of circumstances.

So, it was all down to Caesar was it?

Not if you listen to Micah the Old Testament prophet. God had pin-pointed the very location of Messiah's birth centuries before it took place:

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. [or, from days of eternity]

(Micah 5:2)



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How amazing it is to see the sovereignty of God playing out in this situation. The most powerful man on the planet, for his own reasons, decides to conduct a census. He knows nothing of Micah's prophecy, yet his decision sets in motion events which fulfil the very detail of God's rescue plan for sinners.

I guess the real lesson is not so much 'what Caesar wants, Caesar gets.' It is, rather, that there is someone even greater than Caesar in control of history.

Messiah's Betrayal

Just about everyone knows what a person is getting at if they label someone a 'Judas'. The treachery of one of Jesus' own disciples, betraying Him for money, shocks and offends in equal measure. But we would come to the wrong conclusion if we pictured Jesus as some helpless victim outmanoeuvred by the actions of a traitor.

Jesus knew full well what was going on, even behind the scenes, as men plotted his execution. This was graphically illustrated when He shared a final meal with His disciples. Jesus told His disciples that He knew whom He had chosen and that this choice was made 'to fulfil the Scripture'. He then quoted a statement from King David in Psalm 41:9:

... He who shares my bread has turned against me.
(John 13:18)

Within moments, Judas received from the hand of Jesus a piece of bread referred to as the '*sop*'. It was an expression of affection and friendship. Judas accepted the gift in his hand while simultaneously rejecting the giver in his heart. As the traitor departed into the night, Jesus told him to do quickly what he had determined to do.



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No, Jesus was not a helpless victim. Again and again in the Old Testament, King David appears in the role of one who suffers for righteousness in his devotion to God. At times the description of his suffering far exceeds that which he personally experienced. As a prophet David was enabled to speak of the very sufferings of Messiah himself. Jesus knew that He was fulfilling in every detail all that was written, and that included being on the end of Judas' deceit.

But it doesn't stop there. The prophet Zechariah makes some stunning statements with regard to Messiah's betrayal. The context is significant. Zechariah had been instructed by God to act, on His behalf, as Israel's shepherd. The time came for Zechariah to ask the people to put a value on his work as shepherd:

I (Zechariah) told them, 'If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it.' So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said to me, 'Throw it to the potter – the handsome price at which they valued me!' So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them ... to the potter at the house of the LORD.

(Zech. 11:12-13)

Don't miss the detail given in this rejection of Israel's shepherd:

- 30 pieces of silver are given (it is very possible that this was no arbitrary amount and was, in fact, a calculated insult. Exodus 21:32 states that 30 shekels of silver was the compensation to be paid if an Israelite's *slave* was killed in an accident)
- silver, not gold, is paid
- the potter is noted to be the recipient
- the money is brought to the house of the Lord (the temple)
- the money is thrown, not handed or laid down




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Let's move forward through the centuries and come to the rejection of the One who presented Himself as *'the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep'* (John 10:11). Matthew records what happened and how widely known the unholy alliance between Judas and the religious rulers had become:

Then one of the Twelve – the one called Judas Iscariot – went to the chief priests and asked, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?' So they counted out for him **thirty pieces of silver**.

(Matt. 26:14-15)



When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the **thirty pieces of silver** to the chief priests and the elders. 'I have sinned,' he said, 'for I have betrayed innocent blood.' 'What is that to us?' they replied. 'That's your responsibility.' So Judas threw the money into **the temple** and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, 'It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.' So they decided to use the money to buy **the potter's field** as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: 'They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me.'

(Matt. 27:3-10)

There just was no denying the detail of what had happened in Jerusalem. That infamous piece of real estate nicknamed *'Field of Blood'* made sure of that!

Messiah's death

It is when we come to the events of Calvary that we see with unmistakable clarity how perfectly Jesus matches

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up against the biblical prophecies. The fact that Messiah would die and the circumstances of His death were spoken of in advance. That is why the apostle Paul could write that *'Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures'* (1 Cor. 15:3). To feel something of the force of what Paul said, it is worth taking a Bible in your hand and working through the references below. Keep in mind that every reference from the Old Testament was written centuries before Jesus was born.

Forsaken by Disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31-56
Silent before Accusers	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 27:12-14 1 Peter 2:23
Wounded, bruised and spat upon	Isaiah 50:6; 53:5	Matthew 27:26-31
Hands and feet Pierced	Psalms 22:16	Luke 23:33
Mocked	Psalms 22:6-8	Matthew 27:39-44
Crucified with Criminals	Isaiah 53:12	Mark 15:27
Made intercession for his persecutors	Isaiah 53:12	Luke 23:34
Garments parted and lots cast	Psalms 22:18	John 19:23-24
Suffered thirst	Psalms 22:15 Psalms 69:21	John 19:28-29
His forsaken cry	Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46
Bones not broken	Exodus 12:46 Numbers 9:12	John 19:33, 36
Buried in a rich man's tomb	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60

Let's investigate further.

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The Old Testament prophecies lay particular stress on the fact that Messiah would be '*pierced*':

Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet.

(Ps. 22:16)

... They will look on me, the one they have pierced ...

(Zech 12:10)

... he was pierced for our transgressions ...

(Isa. 53:5)

John's Gospel records three unsuccessful attempts by the Jewish authorities to put Jesus to death during His period of ministry. We are specifically told that they wanted to stone Him to death for the religious crime of blasphemy (see John 5:18; 8:59; 10:31). Some time later, when Herod, the puppet ruler appointed by the Romans, dabbled in a bit of Christian persecution, he had the apostle James put to death by the sword (Acts 12:2).

But Messiah's death would involve neither stones nor swords, but *nails*.

It was no quirk of history that, at this particular time, in the land of Palestine under Roman occupation, the state chose to execute a certain type of criminal in a specific way. The Romans would put to death non-Romans accused of sedition by the ancient Assyrian form of execution, known to us as crucifixion. And, as everyone knows, crucifixion necessarily involves the piercing of the hands and the feet.

One of the most unpleasant details of the crucifixion story is undoubtedly the heartless mockery of many who witnessed it. It is all the more disturbing when you consider that those conducting the cruel chorus were actually leading members of the religious establishment. Once again, it was written down beforehand. In Psalm 22,



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which Christians often refer to as 'the psalm of the cross', King David writes:

But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. 'He trusts in the LORD,' they say, 'let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.'


(Ps. 22:6-8)

Matthew records the taunts directed at Jesus:

Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!' In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. 'He saved others,' they said, 'but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, "I am the Son of God."'

(Matt. 27:39-43)

It would be a hard heart that is unmoved by that. Did you notice the detail given in both David's prophecy and Matthew's description concerning the passing spectators '*shaking their heads*'? It appears that the mockery of Jesus involved actions as well as words. It is a gruesome fact that with crucifixion the only part of the human body capable of any free movement is the head. Victims of crucifixion were known to writhe in agony for hours or even days in some cases. Could it be that, such was the callousness of those witnesses to the events of Calvary, they actually mimicked the distress of the Son of God?



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A final one to consider

The apostle John describes the behaviour of the Roman soldiers responsible for carrying out the crucifixion of Jesus:

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. 'Let's not tear it,' they said to one another. 'Let's decide by lot who will get it'.

(John 19:23-24)

Almost a millennium earlier King David wrote these words:

They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.

(Ps. 22:18)

As John remembered those Roman soldiers, who knew nothing of the Scriptures themselves but simply discharged their cruel duty (while seeking to have some fun in the process), he understood what was really going on. Therefore he continued to write:

... This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, 'They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.' So this is what the soldiers did.

(John 19:24)

Objections

To my mind, one of the most compelling reasons for believing in Jesus Christ is found in His fulfilment of prophecy. In terms of both its sheer volume and the precise detail contained within it, Jesus of Nazareth is the perfect match every time. But not everyone sees it that way.

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So, what objections are put forward? What alternative explanations are offered?

Can we be sure that these are genuine prophecies? Is it fact that these predictions really were made centuries before Jesus was born? Those are fair questions to ask; and easy to answer! It is actually a simple thing to show that every single Old Testament prophecy was around long before the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem. Around 250-150BC a group of Alexandrian Jews in Egypt produced a famous translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the lingua franca of the day (known as the Greek Septuagint). All 39 books in our Old Testament were translated at that time. People may argue over just how many centuries back the prophecies go, but no-one suggests that they were written any time near the arrival of Jesus.


Okay, granted the prophecies were certainly around for a long time, but how do we know the New Testament writers didn't just make-up the different 'fulfilments' they describe?

Again, that is a very reasonable question to ask. Can you trust that what Matthew, Mark, Luke and John reported genuinely happened?

The first thing to note is that they certainly claimed to be describing actual history. It is worth quoting Dr. Luke's introduction to his Gospel in full:

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eye witnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

(Luke 1:1-4)



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It is the stated intention of the Gospel writers that their readers discover what Jesus actually did and said. Against that background, to accuse them of inventing stories so that they could present Jesus as someone other than who He was, raises another couple of major problems.

The authors were self-confessed Jesus followers. To practise deceit and falsehood to promote His cause was a non-starter. You don't serve someone who claimed to be 'the truth' (John 14:6) by telling lies! And you have to ask yourself, why would they do it? When the Gospels were being written it was a decidedly dangerous time to be a Christian. Penning an accurate account of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus was more likely to earn you a slot performing with the lions at the Colosseum rather than signing copies of your work at the Hilton!

No, the Gospel writers told it as it was. They were honest and accurate in what they wrote. Their task was not to make up what Jesus did but, simply, to write it down.

I might even be prepared to admit that Jesus does appear to 'fulfil' these prophecies again and again but, surely, someone was bound to sooner or later. A lot of people have lived and died. Could it not just be one incredible coincidence?

Does that have a hint of plausibility about it?

Not if you listen to experts in the field of probability theory. In case you think this all sounds divorced from the real world, keep in mind that the insurance premiums you pay are worked out according to statistical probability! A rather famous illustration of the probability of one man fulfilling only eight of the major messianic prophecies has come to us from Professor Peter Stoner.

He writes this in his book *Science Speaks* (pp. 106-107):

Coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability.
We find that the chance that any man might have lived



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down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 to 10^{17} (10 to the power of 17)...In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, suppose 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.

I will spare you his further illustration, involving electrons, showing the probability of one individual fulfilling forty-eight prophecies. Suffice to say the number this time is 10^{157} . Yes, that is a number with 157 zeros in it!

Apparently you have a 1 in 14 million chance of winning the U.K. lottery each time you play. But in our case the odds are greater than you playing and winning the lottery *every* time you play, if you could play every week for the rest of your life, and then for many life-times after that!

Is it not the case that other people have made similar predictions that have come true?

There really is a one word response to that ... WHO? History is littered with failed prophets and seers. If you found yourself somewhat impressed by Nostradamus and the 'Kennedy Prophecies' and think there might be some mileage in him, I have a challenge for you. Go read Nostradamus! Very quickly you will discover that, in addition to being translated in wildly differing ways, his prophecies are relentlessly obscure, vague



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and enigmatic. With just a little imagination you can make a free-standing Nostradamus verse predict almost anything! But not even Nostradamus is to blame for all that he is credited with prophesying! Have you heard it said that Nostradamus predicted 9/11? Here's why:

In the city of God there will be a great thunder, Two brothers torn apart by Chaos, while the fortress endures, The great leader will succumb, The third big war will begin when the big city is burning.

These words were read by millions over the internet in the months following the terrorist attack. The incredible irony is that they were posted by a student called Neil Marshall and used in his article *A critical analysis of Nostradamus*. Marshall composed the verse himself to illustrate how Nostradamus' style of writing is so vague that people will read into it whatever they want to see. That was one successful experiment! It really will not do to place the biblical prophets, with their prophecies of a coming Messiah, in the same category as anyone else. The prophecies of the Bible will withstand serious investigation. Why not put them to the test?

Christians are guilty of simply reading Jesus back into the text. You hang your 'fulfilment in Jesus' interpretations on the slenderest of hooks.

Really?

In Psalm 22 alone we encounter David speaking as the righteous sufferer who cries out to God in desolation, using the very words that Jesus quoted from the cross. He is scorned, despised and mocked with words and actions that are replayed at Calvary. He describes the agonies of thirst and having his hands and feet pierced. His garments are gambled for and distributed among those



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who afflict Him. Is this *'proof-texting'* or *'pre-figuring'*?
What about Isaiah chapter 53? It is well worth a read:

He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces, he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

(Isa. 53:3-12)

On several occasions I have talked with people who were shocked to discover that these verses were actually from

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the Old Testament and not one of the four Gospels. Perhaps they explain why Isaiah is often referred to as 'the fifth evangelist'. It is worth remembering that the early followers of Jesus were Jews who knew their Scriptures. It was through a fair reading of those Scriptures, and not fanciful reasoning, that they came to believe in Jesus the Messiah.

Could Jesus have manufactured this apparent 'fulfilment' of prophecy? Are you sure this was not all deliberately engineered? Could Jesus have 'customized' his life to make it align with the prophecies?

The first thing to note is that this view renders Jesus either a monster or a mad-man, or (perhaps) a bit of both! That's a difficult one to come to terms with. It means that the greatest teachings on morality that the world has ever heard and the greatest example of love that the world has ever witnessed, came from the mind of one who was a lunatic at best!

It really is a logical non-starter.

How do you engineer your lineage? How do you select your birthplace? How do you determine the price of your betrayal negotiated in secret? What influence can you have over what individuals decide to do with that money when you are nailed to a cross? How do you control what people say and do as they watch you die? How do you orchestrate events so that soldiers gamble for your possessions? How do you guarantee what happens to your body after death?

Surely it is obvious that, once again, the objections to the objection are simply overwhelming!

Moving forward

One fundamental reason the Bible gives for trusting in Jesus as Saviour and Lord is that *He came as promised*. He



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possesses all the credentials of the promised Messiah, and the evidence is there for all to read. But this is only a first reason. There are others. As we turn to consider another reason, please note that they are cumulative. You cannot separate what you have thought about already from what follows.

Yes, Jesus came as promised, but there's more...

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION/GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Jesus claimed that the Old Testament 'spoke about and pointed toward Him' (pp. 11-12). How huge is that claim? Where does it leave Jesus if it is false?
2. Which, if any, of the prophecies in relation to Messiah's birth, betrayal and death particularly registered with you?
3. If you found any of the objections convincing, why was this?
4. Which objections, if any, have been missed?
5. Read again the passage from Isaiah 53 quoted on page 26. How many points of connection with Jesus can you identify?
6. What is your explanation for the 'match-up' between Jesus of Nazareth and the many prophecies of the Old Testament?
7. Has the material covered in the chapter changed your understanding of Jesus? If so, in what way?