

Prophecies Fulfilled at the Birth of Jesus

4 Amazing Things About the Birth of Jesus

Mat 1:21-23 NIV She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and ***they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us")***.

- It was purposeful - to save us from our sins
- It was miraculous - the virgin will conceive
- It was divine **"God with us"**
- It was prophesied - nearly 700 years before the event took place

Prophecies that Jesus fulfilled ~350 of them

What is the probability of one man fulfilling just 8 of them? Here is how you could visualize it.

- Cover the state of Texas two feet deep with silver dollars
- Put a check mark on one silver dollar - dump it in and mix it up
- Blindfold a man
- He can anywhere he wants in the state of Texas - but he must bend over and pick one up silver dollar - and with his first try he must pick up the silver dollar with the check mark

Approximately 2500 prophecies in the bible ~ 2000 have been fulfilled

Confidence that we hold God's Word in our hand

Manuscripts

The Volume

There are 24,000 partial and complete manuscript copies of the New Testament

Age and time span from the original

We have no original manuscripts, but we have documents that date back to AD 100 to AD 120 - that's within a couple of decades of the completion of the NT.

How the New Testament compares to other ancient writings

Book	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	No. of copies
New Testament	A.D. 40-100	A.D. 125	25 yrs	24,000
Homer (Iliad)	900 B.C.	400 B.C	500 yrs	643
Sophocles	496-406 B.C	A.D. 1000	1,400 yrs	193
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1,400 yrs	49
Caesar (Gallic Wars)	58-50 B.C.	A.D. 900	1000 yrs	10

"The Bible is full of Errors" they say

The copying process

- The process of copying is not A to B, then B to C, then C to D (telephone game)

- Copying instead goes A to B, then A to C, the A to D

Checks and Balances

- Numbers at the end of the book told the the exact number of words in the original
- They also listed the word or the phrase in the exact middle of the book
- The copy was checked and if it failed either test it was thrown away and started anew

How Accurate Was the Process?

When the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947, a complete copy of the Book of Isaiah was found from 125 B.C.¹ When it was compared with a scroll of Isaiah from A.D. 900, a scroll copied 10 centuries later, it was found to match in 95 % of its contents. The material that did not match included simple misspellings or slips of the pen. No doctrinal material was affected by the discrepancies.

Textual Criticism - *Textual criticism is the art and science of reconstructing the original text of the Scripture. A "text critic" is one who examines the available evidence and makes important decisions as to how the Bible we hold two thousand years later should read.*¹

Variants²

*A textual variant is simply any difference from a standard text (e.g., a printed text, a particular manuscript, etc.) that involves spelling, word order, omission, addition, substitution, or a total rewrite of the text.*³

- There are "variants" - where one copy varies from another.
- 99% hold no significance whatsoever
- They involve a missing letter in a word; or reversing the order of two words (such as "Christ Jesus" instead of "Jesus Christ")
- One of the more significant - the last part of the gospel of Mark is missing from some manuscripts
- None of these affect any major doctrine
 - They don't call into question the deity of Christ, the 2nd coming, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, or salvation by grace through faith not of works
- **Either way it is a far cry from these variants to say the bible is full of errors**
- We can be confident that what we hold in our hands is the word of God

NT and Eyewitness Accounts - Not Easily Refuted

- Luk 1:1-4 ESV Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were **eyewitnesses** and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, 3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 **that you may have certainty** concerning the things you have been taught.
- 1Jn 1:1-3 ESV That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we **looked upon** and have **touched** with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.
- 1Co 15:1-8 ESV Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the

¹ <http://www.reclaimingthemind.org/blog/2011/02/text-criticism-in-a-nutshell/>

² for further reading - [List of NT variants](#) and [Textual Criticism in a nutshell](#)

³ <http://danielbwallace.com/2013/09/09/the-number-of-textual-variants-an-evangelical-miscalculation/>

third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, ***most of whom are still alive***, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

- 2Pe 1:16-21 ESV For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," 18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. 19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- Josephus was a historian who lived at the time of the writing of the NT and he also wrote about the resurrection of Jesus - he did not refute this
- The Romans could have put an end to the rise of the church by simply producing the dead body of Jesus

Archeology

25000 archeological digs related directly to matters discussed in the bible there is no external evidence that disproves the Bible's claim to be the Word of God⁴ ... while Archeology does not prove the Bible was inspired by God, but it confirms the credibility of writers who also claim that they wrote with God's authority.

Sir William Ramsay

As a young historian, Sir William Ramsay was determined to develop an independent historical/geographical study of first-century Asia Minor. He assumed the Book of Acts was unreliable and ignored its historical allusions in his studies. The amount of usable historical information concerning first-century Asia Minor, however, was too little for him to proceed very far with his work. That led him, almost in desperation, to consult the Book of Acts for any help possible. Ramsay discovered that it was remarkably accurate and true to first-century history and topography. Ramsay testified to what changed his mind:

Ramsay's study led him to conclude that "Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect to its trustworthiness" (Ramsay, *ibid.* p. 81) and Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements trustworthy . . . this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians"⁵

Example the Hittites

The Old Testament frequently mentions the Hittites as a very real group of people. But for many years in secular history and in archaeology, the Hittites were as invisible as men from Mars. No solid archaeological evidence could be found that verified the existence of the Hittites. For this reason, many people scorned the biblical record and insisted that the absence of information concerning the Hittites proved that the Bible was filled with incorrect material.

1876 saw many people changing their minds about both the Hittites and the Bible. An archaeologist, Hugo Winckler, visited a city in Turkey named Boghaz-Köy. Upon excavating portions of the city, he found a breathtaking number of human artifacts—including five temples, many sculptures, and a fortified castle. But more important, he found a huge storeroom filled with over 10,000 clay tablets. After completing the difficult task of deciphering the tablets, it was announced to the world that the Hittites had been found.⁶

⁴ <https://bible.org/book/export/html/5810>

⁵ <http://web.cbce.com/multimedia/BLB/faq/nbi/804.html>

⁶ <http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=13&article=888>

Jesus

By the time Jesus was born, the most recent Old Testament book (Malachi) had been copied and recopied over a span of more than four hundred years; the books that Moses wrote had been copied this way for more than fourteen hundred years.

Jesus and the Apostles studied, memorized, used, quoted, and read most often from the Bible of their day, the Septuagint. When Jesus quotes the Old Testament in Matthew, He uses the Hebrew text only 10% of the time, but the Greek LXX translation 90% of the time!

Jesus had full confidence that the Scriptures He used were authoritative. It was just like the Bible each of us holds in our hands, ***not the original*** Hebrew Old Testament, but a translation of the Hebrew into Greek. But it was based on exactly the same original and inspired words, and reads just like the Bible we hold in our hands today.⁷

Jesus viewed the Scripture as authoritative

- Luke 24:44 "...all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me"
- John 5:46 "***For had ye believed Moses***, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."

Canon

1. Written by a recognized prophet or apostle
2. Written by those associated with recognized prophet or apostle
3. Truthfulness (Deut. 18:20-22)
4. Faithfulness to previously accepted canonical writings
5. Confirmed by Christ, prophet, apostle (e.g. Luke 24:44; 2 Pet. 3:16)
6. Church Usage and Recognition

At the end of the day it is a book that is believed by faith

2 Timothy 3:15-17... from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, ***which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus***. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work".

Heb 11:3 NIV By ***faith we understand*** that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

Rom 10:17 NIV Consequently, ***faith comes from hearing the message***, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

Joh 20:30-31 NIV Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But ***these are written that you may believe*** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

1Th 2:13 NIV And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but ***as it actually is, the word of God***, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

⁷ Taken from "What Bible Did Jesus Use?" by Discover the Book Ministries