

[Christmas Prophecies: The Probability](http://www.lamblion.us/2009/12/christmas-prophecies-probability.html)

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By [Nathan Jones](#)

What is the probability that all 109 distinct Bible prophecies concerning the Messiah's first coming were fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth?

Dr. David Reagan, Dennis Pollock of Spirit of Grace Ministries, and I recently got together on the television show "Christ in Prophecy" ([watch it!](#)) to discuss how the fulfillment of Bible prophecy in Jesus of Nazareth is proof positive that Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies concerning the First Coming of the Messiah. If you were wondering what the mathematical probabilities are that Jesus is really the prophesied Messiah — read on!

Dr. Reagan: I spent some seven years cataloguing the Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the firsts coming of the Messiah, and in that process I discovered a total of 109 separate and distinct prophecies that were fulfilled in the first coming of Jesus. 109!

A science professor by the name of Peter Stoner has calculated the odds of just 8 of those prophecies being fulfilled accidentally in the life of one person. He concluded that the odds are 1 in 10 to the 17th power. That's the number 1 with 17 zeros after it. That is 100 quadrillion, about 10 times the size of our national debt. Have you ever pondered the odds represented by this phenomenal number?

Now, I have never met Peter Stoner, in fact he has gone on to be with the Lord, but I know he must have been a good guy because he uses the state of Texas to illustrate the meaning of 1 in 10 to the 17th power. Here is how he describes this number. Just conceive of these odds. Fill the state of Texas knee deep in silver dollars with one of those dollars having a black checkmark on it. Then you take 10,000 bulldozers and let them just kind of mix up the silver dollars really, really, good for 10 years. Next blindfold a guy and turn him loose in that sea of silver dollars. The odds that on the first draw he would reach down and pick up one of those silver dollars with the black checkmark on it is 1 in 10 to the 17th power!

Nathan Jones: You're right, Dave, that's just beyond the realm of possibility! That's why some people try to argue that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies on purpose. But, most were incapable of being purposeful and being self-fulfilled. For example, consider the prophecies concerning the Messiah's birth. How many of us have been able to control the timing of our birth?

Dr. Reagan: And, not only the timing, the same is true about the place of his birth.

Nathan Jones: Oh yeah, that's right, Dave, that brings us to one of the most important prophecies concerning Jesus' birth. And you can find it in [Micah 5:2](#) which speaks of the birthplace of the Messiah. The passage reads as follows, *"But as for you, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you one will go forth for me to be ruler in Israel."* This prophecy, written 500 years before Jesus' birth, specifically names the town where the Messiah will be born.

Dennis Pollock: Yes it does, Nathan, and it does it more precisely than most people realize because there were two Bethlehems in Israel at that time, one in the north near the Sea of Galilee and the other in the south near Jerusalem. This prophecy says the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem Ephrathah, meaning the Bethlehem near Jerusalem.

Let me illustrate it this way. If I were to ask a person where he was born and he said to me "Springfield," I would have to ask, "Which Springfield?" That's because there's a Springfield in almost every state of our nation. We are talking here about very specific prophecies and not the kind of vague and indecipherable prophecies that characterize the writings of false prophets like Nostradamus, so-called prophecies that are written in such linguistic mumbo-jumbo that they can be "understood" after the event and then can be applied to numerous events over and over again.

Nathan Jones: I'd like to point out something else in Micah that is very important and which is often overlooked. Beginning with the latter part of [Micah 5:2](#) and continuing through verse 3, the passage says, *"From you Bethlehem one will go forth for me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."* Now, these verses make it very clear that the Messiah will be divine and that He will be God in the flesh, for these verses say He will be the one who has existed eternally.

Dr. Reagan: This is not the only prophecy that affirms the divinity of the Messiah. Another can be found in [Isaiah 9:6](#) where it says the Messiah will be called *"Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace."*

Dennis Pollock: Let's not forget the scriptural evidence of the virgin birth. Several prophecies indicate the divine nature of the Messiah, like the one in [Genesis 3:15](#) which said He would be born of "the seed of woman," and the one in [Isaiah 7:14](#) which said point blank that He would be born of a virgin.

Dr. Reagan: There are many other details in the Hebrew Scriptures about the birth of the Messiah that were prophesied long before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. For example, the prophet Balaam mentioned that a special star would mark the Messiah's birth, and that is exactly what happened. Solomon in one of his psalms stated that the kings would send the Messiah gifts. The New Testament tells us that those gifts were brought by Persian wise men. Hosea prophesied that the Messiah would be taken into Egypt, and that is exactly what happened when Jesus' parents fled Bethlehem due to the threats of King Herod who's subsequent slaughter of the children of Bethlehem was prophesied by Jeremiah.

There is no doubt that the birth of Jesus of Nazareth proves He is the Messiah.