

# Astonishment

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By Wolfram Schüz

## Christmas - a tradition of ashes or of blazes?

As a freshly baked grandfather [a new grandfather] I don't want to pass ashes down to my great-grandchildren. Therefore, I got granular on [examined carefully] Christmas quite anew.

Jesus came, in fact, at the best - for spreading Christianity - possible moment. For the first time in history the whole world was centralized under one rule. Alexander the Great had torn down the borders between nations and peoples, and created a common spiritual ground with a world language: Greek. The Romans had created political unity and built the strategically important roadways upon which the disciples then could carry the gospel into the world.

But the mighty ones were not amazed about His coming. We read "Herod was dismayed and with him whole Jerusalem, when the magi asked after the newborn king." And John comments: Jesus came into his possession, but the world did not recognize him. And the world was made by him, but his own didn't receive him.

But God had provided for His son a much more costly, invisible foundation through more than a thousand Messianic prophecies, which searching people wove in their heads and hearts a concrete expectation. So a man such as Simeon, a woman such as Hanna, lowly shepherds, rich magi travelling from Babylon recognized in the toddler Jesus the Promised One whom angels, prophets and God-seekers had longed to see.

Apparently, it was very important for God to reveal to mankind who the "real" redeemer is. He used various authentication techniques about which do we know only now in modern times.

1. A method used by NASA [and others] to transmit information as securely as possible, called "spread spectrum technique". Information is transmitted in a widely distributed form. In the same way, all messianic prophecies are spread across the complete Old Testament. So, if someone wants to counterfeit the identification criteria of the Messiah, he must rewrite not just one chapter but countless pages.
2. Provision of the criteria to be used for identification of the Messiah, long in advance of His arrival. This criteria included relationships, birth place, birth time and concomitants [things connected with each other that were to happen at the same time]. Government officials and bankers "lick their chops" [hungrily wait for] such a "hacker proof" system, because it is from beyond time and space. But this is God's patent! Only He has the power and knowledge, only He can announce historic events years -- hundreds and thousands of years -- beforehand; only God lets them happen at the right time. So Jesus is the only man, about whom Psalm 40:7 says, "I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me." The writer means the Holy Bible, the book that was written across thousands of years in 3 languages on three continents by about 40 authors, many of whom did not know one another.

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3. Publication dates of Old Testament prophecies are anchored in history. They were written nearly 300 years before their fulfillment. Many future events were described so concretely with such great detail – especially in the book of Daniel -- that one would think they had been written after they happened. But what we call the Old Testament – as is well-documented and widely known – was recorded by 72 scholars under Ptolemäus II in Alexandria about 280 B.C. - in Greek in order to make it more understandable for more people. And this so-called Septuagint contained **already** everything that we now have in our Old Testament.
4. Our documents come from non-Christian sources. The prophecies come from the Jews, who are anything but interested to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. And concerning the fulfillment of the prophecies we have probative [def: tending to prove] non-Christian evidences from that time. Christian faith is, therefore, the only faith whose verity [def: truth] and reliability can be checked in advance: Are the promises correct and how were they fulfilled? For believers in all other religions, because they are man-made religions, the moment of truth will only come upon the deathbed.
5. Confusion statistically excluded: Imagine the cosmos with its diameter of 30 billion lightyears, filled up with ants (1 lightyear is 9.5 million kilometers). One of them is red. How probable is it that you would, with blindfolded eyes, pick up just this red one? Similarly (im)probable is it that one mere man could have fulfilled all 300 prophecies about Him. I'll gladly explain how I performed this calculation. For each prophecy I presumed a single probability of 1:1000. In reality it is most often much lower.

What does this show all of us?

There is really something more sure than death and taxes: scarcely anything in the world is so certain as the fact that Jesus has come into our world as the promised redeemer. He wants, that his journey from cradle to cross was not made for everybody in vain. (That explains this objective verifiability with such an extremely high level of certainty). How much would we like to, as Santas, carry this message into our helpless and restless world!

So, Christmas as a heart-warming feast has its deep legitimation, just as in times of crisis. - Not only that, but we may also in an amazed and relatively cool way experience how much further messianic prophecies are fulfilled step-by-step.

Please go view this YouTube video of the performance of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" in a food court.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE&feature=player\\_embedded#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE&feature=player_embedded#!)