

Christian Faith put to the Test



Everything hinges on honestly answering three questions.

*Dear Andrew,**

I am happy that you want to establish clarity about God, Jesus Christ and the Bible. I will gladly attempt to help by drawing your attention to a few fundamental facts.

Today, the youth and thinking people are occupying themselves more and more with the Bible. But they make one fine distinction. A moderator put it like this: "I don't have anything against God, but I do have a lot against His 'ground crew' – the church."

Today, many sense that there must be something about God after all. They ask: Could they find deeper meaning and purpose in life with Him? Contemporary people want to know the facts. They want to know what it will profit them. And I have to say: They are right.

The Christian faith hinges on honestly answer three questions: God, Jesus, Bible!

- 1. Does a living, all-knowing and all-powerful God exist, who loves humans?**
- 2. Is Jesus of Nazareth really the Redeemer sent by God?**
- 3. Was the Bible or Holy Scriptures really written by people under God's authority or is it merely a human product?**

There are very satisfactory answers to these fundamental questions.

I want to show you a way you can find the answers for yourself. It is better if you convince yourself than if I try to do that. Maybe you aren't acquainted yet with the method I am referring to.

The Bible contains many predictions. They are called prophecies. Hundreds of them have been fulfilled. We can acquaint ourselves with them and verify them. I am sure that you are acquainted with some of them. But maybe I can show you a new aspect now.

* Andrew, after the biblical Andrew in John 1,41.42

One group of predictions is called ‘messianic prophecies’, which refer to the first coming of Jesus about 2,000 years ago. ‘Messiah’ comes from Hebrew. We are more familiar with the Greek form: ‘Christus’. Translated it means: savior, redeemer, anointed, rescuer. This group of prophecies contains 333 details. We can discover them easily.

But what does this have to do with the answers to our three great questions? You will understand in a moment.

The apostle Peter said in the Bible in 2 Peter 1:21 (NIV):

“...prophets...spoke from God.”

To translate Peter: The Bible is based on divine revelation. If this is so, then Christian faith is from God, provided that it conforms with the Bible.

But how can we ascertain for ourselves if the Christian faith is from God?

Verify what the apostle Peter said. But how can you do that?

Compare the predictions of the prophets with events that took place later. The correlations show you that the predictions were true. At the same time, does it mean that the prophets got their information from God?

Exactly that is the crucial point.

No human can know things beforehand. We don't know what will happen tomorrow. Naturally, we can guess what will happen tomorrow. We also know what we want to do. Let's take the weather forecast as an example. Is this knowing something beforehand? No, it is a calculation of what the weather will be based on current factors. Because these factors are variable, the forecast is not always correct.

The predictions about Jesus were made by multiple prophets between 400 and 1,500 years before He came. These predictions contain precise details, which were exactly fulfilled. No human has such abilities – neither then nor today. But there is **SOMEONE**, who knows everything exactly beforehand. The Bible calls this someone **GOD**.

Think about our elections! Even on the morning of the elections no one knows beforehand

who is going to win. The projections are only a conclusion from a poll of certain people. These people are asked who they will vote for and then conclusions are drawn. This is a calculation, not a prediction.

God said through the prophet Isaiah in the Bible in chapter 46, verses 9 and 10:

“Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’”



The prophecies are the divine validation of the Bible. **NO ONE CAN IMITATE THAT.**

If you should find a book with similar prophecies to the ones in the Bible about Jesus Christ, which were given centuries before in detail, then you can get US \$ 5,000 from an American. As of yet, no one has found such a book.

These facts cannot be counterfeited by anyone, because science has since produced an abundance of evidence for this.

The further the sciences get, the more powerful the divinity of the prophecies and the Bible emerges. WHAT DOES THIS SHOW US?

1. There is someone who knows the future in every detail centuries beforehand. He is all-knowing. What He reveals, happens. Nobody can change it. This ONE is all-powerful. He has revealed Himself to us, because He loves us. You can also personally experience this.
2. The Bible writers were, however well meaning, incapable of making these predictions through contemplation or coincidence. Hence, the Bible can only be from God. There is no other possibility.
3. Every person can be distinguished from others through certain features. A letter from Japan reaches you, when the country, town, street, house number and your name are specified. The 333 details in the prophecies about Christ imply that God has endowed Jesus with as many features. Among all people these features apply to only one being – Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, we know that only He is the Redeemer sent by God.

First example:

In the Bible, in the Old Testament, from the prophet Micah, chapter 5, verse 2 (NKJV) it says:

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

The prophet Micah lived about 700 years before Christ. He indicates that a little-known village will be the birthplace. This prophecy was clearly understood. We can read about the fulfillment in the New Testament in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 2, verses 3-6 (NKJV):

“...Herod... inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ‘But you, Bethlehem... for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

A birthplace is indisputable. A few questions about this prophecy: Did Micah just make a good guess? Was the exact fulfillment 700 years later just a coincidence? Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth. They had to go to Bethlehem. Back then it would have been a four-day trip with a donkey or by foot. Why this great exertion just before having a baby? Caesar Augustus had commanded a census be taken.

Everyone had to go to the place of the origin of their lineage. This should have taken place earlier. But the Jews didn't want this census. They had sent a delegation to Rome. The emperor dismissed their objections. Hence, the census was delayed. The famous British chemist and archeologist, Sir William Ramsay, discovered a Roman inscription in 1923, which mentions this measure. Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem at exactly the right moment for Jesus' birth. A precise fulfillment.

This isn't something a person can guess. Also, a person can't know something like this 700 years beforehand. How did Micah know this? There is only one possibility:

“...prophets...spoke from God.”

Micah knew it from an all-knowing God. Can you think of another possibility? Can you prophesy where the man (or woman) will be born, who will govern Germany in 700 years? (...if the world still exists) Do you know of anyone else, who can give this kind of information, which will really come to pass? That was only one example. You can find many more yourself. When you read the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) in the New Testament, then you will frequently find similar expressions to the one in Matthew 2, verse 5:

“...for thus it is written by the prophet.”

Many Bibles also include a reference to the text in the Old Testament where the prophecy is. Bible translators added these so that we can more easily find the connections. Remember:

The messianic prophecies are always in the Old Testament and it was already completed 400 years before Christ. This means that all these prophecies were made at least 400 years beforehand. Under these circumstances, I think that it isn't important to know that Micah lived approximately 700 years before Christ, David about 1000 years before Christ, etc.

Since the New Testament was written after Jesus lived on this earth, you will find all the fulfillments of the prophecies there. If you don't have much time, then read at least the gospel of Matthew, which contains the most examples.

Here is a list of some more prophecies about Jesus:

- › He would come from the tribe of Judah.
- › He would be a descendant of David.
- › A herald would announce his coming.
- › He would die by crucifixion.
- › Lots would be cast for His clothes and then divided.
- › His bones would not be broken.
- › His side would be pierced.
- › His substitutionary death.

Every detail was fulfilled in His life, death and resurrection.

These are only a few of the 333 prophesied details.

**The only person to ever have their
life story written beforehand
is Jesus Christ.**

He was the greatest man to ever walk this earth.

Dr. Olinthus Gregory said that if only 50 prophecies had “coincidentally” been fulfilled (instead of hundreds), then this “coincidence” would be 1:1 trillion 125 billion. In numbers: 1:1,125,000,000,000,000

Whoever knows this, will never again speak of a coincidental fulfillment of biblical prophecies. Peter said:

“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed...” 2 Peter 1:19 NKJV

F. J. Meldau, who studied all of the messianic prophecies, said:

“A person is truly blind if they can't or don't want to see that the eternal Spirit planned all these details and the hand of the Omnipotent accomplished His perfect plan.”

The all-knowing God doesn't expect blind trust from us. He gave us good reasons to trust Him.

The opportunity to get to know prophecies, gives our faith a solid foundation to trust God, Jesus Christ and the Bible.

A summary for today::

1. There is a living, all-knowing and all-powerful God, who has revealed Himself among other ways through prophecies.
2. The Bible can only originate from God, since humans aren't capable of making prophecies like these in such detail centuries beforehand.
3. Jesus of Nazareth is the only one, who was verified through the unparalleled messianic prophecies as our Redeemer. We can and may trust Him completely.

Jesus Himself spoke about the purpose of prophecies:

"And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe."
John 14:29 NKJV

I am glad that you will think about these fundamental questions of biblical/Christian faith.

With warm greetings,

Helmut

May I recommend some other Letters to Andrew about prophecies to you?

Letter to Andrew 6:

What does the future hold?

- › The shortest world history was written 2,600 years ago. It shows us "what will be in the latter days".
- › Of the six predictions, five have already been fulfilled.
- › Will Europe achieve political unity? What is still to come?

Letter to Andrew 8:

Prophecies about Jesus Christ

- › Probability of fulfillment 1:10¹⁷
- › About the clothes of the crucified One: partially dividing them and partially lots were cast for them.
- › None of His bones were broken. The Roman soldiers ignored the command and did what had been foretold, without knowing it.
- › Betrayal for 30 pieces of silver along with eight other details.

Letter to Andrew 9:

Prophecies about four cities

- › which were literally fulfilled although the mathematical probability is 1:200 trillion.
 - The Golden Gate of Jerusalem
 - The strange rock city of Petra
 - The legendary Babylon
 - The rise and fall of Tyre.