

A Catholic Catechism
“Ye Shall Know The Truth”
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Lesson 6
CD 3, TRACK 2
(25:14)

Christ Foretold
(Line Up the Claimants)

Peace be to you.

Throughout the course of history, there have been many who have appeared upon its stage and declared that they came from God and were messengers of God.

At this stage of our inquiry, each and every one of them has a right to be heard. There is no reason why we should pick out Christ at this particular moment any more than anyone else. But we do, however, have a right to suggest *certain tests*, or standards by which each of these *claimants can be judged*. We cannot simply allow anyone to appear on the stage of history and say, *“Here I am; believe me,”* or, *“This is a book which an angel gave me. I want you to read it. It comes from God.”*

Test / Standard #1 - The argument of prophecy or prediction

When we start a discussion of *revealed religion*, we are never to abdicate **human reason**, nor are we ever to lose sight of the fact that we are in history. Therefore, one of the arguments that we will use might be called the *argument of prophecy*, or prediction; namely, has any one of the claimants ever been preannounced, or foretold? Certainly, the least that God could do if He sent a messenger to this earth is to say, ***“I preannounce Him. I am going to let you know He is coming.”*** Our friends do that, when they come to visit us. Appointments are made in business, and certainly God should let us know that His Messiah, Christ, or His Divine Son, is coming to the earth.

Many other world religions should also be examined

Now it might be argued that there are many other great world religions we should investigate them; that is true. But it must not be thought, that these world religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and the like are not in any way related to Christianity. There are many myths in history. There are many great men like Buddha and Confucius and Socrates, and so forth. It could very well be – we are not yet proving it – it could very well be, that each and every one of them is something like a – oh, like a bird that prepares a nest before the bird lays eggs. After all, the bird does not know, as you and I know, in anticipation of what it is going to do. It is governed solely by instinct. But as the bird prepares its nest for eggs, **so providence has prepared, in some way for the coming of a perfect revelation.**

Divine Truth

After all, *divine truth* might be looked upon as a **circle**. There is not a religion in the world, I care not what it is, even though it is one starting this afternoon in Los Angeles, or New York or Paris, that does not have some segment of the *circle of truth*. It may be only two percent, but at any rate it is part of the circle. Now some would have more degrees than others of this complete circle of truth. Some might have twenty degrees, fifty degrees, one hundred and fifty degrees, and so forth.

But that we **recognize what is good** in every single religion. And then, too, as we will suggest later on, some of them are yearning for a redeemer. Or it may be argued that there are likenesses in all religions; therefore, they are all very much the same.

It is true, first of all, that there are **natural truths** that are the same. This is bound to be simply because every human being in the world has reason. So he is bound to arrive also, at certain conclusions in the **ethical order**, which will guide both himself and society. We are, therefore, not to be surprised that many of the ethical principles are the same. But to argue that all religions have similarities and therefore the same cause, namely, the dreams of mankind, is quite untrue. When you go into a picture gallery, you will notice that every one of the paintings has certain basic colors. Simply because they have the same colors, you do not conclude that, therefore they were painted by the same artist. Simply because there are similarities in religions, we are not therefore to argue that therefore man made them all.

Revealed Truths - the subject of this discussion

Then, too, there are **truths that are above human reason**, namely, **revealed truths**, and this is the subject of this particular discussion, namely, God chose to make a **historical revelation**. When we are arguing that the one who came, Christ, as the founder of Christianity, **was preannounced**, we have to prove that.

There are other differences, too, which we might mention before we come to the argument of prophecy, namely, that the founder of no other religion is absolutely essential for that religion in the same way that Christ is essential for Christianity. True, the **founder** was necessary for the **founding**, but the believer in a particular religion does not enter into the **same kind of encounter as a Christian enters into an encounter with Christ. It is the personal relationship to Him which is decisive.** So Christ, therefore, occupies a different place in Christianity than Buddha does in **Buddhism**, and Confucius in Confucianism, Mohammed in Islamism, and even Moses in Judaism. Buddhism does not demand that you believe in Buddha, but that you become an **enlightened one**; that is, that you follow his teachings concerning the suppression of desires. **Confucianism** does not demand an intimate relationship with Confucius. What is important are the **ethical precepts**, and anyone who follows those precepts is presumed to enter into peace with his ancestors. **Moses** did not demand that men believe in him but that they put their **trust in the Lord God**. He was not pointing to himself. **Islamism** demands faith in God and the other four tenets, but not necessarily in Mohammed. But when you come to Christ, here **Christianity** demands a **personal intimate bond**. We have to be **one with Him**, and one with Him in a way in which we cannot in any way claim to be Christian unless we **reflect the Person, the Mind, the Will, the Heart and the humanity of Christ**.

The Argument for Prophecy is very simple:

The argument from prophecy is really very simple. Just ask yourself if any founder of a world religion or any innovator of a modern religion was ever preannounced. His own mother could not have preannounced five years before his birth, his exact birth. No one knew when **Buddha** was coming, or **Confucius**, or Mohammed. **But all through the centuries, there was some dim expectation that Christ Himself was coming.** It is in this that the argument of prophecy consists.

Now this prophecy argument involves two points. It involves **history**, and secondly, it **involves a person**. Christianity is a **historical** religion. Notice in the creed that whenever we speak of our Blessed Lord, we say that **He suffered under Pontius Pilate**. In other words, he's fixed at a very definite point in world history. No other founder of a world religion was ever so bound up with history as He was. We are not just concerned with the fact that He was born and suffered under Pontius Pilate but, rather, with the whole background of history.

Christianity, the historical religion

In the **Old Testament** - which we are not considering here as inspired but only a *record of document* - in the Old Testament we find that God seems to be making a **covenant**, a treaty, a pact, or a testament with humanity, a small group within humanity. We find this in the very beginning that **God has entered into a treaty or pact with Adam that involves all humanity**. Adam was the head. Whatever he did, we did. Then later on, **God enters into a testament and covenant with Noah**. In these testaments and covenants there are always promises and agreements on both sides. If one **party remained moral**, that was the human side; God on the divine side, would give them **blessings**.

Now, from the moment of the very first covenant and its breaking, God said that there would come **the Seed of a Woman, who would undo the work of evil**. Now this tradition is caught up not only among the Jews but particularly among the prophets. After the treaty with Noah, **God enters into a new treaty with Abraham**, whom He calls from the land of Ur. And He promises Abraham, *"I am going to make you the founder of a people who will be the people of God."* Through this people will come the Savior, the Redeemer and the conqueror of evil who was promised after the fall of Adam. Abraham was also told that the people of God would come from Him. First, Israel would be as numerous as the sands of the sea. Later on, these people are led into bondage in Egypt.

A new treaty, pact, covenant is made with Moses. They break it, it is renewed again, then finally there begin to **come now Prophets** and these prophets say that into this people of God there will one day come a Savior and a Redeemer. Here, now we speaking not just about a people that continue a tradition, who have an expectation of a Savior, but we are speaking now of many details that were given concerning that particular person. We will not go into all the prophecies that are mentioned. There are too many. You can readily get hold of a [book which will tell you about the many prophecies](#) that were made concerning our Blessed Lord. **For example,**

1. He would be a member of the tribe of Judah.
2. He would be born of a virgin.
3. And I think that one of the very astounding prophecies of Micah was that He would be born in the city of Bethlehem. If you were predicting the birth of someone who would be a kind of a great world politician, you would certainly choose a big city. Lo and behold, the prophet Micah, under divine inspiration, chooses the tiny little village of Bethlehem, which is called the least of the cities. And he says that out of that city will come forth the one who is to be the ruler of Israel.
4. And centuries, many centuries before His coming, it was foretold that He would be meek and humble of heart, that
5. He would be the suffering servant,
6. that He would be God as well as man,
7. and above all, He would **suffer**.

Isias 53, Prophecy of the Sufferings and Death of Christ

Sometime, pick up the Old Testament, turn to Chapter 53, and read there the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the death and the sufferings of Christ; that He would be reputed with the wicked, for example, in His death, which, indeed, He was because He was crucified between two thieves. That He would be laid in a stranger's grave, which, indeed He was. It almost seems as if the prophecies of Isaiah were written at the foot of the cross.

Other Prophecies:

Then take the many prophecies concerning Him as coming from the *royal line of David*. That meant, that for about a thousand years, there had to be a **male descendant** in every single descendant from David in order to have a fulfillment of a prophecy. Now that's very difficult. Take, for example, a great character like Abraham Lincoln. He had four children, but even in the short span of history since his death, there is not a single male descendant of Abraham Lincoln alive today. No one else ever made a prophecy about the founders of the world religions. It's only about Christ.

What are the Odds

A Jewish scholar who became a Christian and who knew very well the Old Testament and all the traditions of the Jews, said that at the time of Christ, rabbis had gathered together 456 prophecies concerning the Messiah, the Christ, the conqueror of evil, who was to be born of that long line of Israel and who was to enter into a new covenant with mankind. Four hundred and fifty six prophecies.

Suppose the chance of any one prophecy, like the place where He was to be born, was one in a hundred, that is to say, it had that chance to be fulfilled. Then if two prophecies were fulfilled, the chances would be one in a thousand. If three prophecies were to coincide in Christ, that would be one in ten thousand. If four, one in a hundred thousand. If five, one in a million.

Now if all of these prophecies were fulfilled in Christ, what would be the chance of them all concurring at the appointed moment not **only in place** but also **in time**, as was foretold by the prophet Daniel? Well, if you take a pencil and write on a sheet of paper one and draw a line beneath it and under the line write 84, and after 84, if you have time, write 126 zeros, that is the chance of all the prophecies of Christ being fulfilled. You see, it runs into **millions and trillions and trillions**.

There were others who prophesied of One that was to come.

And then, it was not only a question of the Jews foretelling that Christ was to come, there were many prophecies too that were not among the Jews but certainly the Jews, simply because they were in servitude to the other peoples of the world, had passed on their traditions. For example, **Confucius said** that he was expecting some great wise man from the East. **Buddha said** he was not the wise man; someone else was to come. The great **Plato said** that a just man was to come who would tell us how to conduct ourselves before God and man.

Christ came to bear the pangs of our sin

The Greek dramatist always felt there was some god to come, as Eschylus put it in his work "*Prometheus*": "*Look not for any end, moreover, to this curse, until some god appears to accept upon His head the pangs of our own sins.*" In other words, He would bear our sins. And, too, **Socrates** expected someone else, someone whom he called a **Just Man**. And **Virgil**, remember the Fourth Decalogue of Virgil? It has been sometimes called the *Messianic Decalogue* because he asked a virgin, "*Smile on thy infant boy by whom the Iron Age will pass away and the Golden Age will be born.*"

When Christ appeared, **He** said, "**I AM the one whom the prophets foretold.**" In other words, "**I AM not just coming here on the stage of history. You have heard of Me before.**" That is one of the reasons why, for example, Herod was not surprised that the Messiah was born. The rabbis told him. They knew the prophecies. He knew He was to be the King, the new **King of Mankind**.

Therefore, he wanted to kill Him. And then when our Blessed Lord had reached the age of about 30, and one day he walked into his synagogue in Nazareth, and the clerk of the synagogue handed Him, the village carpenter, the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, and He began to read off a passage of the prophecy of **Isaiah** about what the Savior, the Messiah, the Christ, would be like, namely, His meekness, His gentleness, how He would bind up wounds, how He would forgive, how He would release captives. The audience listened with rapt attention.

"This day is Sacred Scripture fulfilled in your ears"

Then He said, "*This day is sacred scripture fulfilled in your ears.*" In other words, "*I AM the Messiah, I am the Christ; I am the Savior of the World.*"

No one else can claim this background. **Christ alone we study**; to the others we say, "step aside." From now on my heart and soul will be absorbed in Him who was **preannounced**.

God love you.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

ANNOUNCED

332. "Angels have been present since creation and throughout the history of salvation, announcing this salvation from afar or near and serving the accomplishment of the divine plan: they closed the earthly paradise; protected Lot; saved Hagar and her child; stayed Abraham's hand; communicated the law by their ministry; led the People of God; **ANNOUNCED** births and callings; and assisted the prophets, just to cite a few examples.[Cf. Job 38:7 (where angels are called 'sons of God'); Gen 3:24; Gen 19; Gen 21: 17; Gen 22:11; Acts 7:53; Ex 23:20-23; Judge 13; Judge 6:11-24; Is 6:6; 1 Kings 19:5.] Finally, the angel Gabriel **ANNOUNCED** the birth of the Precursor and that of Jesus himself.[Cf. [Lk 1:11, 26](#) .]"

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/creator.html#ANGELS>

411. "The Christian tradition sees in this passage an announcement of the 'New Adam' who, because he 'became obedient unto death, even death on a cross', makes amends superabundantly for the disobedience, of Adam.[Cf. [1 Cor 15:21-22, 45](#) ; [Phil 2:8](#) ; [Rom 5:19-20](#) .] Furthermore many Fathers and Doctors of the Church have seen the woman **ANNOUNCED** in the 'Proto-evangelium' as Mary, the mother of Christ, the 'new Eve'. Mary benefited first of all and uniquely from Christ's victory over sin: she was preserved from all stain of original sin and by a special grace of God committed no sin of any kind during her whole earthly life.[Cf. Pius IX's Ineffabilis Deus: DS 2803; Council of Trent: DS 1573.]"

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/visible4.html#DEATH>

437. "To the shepherds, the angel **ANNOUNCED** the birth of Jesus as the Messiah promised to Israel: 'To you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.'[\[Lk 2:11](#) .] From the beginning he was 'the one whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world', conceived as 'holy' in Mary's virginal womb.[\[Jn 10:36](#) ; cf. [Lk 1:35](#) .] God called Joseph to 'take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit', so that Jesus, 'who is called Christ', should be born of Joseph's spouse into the messianic lineage of David.[\[Mt 1:20](#) ; cf. [Mt 1:16](#) ; [Rom 1:1](#) ; [2 Tim 2:8](#) ; [Rev 22:16](#).]"

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/creed1.html#CHRIST>

PROPHETS

64. "Through the **PROPHETS**, God forms his people in the hope of salvation, in the expectation of a new and everlasting Covenant intended for all, to be written on their hearts.[Cf. [Is 2:2-4](#) ; [Jer 31:31-34](#) ; [Heb 10:16](#) .] The **PROPHETS** proclaim a radical redemption of the People of God, purification from all their infidelities, a salvation which will include all the nations.[Cf. [Ezek 36](#) ; [Is 49:5-6](#) ; [Is 53:11](#) .] Above all, the poor and humble of the Lord will bear this hope. Such holy women as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Judith and Esther kept alive the hope of Israel's salvation. The purest figure among them is Mary.[Cf. [Ezek 2:3](#) ; [Lk 1:38](#) .]"

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/profess2.html#Israel>

72. "God chose Abraham and made a covenant with him and his descendants. By the covenant God formed his people and revealed his law to them through Moses. Through the **PROPHETS**, he prepared them to accept the salvation destined for all humanity. "

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/profess3.html#further>

75. "'Christ the Lord, in whom the entire Revelation of the most high God is summed up, commanded the apostles to preach the Gospel, which had been promised beforehand by the **PROPHETS**, and which he fulfilled in his own person and promulgated with his own lips. In preaching the Gospel, they were to communicate the gifts of God to all men. This Gospel was to be the source of all saving truth and moral discipline.'[\[DV 7](#) ; cf. [Mt 28:19-20](#) ; [Mk 16:15](#) .]"

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/profess3.html#TRANSMISSION>

436. "The word 'Christ' comes from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Messiah, which means 'anointed'. It became the name proper to Jesus only because he accomplished perfectly the divine mission that 'Christ' signifies. In effect, in Israel

those consecrated to God for a mission that he gave were anointed in his name. This was the case for kings, for priests and, in rare instances, for **PROPHETS**. [Cf. [Ex 29:7](#) ; [Lev 8:12](#); [1 Sam 9:16](#) ; [1 Sam 10:1](#) ; [1 Sam 16:1, 12-13](#) ; [1 Kings 1:39](#) ; [1 Kings 19:16](#) .] This had to be the case all the more so for the Messiah whom God would send to inaugurate his kingdom definitively. [Cf. [Ps 2:2](#) ; [Acts 4:26-27](#) .] It was necessary that the Messiah be anointed by the Spirit of the Lord at once as king and priest, and also as prophet. [Cf. [Is 11:2](#) ; [Is 61:1](#) ; [Zech 4:14](#) ; [Zech 6:13](#) ; [Lk 4:16-21](#) .] Jesus fulfilled the messianic hope of Israel in his threefold office of priest, prophet and king."

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/creed1.html#CHRIST>

522. "The coming of God's Son to earth is an event of such immensity that God willed to prepare for it over centuries. He makes everything converge on Christ: all the rituals and sacrifices, figures and symbols of the 'First Covenant'. [[Heb 9:15](#) .] He announces him through the mouths of the **PROPHETS** who succeeded one another in Israel. Moreover, he awakens in the hearts of the pagans a dim expectation of this coming."

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/creed4.html#HIDDEN>

523. "St. John the Baptist is the Lord's immediate precursor or forerunner, sent to prepare his way. [Cf. [Acts 13:24](#) ; [Mt 3:3](#) .] 'Prophet of the Most High', John surpasses all the **PROPHETS**, of whom he is the last. [[Lk 1:76](#) ; cf. [Lk 7:26](#) ; [Mt 11:13](#) .] He inaugurates the Gospel, already from his mother's womb welcomes the coming of Christ, and rejoices in being 'the friend of the bridegroom', whom he points out as 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world'. [[Jn 1 29](#) ; cf. [Acts 1:22](#) ; [Lk 1:41](#) ; [Lk 16:16](#) ; [Jn 3:29](#) .] Going before Jesus 'in the spirit and power of Elijah', John bears witness to Christ in his preaching, by his Baptism of conversion, and through his martyrdom. [[Lk 1:17](#) ; cf. [Mk 6:17-29](#) .]"

To view the context, please visit <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/creed4.html#HIDDEN>