
What Child is This?
The Prophecies of Christ
December 16, 2012

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Overview

We have all read the Christmas story in the New Testament as found in Luke 1&2. However, did you know that the story was foretold in the Old Testament? There are over forty-four prophecies that were foretold about Christ in the Old Testament. Why is this significant and what is so significant about the accounts of the Nativity as told in the New Testament?

Today, we will see how the timing of the birth of Christ along with the prophecies that foretold His birth can only be the work of God. This child, without any doubt, is the Son of God. God's timing and His plans are always perfect.

The Messianic Prophecies – God's Word is Always Fulfilled

Let's begin with the Christmas Story as found in Luke 1 and 2.

Luke 1:26-28

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a (1) virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, (2) a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He (3) will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. (4) The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and (5) he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; (6) his kingdom will never end."

34 “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, (1) “since I am a virgin?”

35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born (3) will be called the Son of God.

[Notes and emphasis added by the author for illustration purposes]

There are several Messianic prophecies in these first couple of passages.

(1) Born of a Virgin (v. 27 & 34)

Isaiah 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

(2) A descendant of David (v.27)

2 Samuel 7:12

When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom.

Isaiah 11:1

**11 Out of the stump of David’s family will grow a shoot—
yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root.**

(3) Son of God (v. 32 & 36)

Psalm 2:7

I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father.

(4) Will Sit on David's Throne (v. 32)

Isaiah 9:7

Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

(5) Reign over Jacob's Descendants (v. 33)

Numbers 24:17

"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the people of Sheth.

(6) His Kingdom will Never End (v. 33)

Psalms 45:6

Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

Daniel 2:44

"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

Luke 2:1-7 (NIV)

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

The Messiah will come from the tribe of Judea

Genesis 49:10

The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.

The Messiah will come from the region of Galilee

Isaiah 9:1-2

9 Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali will be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when Galilee of the Gentiles, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory.

***2 The people who walk in darkness
will see a great light.***

***For those who live in a land of deep darkness,
a light will shine.***

The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem

Micah 5:2 (NIV)

***“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.” (Micah 5:2)***

2. He will come from the lineage of David

2 Samuel 7:12-13

12 When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Isaiah 9:7

***Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David’s throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.***

God's Perfect Timing

“Greek and Roman contributions aided in bringing historical development to the point where Christ could make the maximum impact on history in a way not possible before or since the time of His birth. The Romans, as no other people up to their time, developed a sense of the unity of mankind under a universal law. This sense of the solidarity of man within the empire created an environment favorable to the reception of a gospel that proclaimed the unity of the human race in the fact that all men are under the penalty of sin and in the fact that all are offered a salvation that makes them a part of a universal organism, the Christian church, Christ's body” Cairns (2009)¹.

“Because the Roman Empire included all the Mediterranean world that counted in the history of that day, for all practical purposes, all men were under one system of law and citizens of one kingdom”.

Preparedness for Evangelism

The Romans developed an excellent system of roads radiating out from the golden milestone in the Roman forum to all parts of the empire. The main roads were built to serve for ages. They went straight over hill and dale to the farthest point of the empire. A study of the journeys of Paul indicates that he made great use of the excellent road system to get from strategic center to strategic center of the Roman Empire. Roman roads and strategic cities located on these roads were an indispensable aid in the realization of Paul's mission. Cairns (2009).

As you can see, God's timing in coming in the form of a man was at the perfect and precise time for carrying the message of love and redemption to the ends of the earth.

Whenever you are waiting for prayers to be answered, remember that God's timing is always precise. Stay patient and trust.

Psalm 5:3 Says

¹ Cairns, Earle E. (2009-09-13). Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church (Kindle Locations 553-557). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

***In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice;
in the morning I lay my requests before you
and wait expectantly.***

Conclusion

The precision of the prophecies foretold of Jesus Christ could not be more precise. The timing of the birth of Christ could not be at a more perfect time.

When we remember that God's timing and his plans are always perfect, we should live in confidence and in patience knowing that God is in control and we are to walk in faith and know that our prayers will be answered in the same precision as the birth of our Savior.