

His Time

Introduction

There is only one story in the Bible....The entire book is about the coming of, the arrival of, and the return of the Messiah....The Promised One....Jesus Christ.

I realize that this has been an unusual Christmas Series. Not so much focused on the events of the night Jesus was born, but rather on His overall mission.

God wanted to make sure that the greatest event in all of human history would not be missed. He gave clues throughout all of the Old Testament. Those who were searching found them and Him. Those who were not didn't.

As I have been studying and thinking about this series, what has struck me is just how much God truly loves us. That may sound cliché, but He didn't want us to miss Him.

I think about how in every aspect of our salvation and our relationship with Him...He does everything. All we have to do is to be open to Him....just a little bit.

Now you may be looking at these clues and thinking I would have missed Him. They seem vague. They seem hidden almost....like a riddle.

In this series, we are looking at the promises that pointed to the arrival of Jesus. We looked at His genealogy last week....

The reason that you feel that way is because they were. They were there not for those smart enough to find them, but those willing to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal them.

These prophecies were well known to the Scribes and Priests and they were responsible for teaching the people.

At the time of Jesus' birth it was known that the Messiah was due to arrive and that He would be born in the family of Solomon....It wasn't some incredible secret.

Much as always, it was obvious to those who were willing to believe and to those who were closed to God, it was hidden.

But God loves us so much that He announced His arrival...gave very specific clues....and didn't want those who were open to Him to miss Him.

So these aren't just hidden clues...they are love notes from God. ...Im coming...get ready...I can't wait to be in relationship with you again.

Last week we covered 9 prophecies....they were all about genealogy. Not the most exciting but very specific. We started with anyone could be the Messiah....and now we have narrowed it down a bit.

God tells us"He will be a Man..(human not angel) .Semitic....Abraham....Not from Ishmael but rather Isaac...Not from Esau but rather Jacob...Of all the 12 tribes....God says keep your eye on the tribe of Judah....Of all the families of the tribe of Judah...keep focused on the branch of Jesse....Of Jesse's sons watch the youngest one David.....And of all of David's sons keep your eye on Solomon.

Let me pause here and answer a question that has come up....We reviewed Matthew and traced the Genealogy of Jesus through Joseph. Why trace that if Joseph was not the birth father of Jesus? How could Jesus fulfill that lineage? Answer....through His adoptive status Jesus had the same rights as if He was firstborn. Many did not believe the virgin birth story and presumed Joseph must have been the biological father. But we know the truth...Jesus was born of a virgin. He was adopted into Joseph's family and lineage. But in case there is any confusion....God decided to give us a second Genealogy....In Luke 3.

We just learned that the Messiah would come through Solomon, David's Son. But the Genealogy in Luke doesn't include Solomon. It says Nathan...David and Bathsheba's Son. How can that be?

Luke 3:23 (ESV) 23 Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,

We know from the Jewish Talmud that Heli was the Father of Mary....So Luke documents Mary's Genealogy

What Luke is telling us is that because the paternal line is in question, the child's lineage was considered from the maternal line.

These are different because Matthew knew the Jews would trace Jesus through the Father Joseph. And Gentiles, Luke knew, would be more interested in the maternal line of Mary.

Luke followed Mary's line (Jesus' human lineage) while Matthew followed Joseph's line (His *legal* lineage by adoption). This was Luke's point in his important phrase "**being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph.**"

Matthew was writing to Jews....to Prove that Jesus was in the legal line of David by Adoption through Joseph. Jews were only interested in the Father's Line and the child's legal status. Adoptive status had the same rights as firstborn and everyone supposed he was the Father...Hard to believe that virgin birth story anyway.

Luke however was writing to Gentiles and Greeks. He was emphasizing the Humanity of Christ. Jesus was fully God and fully Man.... Fully God- Being Born of the Holy Spirit and Fully Man- being Born of Mary. Gentiles and Greeks focused on His humanity. So Luke naturally traced the genealogy of Jesus through Mary. Greeks would have been more interested in the human

lineage of the Promised 1 because they didn't know the Jewish Scriptures or the promises in prophecy. They wanted to know the source of His true Humanity.

It was customary in genealogies to not ever mention the women. So Luke does not. We would have mentioned Mary the mother of Jesus, but Luke would never do that.

So Two Genealogies define Christ. One is the Legal One as the Adopted Son of Joseph and the other is the Human one as the born of flesh child of Mary.

When you think about it, Jesus was fully man and fully God. Jesus came as the Messiah for everyone. And God was gracious enough to meet the needs of both. His Paternal Genealogy through Joseph for the Jews and His Maternal Genealogy through Mary for the Greeks and Gentiles.

So let's move from Genealogy to some other specifics.....The Holy Spirit is narrowing down the possibilities for us. He is beginning to zero in on a single person

So when we left off, any descendant of Solomon could be the Messiah. So God continues to reveal the mystery...to point us to the Promised One. We still have other clues to find... 1. Where would the Messiah come from? 2. What signs will signal His arrival? 3. When would He come?

10. The Promised 1 must be born of a virgin

That should narrow it down. This promise comes from God through Isaiah.

Isaiah 7:14 (ESV) 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

This is a critical non negotiable doctrine of our faith. If Jesus was born of a man....He would have been born into our sinful nature. Just like us. He would have been born an enemy of God and a follower of Satan. He would have been destined to death until the punishment for human sins. He could not have lived a perfect life because no one in the flesh could do that.

He had to be man, but He had to be born of God. His nature had to be pure and spiritual because His body was sinful and human.

This one man claimed to be born of the Holy Spirit. He was God's Son. He claimed to be from Heaven, claimed to be God....and did only what God could do. If He had not been born of the Holy Spirit....His conception and birth would not have been miraculous. He could not have lived a sin free life....He could not have been the perfect sacrifice for our sins. He would not have been God...and could not have saved us. Take the virgin birth away....we are helplessly lost in our sins. The virgin birth is a non-negotiable core essential doctrine of Christianity.

But that hasn't kept people from trying to discredit that truth.

They can't embrace the supernatural miracle of God because they cannot explain it or replicate it. They come from a mindset that says...if we can't explain it..it didn't happen. Interesting.....they discredit all things supernatural or miraculous so they don't have to worry about dealing with the possibility of a real God who does real miracles. So this time of year...The History Channel will parade out what they call Bible Scholars....

They will tell you that this passage has nothing to do with the Promised 1. They make two arguments..... 1. That this text has nothing to do with the Messiah 2. Virgin didn't mean sexual virgin but rather young woman.

First they argue that God is speaking here to King Ahaz. That the promise in Isaiah is made just to him. That a young woman will have a child....They further argue that this text has nothing to do with a Messiah. I can't go into all of this today.... But they ignore the text....They leave out....that this text is proceeded with "Oh Hear House of David" There is a verb tense change from singular to plural. It is not addressed to the singular Ahaz but rather the entire nation of Israel...plural...It is a Messianic prophecy for all of us.

They argue that the word "Alma" or virgin means young woman. Not a sexual virgin.

So how can we be so sure that this word in this passage means virgin?

Three reasons.....

1. Matthew said so...

Matthew 1:22–23 (ESV) 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

When Matthew translated this word from the Hebrew of the OT to the Greek of the NT...Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Matthew translated the Hebrew word Alma to the Greek word Parthenos...So what? This is a big deal. In Greek Parthenos always means sexual virgin 100% of the time. They had several other more commonly used words for young woman and Matthew did not choose them.

2. Those who lived in that time said so.

The Septuagint (SEP TU A GINT) A Greek translation of the Old Testament.....The Jewish Scriptures.....Created 200 years before the Birth of Christ.... So this passage was translated from Hebrew to Greek 2 centuries before Christ had been born. How did the SEP TU A GINT translate the word Alma? Guess what Greek word they used...parthenos...sexual virgin

Those closest in time....recognized this text to mean that Messiah would be born from a virgin. A woman....sexually pure....The Promised 1 would have a virgin birth...It wasn't even in question until it happened.

3. Isaiah said, "The Lord Himself will give you a sign.... virgin will give birth,"

That is a sign....from God. A woman of marriageable age having a child...not much of a sign. A child born miraculously....from a virgin....THATCould only come from God.

God gave us clues so we could not be misled. It is important that we are well versed in Scripture The virgin shall conceive and bear a son...Named Immanuel....God with us. It is our 10th clue and it is a doozy. Ask every potential Messiah...were you born of a virgin?...This significantly reduces the field to one person. Someone who is not naturally conceived.....but supernaturally...We know where....Bethlehem...We know the sign...virgin birth. WHEN will it happen?

11. The Promised 1 must be born in Bethlehem...In Judea

Within Judah there are many cities....God is going to narrow it down to just one.

Micah 5:2 (ESV) 2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah EPHRA-TAH, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

Bethlehem Ephrathah? It hasn't really been called that before....why did God say this? Did you know that there are two Bethlehem's in Israel? One is in the Northern part of Galilee and this one is Judah...Judah Ephrathah.

This Prophecy was written 700 years in advance of it happening Look at all of the cities of Judah...The Messiah is going to come from a little city named Bethlehem....the one near Jerusalem. You would expect the Messiah to come from Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the most prominent Jewish city. It hosts the house of God the Temple and its name means the place of Peace. Bethlehem is about 2 miles south of Jerusalem...a non city....where nothing happens except they bake bread. Bethlehem means "City of Bread" a good place for the Bread of Life....sent down from heaven...to be born.

Micah 5:2 (ESV) 2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah EPHRA-TAH, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

Note that this prophecy mentions a Ruler In Israel...Not just any ruler.....One who is coming forth from ancient days. There is coming an eternal ruler....one that has come from ancient days...Ancient of Days? That would have immediately reminded them of Daniel's Prophecy written 500 years prior.

Daniel 7:9–10 (ESV) 9 "As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. 10 A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

The Ancient of Days...God on His Throne...and David uses the term again to point to our future.

Daniel 7:20–22 (ESV) 21 As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, 22 until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.

12. Shepherds would bow down before Him.

Psalms 72:9 (ESV) 9 May desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust!

Desert tribes....are always Shepherds. They are wanderers. They must keep moving to feed the sheep.

Luke 2:10–12 (ESV) 10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

Remember that one sign for us was the virgin birth. Now the Angels announce the arrival of the Messiah with another sign. This will be a sign for you...a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in a manger. That sounds normal to us...we hear it every Christmas.

Have you ever thought about how odd that must have sounded to them. ...A baby lying in a pig trough...For all they knew...this baby had been dropped off and abandoned. Sounds crazy.. but if true that would be a sign.

Luke 2:15–20 (ESV) 15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. 17 And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Why did the angel mention swaddling cloths? Why mention that? Why repeat it? Why is that fact so important?

Swaddling cloths showed a mother who loved...Who cared for her child...it was customary to wash new babies with water...then wash them in salt water, cleanse them and wrap them in strips of cloth...swaddling cloths.

This fact told the Shepherds that this was likely a new born child. But more importantly. But the Prophet Ezekiel in a very well known passage, told those in Jerusalem Israel that they were not received by God.

Ezekiel 16:1–4 (ESV) 1 Again the word of the Lord came to me: 2 "Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations, 3 and say, Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth are of the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. 4 And as for your birth, on the day you were born your cord

was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor rubbed with salt, nor wrapped in swaddling cloths.

Jerusalem/ the Nation of Israel had rejected God. They were born to cursed pagans, never separated from them and as a result were not welcomed and cared for. They were left exposed, unprotected and shamed. So when the Messiah comes...When God presents Himself this time....His lineage is clear. His lineage is pure. He is wrapped...He is protected...He is loved.

The only other time the term swaddling cloths is mentioned in Scripture is here in Matthew and in Ezekiel. It is not a coincidence and Luke even repeats the term to make sure the connection is made.

Jesus is symbolically received...wrapped in swaddling cloths.

13. There Would be a Presentation of Gifts to Him by Kings from Persia

Psalms 72:10–11 (ESV) 10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! 11 May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him!

A few years later, the wise men would stir up Jerusalem looking for this Promised One. And Herod would ask his scribes....Where will the Messiah be born?

Matthew 2:3–6 (ESV) 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea,

Again, not Bethlehem of Galilee.

So Abraham...Isaac...Jacob.... David...Solomon.... And now....the Promised 1 will be born...in a little town of Bethlehem The one in Judea. So we know where....How would He be born?

14. Great Sorrow will surround the Time of His Birth and Many Children Would be Killed

The prophet Jeremiah spoke of the destruction of the cities during the Babylonian destruction in Judea. That prophecy had a fulfillment soon thereafter, but it also foreshadowed the birth of Christ.

Jeremiah 31:15 (ESV) 15 Thus says the Lord: "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more."

Matthew 2:16–18 (ESV) 16 Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.

Matthew tells us that Jeremiah spoke of this

Matthew 2:16–18 (ESV) 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

15. The Child would be Called to Escape to Egypt

Hosea 11:1 (ESV) 1 When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

This prophecy would have puzzled them. The Egyptians were not Semitic...certainly not from the tribe of Judah. How would His Son come out of Egypt and be from Galilee?

Matthew 2:13–15 (ESV) 13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." 14 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

God sent a very young Jesus to Egypt to avoid being murdered by Herod. When Herod died He returned. The Messiah came out of Egypt just as God said He would.

Now there is another prophecy that I will introduce here and pick up again as we approach Easter in a few months. I want to cover it because in an odd way, it is a prophecy that relates to Christmas.

The people who knew the prophecies knew that the Messiah would likely be on earth soon. Just like today, we have a sense that if the AntiChrist isn't here already, he will be here very soon. The Prophecies are too specific.

They knew that the Messiah would not show up initially as a full grown Man. He wouldn't just walk into the room like the angels did. Isaiah said he would be born. They said He would be born in Bethlehem. He was coming into the world like almost all other human beings. They expected His birth and the announcement of the King at any time. If he was going to be an adult when He becomes the Savior, then He had to be born soon...in Bethlehem. Why? That is our next prophecy....

16. The Promised One would arrive at the Temple in Jerusalem in 33 AD. He would be presented to Israel.

Wait a minute. Did you say He had to present Himself to the Temple in 33AD? That is pretty specific. How did they know that?

I told you they would get specific. I told you last week that He would present Himself to Israel and be cut off. It is called the Prophecy of 70 Weeks...Found in Daniel 9. This is the most specific prophecy in the Bible related to the timing of the coming of the Messiah

This is going to take a bit of math...but it is ok If math is not your thing don't gloss over here...this will just take a minute....and we are going to do it together.

Daniel 9:25–26 (ESV) 25 Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. 26 And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing..

Decree...then 7 "7's" or 49 Years....then 62 "7's"...From the Decree to rebuild and restore Jerusalem to the Anointed 1 being killed is 69 "7s" That there would be 483 Years until the Promised 1 is cut off or killed

King Artaxerxes issued that decree in Nehemiah in 444 BC. 69 "7's" is 483 years. But they used a 360 day calendar and we use a 365.24 day calendar. So let's count days.....173,880 days In our year (365.24 days) Equals 476 years So 444 BC is the zero year. Year one is 445 BC + 476 Years= 33 AD..

The Messiah will present Himself to His Temple in 33AD. 69 Weeks from the decree.

The prophecies are even more specific than that...but we will get into those at Easter.

For now, just know that they were expecting Him.

There was a lot of anticipation.

17. Christ Would be Filled with Power, Peace, and the Spirit from Birth

Isaiah 9:6–7 (ESV) 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Note that this prophecy does not say....He will call Himself....people will say these things of Him.

Only one man....ever born in all of human history was called these 4 things: Wonderful Counselor....Mighty God....Everlasting Father....Prince of Peace...

Only one man ever born....sits over the Throne of David for all of eternity...with justice and righteousness.

From the moment of the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden....God had been planning the arrival of His Son....the Messiah. He prepared every detail. The Scriptures tell us in the fullness of time Jesus was born. Many in the world were expecting Him.

God did everything He could do to foreshadow His arrival. Every story in the Old Testament points to the Messiah. All the prophecies....all the teachers of the law...all the prophets...they all spoke of Him.

We have heard from Jeremiah, Isaiah, Micah, Daniel, Hosea, Nehemiah, Samuel and Several Psalmists. We have heard from the writer of Deuteronomy, Chronicles, and Numbers.

That comes from just reviewing 17 prophecies.

No other human ever born could fulfill these 17 prophecies related to His birth. Jesus would fulfill over 300 more in His lifetime. You can't study this book with an open mind and miss Him. It is truly impossible.

God only promised one...One Messiah. He made sure that those who cared enough to study the Promises of God would know Him. He wanted to make sure that when people...like us...looked back..it would be obvious who the Messiah was. He loves us so much that He wanted to make sure those who were looking found Him. And he does the same thing today.

The Promised One....The Savior of the World....will be a Man...Semitic.... Abraham....Not from Ishmael but rather Isaac...Not from Esau but rather Jacob...Of all the 12 tribes....God says keep your eye on the tribe of Judah.....Of all the families of the tribe of Judah...keep focused on the branch of Jesse....Of Jesse's sons watch the youngest one David.....And of all of David's sons keep your eye on Solomon.

He will be the one from Solomon's line that is born of a sexual virgin.....in Bethlehem...not the Bethlehem in Galilee but the one in Judea....Shepherds will bow and worship Him....You will find Him is wrapped in love in swaddling cloths...Kings of Persia will bring Him gifts...specifically gold and frankincense.

Children will die and mothers will wail around the time of His birth....He will come out of Egypt....He will arrive at the temple to be examined on Palm Sunday 33 AD....and people will call Him Wonderful Counselor....Mighty God...Everlasting Father....and Prince of Peace

If those are not specific enough for you....God gave another 339 that Jesus fulfilled in his earthly mission to make sure there is zero doubt. 28 on the Day of His crucifixion alone.

God clearly identified Jesus as the Messiah. That is why He is the only way to the Father. We will pick that idea up again when we have our Christmas Eve Service this Friday.