

A Journey with Christ the Messiah

The Birth of the Messiah

Luke 2:4-20, Luke 3:23-38, Matt. 1:1-25

This morning we are continuing a new series that I have entitled *A Journey with Christ the Messiah*. This series, Lord willing, will continue through the Easter season. It is my goal to go both through the old and the new testaments and discover **Christ the Messiah** that is written there. We will explore the old testament prophecies concerning Him and the fulfillment of those prophecies in the new testament. We will look at His birth, His character, His teachings, His miracles, His prophecies, supernatural events that fulfilled prophecy, and most importantly, His death, burial, and resurrection from the dead and the significance of those events.

Through this journey, our goal will be to fully understand that Jesus WAS Who He claimed to be, the Messiah, the Son of God and the Son of man. During this journey we will also fully understand that the Bible HAS to be the inspired Word of God.

Most of us have probably heard the story of the birth of Jesus, but what some may not realize is that His birth, right down to the last detail, was a fulfillment of hundreds of Old Testament prophecies. These prophecies were written between 1450 BC and 430 BC. Manuscripts have been found to prove they were written at least 400 - 1000 years before He was born.

It would be difficult enough to predict something 5 years ago, let alone 4-15 centuries ago, especially with the degree of detail of these prophecies and with 100% accuracy. It would also be impossible for someone to plan to fulfill all the prophecies. The prophecies speak of specific events including timing, location, and circumstances of birth. Who but God alone could plan such things?

This morning we are going to look at the birth of Jesus and some of the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled during that part of His life that prove that He was the promised Messiah of the Old Testament.

Matthew starts his gospel by presenting the genealogy of Jesus and a description of the conception and birth of Jesus. Luke records the actual events that happened at Christ's birth followed by a genealogy of Jesus.

The genealogies are from different perspectives. Matthew records the genealogy of Joseph. Luke records the genealogy of Mary. Both were descendants of David. Joseph's descendants came through David's son Solomon. Mary's descendants came through David's son Nathan. We will explore the significance of each of these genealogies later in this message.

We will be reading from Luke's account of Christ's birth as our scripture passage this morning. But we will also examine also how each of the genealogies and Matthew's account point to Jesus as the Messiah.

Let's continue the journey!

All Stand and Read Scripture

Luke 2:4-20 (NASB)

⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, ⁵ in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. ⁶ While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸ In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹ for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² This *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

¹⁵ When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

As we prepare to continue this journey, let's bow in a word of prayer.

Prayer

Father, we are overwhelmed that you sent your Son to be born on Christmas Day in a lowly manger over 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem. We continue to be amazed at the depth and detail to which you go to show us your truth. We thank you, Father, that you made it so abundantly clear that Jesus was in fact fulfilling every specific prophesy required to be the Messiah. He came as our King, Redeemer, and Savior. We believe that He came to seek and to save that which was lost and we thank you for our salvation! Help us to fully commit our lives to Him through faith.

I pray that for every soul here will know this Messiah. Your only Son that you sent on Christmas day. We especially thank you that you were willing to let Him die on the cross to save us from our sins and make us righteous before you. We thank you for your blessings and the assurance of an eternity in Heaven in the glory of your presence.

Thank you again for your Word and the great truth revealed there. May the Holy Spirit reveal to us the truths that are hidden in these pages in order that our faith may be strengthened and our testimony may be stronger. We give **you** all the glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

I. THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS THE MESSIAH.

This morning we are going to look at the two genealogies from Matthew 1 and Luke 3.

Genealogies. Who likes genealogies? Is anyone here tracing their genealogy? You know, tracing one's genealogy has become quite popular.

Many of you may consider that genealogical lists are very boring! Tell me, honestly, what do you do, when reading the Bible, and you meet a genealogical list? Do you read it attentively? Or do you read it quickly? Or do you not read it at all and skip the section entirely?

Despite the fact that we may find genealogical lists boring, God placed them in the Bible for a reason. Therefore, we need to read these lists carefully – these lists which God places in the pages of the Bible. God placed them there, so that we should learn something from them.

Matthew and Luke are using these genealogies to prove that Jesus was from the lineage of David and thus fulfilling prophecy that He is the Messiah.

Genealogy was more important for the Jews than it is for us. For those of us who have had our genealogies traced, we find it interesting, because we can learn where we came from, what our ancestors did and so on. But for the Jews, their genealogy was more important than just finding bits of interesting information. Their whole identity as a people was tied up in their genealogy. Remember, that in the time before Christ came, only the Jews were the people of God. Therefore, for a Jew, his genealogy was important, because his genealogy proved that he was a real Jew, and therefore, a member of the people of God. Also, the genealogies of some people were more important than for others. For example, priests. In order to become a priest, a person had to prove from his genealogy that he was not only a real Jew, but also a Levite – and one descended from Aaron!

At the time of Jesus' birth, Israel was not an independent country. Israel was a part of the Roman Empire. The Jews did not like this situation and wanted to become independent.

They waited for the Messiah, who, they thought, would save them from oppression and who would rule them with justice. Their hope was that this Messiah would lead them into a golden era of peace and prosperity.

But, not just anyone could become the Messiah. Only a descendent of Abraham and his son Isaac as well as King David could be the Messiah. And David, like all the kings after him, was descended from Judah, one of Jacob's sons. Additionally, in **2 Samuel 7**, the prophet Nathan prophesied to David, that his descendents would always rule Israel.

The church of the New Testament claimed that Jesus was the Messiah. Therefore Matthew needed to show the genealogy of Jesus, in order to prove that Jesus really was

the Messiah. Matthew and Luke both show genealogies that clearly shows that He was descended from Abraham and David and that He was in the royal line.

But Mathew adds a twist to the genealogy in verse 18.

Matthew 1:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

In this verse it says that Jesus was born from Mary, who was the wife of Joseph. But, notice, that Jesus was not born from Joseph! When Mary fell pregnant, she was a virgin. In verse 18 it says that Mary became pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Jesus did not have a human father!

Luke gives the genealogy of Mary back to Adam to show that not only did Jesus have the lineage from David through Joseph, but He also had a TRUE lineage from David through Mary. He was from the seed of Mary, not of Joseph! He was only a son of Joseph based upon Jewish law. It shows that the spiritual genealogy was actually more important than the physical genealogy because through Mary He did not inherit the sinful nature of man.

II. MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Matthew tells us that Jesus WAS born of a virgin as prophesied in Isaiah 7:14.

Isaiah 7:14.

Matthew 1:18, 22-25 (NASB)

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US." ²⁴ And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife, ²⁵ but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

Christ was worshipped and presented gifts by kings as prophesied in Psalm 72:10

Psalm 72:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.

Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11 (NASB)

² Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ² "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him."

⁹ After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over *the place* where the Child was.

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹ After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

There was weeping for the children who were killed by Herod.

Jeremiah 31:15 (NASB)

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 (NASB)

¹⁶ Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi.

Joseph and Mary fled Egypt with Jesus.

Hosea 11:1

Matthew 2:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord *appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him."

¹⁴ So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt.

Isn't it amazing how many details were prophesied concerning Jesus!

III. LUKE'S ACCOUNT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Here are some accounts that were prophesied from Luke.

Micah 5:2 stated that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem:

Luke 2:4-7 (NASB)

⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, ⁵ in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. ⁶ While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Psalms 72:9 stated that Jesus would be worshipped by Shepherds:

Luke 2:15-16 (NASB)

¹⁵ When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.

Psalms 2:7 states that He is the Son of God:

Luke 3:21-22 (NASB)

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form

like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

CONCLUSION:

These are only a few of the prophecies concerning the birth of Jesus. There are so many prophecies that the probability of someone fulfilling them all is impossible in human terms. It would be impossible for someone to choose or decide to fulfill them. How could someone decide in what family to be born? How could they plan to be born in Bethlehem even though the family they chose lived in Galilee? This could have only been God. He was able because:

A few things to think about. Did you know that it would be impossible for anyone today to be the true Messiah? There are many prophecies that can no longer be fulfilled. Just a few:

There are no Jews alive today that can prove that they are of the lineage of David. According to the first century historian Josephus Flavius, soldiers of Titus, during the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD set on fire the repository of the archives that housed the genealogical records of tribal and family descent. The Jews were dispersed all over the Roman Empire. Millions of them were even put in the gas chambers during the Holocaust.

Daniel 9:26 states that Jesus would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Roman general Titus in A.D. 70, thirty-eight years after Jesus Christ was crucified.

According to Daniel 9:25, the Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Nehemiah chapters 2-6 tell of the rebuilding of the temple during the reign of **Artaxerxes (Art Zerxes)** the fifth **King** of Persia from 465 BC to 424 BC. The gospels tell of Messiah's announcement to the people during the triumphal entry into Jerusalem precisely at that time.

How detailed and accurate is the Word of God! Jesus described how this is not a problem with God when He explained to the Jews how it was possible for Him to have seen Abraham.

John 8:58 (NASB)

⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

The Godhead is not bound by time and space. To them everything is as present time to us. They can see the prophecy being given and written down as well as being fulfilled at the same time. In other words, He already knew what was going to happen when He spoke the words through the Old Testament prophets. Christ was the creator and He already existed before His earthly appearance.

If all of His prophecies were fulfilled while He was on earth, you can be assured that all future prophecy will be fulfilled also. Are you ready for Christ's second coming?

If you do not know Christ as your Lord and Savior, I invite you to come forward this morning and place your faith in Christ and be immersed in the waters of baptism for the forgiveness of your sins.

He is Lord!