

Act 1: A Birth Foretold

The birth of Jesus Christ was one of the most anticipated events of human history. Many aspects of Christ's birth were foretold in the Old Testament. Fulfilled prophecy stands as one of the premier proofs that Jesus was the Son of God and Israel's Messiah.

Immediately following humanities rebellion and descent into sin in the Garden of Eden, God issues the first recorded prophecy in the Bible. God promises Adam and Eve that through the seed of the woman he would crush the head of the seed of the serpent.

- Genesis 3:15--And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Through the Abraham Covenant the seed line of the Messiah is narrowed. The seed of the women come through the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. From Judah, one of Jacob's 12 sons, would Israel's Messiah be born.

- Genesis 49:10--The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Within the tribe of Judah the seed line of the Messiah is identified as coming through the family line of Jesse in Isaiah 11:1 and ultimately the House of David.

- II Samuel 7:12--And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.
- II Samuel 7:15--And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.
- Jeremiah 23:5--Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

Because the Messiah was to come from the House of David the Scripture further foretells that he would be born in Bethlehem the city of David.

- Micah 5:2--But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Furthermore, the prophet Isaiah tells us that this child born in Bethlehem would be the one upon whose shoulders God the Father would establish his kingdom reign on earth by inheriting the throne of his father David.

- Isaiah 9:6-7--For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah also tells us that the seed of the woman would arrive through a virgin birth. Moreover, he that would be born of the virgin would be Immanuel, God incarnate in human flesh.

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

Peter Stoner, author of *Science Speaks* presents the probability that any man might have lived in history and fulfilled just eight of the 61 Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The odds according to Stoner are 1 in 10 to the 17th power.

If we took 10 to 17th power of silver dollars and laid them out over the state of Texas they would cover the entire state to a depth of two feet. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up the one silver dollar that is the marked coin. What chance does he have of choosing the right one? The same chance that the Old Testament prophets had that eight of their prophecies would be fulfilled in one man.

This proves that Jesus Christ was truly Immanuel, God with us.

Sing: *O Come O Come Emmanuel*

Act 2: A Birth Announced

In Luke chapter one God breaks 400 years of silence by telling Zacharias, a Jewish priest, that he and his wife Elizabeth were going to have a son. Being beyond their childbearing years, Zacharias is struck dumb until their son is born as a sign that God's message is authentic. Meanwhile the angel Gabriel appears to Mary, an unmarried Jewish girl, in the town of Nazareth. Gabriel informs Mary that despite never having had a physical relationship with a man, she will conceive and bear a son by God the Holy Spirit. This son will be the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scripture we read about in Act One.

- Luke 1:26-38

Joseph, Mary's fiancé, seeking to avoid scandal, is contemplating not following through with his impending marriage to Mary when the angel of the Lord appears and tells him to take Mary as his wife because the child she was carrying was conceived of the Holy Spirit. Joseph also is told that this child will be the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 and be named Emmanuel

- Matthew 1:18-25

After nine months of silence, Zacharias speaks the following prophecy at the birth of his son, John the Baptist.

- Luke 1:64-80

Special Music: Mary Did You Know (Becky, Julie, and Kurt)

Act 3: A Child is Born

In Luke Chapter Two we see further fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in Christ's birth in Bethlehem. Through the miracle of the virgin birth, God became incarnate in human flesh.

- Luke 2:1-7
- John 1:1-2, 14
- Philippians 2:5-7

Have you ever stopped to think about the fact that through the tiny heart of that baby beat the blood that would be shed so that you and I could have the forgiveness of sins? What love does God have for us that he would send his only begotten son to die in our place?

Welcome to Our World by Chris Rice

Tears are falling, hearts are breaking
How we need to hear from God
You've been promised, we've been waiting

Welcome Holy Child
Welcome Holy Child

Hope that you don't mind our manger
How I wish we would have known
But long-awaited Holy Stranger
Make Yourself at home
Please make Yourself at home
Bring Your peace into our violence
Bid our hungry souls be filled
Word now breaking Heaven's silence

Welcome to our world
Welcome to our world

Fragile finger sent to heal us
Tender brow prepared for thorn
Tiny heart whose blood will save us
Unto us is born
Unto us is born
So wrap our injured flesh around You
Breathe our air and walk our sod
Rob our sin and make us holy

Perfect Son of God
Perfect Son of God
Welcome to our world

Special Music: O Holy Night (Becky, Julie, and Kurt)

Act 4: A Birth Celebrated

When Jesus was born the heavenly hosts praised God on that joyous and historical night. In fact, the angelic realm included humanity in the celebration by appearing to the shepherds the night Christ was born.

- Luke 2:8-20

As you sing “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing” pay attention to the depth of the doctrine that is conveyed through this classic carol.

Congregational Song: Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

Acts 5: A King Adored

While the wise men from the East were not present at the manger the night Jesus Christ was born, Christ's star appeared in the sky on the night of his birth. The presence of this star prompted the Magi to make their Westward journey in search of the king of the Jews. These wise men possessed copies of the book of Daniel which contained the prophecy of the seventy weeks. Therefore, when they saw the star while still in the East, they knew what it meant and went to find him. The gifts the wise men present to Christ are also the fulfillment of the prophecy that he would be given gifts.

- Psalm 72:10
- Matthew 2:1-12

Congregation Song: The First Noel