



December 01, 2023

### **Prophecies and His First Coming**

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from back here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

My wife and I are back home from a visit to southeast Texas taking a few days off to spend time with her parents and to visit with other brethren in the area.

Last Friday evening we discussed the importance of how God can always be relied on, and discussed some specific prophecies in the Bible.

Now that Thanksgiving Day has come and gone here in the United States, the mass focus on a holiday never observed or celebrated by God (or his people), Christmas, has become the focus.

So many believe that "the birth of Christ" is the focus of Christmas. Every year we'll see signs that say "Put Christ back in Christmas". Sadly, sometimes even on church congregation marquees. The reality is He never was in Christmas and never will be.

We also know that God giving his son to be the coming Messiah had nothing to do with what the world teaches in regards to its worldly holiday of Christmas.

So here's where I want to focus. Quite interesting, is that some of the most significant prophecies in the Bible that have been fulfilled are those relating to the first coming of the Messiah.

Some of them are very clear and others are not so easily perceived. The earliest prophecy is somewhat veiled in typology and symbolic language. Following the disobedience of Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden, the deceiving serpent was addressed by the Lord. "*And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise*

*His heel."*

Translators recognized the allusion to the special seed or posterity of Eve by capitalizing certain words in God's message. Eve is then specifically addressed next. It seems logical to understand that statement as God predicting the eventual birth of the Son of God through a descendant of Eve. There seems to also be an allusion that the conception of this special child would be by the Holy Spirit apart from the normal human male.

Various prophecies concern the physical lineage of the Messiah. Genesis 12:3 and 22:18 predicted a special seed or descendant of Abraham who would be a blessing for all nations. Paul understands these predictions and identifies this special seed as Jesus Christ in Galatians 3:14-16. There is an allusion to the special Ruler in Jacob's predictions concerning the tribe of Judah. *"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people."* (Genesis 49:10)

The word "scepter" is a translation of the Hebrew word *shebet*. It is translated "tribe" 140 times, "rod" 34 times, and "scepter" 10 times. It would not make sense to translate it "tribe" in Genesis 49:10 since "Judah" which was "a tribe" is the subject. The BBE translation renders *shebet* as "rod of authority." Notice the reference to one who is associated with a throne and a kingdom. *"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom."* (Psalm 45:6)

The special descendant would come through the lineage of Jesse and David as predicted in Jeremiah 23:5: *"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth."*

This is repeated in Jeremiah 33:14-16. Isaiah 11 also presents a Millennial and Messianic prophecy and refers to the coming forth of *"a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots."* (v.1)

This is also predicted in verse 10: *"And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His*

*resting place shall be glorious.*" Some interpret this as referring to a branch or shoot from the Root of Jesse. Of course Jesse came from the "*mother of all living*" Eve. (Genesis 3:20) The apostle Paul links this prophecy to Christ in Romans 15:8-12.

Several Scriptures state and affirm that Jesus was born of the seed of David according to the flesh. (Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8; Revelation 5:5; Revelation 22:16)

David descended from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 46:12; Numbers 7:12; Ruth 4:19-22; 1 Chronicles 27:18).

The following Scriptures declare specifically that Jesus came from the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14 and Revelation 5:5). The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary before the conception and birth of Jesus and affirmed the predictions made in Jeremiah 23 and 33. "*And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.*" (Luke 1:31-32)

The official Jewish genealogies were maintained, preserved, and later kept in the temple. These perished when the temple and the archives in Jerusalem were burned by the Romans in 70 AD (which of course took place after the death of Jesus). Since it was prophesied that the Messiah would descend from Abraham and David, it was necessary for anyone who claimed to be the Messiah to be able to verify his ancestry through these official genealogical records.

These records were also important to authenticate the Aaronic descent of the priests and those who claimed Levitical descent.

We can see its importance in Ezra 2:62, when certain people claimed to be priests. "*These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled.*" It would have been easy for Jesus' adversaries to have refuted His claims to be the Messiah by simply comparing his genealogies with the official records of the time and have shown this was not the case. Scripture

doesn't record any instance of the Jewish leaders challenging Jesus on this point.

So in Jesus' time if one claimed to be the Messiah he would have to prove through his genealogy that he had descended from Abraham and David. To prove this was the case for Jesus, the Gospel writers placed His genealogies at the beginning of Matthew (Joseph's genealogy) and in Luke 3 (Mary's genealogy) for all to see, read, and thus verify.

It is important to seek what God says about Christ our Messiah, not what the world pawns off as a counterfeit prophecy with its mixed messages and false truths. We've a responsibility to seek the truth, and follow it. The world is a mixed bag of half-truths and flat out lies. Scripture is (even with good intentions) interpreted such as to fit what man wants to do in regards to worship even when God clearly says "*Don't worship Me in this way*". (Deuteronomy 12:4 HCSB)

We'll examine this subject in more detail next Friday evening...

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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