

## The Coming of the Messiah Foretold

We have seen that Jesus Christ is eternal – his existence did not begin at birth as a baby 2000 years ago. He existed before the creation of the heaven and the earth. In fact he was the one who created them. He did not have a sudden though one day in eternity that he would become a man and then became one. From the beginning of history, God, who knows the end from the beginning, was preparing his people for His coming to earth. Starting from the time of Adam and Eve God was preparing his people so that when he did come they would know and understand that it was him who came. One of the ways that God was preparing his people was through prophecies which were signposts pointing to him. If we don't heed the signposts we won't find our destination – if we don't heed the prophecies then we wouldn't recognise the Messiah when he came.

Deuteronomy 18: 18

“I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.”

- This was prophesied about 1400 years before Christ

How was Jesus like Moses?

- Moses and Jesus both left Egypt to fulfil their ministries
- They were both mediators of a covenant
- They both knew God face-to-face
- They both performed great signs and wonders

This is fine to look back at both of their lives and know that Jesus was the one prophesied about. But what about specific signs of his coming that those living at the time would know that this is the one prophesied about? Let us have a look at the prophecies concerning his birth.

Isaiah 9: 6

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

- This was prophesied about 700 years before Christ
- This prophesy no leaves us with no doubt that the Messiah to be born a son will be no less than God Himself
  - Wonderful Counselor – Wonderful often denotes the supernatural in the Old Testament whereas Counselor referred to a king. God is the king over all the earth.
  - Mighty God is self explanatory that it is the mighty God himself who will be born a son.
  - Everlasting Father – Everlasting reveals his eternity. The eternal God will enter the realm of the temporal. The Father of all things humbles himself to be a child born into humanity – into His own creation
  - Prince of Peace – The only one who can bring peace to a strife ridden world.

So we know that the Messiah to come is no less than God Himself. But that still doesn't give much clue on how we would recognize Him when he came. Let us see some specific prophecies concerning His birth.

Micah 5: 2

“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.”

- This was prophesied between 750 and 686 years before Christ
- Once again the Messiah is going to be someone significant – his origins are from old, from ancient times – from the days of eternity.
  - He is the one entering into the temporal world from eternity – God himself

- The Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem.
- Naomi and Ruth moved back to Bethlehem from Moab where Ruth married Boaz
  - David was a descendent of Ruth
  - The Messiah was to come in the line of David
- David was from Bethlehem (1 Samuel 17: 12)
- <sup>Matthew 2:1 – 7</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi<sup>n</sup> from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east<sup>n</sup> and have come to worship him." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:" `But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."
- The chief priests and teachers of the law understood that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem
- Mary and Joseph weren't from Bethlehem but from Nazareth
  - While Mary was pregnant with Jesus Caesar Augustus called a census of the whole Roman world
  - As Joseph was a descendent of David he and Mary went to Bethlehem, the town of David, to register for the census.
  - While they were in Bethlehem Mary gave birth to Jesus fulfilling the prophecy

Isaiah 7: 14

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

- Even this verse reveals the deity of the Messiah
  - Immanuel means God with us
- “Behold, the angels said: “O Mary! God giveth thee glad tidings of a Word from Him: his name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and the hereafter and of the company of those nearest to God. He shall speak to the people in childhood and maturity. And he shall be of the company of the righteous. She said: “O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man hath touched me?” (Qur’an Sura Al-Imran 3: 45 – 47)
- <sup>Luke 1:26 – 35</sup> In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Some signposts can be orchestrated but the fact that Jesus was to born in Bethlehem and be born of a virgin were signs that could not be.

God’s hand was on the fulfillment of these prophecies revealing Jesus’ birth to be that of the Messiah foretold many years before.