

Introduction:

- Over the next three weeks this is where I will be going during the Christmas season:
 - Today we are going to look at Christmas foretold, or Christmas before Christ—God’s plan.
 - Next week we will look at Christmas told, or First Christmas—God’s Action.
 - Third week we will look at Christmas retold, or God’s Heart in Christmas keeps us retelling.
- I found a phrase in the book of Luke that jumped out at me. Luke was writing to a friend and he says these words, *“so you can be certain of the truth of everything you were taught.”* (Luke 1:4, NLT)
 - I want to tell the story this Christmas to help you be certain of the truth that you have been taught. If you have been around the church for a few years, I am sure you have heard the Christmas story. And to often that is what we let it become to us, just a story.
 - If you are in public school, there is very little if anything taught about Christmas. Most likely what you are receiving there is anti-christian, and Santa, elves and gifts or the wrong story.
 - I want to share with you today from an old book, called the Bible, the right story. It is the record of God’s love for all mankind.
- The Bible is the written record of God’s activity in the earth. It starts with creation, the beginning of mankind and it finishes with God himself living among His people.
- *“But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.”* (John 20:31, NLT)
- *“But this is all happening to fulfill the words of the prophets as recorded in the Scriptures.” At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled.”* (Matthew 26:56, NLT)
- *“Then Jesus said to them, “You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn’t it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?” Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”* (Luke 24:25–27, NLT)

I. The Bible Foretold This

- A. The Bible is packed with predictive prophecies. For such an old book there are multitudes of things spoken that have been fulfilled. Written over a 1,000-year period, the first part of the Bible contains about 300 references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Christ.
 1. One of the authenticating proofs for the inspiration of the Bible, which at the same time authenticate the claims of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the only Savior of the world, are the many fulfilled prophecies which find their fulfillment in the person and life of Christ, Jesus of Nazareth.
 2. We have in the Holy Scripture, an array of prophecies (over 1,000) which extend over hundreds of years. And many of these find their complete fulfillment in the short thirty-year life span of one person, Jesus of Nazareth, many being fulfilled in one day.
 3. These prophecies truly accomplish the purposes of the Gospel writers as they carefully pointed to the person, words, and works of Christ.
- B. Here are a few scriptures that we see in the OT that spoke of the Christmas story in Mt and Lk. These are scriptures that we are about to look at were written hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, yet so many will dismiss the Bible a book for weaklings.

1. *“All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means ‘God is with us’).”* (Isaiah 7:14, NLT) Mt 1:18, 21, 23-25.
2. *“For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”* (Isaiah 9:6, NLT) *“His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies will make this happen!”* (Isaiah 9:7, NLT) Jesus is the child that Matthew and Luke write about.
3. *“This is what the Lord says: “A cry is heard in Ramah— deep anguish and bitter weeping. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted— for her children are gone.”*” (Jeremiah 31:15, NLT) Mt 2:16,17
4. *“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf.”* (Micah 5:2, NLT) Mt 2:1,5,6
5. *“And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”*” (Genesis 22:18, NLT) Mt 1:1

II. God Declared It In the Beginning

- A. *The first Good News! It is Christmas BC but we received a gift there! “And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”* (Genesis 3:15, NLT)
 1. This is the first promise given after Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. *“This passage has often been referred to as the “protevangelium,” the first good news of a promised redeemer after man’s original fall away from fellowship with God.”* Hamilton, V. P. (1999). 2349 עִוֵּן. R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 912). Chicago: Moody Press.
 2. It’s also the first gospel sermon ever preached on the face of the earth.
 3. These words spoken by God contain the earliest promise of redemption in the Bible. Everything else in Scripture flows from this one verse. Ie. As the acorn contains the mighty oak, so these words contain the entire plan of salvation.
 4. Jesus came to overturn the curse of Genesis 3. This is why the Father sent Him to become a man...to overturn the curse!
- B. Christ is in this verse! He is the offspring or seed that will crush the serpent head.
 1. Adam and Eve have sinned. The result of their sin is to hide because of shame and blame to escape responsibility. This is still the fruit of sin today. It did not ruin the Garden of Eden but it did ruin man (Adam and Eve).
 2. God passes judgement upon the serpent, upon Eve, upon Adam. The bad news for the devil is that there is no good news for him. The good news for Adam and Eve is that the from her offspring would come one who would crush the serpents head. Ro. 16:20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan. Ie. The picture is of a man who putting his foot down on the serpents head so hard that it crushes it and at the same time bruises his own foot.
- C. What the verse foretells is:
 1. Endless conflict between the seed of Satan and the seed of woman—Enemies always. Satan thought that he had Eve now but she by the power of God refuses to

submissive to him! Go ladies! You seed has a written destiny of being at war with hell.

- a) God has always had His righteous seed but at the same time we can always see the seed of Satan opposing the righteous generation.
 - b) We come to the birth of Christ and the seed of Satan is still in opposition to the seed of woman. Ie. Herod kill all the boy babies in Bethlehem two and under. Matt 2:15-16. Who was behind the crucifixion of Jesus? Satan.
2. Temporary defeat. The crucifixion of Jesus was the bruising of the heal of Christ. You can have a bruised heal and still get around. Your head gets crushed you are finished.
- a) What causes heal pain is usually not one incident but the culmination of multiple strikes upon the heal. Satan is constantly attacking us to wound us and cause us to be ineffective in God's kingdom.
 - b) Christ's bruised heal came at Calvary. Satan killed the Son of God on Passover!
3. But three days later...Eternal Victory! Christ ripped the gates off of hell and victoriously walked out trampling death, hell and the grave under his feet.

III. God's Plan of Salvation

- A. What's God's plan? His plan is our redemption. He sees value in us no matter how broken, or defeated we may be, or seem to be. God's plan is our salvation. We were not born to be thrown away or lost forever. We were created for relationship with God and will only experience purpose, peace and joy in Him.
- B. The Christian life will always be a struggle.
 1. Struggle implies effort, sweat, exertion, and difficulty. That's why the apostle Paul uses the image of a runner, of a boxer, of a wrestler, and of a soldier. The Christian life is not easy; it's hard work that demands your full commitment and the full engagement of your soul.
 2. Until the day we die we will struggle against temptation. Sometime we'll win, other times we'll lose. But, we have to be in the fight.
 3. Don't get discouraged because the Christian life isn't easy. Determine to be fully devoted to Christ no matter how hard it gets. It's not supposed to be easy. We're at war. Life is hard, times are difficult, and the enemy is attacking on every side. Salvation is free, but no one gets a free ride to heaven.
- C. Our victories will not be without wounds. Paul said, he bore the marks of Christ in his body. He suffered for the sake of the Gospel. And he carried daily the burden of the church. If Jesus was wounded as God's offspring we can expect nothing less in the fight!
 1. There is no victory without wounding, and there is no progress without pain.
 2. Just stay in the fight!
- D. God's Plan of salvation is wrapped up in a person! The person of Jesus Christ!
 1. Jesus' name is not used in Gen 3:15 but he is the offspring of Mary, and He is the Son of God. All through history, from the Garden of Eden unto the birth of Christ, the righteous seed was at war with the seed of Satan until our Dread Champion was born. What started with the whole human race was now focused on One Man...Jesus!
 2. Here is another interesting fact of scripture. All through the Word 'the seed' was related to the man. But in Gen 3:15 it was the seed of woman...Now go to Mt 1:25. **Joseph had no sexual relations with her until her (offspring, seed) son was born.**

3. When God wanted to save the world He sent His Son! The One who would crush Satan would be a King, born of a Virgin, in a little obscure town. He would be Lord and Christ! *“Because God’s children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.”* (Hebrews 2:14,15, NLT) Only He could break the curse of sin.
 - a) *“Joy to the World , the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room,”*
 - b) *“No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make His blessings flow, Far as the curse is found,”*

Conclusion:

- *“But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.”* (John 1:12, NLT)
- The bad news for the devil is that there is no good news for him. But for humanity, God has had a plan from the beginning of time to save us! Do not let people talk you out of that or create doubt. You can know for certain the things you have been told.
- The Bible, as old as it is filled with words that told of the birth of Christ and our redemption.
- All we have to do is to believe Him and Accept Him.