

THE REAL CHRISTMAS STORY

A

Theme: **The Promise of a Savior**

How did people know Jesus was coming?

• Roughly a quarter of the Old Testament was prophetic at the time it was written and many of those prophecies pointed directly to the coming of Jesus.

Q: What is prophecy? The telling of something that God has said or has revealed to men by the power of the Holy Spirit.

• The Old Testament is the promise of Jesus and the New Testament is the fulfillment of Jesus.

• Jesus is the thread that weaves the entire Bible together and changes history forever.

• Matthew 5:17 // **“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.**

• Luke 24:44 // **“Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”**

25 Old Testament prophetic promises given hundreds and thousands of years before their fulfillment in Jesus.

1) 4000 b.c.: Adam and Eve receive the first prophecy from God that the Messiah (Jesus) would be born of a woman. The Proto-Evangelium - “the first gospel”

Promise: **“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”** (Gen. 3:15).

Fulfillment: “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law . . .” (Gal. 4:4).

2) 2000 b.c.: Abraham receives the promise that the Messiah (Jesus) would descend from Abraham, through his son Isaac (not Ishmael), Isaac’s son Jacob (not Esau), and Jacob’s son Judah (not any of the other eleven brothers).

Promise: “In you [Abraham] all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen. 12:3); “God said, ‘No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him’” (Gen. 17:19); “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel . . .” (Num. 24:17); “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples” (Gen. 49:10).

Fulfillment: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers . . .” (Matt. 1:1–2).

3) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus’ mother would be a virgin who conceived by a miracle and that Jesus would be God who became a man.

Promise: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14).

Fulfillment: “Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us)” (Matt. 1:18–23).

4) 700 b.c.: Micah prophesies that Jesus would be born in the town of Bethlehem.

Promise: “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days [eternity]” (Mic. 5:2).

Fulfillment: “In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. . . . And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn” (Luke 2:1–7).

5) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus would live his life without committing any sins.

Promise: “He had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth” (Isa. 53:9).

Fulfillment: “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth” (1 Pet. 2:21–22).

6) 700 b.c.: Hosea prophesies that Jesus’ family would flee as refugees to Egypt to save his young life.

Promise: “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son” (Hos. 11:1).

Fulfillment: “Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I called my son’” (Matt. 2:13–15).

7) 400 b.c.: Malachi prophesies that Jesus would enter the temple. This is important because the temple was destroyed in a.d. 70 and no longer exists; subsequently, the prophecy could not have been fulfilled anytime after a.d. 70.

Promise: “Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts” (Mal. 3:1).

Fulfillment: “Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law . . .” (Luke 2:25–27).

8) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that John the Baptizer would prepare the way for Jesus.

Promise: “A voice cries: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God’” (Isa. 40:3).

Fulfillment: “In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight”’” (Matt. 3:1–3).

9) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus would perform many miracles.

Promise: “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy” (Isa. 35:5–6).

Fulfillment: “Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’ And Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them’” (Matt. 11:2–5).

10) 500 b.c.: Zechariah prophesies that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey.

Promise: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zech. 9:9).

Fulfillment: “And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. . . . And they brought it [the colt] to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!’” (Luke 19:28, 35–38).

11) 1000 b.c.: David prophesies that Jesus would be betrayed by a friend.

Promise: “Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me” (Ps. 41:9).

Fulfillment: “And [Judas] came up to Jesus at once and said, ‘Greetings, Rabbi!’ And he kissed him. Jesus said to him, ‘Friend, do what you came to do’” (Matt. 26:49–50).

12) 500 b.c.: Zechariah prophesies that Jesus’ betraying friend would be paid thirty pieces of silver for handing him over to the authorities and that the payment would be thrown in the temple in disgust (again, the temple was destroyed in a.d. 70, so this prophecy could not have been fulfilled after that time).

Promise: “Then I said to them, ‘If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.’ And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. Then the Lord said to me, ‘Throw it to the potter’—the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter” (Zech. 11:12–13).

Fulfillment: “Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?’ And they paid him thirty pieces of silver” (Matt. 26:14–15); “And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, ‘It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.’ So they took counsel and bought with them the potter’s field as a burial place for strangers” (Matt. 27:5–7).

13) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus would be beaten, would have his beard plucked out, and would be mocked and spit on.

Promise: “I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting” (Isa. 50:6).

Fulfillment: “Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him . . .” (Matt. 26:67).

14) 1000 b.c.: David prophesies that lots would be cast for Jesus’ clothing.

Promise: “. . . they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots” (Ps. 22:18).

Fulfillment: “When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, so they said to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.’ This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, ‘They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.’ So the soldiers did these things” (John 19:23–24).

15) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus would be hated and rejected.

Promise: “He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not” (Isa. 53:3).

Fulfillment: “And those who passed by derided him. . . . So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him. . . . And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way” (Matt. 27:39–44).

16) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that, though hated and rejected, Jesus would not defend himself.

Promise: “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth” (Isa. 53:7).

Fulfillment: “But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer” (Matt. 27:12).

17) 1000 b.c.: David prophesies that Jesus would be crucified (hundreds of years before the invention of crucifixion by the Persians).

Promise: “For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet” (Ps. 22:16).

Fulfillment: “And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left” (Luke 23:33).

18) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus would be killed with sinners.

Promise: “Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12).

Fulfillment: “Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left” (Matt. 27:38).

19) 1400 b.c.: Moses prophesies that none of Jesus’ bones would be broken.
1000 b.c.: David prophesies the same.

Promise: “You shall not break any of its [the Passover lamb’s] bones” (Ex. 12:46); “He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken” (Ps. 34:20).

Fulfillment: “So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: ‘Not one of his bones will be broken’” (John 19:32–36).

20) 1000 b.c.: David prophesies that Jesus would be forsaken by God.

Promise: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?” (Ps. 22:1).

Fulfillment: “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’” (Matt. 27:46).

21) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus would die.

Promise: “He was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people” (Isa. 53:8b).

Fulfillment: “Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!’ And having said this he breathed his last” (Luke 23:46).

22) 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies that Jesus would be buried in a tomb given to him by a rich man.

Promise: “And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth” (Isa. 53:9).

Fulfillment: “When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away” (Matt. 27:57–60).

23) 1000 b.c.: David prophesies that Jesus would resurrect from death. 700 b.c.: Isaiah prophesies the same.

Promise: “For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption” (Ps. 16:10); “Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities” (Isa. 53:10–11).

Fulfillment: “For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’ Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses” (Acts 2:25–32).

24) 1000 b.c.: David prophesies that Jesus would ascend into heaven and take the souls of departed Christians with him.

Promise: “You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in your train” (Ps. 68:18).

Fulfillment: “But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it says, ‘When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.’ . . . He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things” (Eph. 4:7–10).

25) 1000 b.c.: David prophesies that Jesus would sit at the right hand of God.

Promise: “The Lord says to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool’” (Ps. 110:1).

Fulfillment: “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (Heb. 1:3).