

12.06.20 ~ Jesus Christ was Born to Die.

Christmas celebrates God's greatest Gift to the world, but God's gift (His own Son) was not fully understood or realized until He was unwrapped on the Cross.

About 2700 years ago, two of God's prophets (Isaiah & Micah) both wrote about the future birth of a male child, to a virgin, in Bethlehem, in Judea; this child would be God in the flesh, God's Salvation come to earth, and He would be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Jesus came to pay the penalty (for all sin, for all time, for all people), by His death on the cross; and three days later, He came out of the grave alive, providing eternal life to all who believe in Him.

Micah 5:2, "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah... from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."

Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

Isaiah 9:6, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

See **Isaiah 53:1-12**

Read Hebrews 1:1-3...

See **Hebrews 1:1**, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways." God repeatedly announced to the world the coming of His Son. He did this using a wide variety of people, languages, places, events, ceremonies, and covenants, in order to present His plan and purpose through Jesus Christ.

See **Hebrews 1:2a**, "in these last days [God] has spoken to us in *His* Son." Since Jesus' first advent, God has fully revealed all we need to know, have, and do, concerning God's greatest gift, His Own Son.

Jesus' birth happened just as God had announced through the prophets, everything being made ready for the advent of God's Son, at just the right time (**Galatians 4:4-5**), "when the time had fully come (i.e., at just the right time), God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons."

Politically – Rome the world ruler, had provided good roads and a time of relative peace; the message of Christ could be taken to the rest of the world.

Culturally – The world's people were more educated and unified, even common people spoke Koine Greek.

Spiritually – The world was more accepting of a wide variety of religious philosophies; and the Jews had a renewed interest in the OT Scriptures that pointed to the Messiah, God's One and Only Son.

God had repeatedly announced His coming, giving special details about His arrival, and then God delivered Him in Bethlehem, just as He had said He would. Joseph and Mary raised Him in Nazareth in Galilee.

Luke 2:52, "And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, by John (**Luke 3:22**), God declared from heaven, "You are My Son, whom I love, with You I am well pleased," (**Luke 3:23**), "Jesus was about thirty years of age, when He began His ministry."

See **Hebrews 1:2b**, "whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world." God appointed His Son as the beneficiary of all things, i.e., everything that was made belongs to Jesus Christ, God the Son, Creator of and Ruler over everything.

Colossians 1:16, "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through Him and for Him."

In **Revelation 5:5**, John records God sitting on His throne in heaven, with a scroll in His hand (the deed to the earth and everything on it). No one is worthy to take the scroll and open it, but then John writes, "one of the elders said to me, 'Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.'" **Revelation 5:6-7**, "Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne... He came and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who sat on the throne." At that point a new song is sung in heaven (**Revelation 5:9**), "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

God sent Jesus (**Colossians 1:20**), "to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."

God's plan was to provide forgiveness for sins through the shed blood of His One and Only Son.

See **Hebrews 1:3a**, "And He [Christ] is the radiance of His glory." Christ is "the radiance of God's glory" (lit. "brightness") meaning Jesus is the Light of God, sent to mankind. "Light" is the revelation that brings "Life from God" to all who are being saved.

See **John 1:1-2**, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."

See **John 1:4-5**, " In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend [overpower] it.."

John 8:12, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

1John 1:5, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all."

See **Hebrews 1:3b**, "And He [Christ] is the exact representation of His nature." Christ is "the exact representation [icon or imprint] of God's nature," in fact, (**Colossians 1:15**), "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation," (**Colossians 1:17**), "He [Jesus Christ] is before all things, and in Him all things hold together," (**Colossians 2:9**), "in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form."

Jesus is the express image of God [in human flesh] and without Him we could not see or be exposed to God's light, let alone could we receive life from God.

See **Hebrews 1:3c**, "and [He, Christ] upholds all things by the word of His power." God's Son holds together, sustains, and maintains, all things by His own Word.

He created the heavens and the earth upon which we live, itself sitting out in space just the right distance from the moon and the sun, tilted at precisely 23.5 degrees, as it revolves at 1,037 mph, making a complete rotation every 24 hours; while traveling at 67,000 mph in an orbit around the sun every 365 days.

See **Hebrews 1:3d**, "When He [Christ] had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty [God the Father] on high God's Son cleansed us of sin's penalty and then He sat down [His work was finished] at the right hand [seat of power and authority] of the Father in heaven.

Wow! Jesus Christ fulfilled His sovereign work by taking the punishment for our sins, upon Himself (**Hebrews 9:12**), "through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."

About 700 years after Isaiah and Micah gave their prophecies, a young woman named Mary, who was said to be a virgin, gave birth to a male child in Bethlehem, in Judea; the baby was named in Hebrew, Yeshua, the Greek rendering is Jesus [meaning Rescuer, Deliverer, i.e., *God's Salvation/Savior*]; the baby was also called in Hebrew Immanuel [meaning *God with us*].

This child was God in human flesh, Savior to all who will believe in Him. Jesus was born in a stable and raised in obscurity; as a teenager He confounded the religious leaders, as a man he demonstrated authority over nature, healed people

of every kind of disease and infirmity, raised a young girl and a man from the dead, and was then put to death on a cross, buried, and on the third day He came out of the tomb alive, and began showing Himself to His followers over a 40 day period; after which, he ascended back into heaven.

Hebrews 10:12, "having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, [He] sat down at the right hand of God."

The final message from God is that His own Son was born in the flesh of a man for the purpose of dying for the sins of mankind.

Christmas is about God's Greatest Gift: Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was born for the purpose of laying down His own life as full payment for our sins, so that everyone who repents, believing in Him, receives forgiveness and eternal life.

Revelation 1:8, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

1John 5:11-13, "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

If you have never repented of your sins, believing in God's Son to save you, why not do it right now? This is the most important decision of your life. Don't enter the Christmas season without making sure you belong to God through Jesus Christ, God's One and Only Son.

The reason for the season is Jesus, as Paul writes (**2Corinthians 9:15**), "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"

The word "*Christmas*" is formed from two words: Christ and mass. *Christ* (the Greek rendering of the Hebrew word Messiah), means Holy [or Anointed] One; and *mass* means a congregation or gathering for the purpose of a religious observance or celebration; and so, Christmas is a celebration in honor and praise and worship of Jesus Christ, God's Son, Lord and Savior: crucified, resurrected, and coming again.

Pastor Mike
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