

Why Christmas, Why Jesus? God Promised Him

Gen 3. This is one of *three* passages we're going to look at, as we start our Christmas series titled *Why Christmas, Why Jesus?*

Shorthand for "Why do we *celebrate* Christmas, why does it even *exist*?" and "Why did Jesus come in the first place?" Why Christmas and why Jesus?

Questions fewer and fewer people are able to answer.

Ask 10 people on the street and you're liable to get 10 different answers; if you get any at all. People just don't know.

Or maybe they would say that Christmas has something to do with *Jesus*, but that's it.

He was *born* at Christmas, but that's where it stops.

Why he was born is a mystery.

Maybe that's you. Maybe *you're* not sure why Jesus came at Christmas.

Or maybe you know *part* of the answer, but aren't sure what it has to *do* with you.

So instead of feeling like a *kid* at Christmas, you're a Grinch.

Whatever the case, the answers to these questions are important.

➤ And I hope to accomplish *two* things in explaining them.

For those of you who already *know* the one that God promised at Christmas, I hope to increase your awe, magnify your worship, and renew your joy in him.

Especially at *this* time of year.

And second, for those of you who *don't* know the one God promised at Christmas, I hope to awaken your faith and see you saved.

And toward the end of our time, I'm going to give you an opportunity to do just that – to pray and be saved; to *personally* know the one God promised at Christmas.

And thereby join the rest of us in awe, and worship, and joy.

➤ So let's start with the bottom line. We celebrate Christmas because of Jesus, and Jesus, because God promised him.

Jesus was born at Christmas, because God promised him. That's the first answer to the question.

He didn't just show up out of the blue or unannounced. And he certainly wasn't conjured up as a figment of somebody's imagination. Like so many *other* religious figures.

He was a real person, who lived at a real time, in a real place.

And was foretold by *God* in the Bible. Promised by him.

Starting all the way back in Genesis with Adam and Eve. Where . . .

God promised one who would . . .

1. **Defeat Satan (Gen 3:15)**

Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God promised one who would defeat the devil.

The evil one. The great deceiver. The rebellious angel. Destroyer of souls and lives.

Wrecker of marriages and churches. Hater of God and his people.

Enemy of righteousness. Lover of evil and wickedness.

Christmas is a thing, because God promised one who would defeat Satan. No small thing.

➤ Gen 3:15. God is speaking to Satan right after the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Sin that Satan directly influenced.

Not that *all* sin is instigated by Satan. We give him *far* too much credit in that sense.

Most of the time our sin is the result of our *own* sinful nature, within. Or the temptations of a sinful world *around* us.

But sometimes, it's the result of a direct demonic attack. In this case, from Satan himself.

Because of which, God says in v15, "*I will put enmity between you and the woman [Eve], and between your offspring and her offspring [your people and her people, sinful people and righteous people].*

And then he gets very specific – *he* [someone from Eve's offspring] *shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*"

In other words, some future person would deal a massive *blow* to Satan, *bruise his head*; while Satan would barely injure him, *bruise his heel*.

It's called the *Protoevangelium*. A big theological word that simply means "the first announcement of the Gospel." Promising one who would defeat Satan.

➤ And that *one*, we find out in the *New Testament*, is Jesus. He's the *he* in v15. Just like it says in **Heb 2:14**.

[14] *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood [the children of God, those saved by grace through faith], he himself [Jesus] likewise partook of the same things [he too became flesh], that through death [death on the cross] he might destroy the one [defeat the one] who has the power of death, that is, the devil.*

Jesus became flesh at Christmas, to defeat Satan. For us.

God promised it to Adam and Eve, fulfilled it in Christ, and sealed it with his death.

Beating Satan at his own game, so we wouldn't have to.*****

No wonder the angels declared glad tidings of great joy.

Second, God promised one who would . . .

2. **Bless the world (Gen 22:18)**

Fast forward from Genesis 3 to the covenant God made with Abraham. Part of which, is a promise by God to bless the world.

Like he says in **Gen 12:3** – "*In you [speaking to Abraham] all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*"

And a little later, in **Gen 22:18**, he says it again – "*In your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* The whole world.

But it's the *offspring* part that's *most* important. Repeating what he said in Genesis 3.

Because the Apostle Paul says in **Gal 3:16** that God was referring to *Jesus*.

[16] *Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. Christ Jesus.*

He's the offspring of Abraham, who God promised would bless the world, 2000 years before he was ever born.*****

➤ And we're the *recipients* of that blessing. In the *salvation* God offers us through *faith* in Jesus. That's the *blessing* God promised to Abraham.

It's the grace he extends to forgive our *sins*. The love he shows to adopt us into his *family*. The sacrifice he made to give us *life*. We're the recipients.

But only if we trust him. Only if we give our lives to him. Only if we follow him.

Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God promised one who would bless us.
Do you know it? Have you received it?

Third, he promised one who would . . .

3. **Speak for him (Dt 18:18)**

God promised one who would *speak* on his behalf. Who would tell us all we need to know for life and godliness.

600 years after Abraham (**Dt 18:18**), God raised up *Moses* to speak for him.

And after a time, said that he would do the same with someone else.

[18] *I will raise up for them [my people] a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.* And in the *New Testament*, Jesus is once again identified as the one.

"The word that you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me," he said. (Jn 14:24)

"All that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (Jn 15:15)

And *speaking* of Jesus, the Apostle Peter quoted this very verse. To say he's the one. The one God promised through Moses, to speak for him.*****

To tell us everything we need for life to the full and life forever.

Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God promised one who would speak for him.
Are you listening? Do you hear him?

4th, God promised one who would . . .

4. **Reign forever (2 Sam 7:12-16; Is 9:6-7; Lk 1:31-33)**

400 years after *Moses*, around 1000BC, God made a promise to King David.

It's called the *Davidic Covenant*, and I'd like for you to see it. Because it's referred to time and time again in the *Scriptures*. 2 Samuel 7:12-16.

God is speaking to David here, through the prophet Nathan. And says . . .

[12] *When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom [his rule and reign]. [13] He shall build a house for my name [a place of worship], and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. [14] I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, [15] but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. [16] And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever."*

In order to make heads or tails of this, you have to understand that there's both a *near-term* aspect to this promise, and a *long-term* one.

The *near-term*, is the promise of a *house* or temple for God. Which Solomon built.
David's son. V12.

I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and [v13] . . . He shall build a house for my name.

In the *near term*, that was Solomon. And what a house it was, Solomon's Temple.

And just like v14 says, Solomon was a fallible man who committed sin. And suffered the consequences. That's the *near-term* aspect.

The *long-term*, is the promise of a kingdom and throne that will last *forever* (16). A rule and reign that will never end.

But little did they know, that God had someone in mind to *sit* on that throne forever. Someone who would *live* forever, just like his reign would *last* forever.

➤ And 300 years later, Isaiah revealed it (**Is 9:6-7**).

[6] *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; [remember v14? "I will raise up your offspring and I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son?"] and the government shall be upon his shoulder [implying that he would rule and reign over a kingdom], and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. [7] Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.*

300 years had passed, but God hadn't forgotten. Taking it a step further to connect the eternal reign with an eternal offspring. A son.

Who would be God himself – *Mighty God, Everlasting Father*.

Someone who would *live* forever while he *reigned* forever.

It must have blown their mind. And it should certainly blow ours.

➤ Especially so, because 700 years after *Isaiah* (**Lk 1:31-33**), an angel appeared to a young woman named *Mary*. Saying . . .

Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. [32] He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High [the Son of God]

Just like he told David – "*I will be to [your offspring] a father, and he shall be to me a son.*"

And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, [33] and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever [the house of Jacob once again referring to those who are saved by grace through faith], and of his kingdom there will be no end."

A thousand years after God promised one who would reign forever, Jesus was born at Christmas, to fulfill it. To reign on the throne of his father David. *Literally* his father. Something Matthew went to great *lengths* to show, at the beginning of *his* gospel.

Laying out 28 generations in a genealogy to connect the two.*****

He was the son of David and the Son of God, just like he had promised.

➤ But there's one more part. Look at 2 Sam 7 again.

I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. [13] He shall build a house for my name [originally a place of worship, but now a people of worship; we are the house; we are God's temple], and I will establish the throne of his kingdom [now, in the hearts and souls of those who are his; and later over all the earth] forever.

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, oh what a foretaste of glory divine.

- Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God promised him. Over and over and over. He promised one who would reign forever, starting with our lives. The only question is, “Does he reign in yours?”

And 5th, are you part of his flock? Because God also promised one who would . . .

5. Shepherd his flock (Micah 5:2-5)

It’s not just ruling and reigning that God promised, but shepherding and nurturing and leading. Turn with me to one more passage. Micah 5.

About the same time Isaiah affirmed God’s promise of a Davidic *king*, Micah was prophesying a Davidic *shepherd*. Combining the two. And I want you to see that as well. Starting in v2.

- Having just said that the current leaders of Israel would be *overthrown*, Micah says in v2, speaking for God . . .
You, O Bethlehem Ephrathah [the district or region in which the town of Bethlehem was located], *who are too little to be among the clans of Judah* [too little to be considered in such an important tribe], *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.*

Therefore he shall give them up [God would allow his people to be overthrown for their sin, and scattered in the days of Micah] *until the time when she who is in labor* [Mary] *has given birth* [to Jesus]; *then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.*

Many of the Jews who had fallen away from the Lord, would come back after the birth of Christ. We’ve seen it in our study of Acts.

And he [the one to whom Mary would give birth] *shall stand and shepherd his flock* [his people] *in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.*

- Why Christmas? Why Jesus? Because God promised one who would shepherd his flock. As in provide for them, lead them, purify them, protect them, serve them . . . Bless them, assure them, and nurture them. Just like David described in Ps 23 – *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.* (1)

Can you say that? Are you part of his flock?

If not, you can be. Because God also promised one who would . . .

6. Save his people (Mt 1:21)

A few months before Jesus was born an angel appeared to Joseph (**Mt 1:21**), Mary’s husband, and said . . .

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” From the *consequences* of their sins.

Including eternal torment in the throes of hell, and a life of futility and bondage now.

God promised to save us from that. *Us*. Me, you. Because *his people* includes . . .

Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord (Rom 10:13). *Anyone* who believes in him. *Anyone* who confesses their sin. *Anyone* who receives him. (**Summary**)

The only question is, *have* you? Have you called on him? Have you received him?

If not, pray with me right now, and be saved.

Pray with me to know the victor over your enemy, the means of God’s blessing, the embodiment of God’s word, the Lord of your life, the shepherd of your heart . . .

And the Savior of your soul.

Prayer

God, I believe in the one you promised. I believe in Jesus. I believe he died for my sins, to save my soul.

And I’m sorry for my sins. Please forgive me and wash me white as snow.

I receive you now as Lord of my life, to reign forever. And commit to live for you the rest of my days. (Response)

Pray – Father, you’re good in so many ways, not the least of which is to save our soul and make us whole. Bless and protect those who just gave their lives to you. Shepherd them and keep them. And use them for your glory.