

The Nativity in Prophecy

Introduction

- Do you ever drop hints to someone about a gift you will be giving them? God's greatest gift to man, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, did not arrive without God dropping a few "hints".
- The first coming of Christ and the events surrounding His birth were no accident.
- That Christ would come was revealed by God to many different men who wrote down the details they were given.
- When studying these prophecies, it is clear that Christ was their fulfillment and the only person in the history of mankind who could do so.
- Dyson Hague (1857-1935) wrote: "Who could draw a picture of a man not yet born? Surely God, and God alone. Nobody knew over 500 years ago that Shakespeare was going to be born; or over 250 years ago that Napoleon was to be born. Yet here in the Bible we have a the most striking and unmistakable likeness of a Man portrayed, not by one, but by twenty-five artists, none of whom had ever seen the Man they were painting."

A Little Perspective

- If these prophecies were fulfilled TODAY:
 - The first prophecy may have been written as Stonehenge was being completed
 - Byzantine Emperor Justinian I (482-565) might have written the first prophecy
 - William Shakespeare (1564-1616) might have written the last
- Here's an idea of what we would know about this prophesied person:
 - The person's nationality - (ex. American)
 - Their family tree - (ex. descended from John Adams and John Quincy Adams)
 - The place of their birth - (ex. Plymouth, MA)
 - All of their childhood homes - (ex. Plymouth, MA; Paris, France; Braintree, MA)
 - The reaction of people to their birth - (ex. the child would be a popular leader)
 - We would know the date of their death (ex. 500 years from founding of Boston)
- With so much information, do you think we could not eventually identify them?

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Prophecy	Date	Reference	Fulfillment
"seed of woman" - Virgin Birth	4000 B.C.	Genesis 3:15	Luke 1:34-35
Descendent of Abraham	1920 B.C.	Genesis 12:3 ^{Note #1}	Matthew 1:2
Descendent of Isaac	1910 B.C.	Genesis 17:21	Matthew 1:2
Descendent of Jacob	1760 B.C.	Genesis 28:14	Matthew 1:2
From the tribe of Judah	1689 B.C.	Genesis 49:8	Matthew 1:2
Descendent of Jesse	713 B.C.	Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 1:6
Descendent of David	599 B.C.	Jeremiah 23:5	Matthew 1:6
Virgin Birth	742 B.C.	Isaiah 7:14	Luke 1:34-35
He would be a man (son)	742 B.C.	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:25
Born in Bethlehem	710 B.C.	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:5-6
The Star	1452 B.C.	Numbers 24:17	Matthew 2:2
Called a King	599 B.C.	Jeremiah 23:5	Matthew 2:2
Slaughter of the Innocents	606 B.C.	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:17-18
Sojourn in Egypt	740 B.C.	Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:13-15
Raised in Galilee	740 B.C.	Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 2:2
Raised in Nazareth	713 B.C.	Isaiah 11:1 ^{Note #2}	Matthew 2:23

NOTES

1. The Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12 fixes Abraham and his descendants into a special place in the plan of God. This promise carried through from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob. Though not expressly written, that the promised Messiah would come from Abraham's lineage is seen by many here.
2. The exact prophecy alluded to in Matthew 2:23 is difficult to discern. The word *Nazareth* means "branch", and many verses portray the Messiah as a branch.