

The Fullness of Time

Galatians 4:4

Why did God choose for Christ to be born 2000 years ago? We know the theological answer: that Christ came to save mankind from sin. Have you ever considered why God chose *that* time? He did so because, as in all of His actions, it was the *perfect* time.

- I. The Roman Contribution - the World Power
 - A. The *Pax Romana*
 - 1. Rome was the undisputed ruler of the world
 - 2. For a time civil strife was at a low and foreign wars were at a minimum
 - 3. The peaceful period insured a safe environment for the Gospel to spread.
 - B. Roman Roads
 - 1. One of Rome's greatest achievements was its vast infrastructure of roads and bridges. Some of these are still usable today.
 - 2. Efficient travel insured that the Gospel could spread.
 - C. Longing for Freedom
 - 1. Living under an oppressive master such as Rome led many people to dream of freedom and independence.
 - 2. This led many people to open to Christianity's radical message
 - D. Waning of False Religions
 - 1. This time was a time when many questioned the old gods and religions of their ancestors and sought new ways or even turned to atheism.
 - 2. Emperor Augustus enacted many reforms that he hoped would make Romans more moral and religious.
 - 3. This produced an atmosphere where people were open to breaking from centuries of tradition and embrace the Gospel.
- II. The Greek Contribution - the World System
 - A. Greek Language
 - 1. Though Latin may have been the official language of Rome, the universal language of commerce was Greek.
 - 2. If you were fluent in Greek then you could communicate almost everywhere you went in the Roman Empire.
 - 3. The New Testament was originally written in Greek and most literate people could probably read it.
 - B. Greek Philosophy
 - 1. The thinkers of world at the time were constantly taking up and debating new ideas and philosophies.
 - 2. Just look at Paul's reception at Mars' Hill in Acts 17:16-34
 - 3. This made many curious about Christianity and willing to learn more about it.
- III. The Jewish Contribution
 - A. Anticipation of the Messiah
 - 1. The Jews were always on the lookout for the One that was promised to come throughout the Old Testament
 - 2. This expectation was noted by other, including the Romans.

3. Most of the Roman Empire was probably aware of the concept of the Jewish Messiah.
- B. Background for the Messiah
1. Christ could have come from anywhere, but He chose to be Jew.
 2. It was written in prophecy after prophecy that He would be a Jew.