

Just The Way He Wanted It

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Opening Comments

Introduction

event planning

the weather

the food -

the guest list

I. Matthew

A. The Virgin Shall Conceive

learning that Mary was with child
Joseph struggled with what to do
and he was thinking of sending her away secretly

but then we read this...

Matthew 1:20–23 (NASB95)

20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

21 “She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.”

Isaiah 7:14 (NASB95)

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.

Jewish audience

Matthew refers often to Old Testament prophecies

his goal was to show his readers that Jesus is the Messiah
this message from Isaiah to the Judean king Ahaz, 700 years
earlier

which was fulfilled in the virgin birth of Christ.

Matthew parallels the name Jesus (“God is salvation”) with the
title Immanuel (“God with us”)

as they both describe Mary’s child,
the incarnate Son of God who would save his people from their
sins.

B. From Bethlehem

when the wise men arrive in Jerusalem

they go to the King Herod

Micah 5:1–5 (NASB95)

2“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, 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.”

3Therefore He will give them up until the time When she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren Will return to the sons of Israel.

4And He will arise and shepherd His flock In the strength of the Lord, In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they will remain, Because at that time He will be great To the ends of the earth.

5This One will be our peace. When the Assyrian invades our land, When he tramples on our citadels, Then we will raise against him Seven shepherds and eight leaders of men.

Matthew 2:1–6 (NASB95)

1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying,

2 “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.
5 They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:
6 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; For out of you shall come forth a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

II. Luke

A. Jesus is the promise to Abraham

Mary speaks out in a song
commonly known as the Magnificat

Luke 1:46–56 (NASB95)
46 And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord,
47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
48 "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.
49 "For the Mighty One has done great things for me; And holy is His name.
50 "And His mercy is upon generation after generation Toward those who fear Him.
51 "He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart.
52 "He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble.
53 "He has filled the hungry with good things; And sent away the rich empty-handed.
54 "He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy,
55 As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his descendants forever."
56 And Mary stayed with her about three months, and then returned to her home.

Genesis 12:1–3 (NASB95)
1 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;
2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;
3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Galatians 3:8–9 (NASB95)
8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations will be blessed in you."
9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

Acts 3:25 (NASB95)
25 "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

B. Light to the Gentiles and glory to the people of Israel

Simeon who was waiting for the messiah

Luke 2:28–32 (NASB95)
28 then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,
29 "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word;
30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation,
31 Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
32 A Light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

Isaiah 9:1–7
Isaiah 9 (NASB95)
1 But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.
2 The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them.
3 You shall multiply the nation, You shall increase their gladness; They will be glad in Your presence As with the gladness of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
4 For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.
5 For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult, And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire.

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.

7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

IV. So What?

1. He has a plan

Genesis 3:14–15 (NASB95)

14The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;

15And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

from that point on
so many things happened
that one might think would get in the way

1. the captivity of Israel in Egypt

2. the nation of Israel divided

3. the failure of the many Kings

David - not permitted to build the temple
- his hands were tainted by blood from battle

Solomon - drifted

then the long list of kings
some good
but many bad

4. Herod and his crimes
killing of all the children

5. God sent his son when everything was just right

Galatians 4:4 (NASB95)

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

6. One of the hardest lessons for any of us in life

is learning to trust the Lord
to have faith

to believe that when things are going well
that He is still in control

1 Peter 5:6-7

Therefore humble yourselves under the might hand of God that he may exalt you at the proper time

casting all your anxieties on Him, because he cares for you

2. He is true to His word

Luke 2:25–35 (NASB95)

25 And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

26 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.

27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law,

28 then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word;

30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

31 Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

32 A Light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

33 And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him.

34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed—

35 and a sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

God is True To His Word

Deuteronomy 7:9 (NASB95)

9 "Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

Psalms 33:4 (NASB95)

For the word of the Lord is upright, And all His work is done in faithfulness.

Hebrews 10:23 (NASB95)

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

3. He cares

John 3:16 (NASB95)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Titus 2:11–14 (NASB95)

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

4. There is hope

A. Because of what He has already done

1 John 4:9–10 (NASB95)

9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Galatians 4:4–5 (NASB95)

4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

B. because He is not yet done

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (NASB95)

- 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.
18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Concluding Statement

not everyone gets excited about prophecy
but both Matthew and Luke
relied heavily on Old testament prophecy
to make clear the identity of Jesus

God has always been clear
for those who are willing to listen

God has been active in history
and is still at work today

God made some promises centuries ago
and Christmas is a time to celebrate
how God has kept His promises
and to celebrate Jesus and His birth

Everything happened just the way God wanted it
everything went according to plan
there was no plan B

and so perhaps we should join with chorus

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

Appendix - Prayer

Thurs.

Lord give me peace today
help me to trust you with my life

Sat.

give me courage
give me calm
give me clarity
help me to relinquish control
Lord help me to trust you
help me to relax