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December's memory verse:

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

At the end of this message, you will find a Christmas Reflection by Doug Greenwold

Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus Christ, ODBC 2020

"What is a prophecy?"

A prophecy is the future told in advance by God through a prophet.

"The Bible contains 1,817 individual prophecies concerning 737 separate subjects found in 8,352 verses. These numerous prophecies comprise 27 percent of the 31,124 verses in the whole of the Scriptures.

The first prophecy

Genesis 3:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

The church fathers found in this verse a fuller meaning that would one day be realized in the Messiah, when a representative of all humans would strike the serpent, the representative of the forces that oppose God, with a fatal blow. That victory would put an end to the enmity between the serpent and humankind. As Scripture unfolds God's design, it becomes clear that the one to achieve such a major victory is the Messiah, but it would take centuries before any audience would see that meaning in this text. Understanding the Bible Commentary Series – Genesis.

"Isn't 'fulfilled prophecy' just a guess or luck or coincidence?"

Isaiah 48:2-5 (NKJV)

² For they call themselves after the holy city, And lean on the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts is His name:

³ "I have declared the former things from the beginning; They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did *them*, and they came to pass.

⁴ Because I knew that you *were* obstinate, And your neck *was* an iron sinew, And your brow bronze,

⁵ Even from the beginning I have declared *it* to you; Before it came to pass I proclaimed *it* to you, Lest you should say, 'My idol has done them, And my carved image and my molded image Have commanded them.'

2 Peter 1:19-21 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;

²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,

²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (NKJV)

¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

"Does the Old Testament contain any prophecies about the Messiah?"

Yes! The Old Testament contains about ***FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE*** prophecies about the Messiah. Here is a small sample.

BE BORN AS A HUMAN MALE

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ For unto us a **C**hild is born, Unto us a **S**on is given; And the government will be upon **H**is shoulder. And **H**is name will be called **W**onderful, **C**ounselor, **M**ighty **G**od, **E**verlasting **F**ather, **P**rince of **P**eace.

Why is the Father mentioned, when talking about the Son? Listen to **John 10:30 (NKJV)** ³⁰ I and My Father are one."

⁷ Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. **700 B.C.**

Mark 1:1 (NKJV)

¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

John 1:1-3 (NKJV)

- ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
² He was in the beginning with God.
³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

John 1:14 (NKJV)

- ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

BORN OF A VIRGIN

Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)

- ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. **700 B.C.**

Matthew 1:20-23 (NKJV)

- ²⁰ But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.
²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."
²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:
²³ "*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*" which is translated, "God with us."

FROM THE HOUSE OF JUDAH

Isaiah 37:31 (NKJV)

- ³¹ And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, And bear fruit upward. **700 B.C.**

You will not find this verse in your notes. I added it after I printed the handouts.

Revelation 5:5 (NKJV)

- ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

Matthew 1:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:
² Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.

Matthew 1:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,
⁶ and Jesse begot **David the king**. David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah.

Matthew 1:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

FROM THE ROOT AND STUMP OF JESSE**Isaiah 11:1-5 (NKJV)**

¹ There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of **Jesse**, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

³ His delight *is* in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

Isaiah 11:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ "And in that day there shall be a Root of **Jesse**, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious."

700 B.C.

Romans 15:12 (NKJV)

¹² And again, Isaiah says: "*There shall be a root of Jesse; And He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, In Him the Gentiles shall hope.*"

And again the genealogy verses

Matthew 1:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:
² Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.

Matthew 1:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,
⁶ and Jesse begot **David the king**. David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah.

Matthew 1:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

FROM THE HOUSE OF DAVID

Isaiah 16:5 (NKJV)

⁵ In mercy the throne will be established; And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness." **700 B.C.**

Matthew 1:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

² Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.

Matthew 1:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot **Jesse**,

⁶ and Jesse begot **David** the king. David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah.

Matthew 1:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

BORN IN BETHLEHEM EPHRATHAH

Micah 5:2 (NKJV)

² "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, From everlasting." **700 B.C.**

Matthew 2:1 (NKJV)

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,

Over the years there have been a number of "Bethlehems" in Israel. At the time of Jesus' birth, Bethlehem Ephrathah, referred to in Matthew as "Bethlehem in Judea", was a village about five miles south of Jerusalem, and there also was a town named Bethlehem about seven miles northwest of Nazareth. (Per footnote Matthew 2:1 of the Zondervan NIV Study Bible, 10th Anniversary Edition, (c) 1995)

BE FROM NAZARETH OF GALILEE

Isaiah 9:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ Nevertheless the gloom *will not be* upon her who *is* distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of **Zebulun and the land of Naphtali**, And afterward more heavily oppressed *her*, *By* the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In **Galilee** of the Gentiles. ² The people who walked in darkness Have seen a **great light**; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. **700 B.C.**

Matthew 2:22-23 (NKJV)

²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of **Galilee**.

²³ And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Matthew 4:13-16 (NKJV)

¹³ And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of **Zebulun and Naphtali**,

¹⁴ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

¹⁵ *"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:*

¹⁶ *The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."*

HIS BIRTH WOULD TRIGGER A MASSACRE OF INFANT BOYS

Jeremiah 31:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Thus says the LORD: "A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation *and* bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted for her children, Because they *are* no more."

625 B.C.

Matthew 2:16-18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

¹⁸ *"A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more."*

An interesting side note: most people think that Herod killed **thousands** of babies. However, Bethlehem was "in the boondocks." The chances are that less than thirty babies were killed.

COME OUT OF EGYPT

Hosea 11:1 (NKJV)

¹ "When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son. **725 B.C.**

Matthew 2:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for

Egypt,

¹⁵ and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "*Out of Egypt I called My Son.*"

MISSION WOULD INCLUDE THE GENTILES (Yea, that's us!!!)

Isaiah 42:1-6 (NKJV)

¹ "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One *in whom* My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

² He will not cry out, nor raise *His voice*, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.

³ A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth.

⁴ He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law."

⁵ Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it:

⁶ "I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, **700 B.C.**

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 (NKJV)

¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Church, Jesus is coming back again and I believe it will be very soon!

Reflection - Caesar Augustus and "The Fullness of Time"

by Doug Greenwold, Preserving Bible Times Ministry

Luke opens his historical narrative by informing us that Herod the Great was in power, a bitter reminder that Rome occupies the land. To a devout Jew, this was a dark and oppressive time; Roman occupation was viewed as the equivalent of the kingdom of evil ruling the land.

Walk in Zechariah's sandals with his mindset around 7 BCE. Every time he returned to Jerusalem to serve in the Temple, he saw Roman soldiers standing guard in the Temple's colonnade and wondered, "*How long must the nation wait?*" And whenever he thought about waiting, he achingly remembered how long Elizabeth and he had waited for a son, waiting until all hope was now (seemingly) gone.

The Jews' waiting with unfulfilled longings is a central theme of Advent. The "disasters" brought upon Israel in what is termed the Intertestamental Period began when Alexander the Great conquered the Land in 332 BCE. His conquest brought polytheism, Greek Philosophy, and a lifestyle of hedonism to this monotheistic, ritual purity focused "*land of milk and honey.*" Then the situation worsened in 63 BCE when pagan Rome invaded the Land. How could God allow this to happen? Where is God? Why is He so silent?

The nation of Israel had been waiting for a long time - over 400 years (since Malachi). To the Hebrews of the Bible, God is what God does. The Jewish mind is not conceptual, philosophical; it is concrete, behavioral. And for centuries now it certainly appeared as if God hasn't done anything for His people. No prophets. No deliverance miracles. No Messiah. Has *Yahweh* forgotten Israel?

God is always at work in history even when His people cannot discern it. It's His nature. After all, history is His Story! During Israel's dark time, God was setting the world's stage in preparation for His profound invasion of Grace in Bethlehem that would ultimately lead to a cross and an empty tomb.

As part of God's perfectly orchestrated (and timed) preparation, He used the Roman Empire to bring a civil peace to the known world. For the first time in history, a sense of predictable, physical safety freed people to ponder spiritual realities, *why am I here, what is life about?*

God positioned the world for the spread of His redemptive rescue and restoration "*Good News*" with a more flexible language. Hebrew was on the wane in Babylon and Aramaic was too linguistically limited. In contrast, Greek is more versatile, nuanced, and richer, using different voices and tenses. Furthermore, with its expansive lexicon, Greek was the perfect language for communicating Jesus' words and deeds, along with their implications in Paul's "theology." It was embraced as the language of the Empire that further set the stage for the bringing of the Gospel to a Roman world.

God even planned how best to spread His *Good News*. He orchestrated the Romans to build 80,000 miles of quality roads – the Interstate road system of its day – to function as the Gospel Highway. While the Roman Senate viewed that infrastructure asset as essential to administering the Empire and quickly moving Roman Legions from place to place to keep the peace, God could use it as a Gospel distribution network.

When Caesar Augustus becomes Rome's first Emperor, the world stage is set. The *fullness of time* (Galatians 4:4) has come. God is ready to use this Roman threefold advantage of civil peace, common language and road system to rapidly spread a new message: The Good News of

the life-saving, life-changing sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah on Calvary's Cross.

His plan was unfolded when the angel Gabriel was summoned and briefed for his earthly visitations. The first was to an unassuming priest named Zechariah who faithfully served *Yahweh* in this Land. The second to a (most likely) pre-teen girl in Nazareth named Mary.

With everything in place, the time was ripe for Jesus' humble birth in a small town, in a small country, intentionally positioned at the crossroads of the world of antiquity. God has been at work accomplishing His objectives. Only He knew it. And looking through the rear-view mirror of His Story, now we all know it!

The irony of all this is mind boggling. While the Jewish nation was chafing under Roman rule, with many praying for their concept of Messiah (political/military ruler) to come and deliver them, God was at work using the evil Roman Empire to prepare the earth for the coming of His only begotten (Suffering Servant) Son.

It's Advent. Rejoice! And relax! God is still at work setting the stage for what comes next in the global affairs of nations as well as in the details of your life and mine. The outcome of elections does not alter one iota His Eternal plan for the world and its nations. In fact they are used to impeccably move His plan forward in an unimpeded manner! His Kingdom always has supremacy over the world's kingdoms.

Rejoice as we prepare to celebrate the coming of the *fullness of time* yet again. Rejoice even as we continue to wait with unfulfilled (corporate and personal) longings. And relax; God knows what He's about and what He's doing. The perfection of His nature insures He will never make a mistake in your life or mine! Again, I say rejoice! It's Advent. Everything is ready - *the fullness of time* has come.