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December Memory Verse, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 (NKJV)

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.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

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

Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus Christ, ODBC December 15, 2024

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."

"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.

For each heading below, I will give you Old Testament Prophecy and New Testament fulfilment.

BE BORN AS A HUMAN MALE

Isaiah 9:6-7 (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.

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.**

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.

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."

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.

Matthew 12:16-21 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Yet He warned them not to make Him known,

¹⁷ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

¹⁸ "*Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles.*

¹⁹ *He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.*

²⁰ *A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory;*

²¹ ***And in His name Gentiles will trust.***"

MINISTRY WOULD INCLUDE MIRACULOUS HEALINGS

Isaiah 29:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. 700 BC

Isaiah 35:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

⁶ Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert. 700 BC

Luke 7:20-22 (NKJV)

²⁰ When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' "

²¹ And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

²² Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.

MESSIAH WOULD DELIVER SPIRITUAL CAPTIVES

Isaiah 61:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 700BC

Luke 4:16-21 (NKJV)

¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And

the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

²¹ And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

DESPISED AND REJECTED BY MEN

Isaiah 53:3-5 (NKJV)

³ He is **despised and rejected by men**, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 700 BC

The crucifixion narratives in all four Gospels show this prophecy fulfilled

HATED WITHOUT CAUSE

Psalms 69:4 (NKJV)

⁴ Those who **hate me without a cause** Are more than the hairs of my head; They are mighty who would destroy me, *Being* my enemies wrongfully; Though I have stolen nothing, I *still* must restore *it*. 1000BC

Isaiah 49:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Thus says the LORD, The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, **To Him whom man despises**, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, Because of the LORD who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You." 700 BC

John 15:24-25 (NKJV)

²⁴ If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; **but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.**

²⁵ But *this happened* that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, '*They hated Me without a cause.*'

REJECTED BY RULERS

Psalms 118:22-23 (NKJV)

²² The stone **which the builders rejected** Has become the chief cornerstone.

²³ This was the LORD'S doing; It *is* marvelous in our eyes. 400 BC

Matthew 21:42 (NKJV)

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: *'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD'S doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?*

REJECTED BY HIS OWN BROTHERS

Psalm 69:8 (NKJV)

⁸ I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children;
1000 BC

John 7:1-5 (NKJV)

¹ After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

² Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

³ His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing.

⁴ For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."

⁵ For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

SOLD FOR 30 PIECES OF SILVER

Zechariah 11:12 (NKJV)

¹² Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. 500 BC

Matthew 26:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests

¹⁵ and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.

SILVER USED TO BUY POTTER'S FIELD

Zechariah 11:13 (NKJV)

¹³ And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter"--that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter. 500 BC

Matthew 27:3-10 (NKJV)

- ³ Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,
- ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What *is that* to us? You see *to it!*"
- ⁵ Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.
- ⁶ But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood."
- ⁷ And they consulted together and **bought with them the potter's field**, to bury strangers in.
- ⁸ Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.
- ⁹ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "*And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced,*
- ¹⁰ *and gave them for the potter's field, as the LORD directed me.*"

DISCIPLES WOULD SCATTER

Zechariah 13:7 (NKJV)

- ⁷ "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion," Says the LORD of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd, And the **sheep will be scattered**; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones. **500 BC**

Matthew 26:31 (NKJV)

- ³¹ Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: '*I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.*'"

I have been covering prophecies concerned with the birth of Christ. Every one of them was fulfilled. This should give us the necessary faith to believe a couple more.

John 14:2-3 (NKJV)

- ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
- ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.**

Acts 1:10-12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

¹¹ who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? **This same Jesus,** who was taken up from you into heaven, **will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."**

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

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 this 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.