

## Christmas 2004 12-19-04

### The Seed

Christmas began in the heart of God before the creation of the world. God knew that the race of Adam would fall and therefore need a Savior. God knew that it would cost Him dearly. (Revelation 13:8) Included in the concept of redemption was the need for God to become man. That is why the prophetic promise that first came 6000 years ago, at the fall of man, included a hint of this salvation. The first couple walked with God in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:8) They had everything they could desire. They were the Creator's friends. Nevertheless, temptation entered the Garden, and they chose to rebel against God. It resulted in separation from God, decay, and death.

Adam and Eve heard God declaring to the Serpent that deceived Eve, <sup>15</sup> *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.*" Genesis 3:15 (NKJV) God was telling Satan that a descendant of Eve would one day take his authority away from him. What a promise for man to cling to over the next 4000 years of human history! We will follow this promise of a seed through the Scriptures this morning.

2000 years would pass before mankind had the next promise of redemption. The promise would come to the patriarch Abraham. He was called out of his country and from his family to go to a land of promise. By faith, he obeyed God. (Hebrews 11:8) God met with Abraham and gave him the next promise. <sup>18</sup> *"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."* Genesis 22:18 (NKJV) But let me give you the background to this promise. God had made good on His promise to give Abraham a son through his wife Sarah. Isaac was born to them when they were well beyond being naturally able to have children. He was 100 and Sarah was 90. (Genesis 17:17) It was truly a miraculous birth. When this promise came, Abraham had just taken his son to an altar at God's command. He believed that even if he sacrificed Isaac, that God could raise him from the dead. (Genesis 22:5) As he was about to sacrifice him, an angel stopped him. It was then that the promise of the seed was reiterated. The lineage of this promised seed had gone through Eve, and now through Sarah and her son Isaac. The prophecy now has an additional promise, through the Seed, all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

In regards to this promise, the Apostle Paul pointed out that, *"The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ."* Galatians 3:16 (NIV)

**Commented [notes1]:** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.  
Revelation 13:8

**Commented [notes2]:** <sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.  
Genesis 3:8 (NIV)

**Commented [notes3]:** <sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.  
Hebrews 11:8 (NIV)

**Commented [notes4]:** <sup>17</sup> Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"  
Genesis 17:17 (NIV)

**Commented [notes5]:** <sup>5</sup> He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."  
Genesis 22:5 (NIV)

God met with Isaac when he was older and renewed this same promise. (Genesis 26:4) Isaac had two children, Jacob and Esau. Like his parents before him, his wife did not readily conceive and give birth. It was only after much prayer that his sons were born. (Genesis 25:21) The promise will pass through one of them. If we were to have chosen the child, we might have selected Esau. He was his father's choice. In spite of Jacob's treachery and deceit, God chose him. While he was escaping from his brother, after tricking him out of the family blessing, he slept at Bethel where God met him in a dream. God renewed the promise to Jacob. <sup>14</sup> *"Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.* Genesis 28:14 (NKJV)

**Commented [notes6]:** <sup>4</sup> "And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; Genesis 26:4 (NKJV)

**Commented [notes7]:** <sup>21</sup> Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. Genesis 25:21 (NKJV)

Jacob had twelve sons through his two wives and their maids. With all the trouble with the birth of Isaac and Jacob, you wonder if God was not trying to keep the devil guessing by having so many children. We do not have a direct indication of the promise of the seed in any one son, but Jacob prophesied that Judah's descendants would rule and that his brothers would bow to (also means to worship) him. Jacob also prophesied that the nations would obey him. You can read the whole prophecy in Genesis 49:8-12.

**Commented [notes8]:** <sup>8</sup> "Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down to you. <sup>9</sup> You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness--who dares to rouse him? <sup>10</sup> The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. <sup>11</sup> He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes. <sup>12</sup> His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk. Genesis 49:8-12 (NIV)

Nothing again is said of the seed that would crush Satan's authority and bless the world until one thousand years after Abraham. Let us review the path of the Seed. 6000 years ago, the first prophetic promise was heard by Adam and Eve. 4000 years ago the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob each received an addition to the promise. Now we move to 3000 years ago and the promise is expanded more fully to the great King David. David was a descendent of Judah, through Jacob, Isaac, Abraham and ultimately Eve.

God took the youngest son of Jesse from herding sheep to become the king over the nation of Israel. David loved to sing praises to the LORD God. After his throne was established, he told the prophet Nathan that he wanted to build a temple for God. He felt guilty that his cedar palace was nicer than the tent in which God was worshipped. The LORD spoke to Nathan an incredible promise that we can add to the series of prophecies about the coming Messiah. Listen to just a part of that prophecy. <sup>12</sup> *"When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.* 2 Samuel 7:12-13 (NKJV) It is true that Solomon, David's son, built a temple, but ultimately God was speaking of something else.

The prophet Isaiah explains the heart of God in God's own words. <sup>1</sup> *This is what the LORD says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?" <sup>2</sup> Has not my*

hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word. Isaiah 66:1-2 (NIV) God was never looking for a building made out of cold stone; He wants to inhabit His people, living stones. (Ephesians 2:22) His plan was always to have humble, contrite people become His temple. Solomon did not fulfill this prophecy, for Solomon's reign came to an end. So, to whom was God referring?

**Commented [notes9]:** <sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. Ephesians 2:22 (NIV)

The line of the seed is now clarified to be through David, and we have the additional information that He will reign forever! Now, we know that this coming Messiah will deliver us from the authority of Satan, bless the nations of the world, and reign forever. (Psalm 89:35-37)

**Commented [notes10]:** <sup>35</sup> Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness-- and I will not lie to David--  
<sup>36</sup> that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun;  
<sup>37</sup> it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky." Selah Psalms 89:35-37 (NIV)

Then came the prophets with hundreds of details about the Seed that was to come. He was called the anointed One, from which the Greeks derived the name Christ. He is also referred to as the Son of David or the Branch of David, or simply, the Branch. (Isaiah 11:1-2) David gave the details of the betrayal of the Messiah and His death in prophetic psalms. (See Psalm 22) Isaiah told of how He would be a light to the Gentiles, (Isaiah 42:6) make the lame walk and the blind to see. (Isaiah 35:5-6) He also predicted the suffering and sacrifice that the Messiah would experience for us. (Isaiah 52:14) However, we are looking specifically at the birth, so let us look at the prophecies 700 years before the birth of Christ, 300 years after David.

**Commented [notes11]:** <sup>1</sup> A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.  
<sup>2</sup> The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD--  
Isaiah 11:1-2 (NIV)

<sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14 (NIV) He would be the Seed of the woman as God said from the beginning, not that of man. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. That was to be our sign. He would be called, "God with us", which is the meaning of Immanuel. It should have been understood that the Seed would be God in the form of man.

**Commented [notes12]:** <sup>6</sup> "I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles,  
Isaiah 42:6 (NIV)

Isaiah gives us a few more detail a couple of chapters later. <sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6-7 (NIV) A son is given? God so loved the world that He gave His only son... (John 3:16) Isaiah gives a few more names by which we will refer to Him: Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. He identifies Him as the recipient of the promises to David, to reign forever.

**Commented [notes13]:** <sup>5</sup> Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.  
<sup>6</sup> Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.  
Isaiah 35:5-6 (NIV)

**Commented [notes14]:** <sup>14</sup> Just as there were many who were appalled at him-- his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness--  
Isaiah 52:14 (NIV)

The picture was getting more complete and more wonderful as the time approached. Around the same time as Isaiah, Micah predicted the city in which

**Commented [notes15]:** <sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)

the Messiah would be born. <sup>2</sup> *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."* Micah 5:2 (NIV) Do you see the familiar theme, the ruler, predicted as far back as Jacob's prediction to Judah? Do you see the connection to the name Isaiah predicted in "Everlasting Father" in Micah's words, "whose origins are from of old"? Centuries later, when the wise men came to Herod, Herod asked his scholars where the king would be born. (Matthew 2:1-6) They referred to this prophecy from Micah and told them, "Bethlehem". Those wise men were looking for a sign because Daniel predicted the Messiah would come in that age. [Sing, We Three Kings #206 verses 1, 2, 5] Did you notice the theme of an eternal King in that carol?

Before the wise men saw the star there was a period of 400 years without any prophetic voice. It seemed that the predictions were coming closer and closer together and becoming increasingly detailed, but then came a silence that welled up in anticipation. Israel was in captivity of her enemies. It was the time similar to their bondage in Egypt. They needed a deliver like Moses. Indeed, Moses himself predicted, <sup>15</sup> *The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.* Deuteronomy 18:15 (NIV) A prophet like Moses, a deliverer? Moses delivered a whole new way to the people, the Law of God. Jesus was bringing a whole new way to the people, the way of grace. It was time for a new kind of deliverer to be born. Even in the Gentile world there was an expectation of new king in Israel. [Sing, O Come O Come Emmanuel #169] Did you hear the longing in that song for the Seed to come and disperse the gloom of night?

History was coming to turning point. 4000 years of prophecy and expectation were about to be fulfilled. God was again going to walk with man. He would be born of a virgin in Bethlehem; He will crush the authority of Satan and be bruised by Satan; He will become the eternal ruler of His people, He will be a prophet deliverer like Moses; He will be God with us; He will be our Wonderful Counselor; the Everlasting Father; the Prince of Peace. Could man have any greater hope?

In a little town of Nazareth, a town named after the prophecies of the Branch, because its residents were descended from David, a virgin was approached by an angel. Listen to the fulfillment of the prophetic promises in the angel's words. <sup>28</sup> *The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."* <sup>29</sup> *Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.* <sup>30</sup> *But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God."* <sup>31</sup> *You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.* <sup>32</sup> *He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,* <sup>33</sup> *and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom*

**Commented [notes16]:** <sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."  
<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.  
<sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.  
<sup>5</sup> "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:  
<sup>6</sup> "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."  
Matthew 2:1-6 (NIV)

will never end." <sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Luke 1:28-35 (NIV)

To us a Son is given, the Son of God. For nine months God dwelt among us in the womb of Mary until the day ordained of God from before time began. As the time for the birth approached, the government of Rome called all Israel to their town of their clans for a census. That meant that Joseph and Mary would have to journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. [Sing O Little Town of Bethlehem #178] The hopes and fears of all the years were met in Bethlehem that night as one of David's prophetic songs was fulfilled, "You are my Son, this day have I begotten you." Psalm 2:7 The Son of God was born, all God and all man. [Sing, Joy to the World #171] The wonder of the love of God was manifest in the incarnation.

God entered the work of His own hands. The One who would take authority from Satan was born a tiny baby boy. The One through Whom the world would be blessed had arrived. The One who would reign forever was among us. Who would have guessed that the long awaited seed would be born in a stable to impoverished parents? Who would have dreamed that the attendants at His birth would be shepherds? The only fanfare was a choir of angels over a field of sheep. [Sing, Hark the Herald Angels Sing #184] Glory to the newborn King! The solution to the fall of man had come.

4000 years of prophecy came to fulfillment that night in Bethlehem. The Seed of Eve through the patriarchs and King David had arrived, and in the words of Daniel the prophet 500 years earlier, He had come to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. (Daniel 9:24) What a job for this little one that lay in feed trough! I do not know if you believe this incredible story. There has never been any evidence to disprove it, and discovery after archeological discovery is verifying that these prophecies took place as recorded over millenniums. Countless lives have been transformed by this truth.

This child grew to manhood, sinless, miracle worker, and victor over death and hell. He claimed that He came to fulfill Daniel (Mark 14:62; Daniel 7:13-14) and Isaiah's prophecies (Luke 7:22), to put an end to your sin and mine, to atone for our wickedness. (Matthew 20:28) It is the greatest hoax the world has ever seen, or that little baby was the Son of God, incarnated to save you and me from the punishment we deserve. I have presented just a bit of the evidence through fulfilled prophecies related to His birth. We could go on and share dozens more related to His death. However, it is up to you to decide, what will you do with the babe in the manger, the fulfillment of millenniums of prophetic hope? Is He your King? Does He reign in you? He alone is worthy!  
[Close with chorus: O Come Let Us Adore Him]

**Commented [notes17]:** <sup>24</sup> "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.  
Daniel 9:24 (NIV)

**Commented [notes18]:** <sup>62</sup> Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."  
Mark 14:62 (NKJV)

**Commented [notes19]:** <sup>13</sup> "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.  
<sup>14</sup> Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.  
Daniel 7:13-14 (NKJV)

**Commented [notes20]:** <sup>22</sup> So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.  
Luke 7:22 (NIV)

**Commented [notes21]:** <sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."  
Matthew 20:28 (NIV)