



Jesus the Messiah

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

Psalm 2 Hebrews 9:26b-28 Luke 1:26-38

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Throughout this Advent season, we have been looking at how the **Gospel of Matthew** prepares us for the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.

Matthew begins with the “*genesis*” of Jesus; signaling that *in Jesus* a **New Creation** was being formed where sin’s death and destruction is overturned; *Jesus* brings life and restores us to our Creator-Father. This New Creation is formed through Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. This New Creation comes to you through faith in Jesus. Faith is like being “**born again**” --- this time without sin and death; you are born again in the waters of **Holy Baptism**; you are born again into **God's Family!**

Matthew teaches us that Jesus is the **Son of Abraham** and **the Son of David**. The promise to Abraham was that one of his descendants would *bless the entire earth*; and the promise to David was that one of his descendants would be *a Great King with an eternal Kingdom!* **Jesus is that Great King with an eternal Kingdom who blesses the entire world!** Jesus is the King of the Jews who was crucified on a cross to pay for the sins of every single person ever conceived. His death --- and His resurrection --- bless the entire earth and bring the eternal Kingdom of God to all people! Jesus is the promised **Son of Abraham** and **the Son of David!**

Matthew also teaches us the Christmas story from Joseph’s viewpoint. The angel’s words, along with the witness of the Old Testament prophecies, reveal that Jesus is Immanuel: God with us. **God is with us to save us** in the person of Jesus Christ!

The most important thing that Matthew highlights and teaches us in preparation for the Christmas celebration is that Jesus is the **Christ**, the

long awaited **Messiah** of the Old Testament¹. The Messiah was the Savior that God promised would come throughout the Old Testament times. From Genesis to Malachi --- all the way through the Old Testament --- many promises were made about the Messiah.

- † To **Adam and Eve**, God promised that the Messiah would crush Satan's head, the very one who led Adam and Eve into sin.
- † To **Moses**, God promised that the Messiah would be a great prophet, who would speak the very words of God.
- † To **Isaiah**, God promised that *a child would be born, and a son would be given* who will bring light to those in thick darkness
- † To **Micah**, God promised that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem
- † To **Malachi**, God promised a messenger who would prepare the way for the Messiah --- we know that messenger today as John the Baptist.

There are 100s of promises in the Old Testament that are fulfilled only in **Jesus, the Messiah**: in **Jesus Christ**. By focusing on Jesus as the Messiah, *the "Christ"*, Matthew is teaching us that all the Old Testament prophecies will come true in Jesus! God is faithful; He keeps His word and promises to us!

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas this week, it is also important to note the movement of history.

Matthew makes it clear that **ALL OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY** – all 4,000 years of it since the creation of the world, each generation was moving **towards Christ**. God was at work in each generation, through all the stories and people of the Old Testament, and even through the events of world history, God was at work to bring about the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem. **Everything that happened in the Old Testament times --- secular and sacred --- was moving towards the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.** In Bethlehem, Jesus was born in humility, in a manger, with few people even realizing what happened. That first "*advent*" of Jesus was to pay for our sins... He lived a perfect life for us and He died a

Even now, secular world history itself is divided by, focused on and defined by the **Messiah/Christ:**

BC is before Christ;

AD is after Christ,

or "*in the year of our Lord*".

¹ Matthew emphasizes that Jesus is the Messiah in Matthew 1:1, 16, 17, & 18. *Messiah* is an Old Testament Hebrew word that means "*anointed*"; and it is translated into New Testament Greek as "*Christ*". "**Jesus Christ**" means "*Jesus is the Christ*" or "*Jesus is the Messiah*". "*Christ*" is a title for the Savior, **not** a last name for Jesus.

sacrificial death for us. In humility, He did the work of salvation *on our behalf*.

Just as all Old Testament History was moving towards Jesus the Messiah, born in Bethlehem, so too, **ALL NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY** is **NOW MOVING** towards Jesus, the Christ. We are not moving towards his first Advent in Bethlehem, but we are moving towards His second Advent on the Last Day. **God is at work in each generation, including our lives, and even through the events of world history, to bring about the return of Christ on the Last Day. Everything that is happening in the Church and in the World is moving towards the return of Jesus on Judgment Day.** On the Last Day, Jesus will return with great glory, in the clouds of heaven, and every single eye will see him! In full majesty and power, Jesus will judge and condemn the unbelievers for their unbelief, rebellion and immorality, and He will take those who trust in Him to their eternal home in Heaven.

**HISTORY always MOVES TOWARDS JESUS
THE MESSIAH/CHRIST ---
as it did in the Old Testament times,
so now it is in the New Testament times!**

That means that every single person is heading towards a face-to-face meeting with Jesus – *including you!* It doesn't matter if you believe in Jesus or not --- your life is heading straight towards Him and you can't change that.

The only way to be ready to meet Jesus – at death and on the Last Day – is to trust in him.

And this is the great **IRONY** of all this:
the only way to be prepared for **Jesus' second Advent**
is to trust in **His first Advent!**

The Good News – the Christmas Gospel --- is that Jesus was born in Bethlehem for you and your salvation. He is the Savior God sent for you.

He is the long-promised Messiah of the Old Testament that rescues you from your sins by His life, death, and resurrection.

On that Final Day --- **when your life stops before Jesus** --- the only thing He is going to look for is faith. Do you believe He is your Savior? Do you believe He is the Messiah -- the Christ -- of the Old Testament? Do you believe He was born in Bethlehem to take your sins away? Do you believe that **God is with us to save us** in the Person of Jesus Christ?

**If so, you will live forever in the Kingdom of heaven.
If not, you will be condemned and die in your unbelief.**

All of history --- and every single person --- is moving towards a meeting with Jesus --- the only way to be prepared for **Jesus' second Advent** is to trust in **His first Advent!**

So, make sure on this final Sunday of Advent that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: realize Who He is and understand what He is done for you! Matthew has prepared us by teaching us that...

- + Jesus is the **New Creation** who ushers in the new era of salvation. Jesus will overturn and restore everything that Adam corrupted and destroyed in the original creation.
- + Jesus is the **Christ**; the long-promised Messiah of the Old Testament. He is the One God sent for you.
- + Jesus is the **Son of David** --- a great King with an eternal Kingdom;
- + Jesus is the **son of Abraham**, Who will bless the entire world.
- + Jesus is Immanuel, **God Himself**; conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

**REALIZE WHO HE IS
AND UNDERSTAND WHAT HE IS DONE FOR YOU!**

Amen!