

protests, exactly enough delay was caused, and all in the actual course of events, so that when the enrolment was put in force in Judea the exact time had come for Mary to give birth to her Child (Luke 2:1-3)."

- 5) Lockyer then quotes Dr F. J. Meldau saying, "Neither Mary nor Caesar nor the Roman tax collectors did the *timing*, nor were they in charge of affairs; but the God who rules the world behind the scenes had His hand on the wheel, and He literally 'moved the peoples of the world' and timed everything to the very day, so that Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem in *the nick of time*, that Jesus, the chosen Messiah, might be born in the right place designated by the infallible finger of prophecy."
- 6) God's precise time for Christ's birth was before the Romans destroyed the temple in 70 A.D.
  - a) (Malachi 3:1) "*Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.*"
  - b) (Haggai 2:7) "*And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.*"
  - c) (Zechariah 11:13) "*And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.*"
- 7) If Christ had been born just a few years later, these prophecies could not have been fulfilled.

**Conclusion:** When the fullness of time was come, God sent His son. When the fullness of time is come, Christ will rapture His bride to heaven. God's time is always perfect. He is never a moment early and never a second late. Have faith in God!

**Song:** Jesus is Coming Again 151

# The Time of Christ's Birth

20 December 2020 PM – Galatians 4:4 – Christmas – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** In Matthew 2:1, we read, "*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,*" Thus, we know that Herod was yet alive when Christ was born. Historian Josephus states that an eclipse of the moon occurred shortly before Herod's death. That eclipse took place in March of 4 B.C. Therefore, Christ could not have been born later than March/April of 4 B.C. Pentecost, *The Words & Works of Jesus Christ*, p. 56

Pentecost continues, "Although the exact date may not be pinpointed it seems that there is 'a relatively old tradition of a midwinter birth, therefore a date in December or January is not in itself unlikely.'" p.57

God has not revealed to us the exact date on which Christ was born, but we know that it was the timing was perfect.

**Transition:** As we consider the time of Christ's birth, I want us to note that it was Planned, Predicted, and Precise that these facts might fortify our faith.

## 1. The Time of Christ's birth was Planned

### a. God planned it before the world began

- 1) (2 Timothy 1:9) "*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*"
- 2) (Titus 1:2) "*In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*"
- 3) In eternity past, God knew that the humans He would create would sin and need Him to become a man to save them. Thus, over 6,000 years ago, God planned the birth of Christ.

### b. God introduced His plan in Genesis

- 1) When Adam and Eve did sin, God introduced His plan to the human race. (Genesis 3:15) "*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*"
- 2) We can follow that promised "seed" of the woman in the Old Testament and find it fulfilled in the New Testament.

(Galatians 3:16) "*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*"

## 2. The Time of Christ's birth was Predicted

### a. Jacob spoke of it.

- 1) Jacob, speaking to his sons before he died, spoke prophetically of the birth of Christ. (Genesis 49:10) "*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*"
- 2) *Shiloh* speaks of the Messiah. The word "*come*" means to fill a void by entering it. <sup>AHLB</sup>

### b. Balaam predicted it.

- 1) Balaam is a strange fellow. He spoke with God and for God, but he certainly did not act very godly.
- 2) However, in his prophecy he mentioned a Star and a Sceptre, both of which have reference to the birth of Christ. (Numbers 24:17) "*I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.*"

### c. Daniel dated it.

- 1) (Daniel 9:25-26) "*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*"
- 2) Though some scholars think Daniel's dating began with the Cyrus' order to rebuild the temple, most believe it began from the order to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. These somewhat complicated calculations lead us to the time of Christ's life on earth.

## 3. The Time of Christ's birth was Precise

### a. He was born in the fullness of time.

- 1) (Galatians 4:4) "*But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,*"
- 2) (Ephesians 1:10) "*That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.*"
- 3) Christ was born precisely when God's timing was fully ready. After 4,000 years from Creation, the fullness of God's time was come.

### b. He was born exactly on time

- 1) (Luke 2:1) "*And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.*"
- 2) (Luke 2:11) "*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*"
- 3) God gave Mary conception at the exact time He planned. Her time to give birth came at the exact right time. The events of their lives meshed to fit God's exact time for Christ's birth.
- 4) Herbert Lockyer, in *All the Messianic Prophecies of the Bible*, tells us that Sir William Ramsay, an archaeologist and Bible scholar, "*In 1923 discovered at Ankara, Turkey, a roman temple inscription which stated that in the reign of Caesar Augustus there were three treat tax collections. The second was ordered four years before the birth of Christ; the third, several years after His birth. The second special tax was the one the proud Jews resented; so they sent a commission to Rome to protest about it. Quirinius, the local governor of Syria, did not have the authority to settle the problem. Further, those were days of slow communications and slower travel, and as the commission finally failed, the Jews had to submit to the enrolment and taxing. By the time the official tax collectors had worked their way eastward, town by town, and after the time-consuming delays caused by the Jewish*