

Before The Manger; After The Cross

Part 1

Mic 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, [though] thou be little among the thousands of Judah, [yet] out of thee shall he come forth unto me [that is] to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth [have been] from of old, from everlasting.

The Jewish leaders believed this verse spoke of the promised Messiah.

Mt 2:1 ¶ 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, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

The wise men departed and found the child. In verse eleven, we are given the child's mother's name.

V.11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

In verse thirteen, we are given the child's earthly father's name.

V.13 ¶ And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

Let us notice that King Herod's advisors left out part of the scriptures pertaining to the one born to be the King of the Jews...the last part.

"...whose goings forth [have been] from of old, from everlasting."

This promised child existed before He was born.

The messiah the Jews expected was described in the Old Testament and a descendent of King David.

2Sa 7:12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

He is also described as a supernatural being ruling over an eternal kingdom.

Da 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, [one] like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

He is to be a descendant of David, yet David called him Lord.

The two fold identity of the Messiah was a mystery to the very prophets who wrote of him.

The prophets foretold his suffering and death, but also that he would not see decay; so he would die and yet live.

The Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah did not point to two individuals.

They foretold and described a single individual with two natures.

This is the essence of Isaiah's famous declaration about, "a child born..."

Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Notice the child born is "The everlasting Father."

Notice the child born will rule upon the throne of David.

Notice the child born will rule forever.

Notice that this is a work of God.

The New Testament writers brought this mysterious messiah into focus in a single person; the person, Jesus Christ.

How could God be born into His creation?

Mt 1:18-25

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. 21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. 23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. 24 And when

he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

His name is Jesus.

He existed long before the manger. Without Him, there would be no manger, stable, or world to hold them.

The writers of the New Testament attested Jesus divinity.

Joh 1:1-17

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made 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. 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Examine a few points.

V.2 The same was in the beginning with God.

V.3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

V.14 And the Word was made 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.**

Later writers agreed with the gospel authors.

Col 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Jesus did not deny His eternal nature.

Joh 8:53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? 54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was, I am.**

Jesus also invites us to have faith in Him. He doesn't just present Himself as another messenger of God; but as one equal with God.

“...Jesus does not present himself merely as an example for faith but presents himself as the object of faith.” (J. Machen.)

Jesus did not consider it blasphemy to equate Himself with the Father.

Joh 5:19-23

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. 20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. 21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. 22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

V.23 “That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father...”

The birth of Jesus Christ is an event that is hard to fully comprehend.

The almighty, eternal God entered our limited time-space existence, that we may be able to enter His eternal existence.