

## Introduction

As many of you know, I spent much of my younger life living in Iran. I have many fond memories of Iran. It was a good place to live while the Shah was in power. Shah means king in Farsi. It was a monarchy when we lived there. One of those memories reminds me of Christmas. On October 26, 1967, the Shah of Iran was crowned as the Shahanshah, which means king of kings. Prior to that, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi did not feel that he deserved the title, but in 1967 he had himself crowned as Shahanshah.

It was in Iran, that Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar that he was the king of kings, or Shahanshah, to whom God had given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory. God had given Nebuchadnezzar a vision of what was to come in the future.

(Dan 2:37) “You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory.”

The Empress Farah was also coronated on that day as the Queen of Iran. There were parties and celebrations all over Iran. At that time I was living in the town of Masjed-I-Sulaiman, or MIS, and there were colored strings of lights hung all over the town. All of the major streets had lights and decorations. All of this was done in advance to prepare for and announce the coronation. It was quite an event, and all the colored lights reminded me of our colored lights at Christmas.

Like the announcement of the shahanshah, the announcement of the birth of the real King of Kings was announced in a most spectacular way. Gabriel made an announcement to Zacharias and Elizabeth that their petition has been heard and they are going to have a son. They were to name him John, and he was going to be great in God’s sight. He was going to prepare the way for the King of Kings. We covered all of this about John the Baptist last week, beginning with the prophecies from Isaiah and Malachi about the coming of the messenger to prepare the way of the Lord. John’s whole life, from his clothing to his food, all lined up with his message that people needed to repent and turn to the Messiah.

We are continuing our study of Mark 1:1-8, and we will end with the first part of Mark 1:9. Last week we focused on John the Baptist. In Mark’s introduction, he began by saying that this is the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It was not about John, although Jesus said there was none greater born of women than John. John prepared the way for the Lord, and He knew that it was not about him, but about Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God. Last week we looked at the prophecies about John the Baptist, beginning with the two prophecies in Isaiah and Malachi that Mark quotes. Those prophecies were not just about John; they were also about the Messiah. John was simply the messenger that prepared the way for the Messiah. This morning, we will look at the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah, beginning with the ones that Mark has given. We will look at the prophecies about the timing, the place, the virgin birth, the lineage and the deity of the Messiah. Last, we will look at the announcement of the coming of the King of Kings to the shepherds and their response.

(Mark 1:1-9) “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. {2} As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; {3} the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'make ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight'” ....{9} In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.”

## The Birth Of Christ

1. The Prophecies
2. The Announcement to the Shepherds
3. The Shepherds' Response to the Announcement

### 1. The Prophecies

We will begin by looking at the prophecies that relate to the timing. In verse two it says, "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet; "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way." The messenger had to come before the birth of Christ. We saw earlier that John was born six months before Jesus. The timing of Jesus' birth was coordinated with the coming of John.

(Mark 1:2) "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way."

In Mark 9:11-13, people asked Jesus, "Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" One of the reasons that they would reject Christ from being the Messiah is that they were waiting for Elijah to come first. Jesus answered, saying, "Elijah does first come and restore all things... But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him." Jesus lets them know that Elijah has come in the form of John the Baptist, and this is not a reason not to believe that Jesus is the Messiah. The gospel of Mark starts with the prophecies about John the Baptist because he had to come to fulfill the prophecies that God would send a messenger before the Messiah to prepare the way.

(Mark 9:11-13) "They asked Him, saying, "*Why is it* that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" {12} And He said to them, "Elijah does first come and restore all things. And *yet* how is it written of the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt? {13} But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him."

In Matthew 11:14-15, Jesus clarifies that John is Elijah. We saw in Luke that John came in the spirit and power of Elijah. This is not reincarnation. John came in the spirit and power of Elijah. John was the messenger that had been prophesied to come to prepare the way of the Messiah. The timing of the birth of Jesus was that it had to come right after John's birth.

(Matt 11:14-15) "And if you are willing to accept *it*, John himself is Elijah who was to come. {15} He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Historically, as we look at Christmas, we do not know the exact date of the birth of Christ. We celebrate it on December 25, but in all likelihood, it did not take place on that day. We find in Galatians 4:4 is that God had a timetable. It reads, "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law." God had a particular timetable and when it was time, the fullness of time, He sent Jesus. The fullness of time includes the coming of John the Baptist, all the prophecies that had to be given, the Roman empire being in place with roads and infrastructure, and the Greek language being spoken everywhere so that the gospel message could easily get sent out. We celebrate the coming of Christ at Christmas and the timing fit in with all the other prophecies.

(Gal 4:4) “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.”

In Isaiah 7:14, the prophet prophesied that a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. A virgin cannot bear a child, so this is an impossible thing, requiring divine intervention. The child would be Immanuel, which means God with us. The child would be fully God and fully man.

(Isa 7:14) “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”

We see the fulfillment of this prophecy in Luke 1:26-39. Six months after Elizabeth got pregnant with John the Baptist, Gabriel comes down from heaven a second time and makes another announcement, this time to Mary, who was a virgin and who was betrothed to Joseph. Gabriel told Mary that she was going to get pregnant and give birth to a Son. Let’s read the account.

(Luke 1:26-38) “Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, {27} to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. {28} And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you." {29} But she was very perplexed at *this* statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. {30} The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. {31} And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. {32} He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; {33} and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." {34} Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" {35} The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. {36} And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. {37} "For nothing will be impossible with God." {38} And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.”

Mary wanted to know how this was possible since she was a virgin. Gabriel told her that the Holy Spirit would come over her and overshadow her, and she would become pregnant with the Son of God. When Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant, he wanted to send her away secretly so as not to disgrace her. However, an angel of the Lord also appeared to Joseph and told him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife, that the child had been conceived of the Holy Spirit. So, he took her as his wife, but he kept her as a virgin until after the birth of Christ. We read this in Matthew 1:18-25.

(Matt 1:18-25) “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. {19} And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. {20} But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. {21} She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." {22} Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord

through the prophet: {23} "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US." {24} And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife, {25} but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus."

Micah prophesied about the place that the Messiah would be born. In Micah 5:2, he said, that the Messiah would come forth from Bethlehem. Micah also alluded to the deity of the Messiah, that His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.

(Mic 5:2) "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."

We see the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy in Luke 2:1-7. A decree went out from Caesar Augustus to take a census of all the inhabited earth. Everyone had to register in his own city. Joseph, who was living in Nazareth in Galilee, was a descendant of David, and so he had to go to Bethlehem to register. While they were there, the days were completed for Mary to give birth, and she gave birth in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. This account tells us that the location that Jesus was to be born, Bethlehem, was also executed exactly like God planned. It also tells us that Jesus was a legal descendant of the house of David, which fulfilled another prophecy.

(Luke 2:1-7) "Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. {2} This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. {3} And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. {4} Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, {5} in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. {6} While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. {7} And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

Mark wrote that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee. That is where Mary was when Gabriel came to her. In Luke 2:39-40, we read that after Joseph and Mary had performed everything according to the Law, they returned to Galilee to their own city of Nazareth. When Mark said that Jesus came from Nazareth, that was where they called home.

(Luke 2:39-40) "When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth. {40} The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

In Hosea 11:1 (and also Numbers 24:8), it was prophesied that God's Son would come out of Egypt. Mary and Joseph were from Nazareth and Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but this prophecy said that Jesus, God's Son, would come out of Egypt. His parents were from Nazareth, and He was born in Bethlehem. Afterwards, they went back to Nazareth. So how did Jesus get called out of Egypt?

(Hosea 11:1) "When Israel *was* a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son."

We find the answer and the fulfillment of this prophecy in Matthew 2:13-15. After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph went back home to Nazareth. But another angel appeared to Joseph, and told him to take Jesus and Mary to Egypt and remain there until he tells him to return. The angel told them that Herod was going to search for the child and try to destroy Him. So, Joseph got up while it was still dark and they left for Egypt. It was a good thing because Herod became enraged that the magi did not return to him and tell him the location of the newborn King. So, Herod slew all the male children in Bethlehem and its vicinity that were two years old and under. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were obedient to the angel and remained in Egypt until the death of Herod, when the angel once again appeared to Joseph and told him it was safe to return. This fulfilled the prophecy by Hosea that out of Egypt God would call His Son.

(Matt 2:13-16) “Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord \*appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him." {14} So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt. {15} He remained there until the death of Herod. *This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON."* {16} Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi.”

Isaiah also prophesied about the Messiah being eternal. He said a child will be born to us, and the government will rest on His shoulders. His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace. Jesus and the Father were one. Jesus is also the Eternal Father. Jesus is also the Mighty God. He is the Prince of Peace. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us.

(Isa 9:6) “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.”

This prophecy speaks to the deity of Jesus Christ. This child to be born is Mighty God. This child to be born is the Eternal Father. In Colossians 1:19 and 2:9, Paul wrote that the fullness of deity dwelt in Jesus in bodily form. Jesus and the Father were One.

(Col 2:9) “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,”

In John 1:1 we read that in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In verse fourteen, he wrote that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. That is referring to the Word that was God and was in the beginning with God, and who created all things.

(John 1:1-3) “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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.... {14} And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

In Genesis 1:1 we read that “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The Hebrew word for God is Elohim, which is the plural of El, the word for God. There were not multiple Gods. We have Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is One God and all three are part of the Godhead. It was Jesus, the Word, who created all things.

(Gen 1:1) “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

In 1 John 5:7, the King James reads, “there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.

(1 John 5:7 KJV) “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

Isaiah also said in Isaiah 7:14 that this child born by the virgin will be called Immanuel. In Matthew’s account, he translates the Hebrew word for us, and tells us that it means, “God with us.” Jesus was not a god that was with us; Jesus was God Himself in the flesh.

(Is 7:14) “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”

(Matt 1:23) “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us.”

While looking at the deity of Christ, I want to revisit the initial prophesy that Mark gives. The first part is actually from Malachi, not Isaiah. The second part of the prophesy is from Isaiah. What I want you to notice is that in Mark, it reads, “I send My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way.” The messenger was preparing the way for the Messiah, so that is who the “You” is referring to. In Malachi, who Mark is quoting, it reads, “I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me.” God is speaking and God’s messenger, John, was going to prepare the way for God Himself, which is Immanuel, God in the flesh.

(Mark 1:2) “As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY;

(Mal 3:1a) “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me....”

Isaiah’s prophesy about the deity of Christ is significant. Cults and false religions that do not believe that Jesus is God. The Muslims say that Jesus is a prophet, but not God. The Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses say that Jesus was a god, but not God. The fullness of deity dwelt in Jesus in bodily form. It is very clear that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are One.

There were also specific prophecies about Jesus’ lineage. In Genesis 9:26, He would be a descendant of Shem. In Genesis 12:1-3, He would be a descendant of Abraham. In Genesis 26:3-4, He would be a descendant of Isaac. In Genesis 35:11-12, He would be a descendant of Jacob. In Genesis 49:10, Jesus would be a descendant of Judah. In 2 Samuel 7:12, He would be a descendant of David. All of these prophecies were fulfilled and are recorded in the genealogies of the birth of Christ in Matthew 1 and Luke 3.

<b>Lineage</b>	<b>Prophecy</b>	<b>Fulfillment</b>
Son of Shem	Gen 9:26	Luke 3:36
Son of Abraham	Gen 12:1-3	Matt 1:1, Gal 3:16
Son of Isaac	Gen 26:3-4	Matt 1:1-2
Son of Jacob	Gen 35:11-12	Matt 1:1-2
Son of Judah	Gen 49:10	Matt 1:1-3
Son of Jesse	Isa 11:1	Matt 1:1-5
Son of David	2 Sam 7:12	Matt 1:1, Luke 1:31-32

## 2. **The Announcement to the shepherds** (Luke 2:8-14)

All the details of the birth of the King of Kings had been prophesied and we have seen how they had been worked out. When it was time for Jesus to be born, God sent out an announcement of the occasion to some shepherds staying out in the field and keeping watch over their flock by night. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terribly frightened. They were not expecting this supernatural and unexpected visit by the angels. The glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terribly frightened.

(Luke 2:8-9) “In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. {9} And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.”

Why did the angel of the Lord appear to shepherds? One possible reason is found in the prophecy given to Micah that we looked at earlier. Micah had prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Now he says that “He will arise and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord.” It is fitting that God brought shepherds to witness and celebrate the birth of the Lord, who is our Shepherd.

(Micah 5:3-4) “...When she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel. {4} And He will arise and shepherd His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God. And they will remain, because at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth.”

The angel told the shepherds not to be afraid. He brought them good news of great joy which would be for all the people. Good news (euaggelizo) is normally translated as gospel. The gospel literally means good news. What is the good news? The good news is that in the city of David a Savior has been born. This Savior is the Christ, the Anointed Messiah that they have long awaited.

(Luke 2:10-11) “But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; {11} for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

The Scriptures say that all of us like sheep have gone astray, but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. All of us have sinned and are in need of forgiveness. The good news was that the Messiah was coming to take away the sins of the world.

(Isaiah 53:6) “All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”

Paul tells us in Romans that the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. What we have earned, or our wages for our sins, is death. Our souls are eternal and because of our sins, we are eternally separated from God. There is a chasm between us and God, which is our sins. The gospel or good news is that God sent His Son to be our Savior. This Savior was going to bear our iniquities or sins. This Savior was going to forgive us of all of our sins. This Savior was going to restore our relationship with God the Father. We can now have eternal life with God the Father. This is good news of great joy for all the people. This good news is available to all people. This good news that was announced to the shepherds is now being announced to all people.

(Rom 6:23) “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The shepherds were given a sign. The angel tells the shepherds that they will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. This was the sign that the angel gave to the shepherds so that they would know that this was the Christ. God gives us many signs. In fact, there are over ninety signs given by God to you and I. For example, the rainbow is a sign from God that He would never destroy the earth again by a flood.

(Luke 2:12) “This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly, after giving the shepherds a sign about the baby being in a manger, a multitude of heavenly host appear praising God and saying, “glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” The birth of the Savior is good news, and something to rejoice and praise God about. The birth of Jesus, the King of Kings, is something to celebrate. While we may not know the date, the celebration of the birth of Jesus, or Christmas, is a wonderful occasion.

(Luke 2:13-14) “And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, { 14 } "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”

### 3. **The Shepherds’ Response To The Announcement** (Luke 2:15-20)

When the angels had gone away, the shepherds began to discuss what they were going to do about this announcement from God that they had just been given. They said, “let us go straight to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.” So, they went in a hurry and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby in the manger, just as they had been told.

(Luke 2:15-16) “When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." { 16 } So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.”

Then, the shepherds relayed the statement that the angel had told them about Jesus. That statement was the good news. That statement was that this baby was the Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This baby was the anointed Savior and Messiah that they had been waiting for. This baby was the Lord. When we encounter the Lord Jesus Christ, it is normal to share the good news with others. These shepherds had just met the Lord, and they immediately began to tell others the good news.

(Luke 2:17) "When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child."

(Luke 2:11) "...there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

The shepherds did not just tell Mary and Joseph. Luke goes on to say that all who heard it wondered at the things that were told to them by the shepherds. These shepherds were excited about meeting the Messiah and continued to proclaim the good news everywhere they went. Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. Mary has been visited by Gabriel. She has been impregnated by the Holy Spirit while yet a virgin. She has just given birth to her Son, and now she is visited by shepherds who tell her that her baby is the Savior, Messiah, and Lord. She takes all of this in and treasures these things. She also pondered them in her heart. She continued to think about and meditate on all that had happened and been shared with her. The shepherds went back to their field and were glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen."

(Luke 2:18-20) "And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. {19} But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. {20} The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them."

### **Conclusion and Applications**

This morning, we have looked at the birth of the Christ. It was prophesied in advance. All the details of the prophecies had been worked out and fulfilled. The timing, the place, the virgin birth, the deity and the lineage had been prophesied and fulfilled. Last week I mentioned that a mathematician by the name of Peter Stoner gave the odds of just eight prophecies coming true about the Messiah. It was  $10^{17}$ . You might recall that he said you could take silver dollars and place them side by side in the State of Texas and they would be two feet deep. Then, if you marked just one of those silver dollars and told a blind man to find that one silver dollar, that is what  $10^{17}$  power is. There were 324 prophecies and every one of them has come true.<sup>1</sup>

An announcement was made to the shepherds and then to other people. A sign had been given, which was also fulfilled. When the shepherds heard the announcement, they wanted to go and see for themselves. They went seeking the baby in the manger. Some of you have been seeking. You have heard things and are seeking to find out for yourselves. God says that those who seek Him will find Him. The shepherds had been given a sign. We have also been given a sign. The sign was that Mary was born of a virgin. This sign for us has been fulfilled. Jesus is the Christ. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus Christ is Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> Stoner, Peter W. Science Speaks. Chicago: Moody Press, 1963, pp 100-107

The shepherds found Jesus. When they found Jesus they were filled with joy and began proclaiming this good news to others. Others of you have found Jesus. Like the shepherds, you can rejoice and share the good news with others. You can help others find the Christ.

This morning, how are you going to respond? Have you been seeking God in your life? Have you been searching for answers? Have you been looking for forgiveness and peace with God? A sign has been given to you, that Jesus was going to be born to a virgin. That good news has been shared with you. Are you going to receive this treasure in your heart? Have you made that decision? Have you received this treasure in your heart? This morning, if this is your desire, I ask you to pray this prayer with me.

*Father, thank You for this good news. Thank You for giving us a sign at Christmas time. Thank You for sending Your Son to take away my sins. I believe that Jesus is the Christ and I confess Him to be Lord. Jesus, I ask You to come into my life and forgive me for my sins. I ask You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I ask You to fill me with Your joy and peace this morning. Amen.*

The Bible says that “he who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” If you received Christ into your life this morning, you have eternal life. God does not want you wondering about your salvation. If you received Christ, you now have this treasure in your heart. Like the shepherds, go and tell others that you have found the Christ. Let me know. Let someone else know this morning that you have received Christ. There are things that you should know about how to grow in your relationship with Christ. We want to help you grow and mature as a believer.

(1 John 5:12-13) “He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. {13} These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

**Introduction** (Dan 2:37, Mark 1:1-9, Luke 3:23)

- 1. The Prophecies** (Mark 1:2, 9:11-13, Matt 11:14-15, Gal 4:4, Isa 7:14, Luke 1:26-38, Matt 1:18-25, Mic 5:2, Luke 2:1-7, 2:39-40, Hos 11:1, Num 24:8, Matt 2:13-16, Is 9:6, Col 2:9, John 1:1-3, Gen 1:1, 1 John 5:7, Is 7:14, Matt 1:23, Mark 1:2, Mal 3:1a, Gen 9:26, Luke 3:36, Gen 12:1-3, Matt 1:1, Gal 3:16, Gen 26:3-4, Matt 1:1-2, Gen 35:11-12, Matt 1:1-2, Gen 49:10, Matt 1:1-3, Isa 11:1, Matt 1:1-5, 2 Sam 7:12, Matt 1:1, Luke 1:31-32)

- 1. The Announcement to the shepherds** (Luke 2:8-14, Micah 5:3-4, Isa 53:6, Rom 6:23, Luke 2:13-14)

- 2. The Shepherds' Response To The Announcement** (Luke 2:11, 15-20)

**Our Response** (1 John 5:12-13)