

CHRISTMAS

at Chets

THE HOPE OF A SAVIOR

BIG IDEA: The long-awaited birth of Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God's promise.

DATE: Wednesday, December 3 and Sunday, December 7, 2025

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:4-20

OPENING QUESTION

Have you ever had to wait for something? Maybe you had to wait for the next season of your favorite show to come out or the next book in a beloved series. Or on a more serious note, maybe you had to wait for a medical diagnosis. Or for the birth or adoption of your child. Whatever the situation, none of us are immune to waiting.

What was something you had to wait for? How did you feel during that season of waiting? It can be easy to lose hope in the long spells of waiting. How did the waiting affect your attitude once the wait was over?

The Jewish people knew what it was like to wait on God. They were full of hope and anticipation for their long-awaited Savior. But it would be thousands of years before the prophecy was fulfilled and, in the meantime, they were exiled, enslaved, rescued, and wandered in the wilderness. It was not an easy road, and hope was lost many times.

SETTING THE STAGE

In the garden of Eden, right after Adam and Eve sinned, God made a promise that He would send a Messiah to make all things right. In the third chapter of the Bible, God warned Satan and gave a prophecy to the woman. This verse is known as the Protoevangelium – the “first Gospel.”

THE PROMISE OF A SAVIOR

READ: 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.”

In this one statement, God promised that the woman's offspring would defeat Satan and restore perfect communion between God and man. But that child wasn't born to Eve or any other Old Testament woman. For thousands of years, the Jewish people waited “expectantly” (Luke 3:15) for the promised Messiah to come.

Knowing that God had a plan for redemption from the very beginning, what does that teach us about God? About ourselves?

Why did God make this promise to Adam and Eve (and Satan as well?)

How does this promise point to Jesus as the ultimate hope for mankind? (Jesus is the one who crush Satan and rescue us.)

The prophets foretold a Messiah who would bring light to darkness. In Isaiah we see the prophecy of the virgin birth.

THE PROPHECY OF THE SAVIOR

READ: Isaiah 7:14

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

What does the name "Immanuel" mean, and why is it important? (God with us.) Share about a time Jesus has been "Immanuel" to you. (You felt His presence.)

How does this prophecy strengthen our confidence in God's promises? Why did God give prophecies about the Messiah throughout the Old Testament?

Although it was a long time to wait, God sent prophecies of the Messiah to remind His people of His promise. Jesus' birth in Bethlehem fulfilled centuries of prophecy. God kept His promise—He sent His Son to save us. Since God kept this most challenging promise, surely, He will keep *all* of His promises.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SAVIOR!

LUKE 2:4-20

Before you read, say something like, "And now the long-awaited Savior has come! He was first mentioned in Genesis and prophesied about in Isaiah (and throughout the Bible!) and now He has finally arrived. The prophecy has been fulfilled! God's promise has been kept!"

To have a little fun with the reading, assign the following parts to read today's scripture. You will need a narrator, an angel, a group of angels and a group of shepherds. You will see their parts below. Give each group a minute to find their part before you start reading.

LUKE 2:4-20 (NIV)

NARRATOR: So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them,

ANGEL: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

NARRATOR: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

GROUP OF ANGELS: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

NARRATOR: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another...

SHEPHERDS: "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

NARRATOR: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

DISCUSSION

SHARE: God, in His providence orchestrated every detail of this story. He knew that Mary and Joseph would be in a town far away from their home in Galilee. He knew that there would be "no guest room available" (Luke 2:7), as the modest accommodations of this tiny town were stretched with all the visitors for the census. He knew that Mary would labor and deliver, apart from her mom and aunts and other family friends. Yet God knew that this was the perfect time.

ASK: What circumstances would you expect a Savior to come in?

Have you ever experienced circumstances that seemed wrong to you, but God's timing ended up being perfect? What were they?

The Bible clearly states that "the time came" (v. 6). The NKJV translates this phrase as "the days were completed" and the KJV says, "the days were accomplished." God's timing is not our own, but we know this was the perfect time for the Messiah to come.

We don't know why this was the "fullness of time" or what made God decide the days were completed. Some suggest that the Roman Empire had brought political unity through their government and road systems, allowing the gospel to go forth more easily. Some believe that the Greek Empire had brought cultural unity with one common language. Others think that philosophy and mythology had reached their pinnacle, and people were now seeking a worldview with a Savior. Just as the Greeks had fashioned man into a god, God fashioned His Son into a man.

We don't for sure, but we know that God had promised to send a Messiah since the garden of Eden. And now it was time.

The most glorious announcement in history was delivered to shepherds first.

ASK: Why do you think God chose shepherds to send the angels to?

- What is God telling us about His Son in this portion of our narrative? What kind of Savior would He be?
- What does the angels' declaration mean? Why do you think they were compelled to praise?

The angels came proclaiming "Glory to God in highest heaven," and they were right to do so. God was on His throne, ruling and reigning as these messengers declared His praise. But, in this moment, "glory to God in the lowest" would have been fitting as well, because God had made Himself low. This is divine humility – that the God of highest heaven would join the filthiness of humanity, that He would sleep in the dirt.

Jesus was brought into the world like one of the lambs that beheld His glory. That night, God ruled from His throne in heaven and from a manger in Bethlehem. It's not incidental that shepherd and sheep were the first to behold the glory of Christ's incarnation. Jesus didn't come to earth in outward majesty like the people of Israel expected. Instead, He came gentle and lowly. He came as the Lamb.

Here in the shepherd's field, we find that true glory is in Christlikeness – in trading the highest place for the lowest place and finding Jesus there.

Perhaps you are suffering this Christmas, and you don't feel like rejoicing with the angels. Just as glory finds the shepherds in the dark, He will find you. Glory shines most brightly against the cover of the night. If you are sitting in darkness, you are in a wonderful position to behold Christ this Christmas.

THE RETURN OF THE SAVIOR

READ: Revelation 7:17 and 21:23

For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; 'he will lead them to springs of living water.' 'And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'"

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

Just as at His birth, He brought a ray of light into a dark world. When He returns it will be as a "sun of light" for all the world. **And remember that Jesus didn't stay in the manger—He lived, died, rose again, and is coming back! Our hope is not in circumstances, but in a living Savior. Hope is a person!**

RESPONSE

Although we are past the arrival of our Savior, we are still waiting for His return. As we wait, we should not lose heart because just as He fulfilled His promise the first time, we can be sure He will

do it again. We may be tempted to feel hopeless. Where have you felt hopeless in 2025? Perhaps a long-awaited prayer request has seemingly gone unanswered. Reflect on how God has been faithful in the past and look forward to 2026 with a newfound hope. The Savior has come and will come again!

CLOSE by reading the lyrics to this hymn before you pray:

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Excerpted from:

"The Bible Exposition Commentary" by Warren W. Wiersbe.

"Behold the Savior: Treasuring the Story of Christmas" by LifeWay.