

Promise of Christmas

“The English word "Christmas" is a shortened form of "Christ's Mass". The word is recorded as *Crīstesmæsse* in 1038 and *Cristes-messe* in 1131. *Crīst* (genitive *Crīstes*) is from Greek *Khrīstos* (Χριστός), a translation of Hebrew *Māšîaḥ* (מָשִׁיחַ), "Messiah", meaning "anointed"; and *mæsse* is from Latin *missa*, the celebration of the Eucharist.¹”

Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior Messiah. There was no need for a savior before the fall in the Garden of Eden. Once Adam willfully disobeyed God, then there was a need for salvation. The issue is covered in the book of Job in the “ten questions of Job.” I know, not the ten questions...again! But make no mistake, they are at the heart of salvation. Yes, Jesus paid the penalty of sin for all eternity. But, in order to be “saved” a person needs the righteousness of God as well as eternal life. Job started the conversation about righteousness. The book of Job is the oldest book in the Old Testament, the first book composed.

Job 4:17 (#1)‘Can mankind be just (righteous) before God? (#2)Can a man be pure before his Maker?

Notice the repetition of the concept of righteousness throughout the ten questions.

Job 8:3 (#3)“Does God pervert justice? (#4) Or does the Almighty pervert what is right (righteous)?

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas>

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Job 9:2 “In truth I know that this is so; (#5) But how can a man be in the right (righteous) before God?

Job 14:4 (#6) “Who can make the clean out of the unclean? No one!

At this point in history, Satan apparently thought that making clean out of the unclean was impossible for God without perverting His character. But “Christmas” would change all that.

Job 15:14 (#7) “What is man, that he should be pure, (#8) Or he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous (righteous)?

Whether he knew it or not, Job was pointing to the solution: who was to be born of a woman...the Messiah Yeshua.

Job 25:4 (#9)“How then can a man be just (righteous) with God? (#10) Or how can he be clean who is born of woman?

As Herman has said, it is not just about the penalty for sin, but there is a need to possess righteousness, the righteousness of God. Yeah, I just said that. But it is so important to keep this in mind. Luther was plagued by fear of not having righteousness. Before he understood the first chapter of Romans, he wished that God could be unrighteous and just make man righteous. But that would pervert God’s righteousness. Job specifically addressed that:

Job 8:3 (#3)“Does God pervert justice? (#4) Or does the Almighty pervert what is right (righteous)?

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God had to provide a remedy for judgment on sin and a means whereby God could impute righteousness and eternal life to man without perverting His own character. When God cursed Satan, the woman and man, he at the same time provided the first “good news” which theologians call the “First Evangelium” or First Gospel. It was the first promise of Christmas.

Genesis 3:14 The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

Some say that the bruise on the head of Satan is deadly. It is. Some say that the bruise on the heel is not deadly. Not true. Jesus died on the cross both spiritually and then physically. He died spiritually while bearing the sins of the world. But, because He was perfect, he was able to bear the sins of the world and live physically. Remember, He voluntarily gave up his physical life as a result of His mission on earth being complete. And in order to obtain a resurrection body. He received the first resurrection body.

Luke 23:44 It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour,

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Luke 23:45 because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two.

Luke 23:46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” Having said this, He breathed His last.

It is understood that the seed, or descendant mentioned in Genesis 3:15, is the anointed Messiah. As Scripture unfolds, more information is given about this seed. God promised. as Paul says in Romans chapter 1:

Romans 1:1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

Romans 1:2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,

...the gospel (good news) of God which He promised...

He promised. This is an interesting word. It is used only twice in the New Testament. Here and in 2 Corinthians 9:5. Proepaggello. This is made up of three parts pro (before) + epi (on) + angelo (announce). Epangello is used over 50 times in the New Testament. It is used in one of my favorite passages:

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

God promises; we believe; God acts. Faith-Rest.

This word is not used in the LXX translation of the Old Testament. Paul and other NT writers identify promises in the Old Testament. The gospel is one of those promises. In Romans 1:2, Paul adds “pro” identifying a promise God previously made in history. It started in Genesis 3:15 and continued through the four gospels.

According to Bruce Waltke, “After Genesis we do not hear again of the promised seed until God promises David a seed (2 Samuel 7:12), which should also be understood in all three ways (an immediate descendant, a distant offspring, or a large group of descendants). The unique fulfillment of this seed promise, Jesus Christ, comes into the world through the seed of the woman: the patriarchs and David. Paul refers to the seed of Abraham as the individual Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:16) but then also includes the church in Christ as Abraham’s seed (Rom 16:20; Gal 3:29).²”

Although the “promised seed” does not appear again until 2 Samuel 7:12, the word appears frequently in different contexts. But the lineage of the seed can be traced by the “begats” in the various genealogies. The seed is a noun. The “begats” are the dynamics of passing the seed (DNA) on to the next generation, down through the generations until a man born of a woman named Jesus. As Job said, “born of a woman.”

Throughout the Old Testament there are lists of men and their sons, the genealogies. These lists trace the descendants of Adam to the Christ. Matthew and Luke each have their lists that trace the seed. Matthew

² Bruce Waltke, Genesis: A Commentary

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traces the seed from Abraham to Christ. Luke goes all the way back to Adam. So from Genesis 3:15 all the way to Luke chapter 3 there is a record of this promise from God. It is a written promise. It was fulfilled by Jesus' blood, His work on the cross.

Galatians 3:15 Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

Galatians 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

Galatians 3:17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.

Before we go too far, let us consider the genealogies.

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

Genesis 5:4 Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had other sons and daughters.

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The word “seed” does not appear in the genealogies but the concept of procreation is included in the term “father” and “son.” In actuality, some of the translations say so and so became the father of... but the Hebrew word means to give birth to or as in the KJV says, “begat.” These genealogies are the source material for the genealogies of Matthew and Luke. They trace the seed of promise without using that specific term, but a related term.

The Genesis 5 genealogy is particularly interesting. The way it is written suggests to the modern mind, a spreadsheet. Many have pointed out that the flood and the death of Methuselah happen on the same year. We know that Methuselah was not on the ark. Some have taken his name in Hebrew to mean something like “After this it will happen.” But there is something else to take notice of.

Patriarch Name	Father's Age at Birth	Absolute Time (Birth)	Years after Birth of Son	Age at Death	Absolute Time (Death)	Scripture
Adam		0	800	930	930	Gen 5:3-5
Seth	130	130	807	912	1042	Gen 5:6-8
Enosh	105	235	815	905	1140	Gen 5:9-11
Kenan	90	325	840	910	1235	Gen 5:12-14
Mahalel	70	395	830	895	1290	Gen 5:15-17
Jared	65	460	800	962	1422	Gen 5:18-20
Enoch	162	622	300	365	987	Gen 5:21-24
Methuselah	65	687	782	969	1656	Gen 5:25-27
Lamech	187	874	595	777	1651	Gen 5:28-31
Noah	182	1056		950	2006	Gen 5:32
Shem	500	1556				
Flood					1656	

This spreadsheet is my work based upon Genesis chapter 5 & 10. There are other spreadsheets on the internet that are similar to this one.

Notice that the first patriarch who was born after Adam’s death is Noah. Faith. Stop and think about that. Noah had to learn about Adam, not from

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Adam face-to-face, but from someone else and believe what that person told him. He had to operate on faith. He had to believe that someone he could not see actually existed, just like there was going to be a future Messiah who He could not see but in whom he believed.

Genesis 10:21 Also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, and the older brother of Japheth, children were born.

Genesis 10:22 The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram.

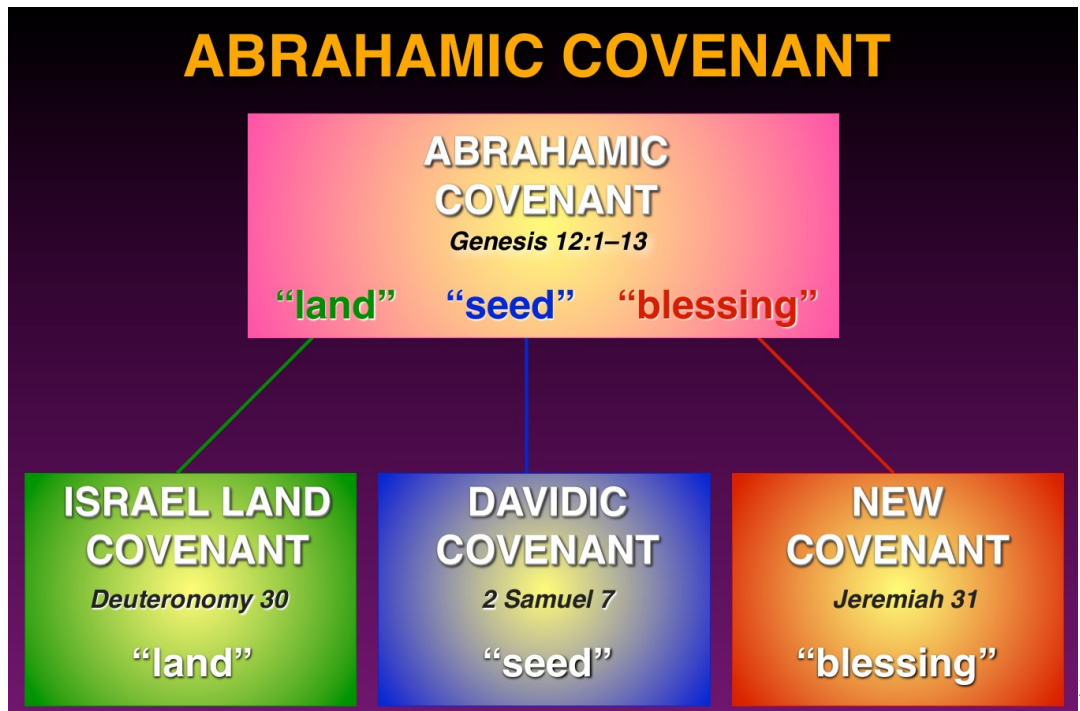
Genesis 10:23 The sons of Aram were Uz and Hul and Gether and Mash.

Genesis 10:24 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber.

Genesis 10:25 Two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one was Peleg (Abraham's grandfather), for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.

Genesis chapter 11 picks up where chapter 10 left off in the genealogies taking them to Abraham. He was very important because God made a covenant/treaty with Abraham which included three paragraphs: land, seed and blessing.

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David was given a specific mention of a seed blessing in the Davidic Covenant.

2 Samuel 7:12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant (literally: seed) after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom.

2 Samuel 7:13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

2 Samuel 7:14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity,

³ <https://deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2015-Samuel-169b.pdf>

I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men,

2 Samuel 7:15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

2 Samuel 7:16 Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”””

God references Solomon who will build the temple but then he slides into David's "house" or kingdom which will "endure before Me forever..." This is a reference to the Messiah and the Messianic Kingdom. Remember, the Millennium is like the front porch of the eternal Messianic Kingdom.

Below is an excerpt of a longer list of prophecies (promises) of the Messiah.

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Prophecy	Given
	Fulfilled
The serpent and the "seed" of Eve will have conflict; the offspring of the woman will crush the serpent. Jesus is this seed, and He crushed Satan at the cross.	Genesis 3:14-15
	Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:14
God promised Abraham the whole world would be blessed through him. Jesus, descended from Abraham, is that blessing.	Genesis 12:3
	Acts 3:25-26; Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:16
God promised Abraham He would establish an everlasting covenant with Isaac's offspring. Jesus is that offspring.	Genesis 17:19
	Matthew 1:1-2
God promised Isaac the whole world would be blessed by his descendant. That descendant is Jesus.	Genesis 28:13-14
	Matthew 1:1-2; Luke 1:33; 3:23-34
Jacob prophesied Judah would rule over his brothers. Jesus the king is from the tribe of Judah.	Genesis 49:10
	Matthew 1:1-2; Luke 1:32-33
The Jews were not to keep the Passover lamb overnight. Jesus was buried the day He died.	Exodus 12:10; Numbers 9:12
	John 19:38-42
The Jews were not to break the bones of the Passover lamb. Jesus' bones were not broken on the cross.	Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12
	John 19:31-36
The Jews were to devote the firstborn males to God. Jesus is Mary's firstborn male; He is also the "firstborn" over creation and the "firstborn" of the dead.	Exodus 13:2; Numbers 3:13; 8:17
	Luke 2:7, 23; Colossians 1:15-18
Moses promised another prophet like him would come. Jesus is that prophet.	Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19
	Matthew 21:11; Luke 7:16; 24:19; John 6:14; 7:40
God told the Jews to never leave the body of someone who had been hanged overnight. Jesus was buried the day He died.	Deuteronomy 21:23
	John 19:31-36; Galatians 3:13
The word of God will be in hearts and mouths. Jesus is the Word who is in the hearts of His followers.	Deuteronomy 30:14
	John 1:1; Matthew 26:26
Moses promised God would atone for His people. Jesus' sacrifice is that atonement.	Deuteronomy 32:43
	Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17
God promised David his offspring would rule forever. Jesus is descended from David, although His literal reign has yet to begin.	2 Samuel 7:12-13, 16, 25-26; 1 Chronicles 17:11-14, 23-27; Psalm 89:3-4, 35-37; 132:11; Isaiah 9:7
	Matthew 1:6; 19:28; 21:4; 25:31; Mark 12:37; Luke 1:32; 3:31

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The preceding table is an excerpt taken from gotquestions.org. For the complete lengthy table see: <https://www.gotquestions.org/prophecies-of-Jesus.html>. Herman has a similar list at [http://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Christmas/notes/Prophecies%20of%20Christ%20\(letter\).pdf](http://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Christmas/notes/Prophecies%20of%20Christ%20(letter).pdf). These prophecies are multiple promises that God would send the solution to the threefold sin problem: 1) the inherited Sin of Adam 2) the sin nature propagated by the man in procreation and 3) individual sins.

Let us take a detour, excursion to look at Noah. I don't want you to miss this.

Genesis 6:5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Genesis 6:6 The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

Genesis 6:7 The Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

Genesis 6:8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

The Hebrew word translated "favor" means "grace." Noah had a relationship with God. Noah was a believer.

Genesis 6:9 These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.

Noah was righteous. Remember the questions of Job. Also remember Isaiah 64:6, our righteousnesses are like “filthy rags.” We have no righteousness of our own that is pleasing to God. Our human viewpoint righteousness is abhorrent to God. He gives us this righteousness in response to our faith. This reinforces our understanding that Noah was a believer and walking by faith.

So here in the imputations is a picture of Christmas: the imputation of sin to Jesus Christ on the cross and the imputation of righteousness to a person at the moment he believes. God’s promise is that He will send a human being who is perfect who can be a substitute and bear the judgment for our sins and at the same time He has to be God because only God can provide this. Remember the verse from Job:

Job 14:4 (#6) “Who can make the clean out of the unclean? No one!”

The Devil says that no one can make a clean out of the unclean. But God can. So Jesus Christ went to the cross. Our “gift” to him is our sins. We have Adam’s imputed sin, our sin nature and our personal sins. This is our gift to Him.

Jesus’ gift to humanity is to bear the judgment of sin. But to have fellowship with God we need His righteousness and His eternal life. This is also Jesus’ gift to us at the cross. His work frees God to impute righteousness and eternal life to us...but without perverting His character and not by-passing our free will. So it has to be a response to our faith in Jesus, His work on the cross. That which the Devil thought was

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impossible God has done. Complete. So if you are a believer in Jesus Christ...Merry Righteous Christmas!!!