

# Hope Fulfilled

UNWRAPPING THE PROPHECIES  
ABOUT JESUS



[A COLLECTION OF CHRISTMAS DEVOTIONS]



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Hope Fulfilled: Unwrapping the Prophecies About Jesus  
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HE WILL BE  
*born of a virgin*



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## Dec. 14 | Day 1

READ: ISAIAH 7:14; LUKE 1:26-31

hristmas is a time for hope. Every year we look around and we feel like our world is falling apart, and in many ways, it is. But each December we have a beautiful reminder that our eternal hope isn't in a politician, an earthly leader, a king, or an organization. Our hope is in Jesus, because He is our Messiah, and only He qualifies to be our Savior.

For the 12 days that remain until Christmas, we are going to learn about 12 messianic prophecies from the Old Testament that Jesus fulfilled when He came to live among us. We'll look at the Old Testament Scripture passage or verse and talk about how He fulfilled it. We'll see how only He qualifies to be our Savior, and our hope must be in Him.

The first prophecy—that the Messiah would be born of a virgin—is found in one of the most well-known verses, Isaiah 7:14, “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

A virgin having a child is not only not common, it's absolutely impossible under normal circumstances. But it happened to Mary, who was a teenager and a virgin. Luke 1:26-31 tells the story of Jesus' miraculous birth, fulfilling the first of many prophecies about the promised Messiah. Tomorrow we will look at another.



HE WILL BE  
*born in Bethlehem*

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## Dec. 15 | Day 2

READ: MICAH 5:2

Today we're looking at a second Messianic prophecy given long before Jesus' birth ... which He fulfilled. Micah 5:2 says, "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Bethlehem was a small town, and Judah was a small tribe. When the people of Israel thought about who their Messiah would be, they never imagined He would be a nobody from nowhere. They imagined an important person from a prominent family, probably born in a well-known place. But even from the beginning of the story, God was positioning Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah, to take the form of a servant.

He came in the lowest, most common of ways—He had a regular birth as a human baby—to an otherwise unremarkable family in a forgettable town. His birth wasn't celebrated by kings or even noticed by the vast majority of people. His birth wasn't attended by a doctor or a midwife. Instead, His birth was announced by angels to a group of shepherds. Jesus came to save the least of us, and His role as a servant king began with His very first breath.





HE WILL COME FROM THE  
*tribe of Judah*

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## Dec. 16 | Day 3

READ: GENESIS 49:10

Today we are studying another Messianic prophecy. From very early on, it was prophesied that the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah. Genesis 49:10 says, “The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.”

This verse is saying that the authority—the scepter—would always be with the tribe of Judah until the Messiah came. When God rejected Saul (who was from the tribe of Benjamin) as king of Israel, He chose David (who was from the tribe of Judah) to sit on the throne instead. The throne of Israel was to belong to Judah until the Messiah came, and it did. Jesus was born as a descendent of King David, and the prophecy was fulfilled.

God’s choice of the lowly shepherd David over the powerful Saul foreshadows the way Jesus would come to us as Messiah—not as a military or political leader as everyone expected, but as a servant. Jesus grew up out of the spotlight, learning hard work and faithfulness, and developed an average trade as a carpenter. He wasn’t famous, rich, or powerful, but through Him, God gave hope to the whole world.





A bare, leafless tree stands in a snowy landscape under a pale sky. The tree's branches are intricate and dark against the light background. The ground is covered in a smooth layer of snow.

HE WILL SPEND A  
*season in Egypt*

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## Dec. 17 | Day 4

READ: HOSEA 1:11

Today, the Messianic prophecy we are studying comes from Hosea 1:11, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.”

From centuries before Jesus’ birth, it was predicted that the Messiah would come up from Egypt. This may not sound like a big deal to us now, but to a Jewish audience reading this prophecy in the Scriptures while they waited for the Messiah ... it would have meant a lot. Egypt was Israel’s enemy. They were the larger, more powerful empire to the south of Israel, and the two nations had a difficult history. The people of Israel were held as slaves in Egypt until Moses led them out of slavery to the promised land. The idea that their Messiah would come out of Egypt would have been confusing and probably unsettling to the people of Israel, because they would likely assume it to mean either he was part Egyptian or that the people of Israel would be returning to Egypt in the time of the Messiah.

But the way God chose to fulfill this particular prophecy shows us some wonderful things about His character. Jesus came up from Egypt because He and His family fled there to hide. In an attempt to remove competition as king of the Jews, King Herod ordered all the baby boys Jesus’ age to be killed. So Egypt, the land of Israel’s enemies, became a safe haven for their Messiah. Joseph, Mary, and young Jesus went as refugees to a foreign land, and had the local people not taken them in and showed them hospitality, the Savior of the world may not have lived to adulthood.

God was teaching the people of Israel, and by extension us, some important lessons: He can even use our enemies to bless us. There is nowhere so bad or scary or “other” that God’s power does not reach. And sometimes people we think are our enemies can surprise us with their kindness. In our world today, with events like the refugee crisis and mass migration, this is an important lesson for all believers—God uses anyone and everyone to accomplish His purposes, and sometimes we will be called upon to serve people very different from ourselves.

A wide-angle photograph of a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a clear, pale blue sky. The snow is bright white and covers the entire foreground and midground. The mountains in the distance are also covered in snow, with some dark patches visible. The sky is a uniform light blue, occupying the upper half of the image.

A MESSENGER WILL  
*prepare the way*

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## Dec. 18 | Day 5

READ: ISAIAH 40:3-5; LUKE 3:3

Today's Messianic prophecy is one that has special significance to us and our lives today.

Isaiah 40:3-5 says, "A voice of one calling: 'In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' "

This voice speaking in the desert refers to John the Baptist—the cousin of Jesus, the son of Elizabeth—who served as a prophet preparing the way for Jesus to begin his ministry. Luke 3:3 says, "He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."

The prophecy in Isaiah says before the Messiah comes, low places will be raised, mountains will be lowered, rough places will be leveled, and rugged places will be smoothed. These descriptions refer not to a massive roadwork project to create a literal path for Jesus to reach Jerusalem, but to the process of preparing the hearts of people to receive Him.

Dejected people needed to be lifted up, proud people had to be humbled, people living lives of unrepentant sin had to change course, and doubtful and cynical people had to grow before they would listen. The truth of the Messiah is something people are not ready to receive and understand until this work has been done. When Jesus came to earth, it was John the Baptist who was assigned the task. Now, it is the Holy Spirit who prepares the hearts of people to believe the truth about Jesus and His sacrifice for us.

And if we are following Him and listening to the Holy Spirit's leading, we can also help prepare the way for the Lord to reach the hearts of people in our lives. We can be the new voice calling out in the wilderness.



HE WILL BE

*rejected by his own people*

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## Dec. 19 | Day 6

READ: ISAIAH 53

The next Messianic prophecy we're studying is a difficult one. Isaiah 53:3 says, "He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem."

When you read that description, it sounds like you're talking about a criminal or someone who deserved to feel shame. But that prophecy describes Jesus, the most selfless man to ever live, and the Savior of the universe. So why was He rejected by those He came to save?

He did not meet their expectations of who the Messiah should be. Despite thousands of years of prophets telling them He would be a humble man, a servant among men, and one who would know pain as they did, they still expected a knight in shining armor to ride in on a white horse and liberate them from their oppressors. They wanted a military leader or a strong earthly king like Saul—certainly not the homely son of a small-town carpenter who consistently told them that the way to redemption was to do the opposite of everything that felt instinctive.

Jesus confounded the expectations of the Jewish people, and they rejected Him for it. In the previous chapter, Isaiah prophesies about how well the gospel will be received by Gentiles—people who did not spend generations building up a specific picture of who they hoped the Messiah would be. Gentiles heard the gospel with fresh ears and accepted it based on its truth. But the vast majority of the Jews—Jesus' own people—decided He wasn't who they hoped He would be, and so they hid their faces from Him.

This is a jarring reminder to us now —Jesus is who He is, regardless of our expectations of Him. And who He is is better than anything we could hope or wish for. He is our Savior, and if we open our hearts and minds and listen to His truth with fresh ears, accepting the hope He offers is so much easier.



HE WILL BE  
*called king*

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## Dec. 20 | Day 7

READ: ZECHARIAH 9:9

The next Messianic prophecy we're studying is found in Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Describing Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, this verse is one of the only times in the Bible when Jesus received a warm, enthusiastic welcome from His own people. They called him their king, and they welcomed Him into their city for what they thought would trigger the end of their oppression by the Romans and the beginning of the Messiah's rule on earth. And yet, five days later they traded Him for a criminal, and they hung Him on a cross. He was dead.

As we learned yesterday, Jesus isn't the kind of Messiah people expected. Many times, He isn't the kind of King we think we need, either. Most of Jesus's time on earth was spent dealing with sadness, struggles, rejection, sickness, and hostility. Even in His moment of greatest earthly triumph, He rode into Jerusalem on the back of a borrowed young donkey—not a strong warhorse or a fast chariot—but someone else's clumsy, untrained donkey.

It was hardly the triumphal entry Israel expected for their long-awaited king. And what followed was hardly the political and military liberation they hoped for. Instead, Jesus spent the week with His friends before one of them betrayed Him, and He died a humiliating death a few days later. Everything about this King didn't live up to expectations, but the King that God sent us is the only one worth placing our ultimate hope in, because He fulfilled ancient prophecies. He came as a servant and He gave His life to save those who rejected Him. That's who we celebrate this week.

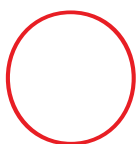


HE WILL BE  
*betrayed*

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## Dec. 21 | Day 8

READ: PSALM 41:9



ur next Messianic prophecy says that Jesus will be betrayed by a close friend. Psalm 41:9 says, “Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me.”

In the last two prophecies we studied, we learned that Jesus wasn’t who people expected the Messiah to be. He wasn’t a powerful military leader or a strong political presence. He was unassuming and humble, and He was rejected for it. But one of the best things about Jesus as our Messiah is that He is relatable, and He understands what it’s like to suffer as we do.

In all His 33 years on earth, Jesus could only count a handful of people as His close friends—12 men who followed Him and called themselves His disciples. They did everything with Him—they lived with Him, followed Him, ate with Him, learned from Him—and even if everyone else in the world rejected Him, Jesus could count on those 12 men to believe He was who He said He was. That was until one of them betrayed Him and handed Him over to the Romans to be killed.

Make a list of the 12 people on earth you trust the most. Now imagine one of them betraying you in the worst way possible. If you don’t think Jesus suffered, think about how that would feel. He experienced the ultimate emotional betrayal, followed closely by the ultimate physical suffering.

When you picture your Savior, your Messiah, realize He knows what it’s like to feel any feeling you’ve ever felt. He can relate to your pain, your anxiety, your exhaustion, your trust issues, your loneliness, all of it. He’s been where we are, He’s survived being human and still didn’t sin, and because of that He was the perfect sacrifice in our place. He’s the only One in whom we can place our hope.





HE WILL BE  
*crucified with criminals*

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## Dec. 22 | Day 9

READ: ISAIAH 53:12

**T**he next thing prophesied about the Messiah was that He would be crucified with criminals. Isaiah 53:12 says, “Therefore I will give Him a portion among the great, and He will divide the spoils with the strong, because He poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

If you’ve been reading our previous devotions, you’ve learned that Jesus’ life was not easy. He was rejected, accused, betrayed, and in the end, He was killed, all for being innocent and perfect. The way in which Jesus was killed—crucifixion—was the worst, most painful, most degrading way a person could die. And not only was He crucified—He was crucified in between two criminals.

Throughout Jesus’ life, He was often accused of being a bad person. Whether it be working on the Sabbath, being called a drunkard, or being known as a friend of sinners, Jesus was not looked upon favorably much of the time. In the end, a convicted murderer, Barabas, was released instead of Jesus. How must it have felt to endure that much false accusation and injustice? Wouldn’t you want to stand up for yourself and set the record straight?

But Jesus didn’t. In fact, not only did He die a humiliating death meant for a criminal even though He was the only perfect person to ever live, but as He was dying, Jesus asked God to forgive His killers. He allowed the injustice against Himself, but He asked for mercy instead of justice for us. That’s the Messiah we hope in today.



HE WILL  
*resurrect from the dead*

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## Dec. 23 | Day 10

READ: PSALM 16:10

The next prophecy about the coming Messiah is perhaps the most defining as far as guaranteeing Jesus to be the Messiah. Psalm 16:10 says, “You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay.”

There are many prophecies about the coming of the Messiah recorded throughout Scripture. Jesus fulfills every single one of them, but it could be argued in the case of some of the prophecies that multiple people could fulfill them. But not this one. How many humans can you think of who raised from the dead after execution? By fulfilling this prophecy, Jesus confirmed once and for all that He is the Messiah. People still doubted Him, but He proved Himself to the ones closest to Him.

Even though God had forsaken Jesus on the cross and allowed Him to die a painful death in our place, God would not let His Son remain dead. After three days, Jesus rose from the dead, and He appeared in person to many of His followers over the coming days to confirm His resurrection. This is the point when many of them must have realized for certain that He was who He had been saying He was—the Messiah.

Even when we doubt Jesus and His faithfulness to us, we can look at this prophecy and remember that because it’s true, we serve a living God, not a dead one. We serve One who raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, and is now seated at the right hand of God advocating for us—the sinners He sacrificed His perfect life for. Because of Him, we have hope.



HE WILL BE  
*a sacrifice for sin*

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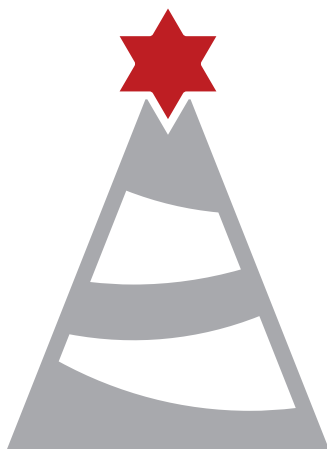
## Dec. 24 | Day 11

READ: ISAIAH 53:5-12

**A**s Messiah, Jesus' purpose in coming to earth, living as a human, dying, and raising from the dead was to be a sacrifice for the sins of all people. Isaiah 53:5-12 described in detail how the Messiah would die in our place. It begins, "He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by his wounds we are healed."

In previous posts about other Messianic prophecies, we've talked about how Jesus lived a difficult life full of rejection and heartbreak, and His death was the most painful way to die. As fully God, He could have stepped in at any point and stopped the whole thing, but He chose to die for us. In our place. To be a sacrifice for the sins we committed.

That's whose birth we celebrate tomorrow.



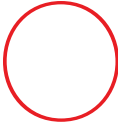
A red cardinal is perched on a thin, bare branch on the right side of the image. The background is a soft, out-of-focus winter scene with snow-covered plants and a misty atmosphere. The text "HIS NAME WILL BE CALLED" is in a simple, black, sans-serif font, and "Immanuel" is in a red, cursive script font, both centered in the middle of the image.

HIS NAME WILL BE CALLED  
*Immanuel*

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## Dec. 25 | Day 12

READ: ISAIAH 7:14; LUKE 2

“ come, o come, Immanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appears.”

More than 700 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote these words:  
“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

Immanuel means “God with us.” When Jesus—fully God—came to earth as a baby, He became also fully human. He became God with us, and for the first time since the Garden of Eden, God lived among His people. He dwelled with us.

The ancient Egyptian gods inhabited far off places like the underworld; Greek gods lived on Mount Olympus; the gods of the Philistines did not reside with their people. Only Jesus came to live with us, among us. He is the only deity known for His physical proximity to His followers. He is Immanuel—God with us.

The importance and constancy of Immanuel is emphasized throughout the Bible. God’s original intent was for His most beloved creations to live with Him, but when Adam and Eve rejected Him in the garden, that relationship was broken. We were separated from God until Jesus reunited us.

He came to earth as Immanuel, and since then His presence has never left us. When Jesus ascended into heaven, He left the Holy Spirit to dwell in us as His followers, and He promised to be with us forever, to the end of the age. This promise is repeated in the last book of the Bible in Revelation 21:3, “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.”

This morning, as we celebrate Christmas, this is what we’re celebrating. He is Hope Fulfilled. Immanuel has come. God is with us.

“Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel  
has come to thee, O Israel.”

Merry Christmas  
from



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