

## **MONTH OF JESUS: ANCIENT PROPHECY**

Micah 5:2 ... “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to me the one to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

You are aware of the birth of Jesus, which we celebrate this December. But, are you aware that God's prophets wrote of him starting thousands of years prior to Jesus' birth? In the Old Testament of the Bible, which was written entirely before Jesus was born, there are about 3,000 verses that foretell of Jesus. And, those references begin in the book of Genesis. Today's verse from the book of Micah speaks of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. The prophet Micah lived 700 years before Jesus was born. The prophet Isaiah lived at least 680 years before Jesus, but he wrote in Isaiah 7:14 “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Many Christians are not aware that God's original plan – even before he created the universe – was for Jesus to be born, die, and resurrected. They are content to trust that God exists and that he will provide a place for them in heaven. However, they either do not know the entire story, or they do not care. Knowing the whole story and seeing the big picture of God's plan for man, is the most impressive and spectacular thing we can learn. And, God documented it in his Word for us to see. God did not send Jesus to die for us because God was frustrated with his people. You will not find that in the Bible. The Bible also does not say that we Gentiles (everyone who is not a Jew by birth) were given access to salvation because God was angry at the Jews for killing Jesus. But some preachers claim these things. They picture Jesus coming to save us out of desperation. The truth is that God planned for Jesus to pay the price for our sins from the very beginning and he gave his prophets that information so they could document it in the Old Testament.

If you are of the belief that Jesus first existed when he was born as a human baby, you are dead wrong. In Hebrews 1:1-2, we are told: “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds.” God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have existed as a single God for eternity, which means God has no beginning or end. And, in this verse we are told that God created the universe and everything in it, including you, through Jesus. This verse also reminds us that before Jesus came to earth, God spoke to us through his prophets. Since Jesus' arrival, God speaks to us directly.

I hope you consider the big picture when you celebrate Jesus' birth this December. The whole story, which God told us about hundreds of years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, is truly epic.

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