

Home for Christmas – Thanks – [Christians...bum us out...Pagan...mad...lights / commercialism = Fine](#)
LOVE CHRISTMAS - Remember: Perfect Plan | Recognize: Eternal Purpose | Rejoice: Present Promise
Bibles p. 454 | One most famous prophecies & promises of hope...all the Old Testament | **Bethlehem**
Heard Bethlehem? [3 Judean Cities](#) | [You should have never heard of Bethlehem, but you Have...Why?](#)

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah (Ef-Ra-Tha), who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,

- [Rachel birth & died? \(Jacob\) | Boaz love w/ Ruth? | David? | Jesus born...More that...Dare you!](#)
When we isolate Christmas...we miss something...something amazing...powerful...executed plan

Big Idea - Christmas Reminds Us of God's Perfect Plan

Context – Chapt 1-3 = Israel Rejected: Covenant – Commands – Counsel | Chapt 4 = Hold on!
Every one of the Jewish rulers...failed them – All the human pomp & significance of Jerusalem...failed!
[Imagine...stretch...every one of the leaders in America were corrupt and failing their people | Hobbs](#)

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah (Ef-Ra-Tha), who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, **PAUSE**
from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel whose coming forth is from of old from ancient days
700 – God revealed His plan – Ruler – From old...ancient of days...everlasting & eternal = Messiah!
From most insignificant city...most significant plan...fulfilled...matters you | **3 things plan means to us**

1. The Coming of the Messiah: Brings us Back

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his
brothers shall return to the people of Israel. **Bring back to what?**

a. **To Relationship with God**

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth;

The Israelite people were in rebellion – God would give them up to their rebellion...[want it...have it](#)

- ‘Until the time’ – When Jesus Christ added humanity to His deity...permanent way back to God
[God had given them up...but not given up on them | You and I – If we want a life w/o God](#)
God Plan...send redeemer...He did...God in flesh...Christmas...remember the fulfilled plan | **GOSPEL**

b. **To Fellowship with God's People**

then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

God had a plan for Israel, and He still does...same plan for all of us...**Restore us and then re-place us**
Know how Israel can be TRUE Israel & be reunited? **Jesus** | How we can be united to the plan? **Jesus**
[Popular DNA things become – Genghis Kahn – Christ moves your ancestry...brothers / sisters...FAITH!](#)
[Home For Christmas – Christian...Big House...Large Family...Promise Keeping Father | Brings us Back...](#)

2. The Coming Messiah: Carries us Forward

⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his
God. **Carries us forward...How?**

a. **As our Shepherd** - ⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock What do shepherds do? **Guard & Guide**

- Our Shepherd Guides us into Truth by becoming the Living Word of God
- Our Shepherd Guides us into Righteousness by becoming our sin
- Our Shepherd Guides us into Relationship by adopting us into His family
 - Our Shepherd Guards the Door between Heaven and Hell...sheep know His voice
 - Our Shepherd Guards the Church...appointing under-shepherds to run off the wolves
 - Our Shepherd Guards our Eternity...mediating between our sin and the Father's justice

b. **As our Strength** - in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

BABY...STABLE...BETHLEHEM...STRENGTH OF GOD...BECAUSE HE'S GOD

Creator all (Col. 1) – **Manger** | Upholds all (Heb. 1) – **Manger** | Foundation of World (1 Peter) **Manger**

Before I say this next thing...clear something up...we have no strength | Sin – Suffering - Death

R 8:35 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.'

Strength overcomes: Sin – Suffering – Death? MANGER! | More than conquerors...Need to hear?

Let the story of Christmas Carry You Forward! Part of God's Plan

The Coming Messiah: Anchors our Hope

And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. & He shall be their peace. By What?

a. **By His Providence** for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

Governance and direction of all things in the universe: Wisdom – Love – Care – Perfection

Don't think He can accomplish His will in and through your life? Great things to the end of the earth?

- Bethlehem – Ruth & Naomi came Bethlehem - Boaz Ruth married | Ancestor Jesus (Matt. 1:5)
- David From Bethlehem's...King - Through David the Jesus would be born (2 Sam. 7)
- Jacob's wife, Rachel, died Bethlehem during childbirth (Genesis 35:16-20)
 - Rachel named her son Ben-oni (son of my sorrow)
 - Jacob renamed the boy Benjamin (son of my right hand)
 - Both Jesus – The cross and the throne at the right hand of the Father) | **Providence!**

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ **Here is the firm and unrelenting Truth for all Christians...God's Got This!** ⇐ ⇐ ⇐

Crazy plain...eternal ruler...God...shepherd...perfect providence...Bethlehem...Barn!

Bible written by monks – Collection of stories for profit – Manipulated for human gain...HOW?!?!?

Bible prophecy isn't for entertainment for the curious; it's encouragement for the serious

Whenever a prophet spoke about future...was to awaken people to their responsibilities in present

The Coming Messiah: Anchors our Hope...By His Providence...For our Peace

b. **For our Peace** And he shall be their peace. | **PEACE ISN'T A PRECEPT...IT'S A PERSON**

Assyrians were knocking at the door – (1) **Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek'** | Starts...ends person peace

Interesting:

- (3) He shall give them up
- (4a) He shall shepherd with the strength of the Lord
- (4b) He shall be great
- (5a) He shall be peace | Look in the middle of v. 4
And they shall dwell secure...Manger | Feel lost – Damaged – Broken – Afraid >>> Manger

This prophecy reveals outrageous claims that all came true:

- Eternal Rule Could Come
- Restore the Jew and Gentile to God...Then adopt the Gentile into the plan for Israel
- Shepherd His People (Guard and Guide) with the strength of the Lord
- He would perfectly Govern the entire universe to bring about the perfection of the plan
 - Day would come when He would be Crucified
 - Day would come when He would be Glorified
 - Day would come when He would take His throne in Heaven
 - Day would come when He will return to be Ruler over His people
 - Today (Present) – Jesus gives peace to all who will come to Him by faith

One most famous prophecies & promises of hope...all the Old Testament

Christmas isn't Pagan – Love Christmas – Reminds Us of God's Perfect Plan...The Coming Messiah!