



# gracefellowship

Whispers of Christmas  
December 20, 2020  
Whispers of...ROYALTY

Online Only Service

Merry Christmas, GFC! We are just five days away from Christmas! Thanks for joining us from home today as we continue our COVID Christmas! These are not ideal days, but in a way I wonder if it can help us connect to the first Christmas and the less than ideal situations around the birth of Jesus. Mary and Joseph weren't in a nice, sanitary hospital. There was no epidural. Jesus was born, wrapped up in cloths typically reserved for lambs and was then placed in a manger- the feeding trough for animals. It was anything but ideal. But it was Christmas, none-the-less! So, I hope your celebration of Jesus' birth this year is able to bring you nearer to the true meaning of Christmas than ever before.

As we have walked through this teaching series together we have been looking at Whispers of Christmas: things in the Old Testament that God spoke that would ultimately come true in the birth of Jesus. During this series we have been looking at a lot of Scripture from both the Old and New Testaments. We will look at several long passages again today. This is by design. I hope to be able to show you intricate the story of Christmas is and how God has been planning this season we are celebrating since the beginning of time. It's important for us as Christians to know our Bibles. It's important for us to know the full story and how everything in Scripture plays together. I hope this helps you put some of the pieces together.

1<sup>st</sup> Whisper of Christmas- A Whisper of Hope: Adam and Eve sinned in the garden and faced the consequences of sin- separation from God and spiritual and physical death. But God promised them that the seed of the woman would come and crush the head of the serpent who had deceived them.

2<sup>nd</sup> Whisper of Christmas- A Whisper of Blessing: God chose Abraham to leave his home and his family in order to take him to a land that God promised would one day belong to his descendants. When God made His covenant with Abraham he said he would become a great nation, would inherit a great land and through him all the world would be blessed.

To narrow down the path of this promised blessing we find in Genesis that God takes Abraham's grandson, Jacob and changes his name to Israel. God gives the same promises to Israel that He gave to Abraham, ending in the fact that through him all the world would be blessed.

When we get to Genesis 49 we find Israel near death. He has called his children around him to give them a blessing. Its in this blessing we see God narrow the path down even more. Out of the nation of Israel God chooses a family line through which the Messiah will come. Israel blesses his first two sons and then comes to his third son, Judah.

*This is where the 3<sup>rd</sup> whisper of Christmas begins...*

**:: Genesis 49:8-10**

**8 "Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down to you.**

**9 You are a lion's cub, Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?**

**10 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.**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Whisper of Christmas is a whisper of royalty.**

We already know the Messiah will bring hope to a lost and dying world and that He will be a blessing to all nations.

In this passage we find out that a ruler will come from Judah's family line. The Messiah will be King! The scepter is a symbol of power and Judah is told that the scepter will always belong to his family until it has it's final resting place in the hands of the one to whom it belongs, the only one worthy to hold it forever.

**NATION // TRIBE // FAMILY**

God's promise of a Messiah has a nation from which He will originate, a Tribe He will belong to and now today we are going to see another whisper of Christmas that will bring the Messiah into the world through a specific family.

In the book of 1 Samuel God allows the nation of Israel to have a king. It's a rejection of God as their King, but He uses this plan to carry on His promise of a Messiah for His people. The second king of Israel is David. God creates a covenant with David that will bring the long awaited Messiah through his family line. Look at 2 Samuel 7 with me; God is talking to David and we will jump into the conversation in verse 12...

**:: 2 Samuel 7:12-16**

**12 When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom.**

**13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

**14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.**

**15 But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.**

**16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.’ ”**

God will bring the Messiah of the world through the family of David. He is promised that his house and kingdom will endure forever and his throne established forever. There's just one problem...

The kings who followed David were not always obedient to God. In fact, before Christmas we were studying the book of Daniel together and the final king before the Babylonian exile was named Jehoiachin. Here's what Jeremiah the prophet was instructed by God to say to King Jehoiachin:

**:: Jeremiah 22:24-27 and 30**

**24 “As surely as I live,” declares the LORD, “even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off.**

**25 I will deliver you into the hands of those who want to kill you, those you fear—Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Babylonians.**

**26 I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die.**

**27 You will never come back to the land you long to return to.”**

**30 This is what the LORD says: “Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah.”**

God puts an end to the line of David ruling in Israel. This seems like a major problem, but remember the prophecy God gave to Judah:

Genesis 49:10

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.

The eternal ruler from David's line is the Messiah, the one who will hold the scepter of power forever. God said David would have an eternal throne and Jehoiachin would never have someone on the throne. How will God reconcile

this? I'm glad you asked! Remember the first whisper of Christmas said the One who would come to crush the head of the serpent would be the seed of woman—biologically that's not how that happens, so let's look at the story of Jesus' birth and see how God brings this story line together.

Matthew's gospel begins with the lineage of Jesus. This traces the family of Joseph and it begins by telling us about Jesus' mission and identity.

**:: Matthew 1:1-17**

**1 This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:**

**2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,**

**3 Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram,**

**4 Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon,**

**5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse,**

**6 and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,**

**7 Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa,**

**8 Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram, Jehoram the father of Uzziah,**

**9 Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,**

**10 Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah,**

**11 and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.**

**12 After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,**

**13 Zerubbabel the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor,**

**14 Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, Akim the father of Elihud,**

**15 Elihud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob,**

**16 and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.**

**17 Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.**

I hope you noticed in that family line that Joseph is a direct descendant of David. But if you were paying attention you also saw in verse 11 that he is a direct

descendant of Jeconiah, another name for Jehoiachin- the one God said would not have a descendant on the throne. So, the Messiah can't come from this blood line.

But was Jesus the biological child of Joseph? No, he wasn't! The Messiah was supposed to be the seed of woman. In Luke's gospel Mary's family line is exactly the same as Joseph's from Abraham to David, but that's where it takes a separate path.

I'm not going to read the whole geneology to you this time, but I want you to see from Abraham to David and then what happens following David.

Mary's Family Line:

Abraham...Isaac...Jacob...Judah...Perez...Hezron...Ram...Amminadab...  
Nahshon..Salmon... Boaz...Obed...Jesse...David...Nathan...Mattatha

Did you notice the difference in this line? It doesn't go from David to Solomon and down to Jehoiachin- it goes through David's son, Nathan.

From Joseph we get the Royal Lineage back to David. From Mary we get the genetic lineage to David. Because Jesus isn't the biological child of Joseph, he can carry on the royal line of the Messiah that was broken with Jehoachin.

**:: Luke 1:26-38**

**26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,**

**27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.**

**28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."**

**29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.**

**30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.**

**31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.**

**32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,**

**33 and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."**

**34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"**

**35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.**

I want to start drawing this to a close this morning by asking another question. It's one thing for us to make the claim that Jesus was the promised King who would

sit on David's throne, but what did people of His day believe about Jesus? To answer that let's look at one final passage of Scripture together.

**:: Matthew 2:1-18**

**1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem**

**2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."**

**3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.**

**4 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.**

**5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:**

**6 " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.' "**

**7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.**

**8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."**

**9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.**

**10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.**

**11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.**

**12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.**

**13 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."**

**14 So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt,**

**15 where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."**

**16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.**

**17 Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:**

**18 “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”**

The Magi came from the East to worship the one they called the King of the Jews. Their desire was to worship Him and bring Him gifts because He was God's long awaited King.

Then we have Herod, who never calls Jesus King, but by his actions we see that Herod takes the prophecy of where the Messiah would be born and the appearance of the star that guided the Magi to Him and he connected the dots. Herod says he too wants to go visit the child and worship him. But Herod had other plans. We can take context clues from the story that Herod thought this was a real threat to His kingship and that Jesus was the legitimate King of the Jews because after the Magi went home without telling Herod of Jesus' location, Herod had every child 2 years old and younger killed to eliminate the threat to his throne.

I want to close with 2 thoughts this morning from what we've been looking at.

1. Matthew's gospel is primarily written to a Jewish audience. He calls Jesus "The Son of David" ten times in the gospel. He wants the Jewish people to understand that Jesus is the Messiah they have been waiting for. But Jesus didn't fulfill the role they thought He would. He never took the throne of David and reestablished a sovereign nation. The royalty of Jesus where He was given a throne wasn't fulfilled in His first coming. But when Jesus comes again He isn't coming as a baby in a manger for the purpose of dying on the cross! When Jesus returns He is coming back as a conquering King! He has beaten sin, death, hell and the grave and when He returns it will be to bring His children into His kingdom and to judge those who have rejected Him, banishing them forever from His kingdom.
2. We must all decide what we will do with Jesus. We stand at the same place as the Magi and Herod- we will both bow to Jesus and worship Him as King, or we will seek to eliminate Him from our lives.

How will you respond to Jesus? Do you recognize Him as King? Do you see Him as someone you are supposed to yield your life to? The greatest thing you can do this Christmas is to recognize Jesus as the rightful King and Lord of your life then beginning a lifelong journey of following Him and becoming a disciple of His.

-Pray

End of service announcements:

- Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m.
- End of Year giving via website and app.
- Jeff Champlin speaking next week.