

The Crisis of Christmas

Matthew 1:18-25; Isaiah 7:14*

In Matthew chapters one, two and three there is the record of responses to the Christ-child. The responses of Joseph, the magi, Herod the Great, and Jerusalem typify the responses of mankind to the message of a Messiah, who has come to redeem fallen man and later, to reign over all the earth as king.

As we come once again to the Christmas season, this text has much to say to us about our response to the King of the Jews who has come as the Savior of the world. Our response will undoubtedly be like that of Joseph, the magi, Herod, or Jerusalem. How we respond has an eternal implication. In addition to our response to the birth of the King, this passage also has much to say to us concerning our perspective of prophecy. We are now awaiting the second coming of the Christ, as promised by the Old and New Testament prophets. We, like Joseph, the magi, Herod, and Jerusalem, may respond to this coming of Christ in different ways.

May I ask you very honestly as we approach another Christmas celebration, "Which response most accurately reflects your response to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ?" Is it possible that we have become so preoccupied with our holiday celebration that we have failed to do what is most important of all--to seek Him and to worship Him?

God's grand interruption (Matthew 1:18-25)

God's great prophecy (Isaiah 7:14)

Messianic Prophecies in the Book of Isaiah

1. He will be called before His birth to be God's Servant (49:1).
2. He will be born of a virgin (7:14).
3. He will be a Descendant of Jesse and thus in the Davidic line (11:1, 10).
4. He will be empowered by the Holy Spirit (11:2; 42:1).
5. He will be gentle toward the weak (42:3).
6. He will be obedient to the Lord in His mission (50:4-9).
7. He will voluntarily submit to suffering (50:6; 53:7-8).
8. He will be rejected by Israel (49:7; 53:1, 3).
9. He will take on Himself the sins of the world (53:4-6, 10-12).
10. He will triumph over death (53:10).
11. He will be exalted (52:13; 53:12).
12. He will come to comfort Israel and to bring vengeance on the wicked (61:1-3).
13. He will manifest God's glory (49:3).
14. He will restore Israel spiritually to God (49:5) and physically to the land (49:8).
15. He will reign on David's throne (9:7).
16. He will bring joy to Israel (9:2).
17. He will make a new covenant with Israel (42:6; 49:8-9).
18. He will be a light to the Gentiles (42:6; 49:6).
19. He will restore the nations (11:10).
20. He will be worshiped by the Gentiles (49:7, 52:15).
21. He will govern the world (9:6).
22. He will judge in righteousness, justice, and faithfulness (11:3-5; 42:1-4).²

*These notes are prayerfully prepared to aid, not replace, your personal study of God's word.

² John A. Martin, "Isaiah," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1049.