

## Introduction

- Last Wednesday evening we took out time and looked at “The Christmas Verse” — Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...*
- The first part of that the verse speaks of Christ’s first advent — as Redeemer.
- The second portion (with the titles, Wonderful, Counsellor, etc...) speaks to His second coming as King of kings — when He established His Kingdom in Jerusalem. (the Millennium)
- This evening we pass over many prophecies and look some more prophecies relating to Christ’s first coming.

## I. The Forerunner

A. Daniel 9 is the record of Daniel’s seventy weeks.

1. Daniel 9:25 *Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be **seven weeks (7), and threescore and two weeks (62): the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.***
2. March 14, 445 BC was the day Nehemiah received the command to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls.
3. It took Nehemiah and the people 52 days to finish the walls, but a great deal longer to finish the city itself - 49 years (7 weeks of years)
  - This delay in the building was due in part to the *troublous times* mentioned in Daniel 9:25 (persecution by Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem)
4. This first week of years (7 sevens) closed out with the completion of Nehemiah’s reconstruction and the close of the Old Testament.
5. 483 years from the day Artaxerxes Longimanus (Daniel was likely not aware of his name) would decree that the children of Israel should return to rebuild Jerusalem, The Messiah would be rejected by men.
6. Artaxerxes Longimanus gave the command to Nehemiah on March 14, 445 BC and 483 years later, the week of Christ’s passion was taking place in the city of Jerusalem!

7. The Pharisees and Scribes were familiar with the Scriptures of the Old Testament and they could look back on Daniel's very specific prophecy.

- There would have much noise being made about the coming of the Messiah (in reference to the prophecies of Daniel) when a wild-looking man starts preaching about the Kingdom of Heaven being at hand.

B. Let's look first at John 1:19 *And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? 20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? 23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.*

1. John the Baptist was the son of Elizabeth and Zacharias — making him Jesus' cousin.
2. John the Baptist would have been a few months older than Jesus and his ministry preceded that of Christ.
3. John was a Levite and his priestly heritage would have aided him in attracting a crowd out in the wilderness.
4. John made no pretense of being the Messiah, himself, but he was the one who had been sent to prepare the way.
  - a) He declared he was the fulfillment of the prophesy of Isaiah.
  - b) *Isaiah 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:*
5. When a king would make a visit into the country of his domain it was normal to have an advance man (or even team) who would go before him and check the road.
  - a) There were even times when they would actually straiten the curves of a road to make way for the safe passage of the royal procession.
  - b) John the Baptist declared himself to be the "advance man" for the coming of the King!

- Malachi 3:1 also speaks of the Messiah's forerunner — *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.*

C. John's message is also alluded to by Isaiah in Isaiah 40:9 *O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!*

1. This verse found fulfillment in John 1:29 *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*
2. This message was repeated the next day (John 1:36) and Andrew and another disciple heard and followed Christ.

## II. A Patient and Long-Suffering Redeemer

A. In Matthew 12, Jesus is found in the midst of turmoil because of His healing of a man with a withered hand on the sabbath.

1. The Pharisees were making a stink about Jesus "breaking the Law" — which He wasn't, but He was making a mess of their traditions.
2. Matthew 12:14 *Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. 15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; 16 And charged them that they should not make him known: 17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. 19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. 21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.*
  - Jesus is quoting Isaiah 42:1 *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. 2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax*

*shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*

3. This prophecy was fulfilled by Jesus in His meek first coming.
  - a) He did not take the world by storm.
  - b) He was longsuffering with those who opposed Him as well as those who received Him.
4. Isaiah spoke of the Gentiles trusting in Christ.
  - a) Jesus said in Matthew 15:24 *...I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*
  - b) But the Jews rejected Him and so the gospel was opened wholesale to the Gentile nations. — Romans 11 speaks of this as the grafting in of wild olive branches (Gentiles) into the olive tree.
  - c) We are privileged to be living the fulfillment of this prophecy even today.

### III. A Willing Sacrifice

- A. We think of the rejection of Christ by the Jews in the New Testament, but it is important to remember that the Jews of the Old Testament also turned their backs upon Jehovah.
  1. Isaiah dealt with the rebellion of the Old, while Christ physically faced the rejection in the New.
  2. And just as we saw the longsuffering nature of the Savior foretold in Isaiah 42 we see His willingness to fulfill His fore-ordained role as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.
- B. Isaiah 50:5 *The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.*
  1. John 4:34 *Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*
  2. John 6:38 *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

- It was God's will for Him to leave the splendors of Heaven, to be born into poverty and to wander without a home upon the earth.
- C. Jesus love and dedication to the will of the Father was further revealed in His passion — Also foretold by Isaiah — (Isaiah 50:6) *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*
- D. But His course was set — Isaiah 50:7 *For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.*
  1. This is exactly what happened in Luke 9:51 *And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,*
- E. Jesus was single-minded — His highest desire was to do the will of the Father (even at tremendous personal cost to Himself.)

### Conclusion

- Christ's ministry was foretold in detail hundreds of years prior to His incarnation.
- The ministry of John the Baptist is yet another confirmation of the identity of Jesus as the Promised One.
- But why would the Jews reject the ministry of Christ when He so clearly fulfilled the prophecies?
  - Their eyes were blinded and their hearts were hardened because they did not want to believe in One who was so contrary to their established way of thinking.
  - "There are none so blind as those who will not see." — unknown.
- But Jesus came, nonetheless.
  - His longsuffering patience with the lost who came to Him in humble faith was remarkable.
  - His dedication and singleminded focus upon the task given Him of the Father is remarkable!
- Hebrews 12:2 *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right*

*hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*