



WEEK 2

Christmas Is. . .

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Day 1
Bethlehem

Why did God choose Bethlehem as the birthplace of Jesus?
This entire story was filled with bits and nuggets just waiting for us to discover.

What we know about Bethlehem is that it was a small insignificant town. Located just 5 or 6 miles from Jerusalem. Bethlehem is said to be the oldest town in Palestine. And as what looks like some foreshadowing Bethlehem continues to pop up as a host to a few biblical stories.

Maybe you remember the story of Ruth and her "Kingsmen redeemer?" This all took place in Bethlehem. Coincidence? I don't think so. This story is about a woman who needed a redeemer and a man who would become her protector and provider. Sounds very similar to our own Heavenly redeemer.

Micah 5:2 says this:

"The Lord says, 'Bethlehem, you might not be an important town in the nation of Judah. But out of you will come a ruler over Israel for me. His family line goes back to the early years of your nation. It goes all the way back to days of long ago'"

So Bethlehem was a small insignificant city in Judah, but God was about to make it the most recognizable city in history.

We can read in Matthew 2:10 how the prophecy was fulfilled.

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

Here is a nugget. Bethlehem actually means "House of Bread." and out of this house of bread would be born the bread of life. WOAHH isn't that so cool

Here is what I notice about Bethlehem,

Bethlehem was a nothing town that housed the biggest miracle ever.

A savior of the world was born there and would forever change the trajectory of the world.

My friend maybe you reading over this and maybe you have felt like me before. Maybe you have felt like you are insignificant and you don't matter. Maybe the hustle and bustle of life have you feeling drowned out . . .

But I want you to see that God has a purpose in everything. down to the bread of the table, the places that were named hundreds of years before prophecies were ever given, and God has a plan for you.

Maybe you are not interested in being the next CEO or running for Politics. Maybe you didn't create a worldwide product (like Toiletpaper lol) but what I want you to see is that there is significance in everything. God has a significant part for you to play in your own story that is filled with your hopes and your dreams and your plans. and just need you to see it, know it, and start walking in it.

How is that?

Start being significant to those around you. Start helping those in need. Start calling people to pray. Start meeting a need in your neighborhood. God will give you ideas and you will see, God was just as specific with you as he was to use Bethlehem.



Day 2
A Star, shining in the night

What is the significance of the Star?

The Star in the nativity story is also called "the Star of Bethlehem." This star, after much research, can not actually be found. No astronomer can not tell what these men were following, they have said it might have been a comet. INTERESTING.

Here is what the prophecy said about the star in Numbers 24:17:

"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, and a scepter shall rise from Israel, and shall crush through the forehead of Moab, and tear down all the sons of Sheth"

And then in Mathew 2: 1-2 we can read where the star is mentioned again.

"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him."

God placed the star in the sky to lead the magi, The wise men, to the baby Jesus.

The star in this story signifies the Birth of a Savior. Everyone near could see this beautiful star that appeared out of nowhere as a sign of what was happening inside.

Here is the most beautiful part the STAR was shining for all to see. Everyone has the opportunity to come to JESUS. Everyone has the opportunity to meet the savior of the world.

and what we know now is that the Gospel story (of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection) is for everyone.



Did you catch that? The gospel is for everyone. the Wisemen who came from afar, King Herod even, and the lowly shepherds that came as well.

Here is something else I pulled out of this, Some of us have people we have been praying for to come to know Jesus. Sometimes we take things into our own hands and maybe if we are honest have some less-than-productive conversations with them about the gospel. What this story shows me is that when God wants to get your attention he WILL.

He can call wise men from far with the simple move of a star.

And Girlfriend, God can move and change the heart of your friend or family member that you are praying for. He can wake them with dreams visions, and send stars in their paths. God is in control and he calls

ALL MEN UNTO HIM.

Maybe our job is to be the STAR, be the thing that God moves and changes and shines so bright that it would call others to know HIM.\

lets pray about that today.



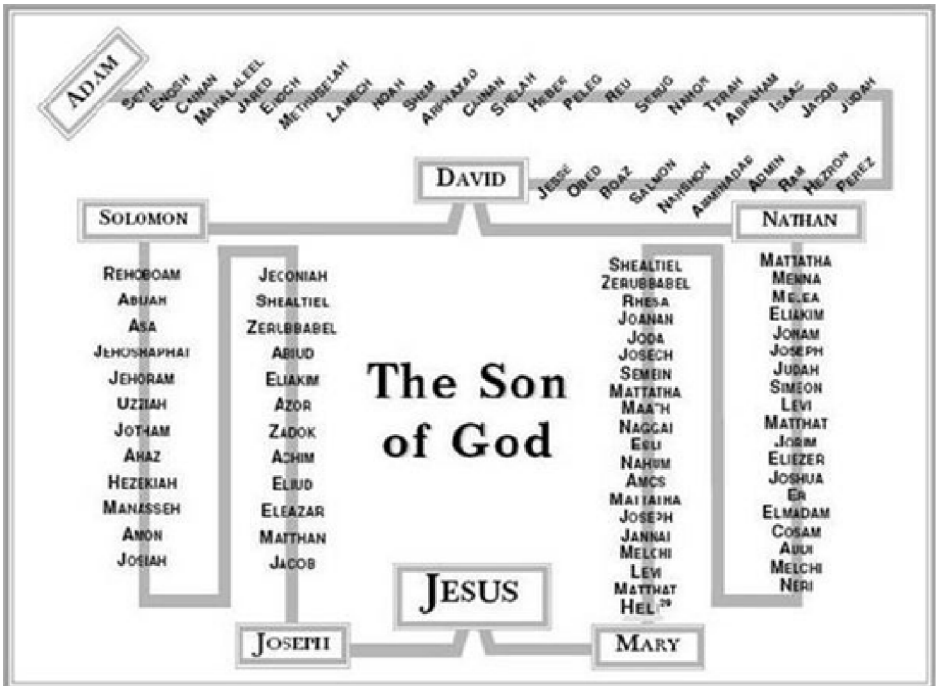
Day 3 A Record of Jesus Lineage

God's promise to David was :

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.
(2 Samuel 7:12)

God promised that the Savior of the world would come from David. Stop and go read for yourself the documented lineage in both Mathew 1 and Luke 3.

Here is what's cool. If you read through both passages you will see that they list different lineages. they don't match exactly. Theologians and historians believe that Mathew gives the account of Joseph (Jesus step father), and Luke gives the account of Mary's bloodline.





First off, God uses everything and everyone. These Lineages are full of imperfect people who continued to fail and mess up and yet GOD STILL USED THEM.

Abraham was chosen by God to father the nation, and yet he messed up and has a child with Hagar (his maidservant) and that bloodline would wreak havoc for generations. Judah slept with his daughter-in-law Tamar, and David slept with Bathsheba and murdered her husband to cover it up. Solomon known for his wisdom was led astray by his wives into idolatry.

You would think that God might want to "skip these Parts" of his history but NO, he makes sure that they get recorded in history so all of us can see that God uses imperfect people STILL.

Here is another thing I want to point out. Joseph was just a Stepdad. he didn't contribute to the BLOODLINE of Jesus. Yet God still made sure that was in the bloodline.

You see our god is a God of Detail, Every detail matters to him. and uses every part.

At a closer look, you will discover that Joseph is actually from Solomon's bloodline and this bloodline was cursed for its disobedience (Jeremiah 22). It would seem that the enemy was so focused on condemning the royal bloodline of Kind David that he left the rest. Jesus was the LEGAL son of Joseph but not the Blood, so the curse didn't affect him. Mary was Blood through Nathan King David's other son.

Here is what this points to. God USES EVERYTHING, and the enemy can't stop what God puts in to motion. What you might be trying to cover up and hid, God wants to use with humility and honesty. God uses it all.



John The baptist

Luke chapter 1 gives us the Story of John the Baptist.

John was born to Zacharias, a priest, and Elizabeth. they were righteous and upstanding in the eyes of the Lord. They didn't have children, which in that day were looked down upon. and they were not getting any younger. Childbearing days seemed to be long past.

But the Lord sent the Angel Gabriel to Zacharias to tell him that his prayer would be answered and they would have a child his name would be John and he would play a significant role in the preparation of the Messiah.

Picture this. Zachariah has waited and prayed for years to have a child, and a son to carry on his bloodline. and as the years passed they probably started to give up the dreams that they had hoped for, the plans that they had. BUT GOD DOESN'T FORGET THE DETAILS.

Christmas is a time of remembering that God keeps His promises and that His promises are not dependent on His people but on the righteousness of His Son. God wants to use it all. Too often we give up on dreams planted in our hearts because it's taking too long. because it doesn't look like it could ever happen, because "the time has passed.

But my friend if God placed a desire in your heart, he will fulfill it. If this desire brings glory and honor to him, it's likely that it's God's dream. and he sees you and he knows you.
DON'T GIVE UP, GOD IS IN THE WAITING.

Today let us remember that if we are waiting for a prayer or a longing we have that God knows the details and God loves the details. Don't give up, linger in the waiting and see that God does show up!



Day 5

SACRIFICE FOR SINS

This entire Christmas story is a big one. The birth of our savior would set in to motion the sacrifice of our sins.

Isaiah 53:10 says:

Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

You see, this little baby in a manger and "Happy Birthday Jesus" songs opened up the fulfillment of our freedom. our peace, our purpose.

Romans 5:8 says this:

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this:

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. –

This doesn't seem like the pretty Christmas story to think about a gruesome death that would happen 33 years later, it's not the Silent Night we sing about, BUT my friend this was the start of it all.

Jesus was born in that manger so that he could save us from our sins.

That story of HOPE to come makes Christmas worth celebrating.