

THE CHRIST OF OUR CHRISTMAS

POINTS TO PONDER

1) Read Hebrews 1:1-2. What is the difference between the message of a prophet and the message of the Son?

WORDS TO WRANGLE

1) The prophets Isaiah and Micah were contemporaries. Look at Micah 5:2 and compare it with Matthew 2:5-6; Luke 2:4-7; and John 7:42. What did Micah predict 400 years before Jesus' birth? Why is this prediction important?

CONCLUSIONS TO CONSIDER

1) What does fulfilled prophecy do to your faith? How is Jesus a prophet for you?

VERSE TO MEMORIZE THIS LESSON SERIES:

"For to us a child is born; to us a Son is given" (Isaiah 9:6 NIV).

Securing our salvation is a process which is given three analogies in the Old Testament. Salvation is a result of the work of a prophet, a priest and a king. John speaks of the resurrected Christ in terms that relate to the three offices or analogies in the first chapter of his Revelation (*red italics mine*).

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness (*the work of the prophet*), the firstborn from the dead (*the work of the priest*), and the ruler of the kings of the earth (*the work of the king*) (Revelation 1:5 NIV).

Eusebius was a historian in the early church. He became the bishop of Caesarea Martima about 314^{AD}. Along with Pamphilus, Eusebius is considered one of the most influential scholars helping assemble the Biblical canon. He was one of the first to recognize in writing the threefold offices of Jesus as the Messiah.

The roles of the prophet, priest and king are the primary examples of leadership as described in the Old Testament scriptures. When Jesus came to earth, even as a babe in a manger, He fulfilled prophecies about each and began to assume the responsibilities of the functions.

The prophet was the one called by God to speak with His authority and on His behalf. The prophet was to announce what God was saying, and to give insight into the events of the future. Old Testament prophets spoke in veiled terms of the coming of the Messiah (Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; Jeremiah 31:15). Many of those alive during Jesus' lifetime referred to Him as a prophet (Matthew 21:11; Luke 7:16; John 4:19; Matthew 16:14).

Jesus even called himself a prophet. He made connections between himself and the great prophets of the Old Testament (Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24-27). He spoke with authority, though often using parables to teach the people (Mark 1:22; 4:34). He was able to perform miracles (Matthew 8:1-17; 9:18-33; Mark 1:32-34; Luke 17:11-19; John 2:1-11). Just as in the days of old, many of the Jewish believers did not heed the words of this prophet.

On many occasions Jesus foretold the future, similar to the prophets of Israel. He told his disciples of his death and resurrection (Matthew 17:22-23), of the denial of Peter (Matthew 26:31-35) and the betrayal by Judas (John 13:18-30).

But rather than being a word from God, Jesus was the Word of God (John 1:1), chosen Himself to live among us (John 1:14). The Hebrew writer proclaims, "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, who he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the world" (Hebrews 1:1-2 ESV).