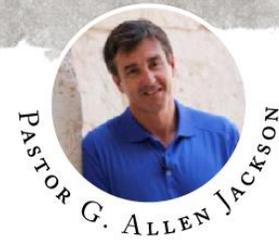


Christmas, A Promise Fulfilled

Personal Preparation

Intend



Matthew 1:18-24 (NASB[®])

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. ²⁰ But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹ "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." . . . ²⁴ And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife,

I. God is Prepared

Job 38:1-6 (NIV[®])

¹ Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm. He said: ² "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? ³ Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. ⁴ "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. ⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? ⁶ On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone--

A. God has a plan — incarnation & parousia

Galatians 4:4 (NIV[®])

⁴ But **when the time had fully come**, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,

Romans 5:6 (NIV[®])

⁶ You see, **at just the right time**, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

John 18:37 (NIV[®])

³⁷ "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, **for this reason I was born**, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

B. God has planned well

Psalms 31:5 (NIV[®])

⁵ Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth.

Luke 23:46 (NIV[®])

⁴⁶ Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

C. God's plan will be completed

Revelation 22:12-13 (NIV[®])

¹² "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

II. Preparation: God's & Mine

Matthew 25:41 (NIV[®])

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire **prepared for the devil and his angels.**

Mark 10:39-40 (NIV[®])

³⁹ "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. **These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.**"

Luke 1:17 (NIV[®])

¹⁷ And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--**to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**"

A. God has a plan which includes you

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV[®])

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, **which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

John 14:1-7 (NIV[®])

¹ "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I am going there to prepare a place for you.** . . . ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus answered, **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** ⁷ If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

B. God has a plan for your good

1 Corinthians 2:6-9 (NASB[®])

⁶ Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; ⁷ but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our glory; ⁸ *the wisdom* which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; ⁹ but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND *which* HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

C. Completed

Hebrews 12:2-3 (NIV[®])

² Let us fix our eyes on **Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith**, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Galatians 6:9 (NIV[®])

⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, in Your great loving kindness You have prepared for my well-being. Your wisdom and strength determine my potential. I rejoice in the plans You have made, I choose to cooperate with You. May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing to You. Grant me the strength to persevere and the wisdom to recognize Your invitations. I rejoice in my redeemer, amen.

Scripture quotations marked (NIV[®]) are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION[®], NIV[®]. COPYRIGHT © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. [®]. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked (NASB) are taken from the Holy Bible, New American Standard Bible[®]. Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org). All rights reserved.