



**BIBLE ROADS**

- With Madelon Maupin, MTS -

## **“Welcoming Christ this Christmas: Biblical Role Models”**

**Madelon Maupin, MTS**

**December 24, 2019**

### **I. Introduction**

- More than busyness to be alert to at Christmas. Like Jesus’ parable of the 10 bridesmaids, we need our ‘lamps’ (thinking) to be lit and expectant for Christ, just as we would prepare to entertain guests in our home.
- Three points we will cover:
  - CHRIST -- What we mean by this term, and how it relates to Jesus
  - PROPHECY – The spiritual foretelling throughout the Hebrew Scriptures that proclaimed a Messiah or Savior that would rescue, redeem and uplift humanity.
  - BIBLICAL ROLE MODELS expressed by two groups and two individuals in the New Testament who welcomed Christ in ways we can model regardless of the difference in centuries, cultures and custom.

### **II. Christ**

- Word from Greek, “Christos”, meaning ‘anointed’. In Hebrew = Messiah.
- Christ Jesus’ dual nature – referred to by Jesus as well as prophets, i.e. “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35).
- When thinking ‘directionally’ about Christ Jesus, many think of God coming ‘down’ to the flesh in the form of the man, Jesus. But what if Jesus’ mission was to go ‘up’, to show that man’s identity is godlike?
- Christ Jesus proved what Gen. 1:26 declared: “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.”
- Christ Jesus understood God is both Father and Mother from the Scriptures (i.e. Jer. 64:8; Isa. 46:3)
- Christ Jesus’ healings weren’t ‘miracles’ but evidence of the Kingdom of Heaven at hand, as he promised (Matt. 3:2). The effect on us of understanding this living Christ: John 1:12 - *“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”*



### III. Biblical Prophecy

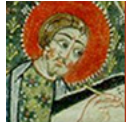
- It's so important because it shows God has always been and IS in charge!
- Anticipation of good news never as pronounced as with the Messiah's promised arrival, foretold by multiple prophets throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.
- In spite of desire and his relationship to King David, Jesus Christ was not a *political* Messiah but rather came to announce the Kingdom of Heaven, described throughout his parables.
- The prophet Micah prophesied *where* the Messiah would be born (Mic. 5:2).
- The Deuteronomist prophesied the Messiah's similarities to the Hebrew lawgiver, *Moses* (Deut. 18:18).
- Zechariah prophesied the Messiah's role as *servant* (Zech. 3:8)
- Isaiah prophesied the sign God would provide: *the virgin birth* (Isa. 7:14), the divine conception by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1).
- Isaiah also prophesied the *work* of the Messiah (Isa. 35:5, 6)

### IV. Biblical Role Models

- Mary and Joseph, expressing receptivity and humility

#### The Magi - HONOR

- From Greek for 'sages/astrologers'. Isa. 60:3 foretold their journey following a star.
- Matthew and Luke's Gospels are only two with a birth story. Matthew describes the Magi and Luke the shepherds, having two different audiences and emphasizing different facets of the birth story.
- The Magis welcomed Christ by HONORING Christ (accord someone deep respect, esteem, including willingness to do that publicly.). Man honors God (Ps. 145:5) and God honors man (Ps. 8:5).
- *Question:* How can I better honor Christ today? What does that look like?



### The Shepherds - WATCHFULNESS

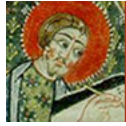
- Shepherds welcomed Christ through their WATCHFULNESS, enabling them to be alert to the angel messages telling of the Messiah's birth.
- In 1<sup>st</sup> century, their profession was looked down upon, being at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder from the Magi. Luke is trying to show how universal Christ is for everyone – all classes, all people, everywhere.
- Shepherds are a lesson in preparation and watchfulness, ensuring sheep are guarded, rescued, not overdriven, tenderly cared for, one by one.
- Story of a night watch on the Atlantic in a hurricane.
- Shepherds watch out for the 'wolves' that would try to devour us today.
- *Question:* How can I be more watchful for Christ in my thinking? What would great spiritual alertness/watchfulness look like in my life?

### Simeon – EXPECTANCY

- Simeon's seven verses are brief in Luke 2:25-32 but point to the spiritual quality of EXPECTANCY (eager waiting, looking forward to God's plan).
- He has been waiting for the 'consolation of Israel' ('the prayerful expectancy of help for Israel', according to Eugene Peterson's *The Message*) – Luke 2:25.
- He serves as a witness to God's promise of salvation through Christ, the presence and power of God.
- *Question:* How can I more actively exercise the spiritual quality of expectancy in daily life? What does it mean that God keeps promises?

### Anna – DEVOTION

- Anna represents the DEVOTION (commitment, fidelity, steadfastness, constancy) needed to welcome Christ because of her long steadfastness in worshipping at the Temple.
- Luke often has pairings of men and women throughout his Gospel, as he does here with Simeon and Anna, both prophets, both welcoming Christ in the Temple. Anna builds on strong female characters from the Old Testament such as Miriam and Deborah.
- *Question:* How can we be more devoted to watching for Christ today?



V. Summary

Nicholas Ge painting: “Messengers of the Resurrection Morning”.

The Mary Magdalene figure embodies all the qualities discussed in the Biblical role models:

Mary embodies all the qualities we’ve been discussing –

- the **honor** she accorded Christ Jesus—as we saw the Magi bring –by going to the tomb, believing his words that he would rise again the third day, that he was indeed the King of that heavenly kingdom that no earth power could destroy or stop;
- the **watchfulness** and alertness – as the shepherds demonstrated -- to be ready to recognize the Gardener’s true identity when the risen Christ reveals who he truly is.
- The **expectancy** that Simeon felt when she believed Jesus’ words about eternal life.
- The **devotion** of Anna that not only saw that he was risen, but was devoted enough to the living Christ to run and tell the disciples, regardless of whether they believed her. She knew, and that was enough.

Thank you and Merry Christmas!

Madelon