

### \*\*Vid bumper

Prequels are very popular in today. A prequel is a story that focuses on events that occur before the revealed narrative. A prequel reveals more about the characters we know, love & appreciate.

Everyone has a prequel. When you know someone's story it changes how you feel about them. The reason your Bible tells you not to judge someone is because you don't know their prequel story. The only thing we can judge about someone is that God views them with the worth of the life of His only son.. This is also why God is the Righteous Judge, because He knows us inside and out. He knows your prequel... Everyone has a prequel.

You probably know the Christmas story, but do you know the prequel? The Incarnation of God in flesh has a back story!

What is the **Christmas Prequel**?

When it comes to Christmas.. what is the prequal? What is the story before the story?

# INCARNATION

The Christmas story is all about the Incarnation, God clothing himself in flesh. God the deity appearing in the form of humanity. This is who Jesus is. Jesus is the God of the Universe in human form.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.(NIV)

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.(NIV)

So God puts on a “bod” and is born in Bethlehem of a virgin named Mary. That is the story.. now what is the back story?

Here is a question we must answer to discover the prequel story of the incarnation..

## **When did God decide to incarnate?**

We know when Jesus was born right? December 25<sup>th</sup>... (joking!) December 25<sup>th</sup> is a day that we traditionally celebrate the birth of Christ but its date is not recorded in scripture. In fact we don't know the exact day or even the exact year of His incarnation but we can narrow it down to a span of a few years. Many think 4BC or 1BC on His birth year.

So we have a good estimation of when the Birth of Christ occurred (within a few years), but when did God decide to incarnate?

Here is another important question. **Why did God incarnate?**

- Marry was blessed among women (Luke 1:42).. did God just look down and say at that moment and say “here is an idea?”
- Did He decide we need a holiday season with gaudy decor and caroling?

- Did God finally decide things were so bad down here that He needed to come straighten it out?

Why did God incarnate?

Many Christians would say – to save us from our sins. They wouldn't be wrong in saying Jesus saved us through the cross, but is the incarnation simply a response to our many mistakes.. the original mistake in the Garden of Eden?

## The rescue mission mindset

Now Jesus does rescue us from the curse of sin and death. ABSOLUTELY! Yet if we believe that Jesus coming to earth was only a rescue mission then that answers...

- Why did God incarnate? – To save us
- When did God decide to incarnate? –
  - after we fell into sin and needed saving
  - some plan where God determined that we would need saving and decided to incarnate before the fall into sin.

Here is the problem with these. That makes Jesus plan B.. Wouldn't you say that Jesus is plan A?

It creates a scenario where God created a good world for us to live in unity with God and each other, but that plan A was smashed by sin so we need a plan B... Jesus save us...

So where does our Christmas prequel start?

- When adam and eve sinned?
- When God decided & predestined that Adam & Eve would sin?

I want to reveal to you this Christmas prequel – **The**

# **Incarnation was God's plan from the beginning**

The Christmas Story is not a response to sin but the plan from the beginning. What took place in Bethlehem Israel was always God's plan.

Ephesians 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.(NIV)

Ephesians 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love(NIV)

Ephesians 1:5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--(NIV)

Now there is a lot there I need to explain. So let's think some. God's masterplan is for us to be blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

When again? BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD the incarnation was planned.

Before anything God planned that our relationship with Him would be IN CHRIST...Adopt us as children in Christ.. bless us in Christ.. love us in Christ. Teach us His will in Christ.

His plan from the beginning is to choose us in Christ through the incarnation.

The Incarnation is God's plan to become a human, taking on our fleshly nature, and to bring us to him and into His nature.

There is misunderstandings about God's plan from the beginning

## The rescue mission mindset

it is a misunderstanding to believe in a predestined rescue operation... if you predestine a rescue plan then you also predestined the cause for rescue.. If God predestined everything.. He predestined the death of Jesus, the coming of Jesus, mankind's failure, Satan's rebellion... so that he can receive glory? Strange plan.

Let's say I created a robot and programed it to destroy Scott's car. The robot does what I predetermined it would do and destroys Scott's car. WHO'S FAULT IS THAT? Scott's fault? The Robot's fault? Or the Creator's fault?

If God predestined everything then He is responsible for everything... look around at the evil in this world. Is that the Christmas prequel?

All death & suffering is a result of sin. If God predestined the fall of mankind into sin then he predestined the resulting dominoes.. Is that the Christmas Prequel we are celebrating?

No we are singing about JOY to the world and heavenly peace.

If the incarnation is only about rescue then it makes Jesus a plan B, or it makes him a predestined savior but also that He predestined the pain and suffering in the world.

I believe that this predestined view creates a monstrous picture of God. I believe it looks nothing like the Lord we read about in the Bible.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.(NIV)

Jesus reveals God. The sin and fall of Satan, angels, and man does not reveal God's glory... Jesus stepping into this broken world and serving, healing, feeding.. Bearing the cross and dying in the place of sinners - this reveals God.

That is the Christmas Prequel right there. This was the plan from the beginning.

God is not responsible for the sin and fall (our choice) but He took responsibility for it on the cross. (His choice/grace)

When was the incarnation decided? This prequel goes all the way back to the beginning.

Romans 5:14 Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.(NIV)

Adam and all of mankind was patterned after Jesus. God had the pattern in mind... God had the incarnation in mind before He created Adam.

Adam was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) – Christ is that perfect image of the invisible God (Col 1:15).

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.(KJV)

In the beginning was the WORD.. Word is the Greek word Logos. (Amongst its many uses) It means logic, thought, order, or plan.

In the beginning was the Plan of the Incarnation. It was with God but it would also BE GOD!

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.(KJV)

The plan of the incarnation put on flesh and lived on earth!  
That plan was formed in the beginning.

Look at this plan!

Colossians 1:15 Who (JESUS) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:(KJV)

Jesus is the creator. (John 1:3, Col 1:16) He is God.

He is also the first born of all creation. (Col 1:15) The incarnate birth was the plan from the beginning

He is Creator yet also the first born of creation. This can only happen in the incarnation.

The incarnation is where God & Man meet in perfect unity.

The incarnation was the plan from the beginning.. Adam was made after the pattern of Christ.. We are blessed and chosen in Christ.. The incarnation is the place where God & man meet

in perfect unity.. Because of this I am persuaded that if Adam & Eve had never sinned that God would have still incarnated.

Jesus did come and rescue us.. but even if mankind didn't need rescuing – our God would have still put on flesh and dwelt among us.

Why would God choose to live down here with us? I am going to be talking about the Why next week.. but let me tell you why in 1 word – Relationship. God desires a relationship with you.

There has never been a moment that He didn't plan to incarnate.. to put on flesh and to have a face to face relationship with you. One day your Bible tells you that you will see an incarnate Christ face to face and that you will live with Him. –We refer to this as HEAVEN. This has always been His plan from the Beginning.

Do you have that relationship with Him? (Too often we only want Him to rescue us.. He wants relationship)

God is willing to step into your world and be with you.

Do you believe in the incarnation? Do you believe that Jesus is Immanuel – God with us?

Invite Him to step into your world.. into your life. Invite Him to be present like He has always planned to be present.