

Jesus: A Man Like No Other

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[0 : 00] Now, I know I'm asking a little bit of a loaded question here, but you guys are familiar with Facebook, right? Do I need to explain Facebook to anybody here at all?

No arms, no hands? Okay. I don't know if you guys are getting it, but I'm getting this whole new Facebook thing that they're reminding me in the morning of memories. You guys getting that whole memory thing?

You know what happened? It goes back. This just kind of started showing up my phone, and Chris kind of alluded to something today, but this week, five years ago, I was actually in Manila.

I was in the Philippines. Anybody else here know anything about the Philippines? Manila, right? All right, this is kind of an honor of you guys a little bit here, but when I was over there, I was preaching at a conference, and it was a great pleasure.

It was a nice Christian camp, and I got to serve 250 pastors, but I also got to make some observation about the Filipino people outside of Canada.

[1 : 01] Okay? So I thought I would share with you, in honor of you guys being here, and of the memories of the three of the most, how would I put it, shocking things that I learned about the Filipino people when I was in Manila.

The first thing that really astounded me, and in case you don't know, and this isn't it, Manila is the largest parking lot in the world. Okay? The traffic is beyond imagination. There is no express lanes. There is no rush hour, because you can't rush. It is just constant, am I right, 24 hours a day, just packed with cars. And what happens with people is you sit in your cars, and I'm not talking our, like, little city streets or being downtown Vancouver.

We're talking picture the 99, six lanes across going one way, six lanes going the other way, and it's packed. It's packed.

And even though I lived six kilometers away where I was staying, it was still a four-hour journey. I'm not exaggerating here. What was amazing is that I learned in the Philippines, you can buy corn on the cob at your car in the middle of the highway.

[2 : 14] People go down the lanes of a major highway selling you corn on the cob. You just, I'm hungry, I'm waiting, I'm in the mood for corn on the cob.

There's someone there with corn on the cob for you. It's incredible. The second thing that I learned about Philippines when I was over there, in case you guys didn't know, I'm a little bit of a KFC aficionado. All right?

I am quite perturbed with them. You know, they've changed the whole coleslaw thing. Yeah, that doesn't do it for me. But anyway, but once in a while I get a penchant for fried chicken. All right, of course, Manila's got some KFC.

You know what you can buy at KFC? Spaghetti. Spaghetti. It seems to destroy all the laws of what is good about KFC. Not no offense, guys.

I'm sure it's good spaghetti. I couldn't bring myself to try it. And the third thing that I noticed about Manila, and hopefully this will transition to the sermon, shopping in the mall.

[3 : 13] So it was exactly at this time, this week of the year, which we're celebrating Thanksgiving, everywhere in Philippines, inside a mall, is Christmas music. They're just pumping out Christmas music like there's nothing going on, like there was nothing else.

Everywhere. I just, 24 hours in the mall, Christmas music. It's October. What's going on, right? All right, so this is my transition, both to honor you guys and having such a great country and being here and such, being faithful members of our church.

But it also reminds me that since we are eventually going to get to Christmas, we are going to be inundated with these little thoughtful magazines. And I mentioned these a couple of weeks ago.

You remember these kind of magazines, right? We're going to Time Magazine, Life Magazine, all these different type of magazines, because it's the Christmas season, are going to give us these stories about Jesus.

And they're going to tell you that, you know, we've got some of the greatest scholars known to man, and we put him into a room, and we want you guys to work years and years and recreate the life of Christ and tell us what he was really about.

[4 : 21] And they pretty much always say the same thing at the end of it. And sure enough, they keep using the same scholars over and over, right? Like you're going to get any different answer every time. But they're going to say that, yeah, yeah, yeah, this Jesus guy, there was a guy who lived in Galilee.

His name was Maybe Jesus. And he was a man, but he certainly wasn't the son of God. But he was kind of a nice peasant guy who said some wise things once in a while, and people followed him. That's pretty much the truth. And I think the number they give you is they'll say, when it comes to the Bible, you can probably trust maybe 12% of it. Certainly not the miracles, right?

So this is the question that I have for you guys, okay? These magazines are out there. People read them, okay? If you're on the internet, you will get an article pretty soon.

We're warming up to Christmas. They're going to put this out. Your friends are going to read that article. Your friends might be interested in Jesus. They come to you with these articles, and they say, what do you think about Jesus?

[5 : 31] What do you got for me? What's true about these articles? My question to you is, what passages in the Bible would you go to to prove not only the existence of God, but God was who he said he was?

And I say God, I'm saying Jesus Christ was who he said he was. Perhaps you'll open the Gospel of Mark. It's pretty quick. It's small. It's almost like newspaper headlines.

But the Gospel of Mark is made for you to see the power of Jesus Christ. Mark wrote that Gospel to the Romans to show you, hey, listen, you guys are all full of your Roman gods and all that.

Let me tell you about the real God and what he can really do. And that's what Mark is really about.

It's talking about the events of the miracles. Maybe you're going to be a little bit more thoughtful and you're going to go to John.

John's a little bit bigger, a little bit more theological. Your friend's a thinker. And you're going to engage him on the questions of theology that exists in the Gospel of John. And of course, you're going to go to John 3.16, right?

[6 : 39] And we're going to look at that and you're going to demonstrate this to your friends. Or maybe you're going to go to the Gospel of Matthew. And you're going to look at the Sermon on the Mount.

And you're going to teach them, hey, listen, this is the fantastic teachings that Jesus gave. And only one who could teach like that had to have come from God. Or you could take any one of the Gospels and you would go to the Passion Week.

And you would describe to them everything that happened at the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And those are all great and wonderful things.

Now, how many of you, when it comes to proving that Jesus Christ was who indeed said he was, would think about turning to the birth of Jesus Christ?

Be honest with yourself. Think about that for a bit. When someone is asking you to prove who Jesus was, would you think about turning to the birth of Jesus Christ?

[7 : 46] Don't feel bad. A lot of people don't. But I think we get the sense that it is a Christmas story that the whole world is familiar with.

And it's a, I would like to say a wonderful story, but I'm sure if you went and asked Joseph and Mary, was that a wonderful story, right? You're kind of coming into Bethlehem and you got to find a place and there's no room in the inn and all these kind of stuff.

But it's this story that we say. And at the very end, a whole bunch of sheep showed up and with shepherds and they celebrated the birth of the child.

Jesus. Jesus. Tugs at our heart. But would we really use those stories to speak into why Jesus is the Messiah?

What does it have to do with Jesus being the Savior of the world? Well, this is what I'm hoping to accomplish over the next several Sundays, is I want to teach you how important, not only is it that

Jesus was born, duh, but how important it was for all those events to happen around the birth of Jesus in order for Jesus to be the Messiah and obviously the Savior of the world.

[9 : 15] All right? That's what I want to do these next several weeks as we look at the birth. We're not going to just look. And I'm going to tell you stuff about the Christmas story that is going to get, you're going to go home and you're going to argue with it.

You're going to fight it because I'm going to challenge some of the myths that we hold about Christmas. And the thing is, you're going to see it right in the pages of Scripture. I'm going to show you verses that you've never noticed before.

You've never even thought of that conclusion that came up. And it will certainly add to the amazing story that we have about Jesus Christ and how it all went down.

But this morning I want to do something a little bit different. Before we get into the eventual birth, I want you to start thinking about not only was it important for Jesus to be born, but it was just as important to have him and the events to unfold that we read in the beginnings of the gospel to happen in the way that they happen in order for Jesus to be the Messiah.

Does that make sense the way I'm saying it? So these are the events that have to happen if Jesus Christ is to be the Messiah. And if you remember, I talked about that if you went through your Old Testament and you were savvy, and we're going to talk about this a little bit more next week, but if you knew your Scripture, you knew Daniel's prophecy, you knew Malachi, and you knew those Scriptures, you knew that eventually a Redeemer would come, and it would be at the time when Jesus came.

[11 : 00] We don't know. When Jesus is coming back, we just know it's the great day of the Lord. It's going to happen. We don't know the time. But it's coming. But those guys at that time for the first coming of Jesus Christ, they could get pretty close to figuring out when it happened.

And in fact, in history, I'll tell you a little bit about some of the guys, but there was actually earlier messianic claims during that time. People were rising up, getting the people all together, and trying to overthrow Rome.

Now, what I want to do is I want you to turn with me to Matthew 1. Matthew 1. That's not going to be the bulk of where we're going to be, but I want you to see some things that is so important for us to understand.

Of course, most of you guys who are familiar with Matthew 1 know this is the genealogies. Let's be honest. Genealogies in our culture really don't mean much.

Unless you happen to be a member of a royal family. Does anybody here a member of the royal family? Okay, we've got one. That's good.

[12 : 10] That's better than most churches. Okay? But usually you're trying to prove something. Remember I told you guys last week, I opened up a little bit about my heritage.

Genealogies show that my ancestors lived in the Americas pre-1776. They were fighting the British. He got captured and he got delivered to Nova Scotia.

And that's how my ancestors grew from the East Coast. Well, anyhow, when I was in the States, there was a citizenship lawyer there. And I said, hey, what do you think the chances of me being able to make an argument before your courts that I should be an American citizen?

That I was forcibly removed from my land, and my people and I demand to be... He said, I think he got a really good case. He said, forgetting British citizenship.

Because he reminded me that there wasn't even America at that point. It was just the British. So you're really not getting anywhere with that. All right. So when we look at genealogies, you and me, they don't mean much.

[13 : 11] But to a first century Jew, in determining who the Messiah is, genealogies mean everything. Now, if you were with us during Christmas, I did a short series on some of the more incredible stories that were in the genealogies of God's incredible grace.

And if you haven't heard them, I would encourage you to go back. I think they're beautiful stories of God using people in the line of Jesus that we would never expect.

If we were to pick who would be the people that would continue the light of Jesus, would we think it would be a Moabitess? No. Would we think it was a woman who committed adultery?

No. You know, it's just all the way through. God uses broken people. Or as the old line goes, God uses crooked sticks to draw straight lines. Amen? So anyway, so I want to talk to you a little bit about the genealogy.

And I want to draw from here three reasons the Messiah needed to have the credentials that he did. So as you all know, the Gospel of Matthew is actually written primarily to a Jewish audience.

[14 : 31] It is a Jewish audience. I believe, some scholars disagree with me, but they are wrong, that Matthew is indeed the first Gospel written out of all the other Gospels.

And I'll tell you the reason why I believe that. One, 2,000 years of church history testifies to that. Two, where was the first place that Jews, who were the early first Christians, went to share the Gospel?

To other Jews, right? And they'd go to synagogues. So as Paul and the missionaries went out, the apostles, they would hit the synagogues. And what they would do is the first thing, and we see Paul doing this in the book of Acts, he reasons, when it says he reasoned from Scripture, he's not arguing from the New Testament.

They didn't have the New Testament. But what he's going back, he's going back into the Old Testament and showing them why Jesus Christ had to be the Messiah.

And this is kind of what I'm doing with you today. So in fact, he would clearly begin with, look at Matthew 1, chapter 1. It goes, this is the book of genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

[15 : 41] That is an absolutely loaded statement. So the first thing you need to do when you meet with a Jew and they understand the Old Testament is you have to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is both the son of David and a son of Abraham.

And I'm going to tell you why in a little bit. But there's three people Jesus needs to be connected to, three promises, three prophecies. The first one we read today is the Messiah needed to be the seed of a woman.

In order for Jesus to be the Messiah, and you're going to see the verse that's up here, is we're going to be looking at Genesis 3.15. It said, for Jesus to be Jesus, for Jesus to be the Messiah, had to be born of a woman.

Now remember the situation in Genesis 3.15. Adam and Eve, they're in the Garden of Eden. They're doing really great until the serpent Satan comes along, tempts them to sin, they eat of the tree of knowledge, which they're not supposed to do, and now they have realization of the sin that they've now brought in.

They're hiding. But there's judgment. But there's also hope in the judgment. That's the wonderful thing about God. Amen? Sometimes he does discipline us, but he does that because he loves us.

[17 : 02] And he says, I will put enmity between you and the woman. And he's talking about Satan here. And between your offspring and her offspring.

And this is he's referring to her offspring, who would be the seed of woman. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. What this tells us is that Jesus is not simply a created being, but that Jesus Christ needed to be the offspring of a woman.

This is the first prophecy in all of Scripture. That Jesus would come. That the Redeemer for all of men had to happen from a woman. Now, I don't know how inquisitive you are.

But have you guys ever asked yourself, why didn't Jesus just show up? Like just say, it's a Thursday night. There's this group of 12 guys that are really good buddies that are having a dinner. And poof, Jesus show up. He says, hey, I'm the Messiah. God just sent me here. You saw me just appear before you. Tomorrow, I'm going to eat a meal so we can get to know each other.

[18 : 18] But tomorrow, I'm going to die for your sins. I'm going to get crucified. A couple days later, I'm going to rise again. And then I'm going to teach you for 40 days. And I'm going to go to heaven.

Have you guys ever wondered why it had to go the way it did? Like, let's be honest. we know nothing of hardship.

And we're going to cover that next week. What it was like to be born in the first century. Right? It was tough.

Why did God want to do that? Why did, wouldn't the fact that he was the sacrifice, that he just showed up and went on the cross, wouldn't that be good enough?

Well, there's actually quite a few theological reasons why that didn't happen. But one of the reasons is that Jesus Christ had to be fully human.

[19 : 24] What does fully human mean? Born of a woman, be a baby, child, teenager, youth, young man, or young woman.

There is a stage of life that no human being can escape. And the reality is for Jesus to be Jesus, to be fully human, meant that Jesus Christ had to go through the same process that we did. It's incredible. And we're going to look at why in a bit. So one of the first things that we understand, for Jesus to be Jesus, he had to be human. Fully human. Baby to adulthood. You with me on that? All right. The second prophecy that we're going to look at is let's take a look at Genesis 12. And this is going to be up here. Is the second thing that Jesus needed to be was a Jew.

Not only did he have to be a human, he had to be a Jew. Genesis 12, 1 to 3. This is, now the Lord said to Abram, this is before he was circumcised, and became Abraham, the father of all Jews. [20 : 39] Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you will curse. And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Who's the greatest blessing to all of mankind? Jesus Christ. I'm going to show you in the genealogy of Luke in a bit why that is so. So the first thing that we need to see for Jesus to be the Messiah, he needs to be fully human. Number two, he needs to be a Jew. He can't be a Hittite. He can't be a Moabite. He can't be an Egyptian. He had to be a Jew. He had to be of the people of Israel. Even if someone during that time happened to live a perfect life, did all the things that Jesus did, but if he were not a Jew, he could not be the Messiah.

[21 : 39] All right, the third, the Messiah needed to be, and as we see in the first verse of Matthew 1, is they needed to be the seed of David.

Check out Psalm 89. It says, I have made a covenant with my chosen one. I have sworn to David my servant. I will establish your offspring forever and build your throne for all generations.

That is a God's giving David a promise that the one who will go on forever will be your offspring. And if you, and we're going to bring up 2 Samuel 7.

If you ever get a chance, sometimes we focus so much on the story and narrative. I think we miss the tenderness that is behind some words.

You know, there's a difference between I love you and I love you. You know, there's different ways to inflect, but there's this background in it. Second, Samuel 7, and I, if you guys want to look that up and spend some time, it's this really beautiful picture and it's David at the end of his life.

[22 : 54] And, and God's kind of saying, I want a temple. I've been in a tent my whole life and it'd be really good if I had this temple, this structure, which could be my home and I will exist with all your people.

And David's kind of making this request. Can I, can I build that Lord? I would love to do that for you. I would love to do that for you, God. And, and we know the story.

And if you don't, God says, David, you, you've been a man of war. You've been a good godly man and I'm not going to have you build the temple. But what I'm going to do is I'm going to use one of your sons who would be Solomon and he will build that temple.

But God does so much more. So let's just look at verse 12, but read the whole chapter. It's this incredible chapter of this. God is talking to David through the prophet and it's kind of this go between and it's, it's beautiful.

It really is. Anyhow, verse 12, it says, it goes, when your days are fulfilled, this is God talking to Dan, David, when your days are fulfilled and you'd lie down with your fathers, I will rise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom.

[24 : 13] He shall build a house for my name. And that's when he's talking about Solomon is going to build that house. And then he says, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

That there's going to be a legal line of a king who will eventually come. And, and God says, listen, if your ancestors get out of line, I'm going to discipline them. I'm going to discipline them, which we know he does, but I'm still going to keep this promise to you that from your seed, all the promises that I've made to you are going to come true.

So we see these three things. We see one, he's got to be human. Two, he has to be a Jew, a seed of Abraham. And three, he's got to be from the line of David.

All right. So let's flip back to Matthew chapter one. And this is where Matthew, the Jew explaining to the Jews where this occurs.

And this is why there's this genealogy. And what the genealogy of Matthew does, it provides what is known as the legal lineage of Jesus.

[25 : 29] What that means is it's determining Jesus's legal right to sit on the throne. And what we read in that genealogy, and we're not going to go through it all, but this is the genealogy of Joseph, the father, who by taking Mary to be his wife, we're going to read about the details next week or maybe the week after, but by taking Mary to be his wife, he takes Jesus to be his son.

And Jesus inherits all the rights to be the Messiah. Now, the question often gets asked, well, Jesus really isn't his son, right?

Jesus was born to Mary, impregnated, for lack of a better word, because of the Jesus, of the Holy Spirit.

But for Jesus to be the redeemer, he has to be of the legal line. And in Jewish culture, but even in adoption, if that's my first son that I take in, and remember, we talked about this earlier, I can't remember when, but the Jewish law stated that, say, I'm one of five brothers, let's take Carl, for instance, Carl's got like seven, and 12 brothers, what is it, eight brothers, something like that, right? So when the older brother, say he dies in a farming accident, as all things happen in Saskatchewan, and if he's married, and the next brother down the line is not married, he is to marry Carl's wife that he left behind.

[27 : 10] And if that guy should have an accident, and it's to keep the wife safe, but she's to give him a son. And so for Carl, that might not, so Carl's brother, that might not be Carl's real son, but he inherits all the rights of what it would have been to be Carl's son, and he would carry on Carl's name.

So this has always existed in the Jewish family. There was always protection, and they would be a rightful sonship, even though he's not really Carl's son because Carl passed, but he would be given all those rights to be Carl's son.

It's the same thing that's working out here because he comes in, Joseph is taken over, even though it's not his son, he still grants him all the rights of being his son.

So they had that, always that protection going on. So by that, being adopted, made Jesus the firstborn to Joseph, thus legally entitling him to the throne.

So we see, in order for Jesus to be the Messiah, born of a woman, he needed to be related to Abraham, a Jew, he needed to be the seed of Abraham, and he needed to be legally entitled to the throne.

[28 : 35] Turn with me now to Luke 3, 23, please. This is another genealogy. And a lot of people really fought this, and I don't know, and I've made one of the points here, it's not only just for you to get to know Jesus, but to trust your Bibles.

A lot of skeptics will come in and say, well, how can this be the genealogy of Joseph? If you read the genealogy in Matthew, it says that Joseph is the son of Jacob.

But when we read this genealogy, it says that Joseph was the son of Heli. And it causes this confusion.

Well, what's really going on here? We're going to get to that in a second. So I want you to know the most important part for us. Take a look at verse 38. Verse 38 of Luke chapter 3.

Who does that connect us? Who does that connect Jesus to? Adam. Right? Luke's genealogy goes right to the beginning of time to Adam.

[29 : 45] Who are we related to? Adam. So this is the power. Not only does Jesus have to be human, have to be a Jew, but because he's linked to us through all of humanity, he has the right to be our savior.

If he wasn't related to us, not a part of what it is to be a human being, he could not be our savior. But by Luke, just writing out this genealogy and then this one verse, he's connecting Jesus to all of man.

So Jesus still has the right bloodlines to the throne of David, but he also is a part of our bloodline and allows him to be our savior.

But what this genealogy in Luke is, this is the genealogy of Mary. So let's take a look at verse Luke 3, 23. And it says, Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about 30 years of age, being the son, as was supposed, of Joseph, the son of Heli.

Heli, in the way they wrote their constructions of the genealogies that we see in Luke, you don't mention the woman, which is Mary, you put in the husband's name.

[31 : 00] So Heli is in fact the father of Mary. So what we now have now is a bloodline connection to David.

So the question you ask is, we have a legal right to the throne through Joseph, and we have a bloodline through Mary.

We see, so we have the blood that flows as a human in Jesus Christ, and then we have the legal rights to the throne. So for Jesus to be Messiah, we know he has to be born of a woman, needs to be born a Jew, he has to have the legal right to David's house, and he also has to have the blood right to the throne.

All right, those are five. Today I'm going to give you the sixth. The sixth thing that Jesus had to be the Messiah is that Jesus needed a forerunner.

Jesus needed a forerunner. If you were a Jew living in first century Israel, and you knew your scriptures, you knew the prophecy of Daniel, that after the kingdom of Babylon had passed, that after the kingdom of Persia had passed, that after the kingdom of Greek, Greece had passed, when the kingdom of Rome ruled, there would come one shouting in the wilderness.

[32 : 40] And you're going to see this verse above you, or above me, Malachi 3.1. Malachi is the last prophet who spoke to Israel.

After Malachi speaks, God doesn't speak for 400 years. And Malachi is setting up the people, basically saying, God is going dark.

You're not going to hear from him for a while. But there's these events in history will happen, and you will know that God will one day speak again, and he's coming to redeem you.

Behold, I send my messenger. This is God speaking. And he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple.

And the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming. And we're going to look at the last two verses of the entire Old Testament.

[33 : 54] Down in Malachi 4, 5, and 6, it says, Behold, I will send you Elijah, Elijah, the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

Isn't that a great way to think about when Jesus comes back, it is going to be the awesome day of the Lord. I had one of my friends say, I don't think we should ever use the word awesome unless we talk about God.

Because it is a word that is unlike any word that God uses. When God comes, it's going to be awesome. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with the decree of utter destruction.

So, you knew if you're a first century Jew and you're waiting for the Redeemer, you know the prophecies, you know the time is right.

The Messiah to show up is going to be born of a woman. He's just not going to get created, beamed in from something like Star Trek. He's going to be a human being, flesh and blood. Two, he's going to be a Jew.

[35 : 05] Three, he's going to be related to David. That means he's going to have the rights to the throne, the legal rights, but he's going to be of the same bloodline.

So he's going to have to come from someone of that bloodline. But before that happens, someone will come and he will shout and he's going to have this power of the, he's going to have the power to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers.

And he's going to come in the strength and spirit of Elijah. And if you don't know who Elijah was, he was one of Israel's greatest prophets. Like, God, he was so great, God just took him to heaven.

He didn't even die. So that leads us to Luke chapter 1, verse 5. Please turn with me. I'm going to read this chapter. I thought about, honestly, just reading you and leaving this off as a point.

But next week, I'm actually going to take apart this passage for you. And the reason why, I was just, I've just been studying this history and going through this stuff. I'm learning stuff I never saw before.

[36 : 27] But God is in this innocuous passage so much. I really want you guys to see every place where he appears. And I pray that it will warm your hearts.

It's just, everything that goes on in this passage is incredible. So let me just read it for you and I'll expound it next week. But this is obviously the announcement of John the Baptist.

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron and her name was Elizabeth.

Even though the first verse is a loaded verse of who these people were. And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child because Elizabeth was barren and both were advanced in years. Now while he was serving a priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

[37 : 45] And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And I'm gonna, we're gonna look at what that was, where it was in the temple, and there's just this, this is like a massive event that is going on.

This guy only gets to go in the temple once in his lifetime. Once. And we see this hand of God's guidance about to give him this great news that he is going to be a father.

And you need to understand not only in the Jewish tradition, even in that first verse, I'm sorry I'm getting away from this, but both him and his wife are from the Aaronic line.

Okay? Why is that significant? They were chosen all the way back to the time of Moses to serve God in the temple. They were a priestly line. And not only was he, but he married someone else in the priestly line.

And she's barren with child. Just think about that. Their ancestors have been carrying on in the temple since the time of Moses.

[38 : 52] That's close to 2,000 years of their family being in the temple. And now they can't have a child. Like just think of the reproach they would feel towards all their ancestors.

They can't have a child who will carry on that honor that our family has always had for serving the Lord in the most intimate of intimate settings for a Jew.

All right? That's what this passage is setting us up for. And he draws a lot because they have to go in. Who's going to go into the inner sanctum?

We're going to tell you what it was to light incense. It's just this awesome story of God's absolute love. Verse 10.

And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside of the hour of incense. And this gift, there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

[40 : 00] And Zachariah was troubled when he saw him. And fear fell upon him. Remember, this is the first time God has spoken to his people in over 400 years.

This is the guy he chooses to do it to. But the angel said to him, Do not be afraid, Zachariah, for your prayer has been heard.

And your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son. And you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness. And many will rejoice at his birth.

Just picture for a second the emotional intensity of that moment. These are just, Luke is just recording what was going on at that time. But, Zachariah, what?

You know, like, there's this incredible display of kindness and love being showered on this man by God who has been silent for 400 years and he chooses this man for a reason.

[41 : 08] We're going to get into it later. For he will be great before the Lord. So it's not enough to know that you're going to have a kid. You're going to have a kid that is going to be great before the Lord.

And he must not drink wine or strong drink and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

Bing! This guy's a priest. This guy knows the scripture. He's starting to figure out what exactly is going on. And he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the hearts to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just and make ready for the Lord a people prepared.

Like, this is like saying, I don't know if we can compare it, you've won the billion dollar lottery and you've been given lordship over all of Canada and the U.S.

And like, it's just everything. Complete freedom. You, your ancestor is going to lead my people. And Zacharias said to the angel, listen, it doesn't say everybody in the Bible was smart, right?

[42 : 29] How shall I know this? For I'm an old man and my wife is advanced in years, right? It's the first thing he's thinking about. He's been, it's like someone showing up, I'm going to give you this brand new top of the line Mercedes Transit and I'm going to put all, I've had Dustin adjusted, it's got all the camping stuff in there and it's yours for free.

And you're like, who's going to pay the gas? Right? It's just, there's this obstinacy.

Verse 19, and the angel answered him, I'm Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news, you dummy.

Sorry, it's not in there. And behold, look at, you know, this is what happens, right? God loves you, but you're stepping on a line. You will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their time.

And the people were waiting for Zechariah and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. And just to let you know, when you went in as the priest, your ankle was actually tied to a rope to the outside because no one was allowed into that inner sanctum.

[43 : 59] And when that bell stopped ringing, and we know bells, right? Who goes hiking here without a bell, right? We know we need to wear a bell, keeps the bears away, but that bell's not ringing.

So sometimes a prophet might die and God has done that to certain people. They were messing around with the incense, boom, God took their lives. So they're like, whoa, whoa, what's going on? There's no noise. And they're wondering, what is happening? And the people were waiting for him and they were wondering at his delay in the temple and when he came out, he was unable to speak to them.

And they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple and he kept making signs to them and remained mute. And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

After these days, his wife Elizabeth conceived. For five months, she kept herself hidden, saying, thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on my people to take away my reproach among my people.

[45 : 10] God is good, amen? And he uses these stories of simple people, stubborn people like us, asking the wrong questions, often at the wrong time.

But what I'm going to do is I'm going to take that little, that story a little bit apart. So that leads us to that sixth point. You had to have a forerunner. The point is here, for Jesus Christ to be the Messiah, there had to be John the Baptist.

There had to be a forerunner who was going to come in the power of Elijah. And that's now, the clock is almost striking zero. He has been announced to Zachariah, who may have been a dummy here, but he was a righteous man.

He did love God. And we're going to talk to you why just him being that man would have been so unusual in a time when the priesthood was so corrupt.

Let's pray. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, there's just these incredible stories that are kind of in the, between the lines of the text.

[46 : 11] Sometimes you use these authors to just say the words that we need to understand, but there's sometimes so much more going on that speaks to who you are, that speaks to your character, your greatness, your majesty.

Oh, your love, your tenderness. Lord, if anything, I pray that we are going to understand the humanity of Jesus Christ. And I know when you read those Time articles, they want to deny.

And Lord, those Time articles are actually wicked, vile articles. They are purposely meant to strip you of your deity that people would not believe.

And I pray that you will give our people the right words to confront such wicked, lying errors. But through this story, as it comes together in the time that it did, may we get to see still the humanity, that humanity is a part of us that understands us, that God that we pray for who understands, whether it be a teenager dealing with the angst of life to a young child, just thinking about their Bible storybook and wanting to know you at such an innocent level.

You know and comprehend all those things. And even as we grow into young adulthood and we think we've got it all together, but sadly, we lack the wisdom of parents that should have been teaching us for years, if not decades.

[47 : 40] But you are kind, God. You are tender. You are merciful. And we sing these songs because we rejoice in your name.

And I pray that the songs that we sing here this day would reflect the attitudes of our heart and our minds and souls. Father, I pray that you would grow us into great followers of Christ who know you and can speak of you and rejoice in all manners of life.

So God, we just ask that you would give us the protection that we need, the love to endure, and the strength to go on. In your most holy and heavenly name, amen.

Amen.