

**The Christ Prophecies: The “Favored One”: Mary’s Qualifications; Narrowing the Line of Christ from Eve to Mary****4. The “Favored One”: Mary’s Qualifications:**

The last title of Messiah that we noted is “the Seed” and it is the first title of Him mentioned in Scripture. This is a prophecy that immediately follows the introduction of sin into the human race.

Up to this point Adam and Ishah enjoyed sex as the ritual commemorating their marital union, but there was no resultant procreation. Prior to the fall the purpose of the human species was to allow positive volition the opportunity to maintain perfect lives in perfect bodies, however they did not enjoy eternal life or resurrection bodies.

Since human volition is the key to resolving the angelic conflict, our original parents’ rejection of temptation regarding the tree of life upheld the divine experiment. Lucifer and his angelic followers used their free will to rebel against God. Adam and Ishah initially used their free will to remain loyal to the divine will.

The perfection of Eden was maintained as long as the First Couple maintained perfection. But once they violated divine policy, they fell from fellowship with God and their point of contact with divine essence ceased to be His love, but became instead His justice.

Divine righteousness demands perfection and rejects unrighteousness. What righteousness rejects, justice must condemn. The condemnation was eternal separation from God and incarceration into the lake of fire.

However, when the Lord entered the garden beginning in Genesis 3:8, he confronted His antagonists: (1) the Serpent, or Lucifer, in 3:14-15, (2) Ishah in verse 16, and (3) Adam in verses 17-19.

The issue before the Lord was to deal justly with the violations. The serpent was banished and isolated from the rest of the animal kingdom and Lucifer was made the subject of several prophecies:

1. Hostility between serpent and the woman.
2. Hostility between Lucifer and his followers, and Jesus Christ and His followers
3. The Seed of the woman shall crush the head of Lucifer, at the Second Advent.
4. Lucifer will crush the Seed’s heel on the cross in the sense he is the one who offered the successful challenge to the sinlessness of the woman which resulted in her fall and the subsequent fall of Adam.

What is interesting is that Jesus Christ, the revealed Person of the Trinity, is the one who issues the prophecy. He speaks of His true humanity when he references the woman’s “seed.”

The “Seed” is Messiah, who will be born of a woman. We will later discover, from the prophet Isaiah, that the Messiah will have no human father and thus have the title, the “Son of God.”

The Messiah will appear in human history and will fulfill the salvation plan of God. The sin of Adam and Ishah and those of the rest of the human race must be dealt with but only in a manner that appeases the integrity of God.

Since man is fallen, he is incapable of resolving his own imperfection. Only God can do this and He developed a plan where the second Person of the Trinity would become united with true humanity and become a qualified mediator between the two parties in dispute: (1) God, represented by His undiminished deity, and (2) mankind, represented by His true humanity.

The latter requires a human body and this is prophesied to occur through the pregnancy of a woman.

The question arises as to what woman would qualify for this duty? It turned out to be Mary, the espoused fiancée of Joseph of the Galilean city of Nazareth.

**Luke 1:26 -** Now in the sixth month [ of Elizabeth's pregnancy ] the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,

**Luke 1:27 -** to a virgin [ παρθένος, *parthenos* ] engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

**v. 28 -** And coming in he said to her, "Hail, favoured one! The Lord is with you."

Why was Mary "favoured" to be the incubator for the biological life of the Messiah and not someone else?

In order to provide the Messiah with the same perfect humanity bestowed upon Adam at his creation in Eden, the plan of God decreed a woman would be selected that would qualify in several ways.

1. She must be a Jew who is a virgin.

**Isaiah 7:14 -** "Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin [ עַלְמָה □ *almah*: young woman; LXX: παρθένος, *parthenos*: virgin ] will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel [ God with us ]. (Compare with Luke 1:27)

2. Obviously, she must be engaged to be married, but the marriage not yet consummated.

**Matthew 1:18 -** Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed [ μνηστεύω, *mnēsteuō* ] to Joseph, before they came together [ συνέρχομαι, *sunerchomai*: sexual intercourse ] she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit

The word "betrothed" is *mnēsteuō* and is defined by:

Orr, James (gen. ed.) *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 3:1997-98:

Betrothal was esteemed a part of the transaction of marriage. Among the Jews the betrothal was so far regarded as binding that, if marriage should not take place, owing to the absconding of the bridegroom or the breach of contract on his part, the young woman could not be married to another man until she was liberated by a due process and a paper of divorce. The formality of betrothal is not entered on till the marriage is considered reasonably certain and measurably near. The betrothal parties were legally in the position of a married couple and unfaithfulness was "adultery."

3. The woman must be genetically in the line of Judah, the tribe from which all of Israel's kings are drawn including the Messiah.

**Genesis 49:10** - "The scepter [ rulership ] shall not depart from Judah [ the line of royalty ], nor the ruler's staff from between his feet [ the descendants of Judah ], until Shiloh [ שִׁילֹה *Shiloh*: "to Whom it, the scepter, belongs" ] comes [ 2d Advent ] ...

4. The woman must also be a descendent of the House of David in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant:

**2 Samuel 7:16** - (Nathan) "Your house [ David's royal line ] and your kingdom [ Israel ] shall endure before me forever; your throne [ authority and rulership ] shall be established forever [ עוֹלָם □ *olam*: for eternity ]." (Compare Luke 3:23-31: the genealogy of Mary back to Nathan.)

5. Her espoused husband must also be genetically in the line of Judah and the House of David:

**Luke 2:4** - Joseph went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house [ through Solomon ] and family [ tribe of Judah ] of David,

**v. 5** - in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was with child.

6. The delivery of the Holy Infant must occur in the city of Bethlehem:

**Micah 5:2** - (The Lord) "As for you Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago from the days of eternity."

**Luke 2:6** - And it came about that while they [ Joseph and Mary ] were there [ Bethlehem: see, Luke 2:4 ], the days were completed for her to give birth.

**v. 7** - And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in burial cloths and laid him in a feeding trough ...

7. A woman who meets all these qualifications must appear at a precise point in human history referred to by Paul as "the fullness of time":

**Galatians 4:4** - When the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.

8. Qualifying under all these prophetic stipulations resulted in Mary being described by Gabriel in Luke 1:28 as the "favored one," the perfect passive participle of the verb χαριτόω, *charitoō*, a derivative of χάρις, *charis*, which speaks of the bestowal by grace of divine favor and therefore a blessing from God.

perfect:	Intensive: implies a process, but as having reached its consummation and existing in a finished state. The point of completion is always antecedent to the time implied. It places emphasis upon existing results, a strong way of saying that a thing <i>is</i> .
passive:	Mary received the action of being favored from God. Other than being a believer, Mary had no special qualification beyond those related to prophecy that caused her to be selected.
participle:	Indicates that God decreed the gracious act in eternity past to be certainly future.

9. Mary's blessing was obviously unique. But she was the recipient because she met certain qualifications at a precise moment in time that satisfied the divine requirements of prophecy.
10. Therefore, Mary was blessed as the divinely selected woman to provide the biological life of the miraculously conceived Messiah of Israel.

## 5. *Narrowing the Line of Christ from Eve to Mary:*

There are nine major prophecies that narrow the line of Christ from Eve to Mary. Several have been referenced with regard to Mary's qualifications to be the mother of the biological life of Messiah, but we now note them in their chronological order.

1. The true humanity of Messiah will enter into human history by means of childbirth:

Prophecy:

**Genesis 3:15** - "I will put enmity between you [ Lucifer ] and the woman [ humanity ], and between your seed [ unbelievers ] and her seed [ Messiah ]; it [ Messiah ], shall bruise your head [ 2d Advent ], and you shall bruise His heel [ spiritual death at Calvary ]."

Fulfillment:

**Galatians 4:4** - When the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.

**Luke 2: 7** - And she [ Mary ] gave birth to her first-born Son; and she wrapped Him in burial cloths and laid Him in a feeding trough ...

Comment: Note that the genetic lineage of Messiah begins and ends with the name of a woman, which is contrary to the usual manner by which the Israelites track genealogies. Typically only the man is mentioned and when a woman is in the family line the husband's name is substituted. Beginning with Eve and ending with Mary places great emphasis on the part the woman plays in the process. It's not the obvious point that children are delivered by their mothers but what Isaiah will point out some several centuries later: that the Messiah will be the result of a virgin pregnancy.

2. The bloodline of Messiah's true humanity will go through Abraham and therefore, He would be a Jew:

Prophecy:

**Genesis 22:18** - "In your seed [ the nominative masculine singular of זרע ] zera ] all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

Fulfillment:

**Matthew 1:1** - The book of the genealogical line of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

Comment: Paul makes it clear that the "seed" referenced in Genesis 22:18 is masculine singular, thus indicating that Abraham's "seed" makes reference to the Messiah.

**Galatians 3:16** - Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and his seed [ **singular of σπέρμα, sperma: offspring** ]. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

3. Messiah's bloodline would proceed not through Ishmael but rather through Isaac:

Prophecy:

**Genesis 17:18** - Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!"

**v. 19** - God said, "Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants [ **zera**: "seed" ] after him.

Fulfillment:

**Matthew 1:2** - [ **Messianic genealogy continues** ] Abraham was the father of Isaac ... [ **See Luke 3:34** ]

Comment: The two genealogies of Jesus reflect two bloodlines. The account in Matthew tracks the legal line of Joseph back to Solomon while Luke's account tracks the bloodline of Mary back to Nathan.

4. Messiah's bloodline would pass from Isaac to Jacob:

Prophecy:

**Genesis 28:13** - The Lord stood above it [ **the ladder in Jacob's dream** ] and said, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; and the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your seed."

**Numbers 24:17** - [ **Balaam's prophecy** ] "I see Him [ **Christ** ], but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a star shall come forth from Jacob, and a scepter shall rise from Israel."

Fulfillment: Matthew 1:2 in Joseph's genealogy and Luke 3:34 in Mary's.

Comment: Common among the prophecies regarding "the Seed" is the promise of a land grant that is described as encompassing all that lies between the Nile and Euphrates rivers:

**Genesis 15:18** - [ **The Lord speaking to Abraham** ] On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your seed I have given this land, from the river of Egypt [ **Nile** ] as far as the great river, the river Euphrates."

In each of the repetitions of this covenant to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Seed of these men is promised this land grant and later, in the Davidic Covenant, a kingdom over which the Seed would rule in perpetuity.

5. Messiah's bloodline would continue from Jacob to his son Judah:

Prophecy:

**Genesis 49:10** - "The scepter [ **rulership** ] shall not depart from Judah [ **the line of royalty** ], nor the ruler's staff from between his feet [ **the descendants of Judah** ], until Shiloh [ **שילה Shiloh: "to Whom it, the scepter, belongs"** ] comes [ **2d Advent** ] ...

Fulfillment: In the genealogy of Joseph in Matthew 1:2, and of Mary in Luke 3:33.

Comment: In Revelation 5:5, the Lord is given the title the “Lion of the tribe of Judah.” The Lord is described as both a Lamb and Lion in Scripture.

Jesus is called a Lamb in His death, “Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), and a Lion in His resurrection and Second Advent (Revelation 5:5).

A summary of “Lion” as an antonomasia for the conquering Christ is found in:

**Lockyer, Herbert. *All the Divine Names and Titles in the Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), 190:**

The figure of the *Lion* applied to Jesus is indeed a forceful one. Noblest of animals, the lion has been called “the king of the beasts.” The reason why Jesus is called “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” is because a lion was traced on the ensign or banner of Judah, noblest of the tribes of Israel, from which He sprang. Applied to Him, the lion is symbolic of His prowess, dignity, and great strength. When He comes to usher in His world-wide reign it will be as the all-powerful Lion.

6. The bloodline of Messiah is further narrowed down to one House in the tribe of Judah, that of David’s:

Prophecy:

**Isaiah 9:7 -** There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness, from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of the armies will accomplish this.

Fulfillment:

**Luke 1:67 -** [Zacharias’s prophecy] “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,

**v. 69 -** And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant.”

Comment: The word “horn” is used figuratively in Scripture as an emblem of power. Jesus has the “power of salvation” to those who believe in Him.

7. The location of the Messiah’s birth was predetermined in eternity past and prophesied around 740 years before the first Christmas:

Prophecy:

**Micah 5:2 -** (The Lord) “As for you Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago from the days of eternity.”

Fulfillment:

**Luke 2:6 -** And it came about that while they [Joseph and Mary] were there [Bethlehem: see, Luke 2:4], the days were completed for her to give birth.

**v. 7 -** And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in burial cloths and laid him in a feeding trough ...

Comment: Micah's prophecy is a divine pronouncement of the hypostatic union. The Lord states that from Bethlehem Ephrathah "One will go forth for Me." This is the Messiah concept: the title means the "Anointed One" who is set apart for a special mission. He will commence that mission as he leaves Bethlehem and assumes the duties of the Incarnation.

Micah points out that the true humanity of Christ will have its beginnings in Bethlehem, fulfilled, as noted, in Luke 2:6-7, but he also makes it clear that this "One" is undiminished deity whose "goings forth are from long ago from the days of eternity."

8. The major prophecy regarding the Messiah is found in Isaiah where His human impeccability is established:

Prophecy:

**Isaiah 7:14** - "The Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son and she will call His name Immanuel [ **God is with us** ].

Fulfillment:

**Luke 1:26** - Now in the sixth month [ of Elizabeth's pregnancy ] the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,

**v. 27** - to a virgin [ παρθένος, *parthenos* ] engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

**v. 31** - (Gabriel) "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.

**v. 32** - "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

Comment:

Mary's pregnancy is called parthenogenesis: pregnancy without human fertilization, and it resulted in her giving birth to Jesus while still a virgin. The importance of this doctrine cannot be overstated. Without the 23 male chromosomes of Joseph, the human zygote of Messiah is left without a genetically transferred sinful nature leaving His true humanity free of the imputed sin of Adam. This means that Jesus was born into this world exactly as Adam was created: absolutely perfect and thus qualified to be our substitute on the cross.

Note that Gabriel confirms what Isaiah prophesied: the Messiah, to be named Jesus, is in hypostatic union: (1) "Son of the Most High," and (2) Son of David: "the throne His father, David."

9. Luke gives us the historical account of the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant which was prophesied by Nathan:

Prophecy:

**2 Samuel 7:16** - (Nathan) "Your house [ **David's royal line** ] and your kingdom [ **Israel** ] shall endure before me forever; your throne [ **authority and rulership** ] shall be established forever [ עולם ] **olam: for eternity** ]."

Fulfillment:



**Luke 2:1** - Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus to take a census be taken of all in the Empire.

**v. 2** - This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

**v. 3** - And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.

**v. 4** - So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David.

**v. 5** - He went to be registered with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him, and was with child.

**v. 6** - And it came to pass while they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

**v. 7** - And she gave birth to her first-born Son and wrapped Him in burial cloths and laid Him in a feeding trough, because there was no vacancy in the inn.

**v. 8** - And in the same region there were shepherds bivouacking out in the fields, keeping guard over their flock by night.

**v. 9** - And the angel of the Lord [ **sereph rank** ] suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shined around them and they were extremely frightened.

**v. 10** - And the seraph angel said to them, "Stop being frightened! Behold, I bring you good news of great inner happiness which shall be for all people;

**v. 11** - for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior [ Ἰησοῦς, **lēsous: Jesus, which means "Savior"** ], who is Christ [ χριστός, **Christos: the Anointed One; Hebrew: *Mashiach*: Messiah** ] the Lord [ κύριος, **kurios: title of deity** ].

**v. 12** - "And this will be the sign for you: you will find the baby wrapped in burial cloths and lying in a feeding trough [ **prophetic for the spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus on the cross** ]."

**v. 13** - Suddenly there appeared with the seraph angel a large number of angelic armies praising God and saying,

**v. 14** - "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace [ εἰρήνη, **eirēnē: prosperity of soul. Peace with God is reconciliation and is available through faith alone in Christ alone, therefore peace on earth is possible through Jesus Christ alone.** ] **among people with whom God is well-pleased** [ εὐδοκία, **eudokia: Salvation is available only through the good-pleasure of God** ].

Comment: The Christ prophecies culminated on the first Christmas night inaugurating the Incarnation of the Messiah, an event carefully tracked by prophecy, so that those who knew the Scripture would be able to identify Him.

It is interesting that when the magi came to call on Jesus it caused King Herod to become upset much more than usual. The Persian magi coming to visit the Jewish Messiah caused him to fear for his position of power. He called the scribes, the resident experts in the Mosaic Law, and inquired where this Messiah was to be born.

The scribes knew exactly where and tell the king in:



**Matthew 2:5** - They [ **the scribes** ] said to him [ **Herod** ], "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:

**v. 6** - "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel."

The scribes knew exactly where to find Messiah, yet they ignored the prophecy until Gentile astrologers showed up and a Jewish king became frightened he might lose his power to babe born in Bethlehem.

But the Christ Child's mission was not to conquer Herod or Rome but to conquer sin.

**2 Corinthians 9:15** - Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!