

What “Prophet” is there at Christmas Time?

Matthew 1:18-2:23

The Christmas story, especially in Matthew, is filled with references to the prophets. As a matter of fact, the entire Gospel story is filled with references to the prophets (also the Law and the Psalms, or the poetical books). Of what importance are the prophets to us? We have the New Testament. Isn't that enough? Let's investigate Matthew's use of the prophets in a few places and see if we should take any personal interest in them ourselves.

Matthew 1:1 (note vs. 1-17)

Seed of Abraham (Moses) Genesis 12:1-3; 15:5 cp. Galatians 3:16, 28-29.

Seed of David (Isaiah & Jeremiah) Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6.

Matthew 1:22-23 Born of a virgin (**Isaiah**) Isaiah 7:14.

Matthew 2:5-6 Born in Bethlehem (**Micah**) Micah 5:2.

Matthew 2:15 Came out of Egypt (**Balaam & Hosea**) Numbers 24:7-8; Hosea 11:1

Matthew 2:17-18 Death of children in Rama (**Jeremiah**) Jeremiah 31:15.

Matthew 2:23 He lived in *Nazareth* – a place of humble & lowly reputation (**multiple prophets**). *See explanation below:*

Nazareth, along with all of Galilee, was treated with contempt. It was considered insignificant and unproductive. Perhaps Galilee had a negative connotation because it had often been occupied by Gentiles (Matthew 4:15). Christ's reputation as a **Nazarene** was a term of derision (John 19:19; Acts 6:8-14). There was confusion and contention about Christ because of his association with **Nazareth** of Galilee (John 1:45-46; 7:40-43, 50-52). Yet, Christ did not try to correct or explain to anyone. He identified with the contempt (Acts 22:8 cp. Philippians 2:5-7; I Peter 2:21-23). The apostles and disciples also took up the term of derision and used it to identify Christ (Acts 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 26:9). They even were called by the same title (Acts 24:5). The prophets spoke of the contempt which Christ would receive (Psalm 22:6-7; 69:7-12; 118:22; Isaiah 8:14; 50:6; 53:2-4, etc.).

Why are the Prophets important to you?

1. Prophecy helps establish that the Gospel is the testimony of God, not man. (I John 5:9-10).
2. Your salvation depends on the accuracy of the prophets (I John 5:11-12; John 5:37-47).
3. Your testimony and the ministry of the Gospel is built on the accuracy of the prophets (Luke 24:44-48; Ephesians 2:19-22; Romans 16:25-27).