

Perspectives

Looking Forward

Big events happen in the life of every family. This might be something like a birthday, graduation, or wedding. Often, we mark this event on a calendar months in advance, occasionally looking at the date in anticipation. I remember when my family would plan a vacation, we would decide on a destination and date at least nine months ahead of time and then spend those days leading up to the vacation planning and preparing. Looking forward to a special event is always exciting.

Jesus' birth was a special event that took place at a specific time in history. However, this event did not happen without advanced notice. Unlike a family vacation planned months ahead, the prophets foretold the birth of the Messiah hundreds of years before it happened. For example, Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would give birth to God's son (Isaiah 7:14); in Luke 1:35, this prophecy was fulfilled. Isaiah also said He would be called "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," "Prince of Peace," and would possess an everlasting kingdom (Isaiah 9:6-7). Throughout the Old Testament, the prophets pointed forward to a time when the Savior of the world would come. The message of these prophecies was intended to give people hope and prepare the world for His birth.

We, today, live on the other side of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Yet, there is another event prophesied that will take place in the future. At Jesus' ascension, the angels told the disciples standing there, "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Jesus' second coming is something we should look forward to with hope and anticipation.

This quarter, we will look at how the prophets pointed toward Jesus' coming and the good news they proclaimed. As you study each passage, think about the importance of Jesus' first coming, looking forward to His second coming—both celebrating His birth and His approaching return!

May God bless you as you study His Word this quarter!

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