

Matthew 1:1-16

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[0 : 0 0] This morning, I'll go ahead and let you know, will be Matthew chapter 1. Some of you have heard that text before and I know some of you know where I'm going with that text in Matthew chapter 1 verses 1 through 16. As you're turning there and you're marking Matthew chapter 1, you're not going to stay there.

You're marking that first chapter in the Gospel of Mark and you'll see that list of genealogies. We've just sang a couple of, we sang a hymn, Come Thou Long Expected King. Come Thou Long Expected Jesus and then even as Brother Trey sang, He's the long expected one.

So we're going to look at that this morning. I want you to see this morning, hopefully prayerfully over the next several weeks, we will begin to tighten our focus as we consider the Christmas event. We will start broad this morning.

So I'll go ahead and just kind of warn you in advance, something that I do not do very often any longer, but I used to do it. We will read a number of passages together. So you don't have to turn to each one of them, but we will read them together.

So we'll take some time to make our way through them. So this morning we will look at the grand narrative of Christmas. Each week, hopefully, we'll tighten our focus on the Christmas event until we get to that Christmas Eve service where we find that there is a child that is born and is laid in a manger.

[1 : 0 7] And they come and they worship him and they adore him and they celebrate him. So we will tighten our focus every week as we go together through the Word of God and we look at this long expected one, which is the reason we gather together and we celebrate so much on a weekly basis.

And then the world begins to take notice of it just a little bit in the season of the year called Christmas. So this morning we will start actually in the book of Genesis. We will read several passages from the book of Genesis.

We'll read in Genesis chapter 3. Then we'll read in Genesis 17. We'll read also from Genesis 23 and 28 and read in Genesis 49. Then we will go to the book of Numbers, Numbers chapter 24, 17.

We'll also read in the book of 1 Chronicles, the 17th chapter. I'm not asking you to turn there yet. I'll give you time when we stand up so you'll know we'll spend some time in the Old Testament as we read it together, but not a whole lot, okay?

We'll just read a few verses and hopefully by the time we're done you'll see it. So if you're physically able and desire to do so, would you join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God starting in Genesis chapter 3.

[2 : 0 9] Just two verses in Genesis chapter 3. I promise you I will give you time to turn to each one. You know the context. The fall of man is recorded for us in the first few verses of the third chapter of Genesis 3.

And then God finds them hiding in the garden that he had called them to enjoy and created them to enjoy and to work and to tend. He found them hiding. After the confession of Adam and the confession of the woman of what they had done, then the Lord God begins to speak and we picked it up in verse 14.

The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all the cattle, more than every beast of the field. And on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life.

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.

The 15th verse is what we refer to as the Proto-Evangelium, the first mentioning of the gospel. It focuses on the seed. Now turn with me over to Genesis 17.

[3 : 23] I'll give you a moment because mine are marked. Genesis 17. The first verse of Genesis 17.

Now when Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, I am God Almighty.

Walk before me and be blameless. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly. Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with you, and you will be the father of a multitude of nations.

No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham. For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you.

I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants. Just so you know in the New American Standard, the word descendants, the literal translation is seed. So I will read it as seed. I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant to be God to you and to your seed after you.

[4 : 40] I will give to you and to your seed after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. The book of Exodus tells us that he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

So now turn with me, if you will, go over to Genesis 16. I mean Genesis 26. We're in Genesis 17. Go to Genesis 26. First verses of Genesis 26.

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine which had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech, king of the Philistines.

And the Lord appeared to him and said, Do not go down to Egypt. Stay in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed I will give all these lands.

And I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will multiply your descendants or your seed as the stars of heaven. And I will give your seed all these lands. And by your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

[5 : 46] Because Abraham obeyed me and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. Now turn just a couple of pages over to Genesis chapter 28.

Genesis 28. We're going to pick it up. In verse 13. Jacob is on his way to go find a wife who eventually will end up in the household of Laban.

But as he stops in a place called Bethel, he lays his head upon a rock and he has a dream. And it says in verse 13, And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham, and the God of Isaac.

The land on which you lie, I will give it to you and your seed. Your seed will also be like the dust of the earth. And you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south.

And in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land.

[6 : 55] For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you. A couple more pages. Turn with me now to Genesis 49. We'll find Jacob at the end of his life.

Referred to here as Israel, for he wrestled with the Lord as he made his way back. But this is Jacob speaking, and he's speaking a blessing upon his children. And he is declaring to them things that will be.

So we are in Genesis 49. Starting in verse 8. Judah, your brothers shall praise you. Your hands shall be on the neck of your enemies.

Your fathers' sons shall bow down to you. Judah is a lion's will. From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion. And as a lion, who dares rouse him?

Verse 10. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shalom comes. And to him shall be the obedience of all the peoples.

[7 : 58] 400 years passed. Now we go to the book of Numbers. Numbers chapter 24. Some 400 plus years transpires since Jacob declared that blessing upon Judah.

It seems to have been a forgotten promise that there would be a scepter that will not depart from Judah until Shalom or peace comes. And in Numbers 24, as they're making their way now that the Exodus event has taken place, and immediately before they go into the promised land, there is a leader there who has called someone to speak a false prophecy over them, but he cannot.

So in verse 17, he says, I see him, but not now. I behold him, but not near. A star shall come forth from Jacob. A scepter shall rise from Israel and shall crush through the forehead of Moab and tear down all the sons of Sheth.

So for 400 years, the prophecy had remained. 400 years later, it is still seen. A number of years, generations, and decades go by until we get now to the last one in the Old Testament, 1 Chronicles chapter 17.

1 Chronicles chapter 17. You're being very patient with me, and I appreciate that. 1 Chronicles chapter 17. There is a man in Jacob who happens to be from the tribe of Judah who longs to build a house for the Lord God, and his name is David.

[9 : 24] The man happens to be sitting upon the throne of God's people at that particular time, and his desire is to build a house for the Lord God Almighty. But God has a word for him, and we pick it up there in verse 7 of the 17th chapter.

Now therefore, thus shall you say to my servant David, thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following sheep, to be leader over my people Israel.

I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and will make you a name like the name of the great ones who are in the earth. I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place, and not be moved again.

And the wicked will not waste them anymore as formerly, even from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover, I tell you that the Lord will build a house for you.

When your days are fulfilled, that you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up one of your seed after you, who will be of your sons, and I will establish his kingdom.

[10 : 36] He shall build for me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. I will not take my loving kindness away from him, as I took it from him who was before you, but I will settle him in my house, and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.

Centuries go by, and now you go back to Matthew chapter one, and we will be through. The record of the genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. Judah was the father of Perez and Zerubah. Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram.

Ram was the father of Amenadab. Amenadab the father of Neshon, and Neshon the father of Salmon. Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse.

Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba, who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Of Abijah.

[11 : 46] Of Abijah. Of Abijah. Of Abijah. Of Abijah.

of Shilti, and Shilti the father of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud, and Abihud the father of Elakim, and Elakim the father of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok, the father of Ekim, and Ekim the father of Eliad.

Eliad was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Methan, and Methan the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you so much for this day. We thank you for your word. We pray now you speak to us with clarity and certainty from it, and we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. You've been seated. You may be seated.

I greatly appreciate your patience as we made our way through those verses, for I think it is of utmost importance that we see the grand narrative of the Christmas event, that what transpired that holy, eventful night was not some passing circumstance that has since been acknowledged and recognized by mankind throughout the years, but rather he is the one that was expected and anticipated and longed for and looked for since the very beginning of creation.

[13 : 23] The word of God declares to us that he is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world was laid. That is a good way of saying that he is the one that the world has been crying out for even before the world was created.

It is the very purpose and plan of God from the very beginning. It is not a reactive response to man's failures, but rather it was an intentional planning and happening that God had orchestrated and began to weave throughout Scripture.

We do not look at the New Testament alone for the Christmas event, for we find the Christmas event in its fullness throughout the entirety of the Old Testament. From the very beginning of the word of God found in the book of Genesis, we have the proto-evangelium that begins to speak of the seed.

We can trace that seed through a number of passages, the seven that we looked at in the Old Testament, but there are so many more. We can follow it time and time and time again. Too often because of our English translation of certain words, we lose it and we refer to it in the multiplicity as descendants, but there are particulars that refer to an individual that is the seed.

The promise that is given into the garden is that it would be the seed singular of a woman that would crush the head of the serpent. And then when we begin to read the covenantal promises of God, we see this seed singular continuing to remain until we turn the book and we open up the page of Matthew chapter 1 and we find that this seed is no longer spoken of, but rather he has come. So I want you to see the grand narrative of the Christmas event. The first thing that we notice is that this event comes through a select people. It comes through a select people. Now there is just something innate within us, within the heart of every man and woman, every boy and child. And if we're not careful, we would have to wrestle against it and we'd have to try to suppress it. But if we're not careful, we would allow it to flourish. And it is this reality that something within the very depths of our being despises, loaves, and even is appalled at the reality that someone would be chosen. We wrestle with it. If you want to start a church conflict, something real easy to do, all you have to do is begin to start speaking about certain words as election, predestination, and all these other words. And some of you are getting really drawn back already because you know these can be offensive words. And the reason we find it so offensive is because, well, let's just call it what it is, of pride and self-concern. Who are they or how are they better than me? While that particular group rather than another group, while that person rather than this person. And there is something within us that wants to see all on equal ground. And we want to see all as being equal in every measure and every way and that God would show no favoritism. Well, friend, that is a lie of the enemy for in choosing a select people. God did not show favoritism. For if you remember, the covenantal promises of God were ordained long before the people of

[16 : 38] Abraham were even a people. He made the promise in the garden long before Adam and Eve had children. He renews the promise even after the first murder takes place before the birth of Seth, which would be the godly lineage of the people of God. Again, he reiterates that promise when Noah comes out of the ark after the flood. Again and again and again, we see that God's choice of the people has nothing to do with favoritism.

If we're completely transparent and clear in our understanding of Scripture, we see that when God chose a select people, he did not do it because they had it all together for they were miserably imperfect as much as we are.

He did not choose them because they had any attribute about them that would make them likable or lovable. He did not choose them because they were better at things than any other people around them were. As a matter of fact, he called Abram out of the land of the Ur of the Chaldeans. He called Abram from the very seat of idolatrous worship in the world at that time. More than likely, Abram himself was an idolatrous worshiper of not only the moon god, lowercase g, and the sun god, lowercase g, but a multiplicity of other gods that were in that land in which God called him from. And if the Lord God had not appeared to Abram, he would have continued in that reality. There is nothing within him that makes him stand out. There's nothing any different in him other than the fact that the Lord God showed himself to him. But he is, as Moses finds out on that mount, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There is nothing really appealing about Isaac.

When we read the story of Isaac, there are some very things about Isaac which we wish that were not there. And what about Jacob, the supplanter, the one who wrestles and does all these things?

There's nothing about Jacob that seems to be appealing to us. And yet we understand that God chose a select people. And it is through these people that God ordained that he would bring about the events we have recorded for us in the Gospel of Matthew. These people are not people that are special in any other way other than the fact that the Lord God chose them and uses them. We are not to look on them with animosity or even hatred. We are not to look upon them with any kind of air of superiority. They're not greater than us. They are the people that God chose to use for his purposes. We'll get to that in just a moment. And in case we have the tendency to elevate any particular people higher than we ought to. I remember before I came to faith, actually when I came to faith, I was so touched and moved by people that the Lord God used. I used to raise up, and this was a tendency of mine, I would place pastors on a pedestal that they had no right standing upon. Even my own pastor who was a dear friend of mine, I just so honored him and revered him and had a way of raising him up. And I remember I was kind of new in a faith. I think I've shared this with you before. And I was transitioning jobs. The Lord had opened up for me to have a job I'd been praying for for about six months, and the door had finally opened, and I was about to start that job, but I had a few days between jobs, so I said, I'm going to go hang out with the pastor. And I was so excited. I was a young believer, and Carrie could testify to this. I was so excited. I was going to go hang out with the pastor. So I went down to the church, and I couldn't wait to see what this holy man of God did that day as I hung out with the pastor. And I walked into his office, and we prayed, and we had a powerful prayer time, and we had a time on our knees. But the reason we had such a powerful prayer time is he was praying God's favor and leading upon our day as we went to the woods to look for his lost glasses. Because without them, he couldn't read. And so we spent the day walking in the woods looking for lost glasses, which we never found. And I remembered when I left that day, he's a guy just like me. Still revered him, still honored him, still acknowledged him. But no more exaltation. When we look at the people that God chooses to use as conduits and instruments, in particular the nation of

[20 : 54] Israel, the descendants of Abraham, just in case we have the tendency by the time we get to the New Testament to say, wow, look at the people, then in the lineage of our Savior, we find people of not really good reputation. We find, some of you know, I've preached through this series before, there are a number of women here, and some of these women had shady practices. But we also find some non-Israelite people, but it is not necessarily the women that had shady practices. We find a lot of men who did some horrible things. And God shows us and tells us and declares to us, he chose a select people because he is sovereign. It is the sovereign choosing of the Lord God Almighty, not the worthiness of the people that matters. And the fact that he stayed true to the choosing and calling does not prove to us the faithfulness and the worthiness of the people, but rather the deserving holy worship that the Lord God Almighty deserves. Often in spite of these people, these things came about. And all the sovereignty of God in his choosing. Because if he can work through these people, my friend, he can work through us as well. If we ever find ourselves going, I could never be one of the people that the

Lord God would ever choose or call or whatever ordained it, he would use me for his glory. Then my challenge to you is open up the word of God and read about the people there. We don't have a collection here of perfect people, but rather we have a collection of a holy God using imperfect, flawed individuals for the glory of his own name. God includes the testimonies of so many people. He tells us of what they did right and he tells us of what they did wrong and he shows us that we all find our place somewhere in that line of thoughts. God uses a select people and as these select people are chosen, notice when we read the transition and we'd have to go back and read them again, but we will not. As we looked at the covenantal promises of God, God said that the seed of a woman would crush the head of a serpent. He chose a man, Abram, to be the conduit that that seed would come to. And then he begins to connect promises to this seed and each one, it begins to get a little tighter and tighter and tighter and focus. And he talks to Abram. He says, your name is not Abram, it's Abraham. And to your seed, he says, you'll be a multitude of nations will come forth from you. We know that because there's Isaac and Ishmael. And he says a multitude of nations will come from you. A multitude of kings will come for you. And if you read the lineage of Ishmael, you'll notice that

Ishmael had kings all throughout its lineage long before the people of Israel had kings. When the people of Israel get to the promised land, we're told about all these random kings and prominent people. Well, that are some of the kings that came from Abraham because God kept his word even to Ishmael. And so what we see here is God says there'll be a multitude of nations, a multitude of kings, but then he says, but to your seed. And I know when you read it in your translation, it says descendants with an S, but the literal translation is seed with an out in S. It is singular in focus. But to your seed, I will give this land and I will maintain them and I will give them purpose and I'll give them cause. So the first Abrahamic covenant is a covenant of a particular people in a specific land for the glory of the father. And then we move on and we see the covenantal promises of Isaac. And we see here, it is again, the Lord God appearing to Isaac and he says to your seed. Singular, I will give this land. And now we have the repetition of the land. Okay. And it is there. He says, but they will be a blessing to the nations. Nations were born out of Abraham, but the seed of Isaac would be a blessing to the nations. And then we have Jacob who has neither wife nor family yet lays his head upon a rock. And he sees what we refer to as Jacob's ladder. And the Lord appears to Jacob and makes a promise. He says, your seed will have this land. Again, the repetition of the land. Your seed will have this land. And not only will they be a blessing to the nations, we narrow it down just a little bit more. Look at what it says. They will be a blessing to the families. So now we went from people in a land to people blessing nations to people, a particular person being a blessing to the families. By the time we get to the end of the book of Genesis, Jacob is blessing his children and he calls out Judah. It seems that history forgets about Judah. Until we get to Numbers 24, we are reminded that there will be a king that comes out of Jacob. If we go back to Genesis, we know that that true king would actually come from Judah, for he had already declared that in his blessing and favor. But when we get into the times of the judges and the kings, we see that the first one is not chosen from Judah because you remember Saul. He's a Benjamite.

But then we meet David and we have the covenantal promises of David in 1 Chronicles 17. Again, we have a singular seed. God does something amazing here. He says, I will give Israel the land. He reminds them, Israel will get the land, but your seed, he will build me a house. And I'll give him a throne. And I'll give him a place beside me in my kingdom. See the deviation there now. That seed is no longer connected to that land. That seed now has an eternal, everlasting kingdom, which throne rests in the very presence of God. And still yet it is flowing through these people. It is a select people. Secondly, we've just highlighted a little bit that these select people serve a sovereign purpose. Ever since the book of Genesis, we are waiting on the one, the seed of a woman that would crush the head of the serpent. God's word is very intentional in his word choices. None of you presently before me nor myself are the seed of a woman. We're not going to take time to get into biology and to speak about conception and all these things. But the reality is, is that we are all the seed of men. So when God says that it would be the seed of a woman that would crush the head of the serpent, it causes us to stand up and take notice for that seems to be a biological impossibility. It just can't be. That's not how it works. But yet the creator says it's how it's going to be. Isaiah refers to it in Isaiah 7 verses 14 and following when he speaks of the virgin that will conceive. We know that it takes place when we get to the gospel of Luke and there is a virgin betrothed to a man whose name is Mary and the angel comes to her. We'll get to that eventually. But yet the promise is that the seed of a woman would crush the head of Satan, which literally means our adversary. So throughout history, man is waiting for one that would come and to relieve them of their adversary, their great foe that opposes them, the one they had surrendered their right to rule to when man took from the tree of the garden of Eden. And we're waiting and longing and anticipating. And when we read scripture, and this is why I encourage you to read all of scripture. When we read scripture, we find that in various ways and various means, man tries to redeem himself. Some try to redeem themselves through military powers and warfare and the forging of instruments and all these tools. And we found it. We find Nimrod, the valiant warrior. We find people that are doing all kinds of wonderful things. Some try to redeem themselves through the building of magnificent cities. And some try to redeem themselves through their own efforts and ambitions. A multitude try to redeem themselves through the sacrificial system. But over and over and over again, what we find is that no man is free. Each is bound to his own desires. And as Paul would declare in the book of Romans, he is reiterating what has already been declared in the Old Testament prophets. There is none righteous, no, not one. And man's waiting. And he's anticipating and he's longing. Surely there would be one who would come who will save us. For that is the promise and purpose of God. God uses these people and he uses them to bring about his purposes. It is the conduit for which God ordains. Notice the covenants that we read today are what we refer to as unconditional covenants. Adam and Eve repent and God declares the proto evangelium. It is he who comes up with this reality of redemption.

When the Lord God appears to Abram, God declares to Abram and doesn't tell Abram, later Abraham, to do anything. When God appears to Isaac, God declares to Isaac what will be and never declares to Isaac what he should do. When God appears and the Lord God appears to Jacob, he declares to Jacob what will be and never declares to Jacob what he should do. When God appears to David and stands before him, he tells him what will be, but he never tells David what he should do.

[30 : 40] These are unconditional promises, covenants based upon the purpose declared by God found in the book of Genesis. In contrast, if you will take to mind what we refer to as the Mosaic covenant because covenants are important in scripture, by the way. The Mosaic covenant, we refer to it as the law. You know it by the Ten Commandments. It is the first five books of the Bible, the Torah, right? It is the do this, don't do that. Eat this animal, don't eat that animal. Be sure to wash your hands this way.

We call it legalism. By the time we get to the New Testament, the Pharisees are masters at it. The Mosaic covenant, when the Lord God appears to not only Moses, but to all the people in the mountain, quakes and trembles and there's smoke and fire and brimstone, and they all hear his voice.

How does God start that covenant? I will be your God and you will be my people if, if you will do these things. And that promise, stay with me, is a promise to bless a particular nation and to make them prosperous and secure and their cross would not fail and their women would not fail to have children. It is not a promise of a coming seed, but it is a promise of a displayed favor. And the favor is conditional upon their obedience. But what we're looking at with Christ is an unconditional purpose. God's going to redeem man. Even if man is unfaithful. See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us. Do you understand that? The purpose of God for redemption and salvation was not dependent upon the favor of any particular people, but rather it was dependent upon the faithfulness of the Lord God to bring it about. God's favor shown to that people was dependent upon their behavior. But God's mercy and grace extended to all nations is absolutely sovereignly unconditional. It is the sovereign purpose of God.

Third and finally look at the Savior presented. The Savior presented. In the genealogy found in Matthew chapter 1, there is a great transitioning in words. Hopefully you noticed it. It is Abraham became the father of, and so on, so on, and so on. Generation after generation after generation, we have so-and-so became the father of, so-and-so became the father of, so-and-so became the father of. Until we get to the 16th verse, there's an abrupt change in our order. It says in verse 16, Jacob was the father of Joseph.

And here's the change. That Joseph is the husband of Mary. Now that's intentional because Joseph is not the father of the one we're looking at the one we're looking at the one we're looking at next.

[33 : 54] He just happens to be the husband of the one that bears the one we're looking at next. Joseph is the husband of Mary by whom Jesus was born. The seed of a woman who is called the Messiah.

He is the Savior. He is the Savior. He is the long-expected one. He is the one coming to redeem man to crush the head of the adversary. He is the one who has come to be a blessing to the nations and to bless the families. He is the one that has come to set up on the throne eternal.

He is not ashamed to call God his father for he is the child of God, much like God had promised to David. He has come not to set a particular people upon a place but to build a house for the Lord God himself.

As Peter tells us, we are spiritual stones being built up to one another. He is the builder of God's house who sets upon the throne eternal. He reigns presently not now upon this land but rather by his father's side.

For I will establish his throne in my presence forever, the Lord God had declared. All of a sudden at a point in history, at some time in history, which we refer to as the Christmas event, we see that the Savior has come.

[35 : 24] God chose a specific people to be the conduit of fulfilling a sovereign purpose so that at some point in history, the Savior may be presented to us.

And we stand and say, glory, hallelujah, there he is. So what now then? As we look at this Savior and say, here is the long expected one.

Here is the one that all of creation groans until he has come. Here is the one we've been waiting on ever since we took from the tree. And yes, we have to unite ourselves with that disobedience.

Since we took from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and we have walked in open rebellion, now he has come. Just as concluding remarks, be careful what you do with that specific people God chose.

I won't take you there, but Romans chapter 11 tells us that because of that people's rejection, the Gentiles, which is us, have now been blessed by their rejection and we have been grafted in to the family tree.

[36 : 39] But Paul says that their rejection has led to the redemption of the nations. What will their acceptance be? Is it because they're God's favorite?

No. It's because they were the ones God chose to use to present to us the Savior. And we pray for them as we want anyone else.

We pray for them that they may be redeemed and restored to walk in obedience, much like we pray for those around us because God does not cast off those who he has chosen to use.

Friend, as we look at the grand narrative of Christmas, so much more happened than just a child being born and laid in a manger. What God had promised and purposed from the very beginning has just transpired.

Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for your word.

[37 : 45] We thank you that your word is consistent and true. Lord, that it declares your worthiness to us. So may we be a people of praise and worship.

May you be glorified in the way you move in the hearts and minds of each and every individual here. And we give you praise in advance for it.

And it's in Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen.