

Here's your sign.

Preliminaries

- God is not random, and neither is His calling on your life – Romans 1:2 *which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures,*
 - The only other place in the Bible where this word is used is 2 Corinthians 9:5 *“So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.”*
 - This word is used here in the sense of a pledge, a promised gift upon which the honor of the promiser depends.

- The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament points to Jesus Christ.
 - Luke 24:27 *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*
 - John 5:46 *For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.*
 - Philip to Nathanael in John 1:45 *We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.*

- Prophecy #1 Isaiah 7:10-14

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

- Does “virgin” in verse 14 actually mean virgin or “young woman?”
- Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, 3rd-2nd century B.C.) παρθένος - a young woman of marriageable age...one who has never engaged in sexual intercourse, *virgin, chaste person*.¹

“The concept of the virgin birth is a cornerstone of biblical Christianity.” – Lawrence O. Richards²

- Prophecy # 2 Genesis 3:15 *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*
 - *Protoevangelium*: “the first gospel.”
 - Crushing the Serpent’s head...
 - For reasons to hold this verse to be a Messianic prophesy, see Jonathan Cheek, “Recent Developments in the Interpretation of the Seed of the Woman in Genesis 3:15,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 64.2 (2021): 215–236. Abstract: *From the late nineteenth century through the 1980s, a lack of strong exegetical support for a messianic understanding of Genesis 3:15 (the “protevangeliuim”) led to a number of exegetical and theological treatments of the verse downplaying the messianic significance of the verse and favoring a collective view of the seed of the woman and often a naturalistic view of the serpent. Since the early 1990s, though, scholars have provided significant exegetical and theological arguments to support an understanding of the seed of the woman as an individual who will engage in warfare with the serpent. These developments have brought about something of a renaissance in the interpretation of Genesis 3:15 among evangelical scholars. This article*

will survey and evaluate the most significant issues and developments in the interpretation of the seed of the woman over the past thirty years.³

- *Prophecy #3 Micah 5:2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.*
 - *King Herod's Jewish scholars believed the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem – Matthew 2:1-6 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:⁶ " 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.' "*
 - *Augustus Caesar's tax mandate brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem in time for Jesus to be born...but Jesus was raised in Nazareth – Luke 2:1 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.*

Application

- How is God leading you to show generosity in this season?
- Who is God leading you to reach out to in this season?

¹ William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 777.

² Lawrence O. Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion*, electronic ed. (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991), 416.

³ For reasons to hold this verse to be a Messianic prophesy, see Jonathan Cheek, "Recent Developments in the Interpretation of the Seed of the Woman in Genesis 3:15," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 64.2 (2021): 215–236.

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