

Table of Contents

Pointers on Using This Book	05
Preface	07
Prophecy	08
December 1: Only God Can Accurately Foretell the Future	10
December 2: Would Be the Seed of a Woman	12
December 3: Would Come From Abraham	14
December 4: Would Come From Isaac, Jacob and Judah	16
December 5: Would Come From Jesse, Throne of David	18
December 6: Would Have a Forerunner	20
December 7: Mother Would Be Virgin	22
December 8: Would Be Called Lord	24
December 9: Would Be Called Immanuel	26
December 10: Would Be Born in Bethlehem	28
December 11: Would Be Rejected	30
December 12: Would Be a Light to the Nations	32
December 13: A Star Would Rise	34
December 14: Kings Would Bring Gifts	36
December 15: Would Live in Egypt	38
December 16: Mothers Would Mourn	40
Fulfillment	42
December 17: Likelihood of One Man Fulfilling the Prophecies	44
December 18: Born to Line of David	46
December 19: Forerunner	48
December 20: Born of a Virgin	50
December 21: Called Lord	52
December 22: Called Immanuel	54
December 23: Born in Bethlehem	56
December 24: Rejected by His Own	58
December 25: Birth to Woman Announced	60
December 26: Seen as Light to Gentiles	62
December 27: Identified by a Star	64
December 28: Kings Bring Gifts	66
December 29: Lived in Egypt	68
December 30: Herod Kills Children	70
December 31: Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega	72
A Missed Miracle	74
Christmas True/False Test	75
End Notes	76
Classic Christmas Carols that Illustrate Advent Foretold	78
A Clear Path to God	87

December 1

God promised that one day a person of highest importance would be born. He wanted us to recognize this Supreme One, this Messiah, so he told us ahead of time exactly what to expect.

Have you ever tried to predict the future? Weathermen do every day. They study atmospheric conditions and decide the likelihood of rain, snow or sunshine. But even with instruments and equipment, they are often wrong. Can you think of a time when you've been disappointed by an inaccurate weather prediction?

How accurately can you predict the future? Can you tell the name of the town where your great-great-grandson will be born? Do you know who will come to his baby shower? Can you name the gifts he will receive? Do you know what others will call him? Can you describe any of his friends? Of course you can't. Only God knows the future with certainty.

E. P. M'Ilvaine defines prophecy as "a declaration of future events, such as no human wisdom or forecast is sufficient to make—depending on a knowledge of the innumerable contingencies of human affairs, which belong exclusively to the omniscience of God; so that from its very nature prophecy must be divine revelation."¹ Or in other words, prophecy is telling ahead of time what will happen when only God would know for sure. We will see how prophecy must be more than conjecture or a lucky guess. It does not depend on trends. Prophecy deals with human affairs which are unpredictable.

Read **Isaiah 46:9-10; 48:3,5** and **Numbers 23:19**. More than five centuries in advance God gave us specific information about His promised one, information which only God could possibly know. During the Christmas season we will consider just eighteen of over three hundred distinct predictions concerning the coming Messiah.

The prophecies we will study are unique to all history. **In no other case has the coming of an important religious leader been foretold.** "The ancient world," explains Wilbur Smith, "had many different devices for determining the future, known as divination, but not in the entire gamut of Greek and Latin literature... can we find any real specific prophecy of a Savior to arise in the human race.... Mohammedanism cannot point to any prophecies of the coming of Mohammed uttered hundreds of years before his birth. Neither can the founders of any cult in this country rightly identify any ancient text specifically foretelling their appearance."²

Would Be The Seed of a Woman



"And I will put enmity between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise His heel."
—Genesis 3:15, NKJV

December 2

The Christmas story starts at the beginning of recorded history. God places Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, in a beautiful garden. They knew only how to do good things. They were very happy. God explained to Adam that he could eat fruit from any tree except one in the garden. If he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, then he would die (first spiritually and later physically). Shall we read the story directly from the Bible (**Genesis 2: 8-9,15-17**)?

Satan, the evil one, wanted man to disobey God. He wanted to trick man. Instead of tempting the one in charge, he decided to trap Adam by first deceiving the one he loved, his wife. Let's read **Genesis 3:1-19**.

Adam disobeyed God. He would pay for his sin by dying. "The wages of sin is death." Any children born from his sons (that includes you and me) would inherit his sin nature and die (Romans 5:12).

God did not want all people to die. He wanted to provide a way man could be saved from eternal punishment. The first prophecy in the Bible is a promise of a future Savior, the Chosen One, or Messiah. The prophecy is given in **Genesis 3:15**. Read it again.

The remainder of recorded history is summarized by this one verse. There will be a conflict between two seeds. Name them. (the **seed** of the **serpent** or the **devil** and the **seed** of the **woman** or the **Messiah**.)

How will the conflict end? Who will win? How do we know that? (A promised one—seed of the woman—would one day be born. He would somehow suffer because the devil would strike his heel, but in the end he would win the struggle. He would crush Satan's head. An injury to the foot is painful but a crushed head is fatal.)

Sin entered the world and with it sickness, pain and death. But God also gave the promise of hope to come. This news gives us joy when we think of it at Christmas and throughout the year.

Would Come from Abraham



Now the Lord had said to Abram:
'...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'
Genesis 12: 1,3

Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said , ...'In your
seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.'
Genesis 22: 15,18

Advent Foretold

A December Devotional for All Ages

Exciting for Children

Edifying for Adults

Old and young can study together many unusual, but specific, prophecies foretold hundreds of years before the coming of Messiah. This special one was, among other things, to:

- descend from a man too old to sire children
- be born in a pre-selected obscure village
- have his coming announced in the desert
- be born of a virgin
- be given names ascribed to deity
- be rejected by those of his own race
- be given gifts of gold and incense by strangers

Marvel together at the supernatural fulfillment of each of these unlikely predictions. Sing carols that highlight daily readings as the drama intensifies through the month of December. Rejoice together as you share our rich spiritual heritage.

About the authors

Gary and Wanda Sanseri live in Portland, Oregon. They are both authors and speakers. Gary has written [A Banker's Confession](#) and [Covered or Uncovered](#). Wanda has written [God's Priceless Woman](#) and [Teaching Reading at Home & School](#). This Advent devotional guide is the product of fifteen years of work.

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