Don't Open Until Christmas
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: QA72

At Christmas time, many of us delight in holding a present to our ear and giving it a shake to guess its contents. Sometimes we guess right, but more often we are left puzzled and have to wait until Christmas Day to unwrap and enjoy our gift.

The Old Testament prophets also had wrapped gifts to shake. The gifts they joggled were the prophecies of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Savior. First Peter 1:10-12 says the prophets investigated Scripture with a desire to know more about Him and His coming:

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look (1 Peter 1:10-12).

The Old Testament prophets wrote about salvation in Christ and studied closely what God revealed to them. They saw the birth and sufferings of the Messiah, and also the glory that would follow. But they could not fully understand the timing or connection between the two--in some of the prophecies the Messiah's sufferings and glory are blended in one verse or paragraph. For the prophets, the gift remained wrapped in mystery. And what are those passages that intrigued them so much? There are many, encompassing the whole Person and work of Jesus the Christ. During this time of year, we specially celebrate the fulfillment of prophecies concerning His birth. As you celebrate this year, take time to explore these key Old Testament prophecies that were opened--fulfilled--at Christmas:

- The Lord raised up a great Prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-19; John 7:40)
- A star and a scepter came out of Israel (Numbers 24:17; Matthew 2:1-2)
- Messiah was a descendent of David (Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-3; Matthew 1:1-17; 3:16)
- He was born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1-6; Luke 2:1-7)
- Jesus was born of a virgin and called Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25)

For further study on the wonderful meaning of Christmas, take a look at these excellent resources (see below):

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