

Why did God decide to intervene in history at the time He did? It was a campaign to bring freedom and salvation into the world, to provide a way to reconcile man to God. The Creator of all things was on a mission to set the captives free. Jesus came to a world enslaved by sin to set us free. The timing of this mission had to be perfect; the pieces had to be in place. “But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son” (Galatians 4:4).

The Perfect Time

When we study the historical context of Jesus’ birth, we see that the pieces perfectly aligned for Jesus to be born. The Roman Empire had ushered in a time when all the nations and peoples of the known world in the Mediterranean region were unified. The Roman roads and transportation linked people groups and nations that previously had no contact with each other. Sailing ships had been developed, and the vast distances of the Mediterranean were connected. All these developments paved the way for the message of Jesus Christ to be easily spread.

This was also the period in world history of unusual peace, from 27B.C. to 180 A.D., known as *Pax Romana*. The Roman Empire was stable, and there was relative peace across the known world. The Prince of Peace came at a time of peace in the World.

The Perfect Language

The Roman Empire was influenced by the Greek Empire, and the common language across all the Empire was Greek. Greek became the common trade language. Language experts say that Hellenic Greek was one of the most articulate languages in history, making it a perfect language for the greatest story ever told.

The Perfect Town

Why should Bethlehem be the location for the one born who was to be the savior of the world?

Bethlehem was not a major city of any importance, but when Jesus was born there, it became the most important town on the face of the earth. Reading the Old Testament, we see that Bethlehem has quite a legacy. Jacob’s wife, Rachel, was buried in Bethlehem (see Genesis 35). She died giving birth to Benjamin, Joseph’s favorite brother.

The story of Ruth and Naomi also takes place in Bethlehem. Boaz married Ruth and was the great grandfather of King David.

In 1 Samuel 16, we read of the prophet Samuel anointing young David, who became Israel’s greatest King and the man after God’s own heart. That is why Luke in his Gospel calls

Bethlehem the town of David (see Luke 2). The name Bethlehem means “House of Bread”, and Jesus was well aware of that when, in John 6:48, he says; “*I am the Bread of Life*”.

These are just a few examples, but we see a thread running through the Old Testament that ties Israel to this little town. For most of history past, God had been preparing this place. Bethlehem was ready; it was the culmination of these people and stories across time.

For Christ to be born in Bethlehem at that time in history was not an accident. The fullness of time had come for the arrival of God’s Son.

Why Are You Here Today?

Why are you and I here at this time in history?

Time is one of the most precious commodities that we possess. But the truth is that we don’t possess time; we are given time with the purpose of stewarding it. In other words, each of us is granted a certain amount of time. God entrusts us with that time. We can choose to use it wisely, or we can simply sit back and let it run by like water running down a hillside stream. The Psalmist David wrote that God gives us a certain number of days and even writes them down before we are born (see Psalm 139:16).

So why are we here today? Paul, writing to the church in Ephesus, writes in Ephesians 2:10, “*For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*” If you have made Jesus Christ Lord of your life, you are a son and daughter of the King, and you were created in Christ to do good works that He prepared in advance for you to do.

This day is only here for a moment in history. God placed you in this moment, with a purpose, with a mission—a mission that only you could fulfill. Do you know your mission?

But there is another component to this line of questioning. Not only must we ask why we are here in this time in history, we must also ask why we are in this place. Why am I here in Kansas City? I have absolutely no doubt in my mind that I am in Kansas City because God has called me to serve Him in this city. Along my life’s journey, I have often asked the Lord, *why am I here?* I believe that this is essential for us as Christians. We need to know our purpose and know why God has called us to serve Him in a particular place at a particular time. We can so easily drift along with no sense of purpose.

Jesus was born at a specific time in history, at a specific place on the earth, for a specific purpose – you are also born at a specific time in history, you have been placed at a specific place on the earth, and you have a specific purpose.

Do you know the call of God on your life?

