

## Perspectives

*Jesus said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!"  
Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets,  
He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.  
(Luke 24:25, 27, NASB)*

Imagine that you'd like to get to know a certain city. Maybe you're visiting on vacation, or perhaps you're considering moving there. There are several ways you can approach the task.

You can explore the city up close. Spend some time. Visit its sites. Drive its streets. Eat in its restaurants. Walk its neighborhoods. Observe the people and interact with them.

Or, you can observe the city as a whole, from a distance. Go up in an airplane and get a perspective that you can't get up close. See its overall character and layout. Learn how it fits into the geography of the region. Drink in the panorama.

The Bible gives us both perspectives on Jesus Christ. In the Gospels we see Him up close. We walk with Him, eat with Him, watch Him in various settings, and hear from the people who knew Him.

In the Old Testament prophets we see Him from a distance. These prophets wrote many centuries before He was born. Though their prophecies are amazingly detailed, they are most moving in their overall view of Him. We see Him in silhouette. We get a broad perspective on His character. We see how He fits into the Father's plan and purpose for all of history.

It's said that up close, sometimes we can't see the forest for the trees. Applying that to Jesus Christ, the prophets give us a great view of the forest in all its richness and beauty.

As they view Jesus towering over all history, the prophets struggle to describe Him in terms that are understandable to us yet still do justice to His greatness, the depth of His character, and His impact on our lives.

- He is a great Light in our darkness (Isaiah 9:2; 60:1-6).
- He is a mighty King who will rule everywhere and forever (Isaiah 9:6-7; Zechariah 9:9-10; 2 Samuel 7:16; Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalms 2; 72).
- He is a Deliverer and Provider (Isaiah 61:1-3).
- He is a Redeemer and Savior (Isaiah 63:7-9).
- He is a Prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).
- He is a Priest (Psalm 110:4).

- He is a Servant who gives himself for His people (Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13- 53:12).
- He is a Shepherd (Ezekiel 34:22-24; Micah 5:2-5a).
- He is God with Us (Isaiah 7:14).

This Christmas, spend time getting to know Jesus—both up-close and from a broader perspective. Read about Him in the New Testament and in the Old. Begin to see Christ in more of His divine and human beauty. Allow God to draw your mind and heart deeper into the magnificent person that He is.

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