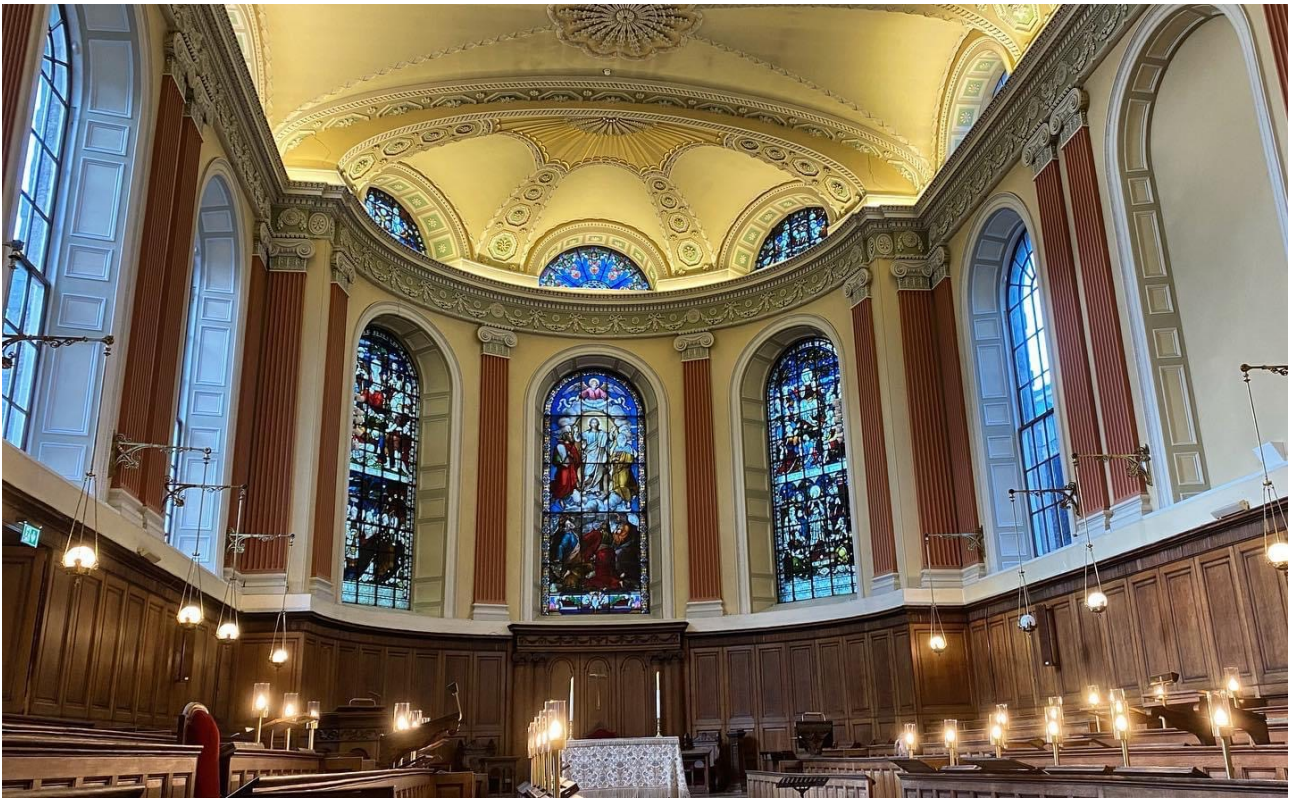


Speaking to the soul



The coming of Jesus

Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah. All those listed above include fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen from the Babylonian exile to the Messiah. Matthew 1: 16 -17

Matthew shows here how the Old Testament has prepared the way for the coming of Jesus. He points out that there were 14 generations from the time of Abraham, the father of

the nation, up to the reign of King David. This was undoubtedly the high-water mark in the Old Testament. David established Jerusalem as the city of God and prepared the way for the building of the magnificent temple.

After that, everything went catastrophically downhill, with the next 14 generations ending with the Jewish people being taken into exile in Babylon. The following 14 generations were ones in which the prophetic voice was almost entirely silent. There is a 400-year gap between the final book of the Old Testament and the coming of Christ. However, throughout those dark years, there were some who held on to the conviction that God would send his Messiah, his anointed one, to usher in a new age of the Spirit.

The coming of the Messiah was the fulfilment of many prophecies and saw the purposes of God move into a completely new era. History had been pointing in this direction but now, finally, it had become a reality. When the apostle Paul spoke of these things he wrote: “When the right time came, God sent his son, born of a woman” (Galatians 4:4). People had waited centuries for this special moment, but God knew exactly what he was doing.

We cannot be sure how many people were awaiting the coming of Jesus, but it probably wasn't many. Jesus' arrival certainly came as a complete surprise to most people. However, we thank God for Simeon and Anna, two old people whose lives were given over to prayer and who immediately spotted the Messiah when they saw him (Luke 2:25-38).

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, let's give thanks to God that he sent Jesus as Messiah and that, through his death, he opened the way for us to find new life in him and to participate in the new age of the Spirit.

QUESTION

Looking at Galatians 4:4 what do you think made the time of Jesus coming exactly the right time?

PRAYER

Lord God, thank you for the new era that Jesus our Messiah opened up and in which we can share today. Amen

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