

IN “THE FULLNESS OF THE TIME”  
(Galatians 4:4)

- I. “The Fullness of the Time” in the HISTORICAL Context
  - A. God’s providence in POLITICS
    1. Roman Empire’s SIZE took CENTURIES to produce
    2. Roman Empire’s PEACE lasted 200 YEARS
  - B. God’s providence in COMMERCE
    1. Roman Empire’s ROADS provided easy TRANSPORTATION
    2. Roman Empire’s POSTAL SYSTEM provided COMMUNICATION
  - C. God’s providence in LANGUAGE
    1. Universal use of GREEK facilitated spread of the GOSPEL
    2. Translation of the OT into GREEK had become WELL-KNOWN
  - D. God’s providence in PHILOSOPHY
    1. The GREEK concept of the *logos*—WORD (John 1:1-14)
      - a. Heraclitus (ca. 500 B.C.) used it to describe a universal REASON or ORDER (as opposed to chaos or chance) in the world
      - b. Anaxagoras (ca. 400 B.C.) described it as a sort of intermediary between GOD and MAN
      - c. Zeno and the Stoics (ca. 300 B.C.) considered it a pantheistic sort of reason and order, described as “PROVIDENCE”
    2. The JEWISH concept of the *logos*
      - a. Septuagint (ca. 250 B.C.) used it for God’s “word” as the AGENT and CONTROLER of creation
      - b. Philo (ca. 20 B.C.) synthesized the GREEK and HEBREW concepts
- II. “The Fullness of the Time” in the BIBLICAL Context
  - A. The TIMING of Zacharias’ lot (Luke 1:9)
    1. His HIGHEST duty

2. A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME appointment
- B. The CONCEPTION and BIRTH of John (Luke 1:5-7, 24-25, 57-66)
- C. The involvement of MARY and JOSEPH (Matt. 1)
  1. Their PRESERVATION
  2. Their UNION
  3. Their LINEAGE
- D. The CONCEPTION of JESUS (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38)
  1. Occurring AFTER their betrothal and BEFORE their marriage
  2. Announced to MARY and not to JOSEPH
- E. The ordering of the CENSUS (Luke 2:1-6)
- F. The BIRTH of JESUS (Luke 2:6-7)
- G. The involvement of the SHEPHERDS (Luke 2:8-20)
- H. The presence of SIMEON and ANNA (Luke 2:23-38)
- I. The involvement of the MAGI (Matt. 2:1-12)
  1. Preservation of the knowledge of PROPHECY
  2. Appearance of the STAR at the appropriate places and times
  3. First going to JERUSALEM for a public announcement
  4. Warning not to return to HEROD
- J. Herod's massacre of the INFANTS (Matt. 2:13-23; cf. Hos. 11:1; Jer. 31:15)
  1. LIMITED Satan's destructive activity
  2. FULFILLED prophecy
  3. PROTECTED Christ Jesus

### III. Applications for our Encouragement

- A. NOTHING is IMPOSSIBLE with God (Luke 1:47)
- B. We can be confident that God is coordinating the PREPARATION for the Lord Jesus'
 

SECOND COMING