

A large, vibrant green evergreen Christmas tree stands prominently in the center of a grassy field. In the background, a dense line of trees stretches across the horizon under a sky filled with soft, white and grey clouds. The lighting suggests a late afternoon or early morning setting. The entire scene is framed by a white border.

UNWRAPPING  
*Christmas*

*Christmas From the East*

## The Point

In fulfillment of His promise God sent His Son, Jesus, to be God with us as our Lord and Savior.

*Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV)*

*18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."*

## *Matthew 1 (ESV)*

*21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.*

Messy  
Christmas

The image features the text "Messy Christmas" in a 3D, bubbly font. "Messy" is in white with a slight shadow, and "Christmas" is in bright yellow. Both words are set against a vibrant green, irregular splat-like background that resembles paint or ink. The entire graphic is centered on a white background, which is itself framed by a thick green border.

# Messy Christmas

- Virgin birth a long way from home & without a bed
- Russian dolls
- #MiddleOfTheMess
- WW I Christmas truce 1914
- Head-on crash on the New York State Thruway in 1973

*Matthew 2:1-12 (ESV)*

*1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.*

## *Matthew 2 (ESV)*

*5 They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: 6 “‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’” 7 Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.”*



## *Matthew 2 (ESV)*

*9 After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.*



## Action & Reaction

- Action: God sent Jesus IAW His plan & promise
  - Jesus is God
  - Immanuel – God with us
  - King of Kings
  - Savior - Propitiation
  - Lord
  - Good Shepherd
- Jesus fulfilled 456 prophecies (> 8 – One in one hundred quadrillion)

## Action & Reaction

- Reaction: Angels, shepherds, wise men, Herod (Jewish people & leaders) & Gentiles (us)
- All must react
  - Indifference
  - Rejection
  - Worship
- Don't have to wait until we are cleaned-up to welcome Him

## Questions

- How is your life messy this Christmas?
- How has your reaction to Jesus' birth changed/guided your life?
- How can you worship Jesus this Christmas, 2024, "to infinity & beyond" (Buzz Lightyear)?



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