

Q:

Why did Jesus arrive when He did?

I grow uneasy when inquiries stray into unsettled theological territory. For example, when we inquire about God's timing – "the when" and question His grand strategy – "the why".

However, I think it's safe to say most scholars agree, Jesus of Nazareth was part of history. His name and some events surrounding His life are recorded by multiple sources.

According to the story found in the Bible – the Son of God appeared on earth in the flesh, taught, healed, preached, debated Jewish authorities, and was eventually tried, tortured, and executed before rising from the dead to defeat sin and death.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
- John 3:17

To answer the big questions, we must sometimes engage in creative speculation, concepts that may be loosely supported but not precisely underpinned by biblical passages.

The Incarnation is no exception.

Why did Jesus come at one particular moment in history?
What were the conditions that made His arrival timely, or necessary?
Could those conditions exist again?

The Bible contains no direct explanation for the arrival of Jesus, only clues to be examined and pieced together.

The most direct clue speaks mysteriously to "the when".

*"But when the fulness of the time was come,
God sent forth his Son, made of a woman,
made under the law,
To redeem them that were under the law,
that we might receive the adoption of sons."*
- Galatians 4:4-5

The fulness of time? What is Paul referring to in this poetic passage?

WORD ON THE WORD:

The Greek word - plērōma (PLAY-roh-mah) - is the act of filling, not the container — it is the thing that fills, the contents, the full complement of completion. Something was being poured in, drop by drop, until the measure was complete. And when plērōma is paired with words related to time (chronou, kairos, kairon) multiple meanings emerge – the end of a wait, a single instant, and a convergence.

In a nautical sense, plērōma was related to a ship's full complement: crew, cargo, provisions — a vessel fully manned and loaded, sitting at the dock ready to embark.

In English, a prosaic reading would suggest an allotted period had run its course or the appointed term had arrived. A more poetic interpretation might read - history became swollen with readiness.

However, neither of these abstractions provides the exact calculation we seek to answer the question - why then?

The Book of Daniel, however, reveals a mysterious formula.

*"Know therefore and understand, that from the
going forth of the commandment to restore and to
build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall
be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks:
the street shall be built again, and the wall, even
in troublous times."*
- Daniel 9:25

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Not exactly the precision we expect from a prediction today, but the calculation was understood by the people of the day. To them it meant..

483 years or 173,880 days

From the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the end of the calculated days, the Messiah was scheduled to arrive precisely during Jesus' known ministry on earth: 30-33 AD.

To the people of the time, their wait had finally come to an end. The messianic countdown had reached 00:00.

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."
– Mark 1:15

Now that we have "the when" mildly understood, we can begin to work on "the why".

In retrospect, we can see how conditions of the day created the perfect moment for Jesus to arrive as He did.

The conquest of Alexander the Great had established Greek as the lingua franca of the known world. Rome's imperial peace – Pax Romana – safeguarded thousands of miles of roads connecting the empire. And the Jews had established a system of synagogues throughout the region from which to preach and establish new communities of believers.

These conditions may not explain why the Incarnation occurred when it did, but they help explain why its message could travel so far so fast afterward.

The perfect network was now in place.

"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness."
– Matthew 9:35

Prior to the arrival of Jesus, the Bible tells us humankind was not spiritually ready. We were helpless moral failures, incapable of living in cooperative peace with one another, and unable to save ourselves from the chaos of disordered lives.

Therefore, a strict set of laws was necessary to establish order - Mosaic Law. The law would serve as a provisional overseer to guide humanity until the Messiah could arrive and establish a new order – a covenant for ALL based not upon rules, but the grace of God.

"...we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith."
– Galatians 3:23-24

Now the perfect conditions had been established and the minds of both Jew and Gentile made ready for the arrival of a savior. The moment was ripe with expectation.

The Jews were well steeped in the messianic promise beginning with chapter three of Genesis. This message was perpetuated throughout the Torah - the voice of the prophets, the poems of the psalms, and nearly every story in between explicitly or subtly makes reference to the coming of a messiah.

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"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

- Genesis 3:15

The Gentiles too were anxiously awaiting a savior. The Fourth Eclogue, a poem written by Virgil in 40 BC, hint at the arrival of a divine child who would end the era of violence, restoring peace and prosperity to the world. And in 9 BC, the Priene text was widely circulated throughout the Roman Empire exalting Providence who would gift the world a savior (Ceasar Augustus) to establish peace, end wars, and set the world in order.

The Priene text carries the most famous pre-Christian use of the Greek word euangelion - 'good news,' or 'gospel.' Rome had claimed it for Augustus.

This was the world into which Jesus stepped.

"And which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

- 2 Timothy 1:10

This miraculous intersection of perfect conditions and the arrival of a pre-determined time should not be considered coincidental.

God did not wait for history to become convenient. He appointed the time. The plan was within the Divine Order itself.

It was God's perfect purpose - Jesus as the fulfillment of creation's plan established from the beginning before the foundations of the world were set. God would align all nations and every soul unto Him through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ –the unifying order of the universe.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

- Romans 6:14

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, the victory over sin would be won. What we are now experiencing on earth is only the aftermath, the mopping up and sorting out after an epic battle between good and evil.

Evil's guerilla rebellion now desperately engages in sporadic chaos to capture and recruit as many souls as possible before the perfect time and conditions are once again ordered and Jesus returns to claim all believers unto Himself.

- NOTHING LIVES FOREVER APART FROM **GOD**.
(THIS IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD 2 WAYS.)

AND SO THE STORY GOES...

GOD MADE A GOOD WORLD.

GOD MADE MAN IN HIS IMAGE TO RULE IT WITH HIM.

GOD OFFERED MAN A LIFE WITH HIM, THE SOURCE OF ALL LIFE.

MAN CHOSE HIS OWN LIFE OVER LIFE WITH GOD.

MAN TURNED AWAY FROM GOD.

MAN MUST NOW DEAL WITH THE RESULT - DEATH.

THE BIBLE WRESTLES WITH THE QUESTION...

Q. HOW WILL DEATH BE RESOLVED?

A. SACRIFICE

- LOVE IT OR HATE IT.
- ACCEPT IT OR REJECT IT.
- FIND IT BARBARIC OR PERFECTLY REASONABLE.
- ABHOR IT OR ACKNOWLEDGE IT,...

IT REMAINS

TRUE.

GOD SURRENDERED HIS BELOVED SON TO BE SACRIFICED,
but,... **JESUS** CHOSE TO SACRIFICE HIMSELF
FOR US WILLINGLY.



the living,...
aware,...
conscious,...
alive,...
feeling,...
knowing,...

Lamb
of **GOD.**

- LIFE AFTER DEATH WITH GOD = ETERNAL FREEDOM

WHY WE WORSHIP.