

The world had been prepared for the coming of the Messiah. It was the RIGHT TIME:

1. Politically: The Roman empire achieved under Caesar something no one has duplicated: THE UNIFICATION OF THE WORLD.

PAX ROMANA: The Roman Peace--it was a forced peace but it was PEACE.

ROMAN ROADS: Great highways ran from one end of the empire to the other...Travel was easy, access was possible. Across the roads the early Christians traveled the world preaching the Gospel.

2. Culturally: When Alexander the Great went out to conquer, he took with him his teacher, Aristotle...So complete was his conquest that the world became GREEK, in its culture, philosophy, art, drama, institutions.

THE GREEK LANGUAGE; one of the most expressive and exacting. While each province had its own dialect, everywhere people were bilingual and knew Greek .

3. Economically: Underneath the forced peace and apparent luxury, unrest was fomenting and poverty stalked the streets. The world was at a crisis point when Jesus came.

4. Morally: Rom. 1 gives a picture of the Roman world. Sexual perversion, idolatry. Purity and humility were unknown virtues.

5. Religiously: People had become disenchanted with their old gods.

No prophet's voice had been heard for centuries. The burden of the law was breaking men's backs.

John Wesley:

A clergyman, son of clergyman, orthodox, zealous, moral, full of good works. Visited inmates of ~~pr~~ prisons, ministered to slum children of city.

Observed Saturday and Sunday as Sabbath, fasted, prayed, belonged to a HOLY CLUB.

But a slave to his own religion, trusting in himself that he was righteous, instead of trusting in Christ and Him crucified.

After his conversion, he looked back on those days and said. "I had the faith of a servant, though not that of a son."